

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background

Increasing fascination of migrant literature in academic studies reveals a desire among critics to examine cultural traditions. This is precisely because migrant literature provides a complex spectacle of cross-cultural interactions by positioning immigrant characters within the cultural contact zones. The inescapable enactment of tradition is portrayed in an anecdote that Zadie Smith tellingly includes in her *White Teeth*. As the story goes, the Queen of Thailand had been to somewhere on a boat along with the attendants. As “suddenly the stern hit a wave and the queen was overthrown overboard”, “not one person in that boat went to her aid, mysterious to the outside world, to the Thai the explanation was immediately clear: tradition demanded, as it does to this day, that no man or woman may touch the queen” (193). As traditions are considered more powerful than the lives of people, in Thai case, even the royal lives, understanding of the traditions is worth the efforts.

This study has sought to reflect on the tradition of the immigrants. In such a study, some of them are found to be bent to their own traditions as the Queen of Thailand did. The price is bound to remain high for that as the Queen was destined to lose her life only because she could not have the aid on account of her tradition. On occasions, the challenge to one’s tradition is essential and the perception that one’s culture is uniquely different from others needs to be reevaluated. This study asserts the connections and resemblances in the cultural lives taking three fictional texts as the corpus of study. The three writers and their texts include: Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul’s *The Enigma of Arrival* (henceforth, *EOA*), Junot Diaz’s *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (henceforth, *BWW*), Zadie Smith’s *White Teeth*

(henceforth, *WT*). This reasoned choice bases itself on the twofold determinants: the time span and the motives of immigration. A report by UN states that there were 93 million immigrants in 1970, 153 million immigrants in 1990 and 281 million immigrants in 2020. The novels selected fall under this time frame: 1987 to 2007, the time span of mass migration. The dominant motives of immigration are education, standard of life and politics. The narrator of *EOA*, an individual of Indian origin, has migrated from Trinidad to England for pursuing the writing career in Oxford University; the protagonist of *BWW*, Oscar Wao and his family has migrated from Dominican Republic to North America for saving themselves from the oppressive Trujillo regime; and one of the protagonists of *WT*, Samad Miah Iqbal has migrated with his family from Bangladesh to England for better lives.

In the late nineteenth century, V. S. Naipaul's grandparents had migrated from India to work in Trinidad's plantations as indentured servants. His *EOA* includes a narrator who seems to be the alter ego of Naipaul himself. The narrator's ancestors migrated from India to Trinidad and the narrator has further migrated to Wiltshire, England. In Wiltshire, he examines his experiences there, and the experiences of England have multiple layers with narrator's favorite concern of questioning the view of the origins. He sets forth the idea of multiple beginnings brought to him by the multiple journeys. In Trinidad, the narrator had studied about England in his school textbooks; upon arriving at England, he did not find that England. The romanticized England as presented in the school textbooks did not exist there in reality. The derelict houses and the old agricultural farm houses made him question his prefiguration of the experience. The reference of his sister's death and the rituals observed in Trinidad helped the narrator look for the adoption and invention of the cultural detours.

Zunot Diaz, born in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, migrated with his family to New Jersey when he was six years old; Diaz received the 2008 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for his novel *BWW*. Oscar Wao, the protagonist, who is overweight and nerdy, has migrated to the U.S. from the Dominican Republic with his sister, Lola, and mother Belicia. For the family it has been difficult to adjust in the migrated land because of fuku-the curse of the new land. The novel is a tale of a various aspects of living in the borderline between countries. The rule of Trujillo, the dictator in the Dominican Republic, and Oscar's family's compulsion to migrate show the challenges faced by the family. Yuniors is the narrator who has been able to assimilate in the American culture while Oscar is a failure to adjust in both the cultures. The footnotes in the novel and the use of science fiction elements testify that Diaz wants to show the tyranny faced by the people of Dominican Republic under the Trujillo regime.

Zadie Smith, born in Willesden, London to a Jamaican mother and an English father, published her debut novel *WT* in 2000 that won the Whitbread First Novel Award, the Guardian First Book Award, the James Tait Black Memorial Prize, and the Commonwealth Writers' First Book Award. Also, it was included on Time magazine's 100 best English-language novels published from 1923 to 2005. Zadie Smith's *WT* constitutes the immigrants from Bangladesh, and Jamaica. Summarily, an Englishman Archibald Jones is about to commit suicide for his first wife Ophelia Diagilo has divorced, he happens to marry Clara Bowden, a girl from Jamaica. Archibald and Samad Miah Iqbal were wartime friends for England in the Second World War. Much of the story then goes to the historical background of Samad Miah Iqbal and his family and cultural difficulties. At the later part of the novel, we come to a family of Marcus Chalfen, the other immigrants. Marcus Chalfen

is conducting a future mouse project to show that the genes of human beings can be controlled.

The selected fictional texts contain food and attire narratives that are worth the consideration and examination. In *WT*, Samad's son Magid, a Muslim character wants to eat bacon while his father forbids him to do this. The narrator in *EOA* eats the roasted chicken though hesitantly; however, in his sister's death ritual, the Hindu norms are strictly followed. The commonalities between and among cultures can be traced as: a lady servant to the landlord in *EOA* cannot take tray while she takes the tea to the landlord which is the sign of formality and formality in food times is almost the norm of all cultures; Clara in *WT* has likewise worry about the invitation to Samad because she does not know to cook the type of curry that Samad might like. Her concern about being acceptable when her husband's friend comes to dine together carries an impression that Samad is actually interested in continuing the relations despite the different cultural upbringing. Her effort for being formal in the dining times is similar to a lady in *The Enigma of Arrival*. A lady in *EOA* is expected to use a tray while offering tea to her landlord. She forgets to do so. Thus, she cannot continue her job because she could not meet the expectations of being formal. La Inca in *BWW* fasts by only taking the orange for the safety of Beli from Trujillo; this instance of fasting exists abundantly in real cultures as well. Her effort of observing the fasting for the betterment of the situations cannot be taken a case that takes place only in the scenario pertaining to Dominican Republic. Similarly, Samad in *WT* goes on a fast by not even swallowing the spit. This custom in the Muslim culture has some similarities as observed by La Inca in *BWW*. Foods from other cultures are accepted in these novels. For instance Lola in *BWW* accepts the job of selling the French fries although she is Dominican; Lola accepts this job because she has been a runaway and

has to earn the money for herself. She does not stick to her cultural foods when she has been an immigrant. Alsana in *WT* claims that there is no pure culture and the idea of pure culture is a fairy tale. Alsana's idea of fairy tale is the questioning of the existence of such phenomenon. She terms the notion of pure culture as the fairy tale to denote the non-existent entity. She does not believe on the authentic culture. For her all cultures have the intermixture. Her consultation of the encyclopedia to find the meaning of the Bengali culture shows that her culture has the connection to the Western cultures. Her point is that no culture is absolutely pure.

The attire narratives in these three texts are in abundance. Karina Cain in *WT* has been severely criticized by her boy friend Millat for her apparel. She wears short apparels that Millat condemns. Her dressing has been a bone of contention in between them. While Millat calls her a whore for wearing the short attires, she intends to beat him for being so narrow-minded. In *Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, Lola's bikini has been interpreted at various levels. While she has worn the black bikini, some people take it as the mourning dress; she does not take it that way. In *The Enigma of Arrival*, Landlord loves to wear shorts while Mr. Phillips does not. Their apparel choices are entirely different. These evidences in three texts have the attire commonalities even though from different cultural backgrounds. Internal cultural contradictions exist in these texts. Clara in *WT* is reproached for her dresses because the members of Jehovah's Witness would not wear the colorful dresses. When she wears the attires that are youthful, her boy friend calls her a whore. She is condemned for her attire choices. Her choice is different from the community she belongs to. Thus, she has to face the criticisms. Similarly, Bray in *EOA* loves wearing informal dress while Alan prefers formal dresses.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In cultural studies, the difference- thinking tendency enables the assumption of cultures as discrete spheres. Calling this incommensurability into question, the literature of immigration, particularly the corpus selected- Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul's *The Enigma of Arrival*, Junot Diaz's *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, and Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, discounts the claim of difference-thinking and asserts the sense of cultural relatedness because the homogeneity and uniqueness of cultures are interrogated; the delimitation of a culture is questioned and the internal cultural variation is spelled out. Concepts like multiculturalism, interculturality and hybridity have offered explanations for the co-existence of immigrants and hosts. Their explanations cannot adequately address the problems the immigrants and hosts encounter. Bearing these explanatory preoccupations in mind, the research questions below have been generated and developed:

- a. In what ways do immigrants and hosts share cultural practices in relation to food and attire in the three fictional texts?
- b. What happens to the assumption of homogeneity and uniqueness of cultures and what does immigrant and host characters' refusal to embrace their own cultures of origin reveal about transcultural interactions?
- c. How do these texts affirm, refute or interrogate hitherto established theoretical paradigms such as multiculturalism, interculturality and hybridity?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Many characters in the novels intend to validate the uniqueness of their cultures defending putative exclusivism. The objectives of this study stem from the notion of cultural exclusivism:

- a. to explore the instances of cultural sharedness among cultures for operationalizing it
- b. to examine the internal cultural variation for questioning the rigid boundaries between and among cultures
- c. to assess the extent of the applicability of the theoretical paradigms such as multiculturalism, interculturality and hybridity

1.4 Methodology

This study adopts qualitative approach so that the penetration of the emotions, feelings and sentiments of the immigrants and hosts is carried out in the more appropriate way. In addition, applying a narrative research the data analysis assumes its appropriateness because it is open to the multiple interpretations.

This dissertation uses the transcultural theory. Transculturality opposes the analytical paradigms such as multiculturalism, interculturality and hybridity in that they assume significance of the cultural binary. In contrast, transculturality highlights the significance of the relational webs between and among the cultures. The cultures are not the discrete spheres; they are the webs that are connected to each other in many respects.

The three fictional texts have been analyzed taking food and attire as the data. Datafying food and attire underlies the rationale pertaining to their nature: food and attire are underscored as the basic needs of the human beings. (More in Chapter two; Pages 14- 33)

1.5 Delimitation

The authors of the selected fictional texts possess immigration experiences. Their texts, predominantly, contain the cast of the immigrant characters who can be characterized in the spectrum of viewpoints: the total allegiance to the

native cultures and the ability to negotiate. It is not only the immigrant characters who project such qualities; it is also the hosts who share these traits. The immigrants-hosts' viewpoints concerning the cultural evolution are central to these novels.

The choice of these texts is further supported by the motives of the immigrants. The important reasons for the migration in these texts are: educational, financial and political. The narrator of *EOA* wanted to pursue his writing career in Oxford University. Oscar Wao in *BWW* has migrated from Dominican Republic to the United States for escaping the tyranny of Trujillo regime. Samad Miah Iqbal in *WT* has migrated from Bangladesh for the better living conditions for himself and his family members. The researcher wanted to have the immigration fictions containing these motives. Thus, these novels have been selected.

Why would people abandon their birthplaces? This emotionally charged question receives the answers like the reasons discussed. The ancient motive like the political freedom has become the motive even in the twentieth century in Dominican Republic text. The textual representation of these three reasons – educational, political, and financial seem, thus, the perpetually present reasons for the immigration. Despite the limitation of the researcher to confine in the creative texts, these reasons are important even in the real world immigration scenario. These reasons are considered and one can claim them to be important even through the common sense.

The nuanced treatment of the cultures by the theory of transculturality forms the base of its selection. Transculturality outright rejects the status of the cultures as the fixed and definable ones. No culture is pure because a culture ever evolves. Other paradigms of cultural explanation such as hybridity, multiculturalism fall short of their assumption of the cultural purity and autonomy. Even when the cultures do not

come in contact with each other, their purity and definable autonomy is merely provisional because cultures are characterized by the inherent nature of the change.

Examination of two or more cultures in the distinct territories shows that not every aspect of the cultures is different. Some level of commonality shows the interpenetration of certain aspects. Interpenetration existed even in the past. This phenomenon could be attributed to the common conditions of life and life aspirations. The acceptance of interpenetration in cultures by the theory of transculturality is another factor for its selection. In addition, globalization could mean an act of homogenization of cultures, or Westernization and uniformization. Transculturality, in contrast, is an effort to locate commonalities across cultures despite the existence of the differences in them.

When it comes to the discussion of cultures, the emphasis on the differences, dissimilarities and divergences is a common practice. Transculturality, a theory, abstains itself from this lopsided practice. It accepts that variations exist; what is more, the identifiable practices also exist. For these three reasons- challenge to purity and autonomy, interpenetration in cultures, and emphasis on the identifiable practices, the theory of transculturality is selected as the theoretical underpinning of the dissertation.

The examination of the fictional texts for the study of cultures of immigrants and hosts cannot deal with the real data of the real world. The necessity of selecting fictional texts is the adherence to the disciplinary convention. The methodological convention of the English Department requires the examination of the fictional texts.

Apart from the adherence to the disciplinary convention, my attempt to examine the immigration texts written by the immigrants has a slight hope for the grains of the truth. This effort in understanding the culture at the borderlands in the

creative texts by the immigrants could have some reflection of the reality while some dimensions could have been creatively invented.

1.6 Chapter Divisions and Summaries

The chapters thus juxtaposed assume specific points of rationale. Placing introduction section at the initial position underlies the researcher's purpose of putting forth the preliminary phases of research agenda conception. After presenting the conception phases, placement of the second chapter as literature review intends to inform the audiences as to what central debates have been conducted on the primary texts. Alongside, the inclusion of the methodological underpinnings in the third chapter aims at informing what theoretical and methodological strand is being applied for the evidence to the research gap discovered.

Juxtaposing the evidence analysis at the fourth and fifth chapter is the linearity developed for the considerations of the evidence. These two chapters that precede the concluding section intend to examine the hypothesis set. The final section as the conclusion restates the major concepts in the dissertation thereby hinting at the ideas developed.

The first chapter initiates the researcher's interest in the study of tradition and culture in the fictional representations. The research questions that penetrate into the literary representations are aimed at finding the applied cross-culturality and the internal variation in a culture. The chapter contains the description of all the methods applied from research questions to the analytical themes.

The second chapter presents methodology deployed in the dissertation. It explains why and how the analysis has been carried out. The rationalia for the selection of qualitative research, narrative analysis and the transcultural oscillation for the study of immigration literature have been established in this chapter. Further, the

discussion of cultural studies, along with the emphasis on the food and attire, has been conducted in this chapter.

The third chapter contains the scholarship around the primary texts. The transcultural novels contain the characters that have multiple beginnings and possess the ability to question their past. The review on the primary texts sets forth the major debates in them. *EOA* is more like reading the palimpsest. The narrator in the novel faces the comforts and complications of the migration. *BWW* contains a protagonist named Oscar Wao who is neither able to follow his native culture nor has been able to integrate in the culture of U.S. This text is more about the problems in the definitiveness; the footnotes in the text are the strategic points for hiding information from the dictator. *WT* promotes the inventive appropriation while negotiating between and among the cultures. Many characters attempt to establish the fact that cultural purity is non-existent notion. With these views on these texts, the researcher has been able to identify a gap in the literature thereby intending to find the variation within a culture and permeation of cultural practices with food and attires as data.

The fourth chapter questions the cultural binaries, discusses the multiple selves and variation within a culture. In *EOA* the narrator discusses that pure milk was not available in Trinidad, his birthplace and is not found in England, where he has migrated. In *BWW*, Abelard, the grandfather of the protagonist, is deprived of foods because he is a prisoner. In *WT*, an old man named Hamilton does not accept hard foods for he has no teeth. These instances – unavailability of pure milk, a prisoner being deprived of food, and old man not taking hard food are not cultural specific practices. Intraindividual differences intend to establish the concept that it is not the cultures that seem different from each other; a person is different to oneself on different occasions. For instance, Shiva the Hindu God, in *EOA* is presented as drug

taker. He is respectable because he is God and disrespectable because he takes drugs. *BWW*'s protagonist, Oscar wants to lose his weight but continues eating carelessly; *WT* has Samad Miah Iqbal who is an excellent waiter but a bad husband and bad father. This chapter concludes with the analysis of variation within a culture. In *EOA*, two characters from England Alan and the landlord have differing attitude to a toast. In *BWW* two characters Lola and the Gangster eat pescado frito while in outing and do not eat this food on other occasions. In *WT* Samad loves preaching in dining times while his wife hates it.

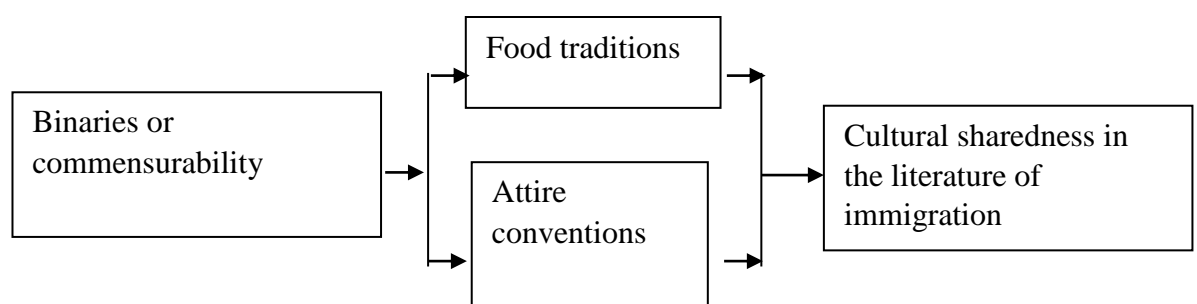
The fifth chapter examines the paradoxical nature of homogeneity, the permeation of practices across cultures and the crisis of the delimitation of a culture. In *EOA*, two characters such as Alan, the writer, and Bray, the car-hire man, use attires for differing intention: one for boisterousness and another for the professional privilege. In *BWW*, the protagonist's mother, Beli wears better attires for taking photos. She does not wear beautifully all the times. In *WT*, Millat, the Muslim character would wear jeans. When he joined an organization called KEVIN, he started wearing kurta- pyjamas. The representative instances of permeation of cultural practices can be taken from *EOA*. A decorator keeps himself neat by wearing overall. He uses the pockets of overall for keeping the ashes of cigarettes. *BWW* contains a narrative where Beli, Oscar's mother is shown to be wearing fully. She wears fully to hide her scars. *WT* has a wedding scene where the bride and bridegrooms Clara and Archibald Jones wear more beautifully. These three cases- attire having pockets, a person wearing fully to hide scars and wearing more beautiful attires in wedding occasions cannot be particular practice of a particular culture. They are the contents of all cultures in all occasions. Attire has pockets for carrying the contents; one of the purposes of wearing fully would be to hide the deformities of a body. And the

wedding situations invite the brides and bridegrooms to be additionally decorated. Considering the crisis of the delimitation of a culture takes us to *EOA* where the cultural imperative is questioned. A lady of fifty from lower social position goes against the cultural imperatives by wearing the tweed skirts. In *BWW*, Beli, the mother of Lola, threatens to tear the attires of her daughter if the daughter does not follow her. A mother is expected to love while she does not. *WT* contains Samad and Alsana who wear the attires that their culture would not have approved of.

The conclusion section revisits the central concepts and instances in the fictional texts by hinting at the cultural correspondences between and among the cultures. Alongside, variation and paradoxes in a given culture are discussed. More importantly, the delimitation of a culture is not possible because the characters in the novels have not been confined by the cultural imperatives. Thus, these rationales and summaries of the chapters attempt to portray the permeation of the cultural practices in the fictional texts, if not in the real society and cultural landscape. To reiterate, my argument that there exists applied cross-culturality and a particular culture has variation in it, it may/can have many paradoxical practices is applicable in the creative texts I have selected.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

As sturdy conceptual framework and full-scale conceptualization help circumvent challenges encountered in the research process, the reasoned concepts such as binarism and commensurability in relation to food and attire are examined, explored and assessed. With such an attempt, significant degree of cultural sharedness is discovered:



CHAPTER: TWO

Methodology: Cultural Correlation and Multilayered Voices

This chapter discusses the details concerning the application of the methodological competence in the course of research endeavors. Some review on qualitative research, narrative design, food and attire studies, transculturality, immigration and globalization, and discontents of hybridity has been reconsidered from the view of this dissertation.

Which methods and methodologies would have been right for the examination of the cultural texts particularly in the study of immigrants is again a matter of a heated debate. David Silverman turned out to be supportive when he considers the alternatives of the research methods, “we are taught that methods cannot be always ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, only more or less appropriate” (6). My consideration of the methods in the research of immigrants, thus, is not in the mode of “right” or “wrong”, I, as, a researcher, tend to think as Silverman suggests about “more appropriate” or “less appropriate”. Writing methodology section is more about trying to “overcome the common problem of failing to explicate to the reader what is now ‘obvious’ to you” (Silverman 358). I did not have the slightest sense of methods on particularly how I was to come to this level. This section is about what I did and how I did. In addition, it is more about why I did what and how I did.

2.1 Verbal Analysis

The representation of the characters’ viewpoints about the food and attires could not be presented through the quantitative modes. Qualitative themes were more appropriate because the perspectives of the narrators, characters-immigrants and hosts could not be adequately represented in the quantitative ways. Much would have been missed out provided the quantitative measures had been adopted. Particularly, the

human aspects and the feelings of the humans would have been missed. Leaving aside the feelings and sentiments in the research does not seem valid particularly in the studies of cultures of the hosts and immigrants. In fact, the researcher experienced the same when analyzing the storied events. For instance, why the narrator of *EOA* had indescribable pleasure in the presence of Italian girl Angela at a hotel cannot be contained in the numbers. In addition, the researcher does not rule out the appropriacy of quantitative measures in the study of migration. However, the characters' attitudes, behaviours, and tendencies are better analyzed by the qualitative measures. An additional instance can be taken from *BWW*, Belicia Cabrel hides her body fully. The discussion of hiding and revealing the body parts is certainly better captured through the narration of her case: why does she hide her body fully even while sleeping?

In addition, the experience, opinions, observations and emotions of immigrants cannot be captured by the statistical modes of analysis. To that end, qualitative modes of data collection and data analysis have been adopted.

Moreover, the consequences of immigration in relation to their culture in these fictional representations could be better represented through the qualitative modes. The qualitative scholarship could better capture the essence of the consequences of the immigration. Analyzing the immigration novels through the transcultural perspective required the developments of the codes. Johnny Saldanna in *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* defines code as “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence –capturing and/or evocative attribute for a language based or visual data” (3). With the support of this coding manual, the researcher developed the themed codes for the analysis of the available evidence: untenable cultural binaries, subject as multitude and internal cultural

variation in terms of the foods of the immigrants and the hosts. The themed codes relating to the attires also had been threefold: homogeneity paradox, cultural permeation and untenable cultural delimitation.

With the themed codes and the transcultural underpinnings, the cultural permeation in the immigrant and the native characters has been mapped. Drawing on the narrative units from the selected primary texts, the hypothesis set: inherent contradiction in a culture and the purity of cultures has been tested, and the commonness across the cultures is claimed. Alongside, the variation in a culture is demonstrated so that the paradox of homogeneity can be established.

2.2 Narrative Research

The choice of narrative research as the research design assumes its importance to the representation and manifestation of the character's point of views concerning the food and attires. These storied events can show how the characters perceive the changed contexts, how they negotiate and how they invent and reinvent the cultural practices. Narrative research, more like the case study method, takes the cases of situations, occurrences and events that are around the attire and food conventions and analyzes the corpus to find how cultures look similar to each other or how a typical culture looks so atypical. The deployment of narrative research, thus, is more similar to case study method.

Cultural evolution resists closures. Similar is the case with the narrative research. This design finds an idea and ever remains open to the other hermeneutic efforts. In this vein, narrative research comes closer to the analytical mode of transculturality. Both of these paradigms remain open for the forthcoming and subsequent interpretations.

Considering the alternatives for the analytic approach, other four approaches had been taken into account. Frederich J. Wertz discusses it concerning the phenomenological approach, it involves, “Empathetic immersion in the situation” “dwelling in each moment of the experience” and “suspension of belief” (132). Kathy Charmaz clarifies that the grounded theory helps to “construct a fresh theoretical analysis” and “the extant concepts” “should not be applied” (170). While phenomenological inquiry expects the researcher to engage fully in the subject, the grounded theory stops the researcher from using any theory already formed. Discourse analysis analyzes any text for examining how the text enhances one subjectivity while diminishing the other (McMullen 205). The intuitive approach involves the inquirer to reflect on “pre-understanding on the topic” and examine the transformation “that engages readers both personally and professionally” (Anderson 249). This researcher neither wanted to immerse in the subject, nor build a new theory. Also, the researcher neither developed pre-understanding of the immigration, nor wanted to examine the domination or agency among the immigrants. The researcher wanted to use an analytical strategy in which “ Readings of narrative materials can be conducted” in an important dimension known as categorical analysis that “ abstracts sections or words belonging to a category, using coding strategies, and compares these to similar texts from other narratives” (Josselson 226). This researcher, by collecting the sections from three fictional texts, has compared the category called food and attire for coming to an idea called cultural sharedness. In addition, narrative analytic approach, “tries to maintain a view of how the person integrates multiple psychic realities” (Josselson 227). The categorical narrative, a strand of narrative analysis is consonant to my theoretical position- the transcultural study of cultures. Hence, narrative research strategy merits my selection rationale.

The fictional texts abound the narrative threads. Molly Andrews et al. argue that the narrative research focuses less on the language and more on the stories themselves: “research that focuses on narrative as an expression of individual experience, or as a mirror of social realities tends to bypass the language of stories in order to focus on their meanings or the social positioning they produce or reflect”(9). The characters in the story have their “social positioning” and that aspect is excavated by this sort of research. For Amia Lieblich et al, “narrative is used to represent the character or lifestyle of specific subgroups in the society...” (4). Since the study of the immigrants is all about their particular groups in the host land versus the native groups, narrative research is deemed to be apt for this sort of research purpose.

2.3 Cultural Studies: Food and Attire

The analysis chapters with three coded themes include the consideration of applied cross-culturality. With the food as data, the analysis contributes to the multiple selves, problems with the typicality and variation within a culture. These themed considerations are formulated for the consolidated view of food and its meaning making process as the permeated practice.

With the attires as data, another three themed titles have been framed so that the unmistakable delimitation of culture and its homogeneous autonomy could be questioned. The permeation of similar meaning making process of attires has been brought to the fore with these formulations.

The selection reason for the data as food and attire leads to the basic need of human beings. The civilizational beginning of human society must have been triggered with the more systematic provisions of food and attires for dealing with hunger and the protection of the body from the heat and cold.

Popular Nepali parlance *gas, bas, kapas* (food, shelter and attires) also had the important bearing on me because when I would attempt to resolve the question like: which aspect of culture am I going to study? As culture encompasses everything on the part of humans, it was this part of adage that triggered the selection.

The researcher's preoccupation with the immigration in the literary texts would lead to the negative or positive projections. This tendency took the researcher to think about the fictional texts that represent immigrants. After that, the scholarship in the selected texts was reviewed. In the process of literature search, I came in contact with two important texts that have important bearing in me so much so that they shaped my choice of food as data for my study of the cultures: *A History of Food in Literature: from the Fourteenth Century to the Present* (2017) edited by John Fitzpatrick and Charlotte Boyce and *Mapping Appetite: Essays on Food, Fiction and Culture* (2007) edited by Jopi Nyman and Pere Gallordo-Torrano. In addition, *The Face of Fashion: Cultural Studies on Fashion* (1994) by Jennifer Craik drew me to take attires as another set of data. Alongside, I attended an online seminar run by Jennifer Craik in association with Cornell University Library. While I was generating research questions by further studying the primary texts, I was able to detect a common problem in all three texts: The immigrant characters tended to love their native culture and still lived in the migrated land. Their love of native culture and living in the host land gave birth to the questions such as the identification of common cultural practices, the inability of immigrants to defend their position fully and their efforts to maintain the cultural autonomy. These contexts supported me to formulate, generate, develop and reformulate the research questions and objectives.

Foodways, as defined by Carole M. Counihan, are "behaviors and beliefs surrounding the ... consumption of food" (6). In this sense, the foodways involve the

major portion of the lifestyle and the identity. Besides, the foods carry a sense of the additional function. Anthony Winson locates their unificatory role, “the rituals of food preparation and communal food consumption have played a central, integrative role in human society. They have formed an essential means of bringing people together – of establishing human existence as a social existence” (2). Thus, the foods have not only the unificatory but also the divisive roles. Mary Douglas, describes how cultural beliefs manifest in ordinary meals, “. . . the meaning of a meal is found in a system of repeated analogies. Each meal carries something of the meaning of the other meals; each meal is a structured social event, which structures others in its own image” (240). Every meal is the representation of big cultural reminder. David A. Davis and Tara Powell demonstrate that the immigrants might forget other aspects of their identity but food, food is one of the important identity markers; so the immigrants even when they assimilate other aspects of their culture, they “maintain food traditions”. Along with the foodways, the clothing codes demonstrate the unificatory and divisive concerns. Susan B. Kaiser regards the binding aspect of the fashion, “fashion involves becoming collectively with others” (1). Clothing codes are as important as the foodways in determining one’s cultural concerns, “clothes have the ability to invoke emotions and memories” (Geczy and Karaminas 85). Even when a person leaves one’s nativeland, the attires and the memories associated with it are preserved. Jennifer Craik expands the signification of the clothing, “clothing does a good deal more than simply clad the body for warmth, modesty or comfort” (4). They “construct a personal habitus” (4). By habitus, Craik intends to bring the association of an individual to the specific group he/she is living in. As Fred Davis delineates the constitution of the clothing, the clothing features/codes refer to “ fabric, color, texture, cut, weight, weave, stitching, transparency, and whatever else makes a

difference in how the garment or its surrounding ensemble of apparel is responded to in a community of clothes-wearers” (13). Although all of these dimensions of the attire have not been considered in this dissertation, few of them are duly deliberated on.

The discussion of food and attire in the literary or religious texts is not necessarily a new phenomenon nor is the criticism about them. There have been various norms developed about food and attire. In fact, foundational scriptures like Gita, Bible and Quran have numerous references to food and attires. Bajra Dulal Mookherjee points out this categorization in Bhagavad Gita, “food dear to the satwik people”, “food desired by the rajasik people” and “food dear to the tamasik people” (412). The Bible shares this nature of category. Seth D. Kunin elaborates on this process, “Biblical food rules” can be summed up into two categories the first being “the animals that can be eaten and those that are forbidden” and the next category “relates to mixtures” (380). The Islamic scripture Quran also contains the food rules, “correct eating and drinking are key aspects of a correct Islamic lifestyle” (Armanios and Ergene 3). All of these scriptures have the rules for the correct ways of eating. Pertaining to the attires, these major scriptures include significant ideas, the Bhagavad Gita contains the notion of “paramhansa” or “naga” that refers to a “sanyasi” “who does not wear clothes”. Even in cold seasons, they are expected to remain “without clothes” (Nithyananda 400). This shows how the rules in regards to attires were very strict. “Hebrew Bible mentions items of dress” as “objects of culture” “by which natural bodies are made social” (Quick 1). Resembling the discussions of Bhagavad Gita and Bible, Simonetta Calderini discusses the cultural sides of dress in Quran, “Muslim leaders have resorted to the ‘politics’ of veiling and unveiling to express and

implement their political, social and cultural agendas” (630). Through these scriptural texts, the rules for the foods and attires are enacted.

2.4 Transculturality

Wolfgang Welsch (1946), a German Philosopher and the student of Immanuel Kant¹, defines culture opposing its mono-cultural associations. Welsch asserts that it is necessary to think of culture as more than a juxtaposition of the familiar and the foreign (196). Transculturality takes into account the internal complexities and constant variations characteristic of every culture. Corroborating with Welsch, Afef Benessaieh, a writer on transculturality, clarifies distinctions among terms, such as interculturalism, multiculturalism and transculturality. As her, the terms like interculturalism and multiculturalism invite the disharmony while transculturality invites the harmony and the effort to understand the other (30). She focuses on the difficulty of neatly isolating the cultures from each other. It is not the matter of celebration of harmony. Transcultural orientation is the effort to locate commonalities that can support the co-existence of the cultural groups. While the theoretical paradigms such as interculturalism, multiculturalism and hybridity assume the separateness of the cultures, the seed of conflict sown there. The cultural critics have been focusing on the dissimilarities between and among the cultures that have stemmed in the portrayal of the cultures as the islands, “We are thus, both conceptually and emotionally, bound to the concept of difference” (Welsch 4) . As Johann Gottfried Herder², any culture is characterized by the ethnic foundation, social homogenization, and intercultural delimitation (Welsch 5). These three

¹ Wolfgang Welsch, the author of two seminal essays – “Transculturality- The Puzzling Forms of Cultures Today” and “On the Acquisition and Possession of Commonalties”, is taken as the precursor of the term ‘transculturality’. Before him, Fernando Ortiz, a Cuban Sociologist had used the term ‘transculturation’ with slightly different meaning with that of Welsch.

² Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) is a German philosopher who outlines his discussion of the inevitable ingredients of culture in *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man* (1784-91). His conception of threefold characteristics of culture had been dominant for many cultural critics.

distinctive characteristics of any culture discussed by Herder pose a dominant problem to Welsch. With the discussion of culture and transculture, Mark Stein in “The Location of Transculture” focuses on the internal variation in a given culture. The difference seeking tendency among the cultures needs to redirect the focus on the internal differences in a particular culture. The cultures are influenced not only by the internal differences, rather they are considered by the correspondences that challenge the view of the cultures as the distinct entities (253). The cultures cannot be taken as the spheres that are unmistakably different from each other. Winfried Siemerling and Sarah Phillips Casteel state that Mary Louise Pratt who introduced the concept of transculturation in Anglophone criticism defines it as the process of “selection, intervention and invention” (195). As the cultures encounter, the people adopting them need to select each other’s cultural ways, negotiate and even generate newer ways for their lives ahead.

The mixture of different cultural traditions in a novel or literary texts is one of the topographies of the transcultural novel (Brancato 234). For Brancato, transculturation is the ‘process of assimilation, through selection and invention, of a dominant culture by a marginal group (Brancato 236). Transculturation is analogous to assimilation in which there is the selection of a cultural item from one culture and invention of another cultural dynamics for the living. The practice of the transculturation embraces the adoption and the creation of the cultural practices. The practices may not match any culture that comes in the contact. Thus, this is not the hybridity, rather the invention of a cultural notion in the process. Sissy Helff, one of the editors of *Transcultural English Studies*³, discusses the features of the transcultural novels. For her, there are

³ *Transcultural English Studies: Theories, Fictions, Realities* (2009) edited by Sissy Helff and Frank Schulze Engler is a collection of more than two dozen essays that intend to establish the scope of transcultural criticism. The essays include the discussion of transcultural novels and the theoretical edges.

no structural and formal criteria for the setting off of the transcultural novels, but one important feature would be the characters having the self-doubting tendencies, in that sense, the transcultural novels have the drastically personalized realities (82). The transcultural novels display the origin which is not “teleological or deterministic” (Schaff 291). The “cultural crossovers” and “the transcultural movements” in the globalized world have been the imperative “signifiers of a powerful destabilization of essentialism and binary oppositions” (Schaff 281). In fact, the transcultural novels are known to break the fuzzy boundaries and erase the essential binaries that create demarcations.

The novels of transculturality keep the sense of the history of the characters, however, the history does not have the function of deterministic mode, neither has the teleological stance. There is the free back-and-forth for the additional instigation of the newer forms of values that spring from the interstitial relation between and among the cultures.

Transcultural novels constitute the characters having the sense of self-doubt about their past cultural realities. People, particularly, in the immigration context, are “likely to have multiple cultural belongings in an era of enormous cultural crisscrossing” (Butt 295). The accumulative interconnectedness, the diverse cultural associations and multiple cultural memories constitute the multilayered paths. The characters in the transcultural novels go through various tangles, have hectic sense of the self and are not containable in the singular pattern of the cultural memory. They have the “constant doubt about the reality of the past” (Butt 294). Since they encounter various cultural orbits, various realities of their past are questioned in the course of living.

Transculturality, a process of adoption and invention of the cultural signifying practices are documented in the literary novels, too. The features of the transcultural

novels are the unique personal realities, and the lack of the deterministic and teleological sense. Such novels display the sense of the doubt and lack of certitude.

2.5 Immigration and Globalization

Ever since globalization took hold of the world, the immigration boom has been fueled and there is much debate about the cultures that come in the contacts. Immigration constitutes the central purpose of better lives particularly through the economic prosperity. However, Chris Barker delineates this node of globalization remarking it having the “issues of cultural meaning” and seeking the dynamic outlook in the understanding of culture (76).

Globalization, in its several scopes, is more about the shift of the cultural meaning making process and this process is represented in the literary texts. Naomi Klein, an author of alter-globalization book *No Logo*, views that globalization incorporates mixture of market masala (117). The assortment could be taken as the cultural loss or the beginning of newer culture. Rinku Sen claims, “Most prospective immigrants are part of a family chain encouraged to search for a better life” (20). The instance of cultural remixture occurs in the lives of immigrants and the immigrants prefer mobility in the fondness of better lives. The likelihood of change in the viewpoint and values in the lives of immigrants is affected by the outlines of immigrants. Roger White avers, “members of more traditional societies express high degrees of national pride” and are not open to change (79). It would be an inaccurate statement to assert that change in outlook in the immigrants is a rare case. Outlooks are changed. The study of the extent of change in outlook, values and norms becomes the attention of the critical studies.

Discourse of globalization and immigration has summoned the polemic and the people are divided when this issue enters any discussion. The enquiries rise- is

globalization the contemporary phenomenon, or the antique one? Is it good for all nations of the world or only for wealthier nation? Globalization induces a lot of responses evading a single explanation. It is a charged field containing the darker and brighter sides. Jagadish Bhagawati avows, “Globalization must be managed so that its fundamentally benign effects are ensured and reinforced” (35). How the nonthreatening effects are stimulated requires a precise handling of the question. Globalization is considered to be a special dress called straitjacket. The tighter we wear the Golden Straitjacket, the more gold it produces (Friedman 104-106). Metaphorical though, it is anticipated to be the looked-for dress that has the proficiency to harvest more as it is squeezed. That is, the more it is ubiquitous, the more profitable it is for the general public. It is favorable because of the re-contextualization of the cultural meanings. The culture and knowledge are re-contextualized in the series of different settings (Hannerz 107-111). This process of re-contextualization of the culture and knowledge becomes important in the evolutionary aspect of the new understanding.

Understanding the world in polarities causes various strains. Dicken asks us to think in the ranges of the activities rather than in the extremes of global and local (5). Despite sharing the networked values through the connections, the societies can “brand their flags”(Castells 3-5). The existence of other in the self or the mixtures of external and internal cohere in the networked societies. Anthony Giddens reminds that the aspects of globalization “contribute to the stresses and strains affecting traditional ways of life and cultures in most regions of the world” (4). The connection of the societies fosters pains, and this is a normal process.

There is also the simulation of anti-globalizers. Globalization paralyzes national economies by turning them unrealistic and globalization is pointless myth (Hirst and

Thompson 1-7). Anti-globalization goes against the task of turning powerful ideas into advertising catchphrases and public streets into shopping malls, genes are patented, the politicians are bought and altered (Klein 219-26). It is the paramount effort to commodify every aspect of life. When we mean that globalization is the means to homogenization, there is much fuss about it. What works well in the US cannot be equally applicable to overseas (Rugmann and Hudegts 333-343). The location differs and needs differ thereby flouting the imported culture. The other expression for globalization could be increasing interdependence.

The globalists like Held et al. recognize that globalization offers opportunities for “redefining the role and functions of national government ...as against the provision of passive welfare benefits” (250). They hint at the more eloquent interaction between and among the nations that result into the higher level of benefits to the nations engaged in the interaction. In contrast, the interaction, it can be said, will not always yield the regimented culture. It will have the hybridized epithets and symbols. Roberta Sassatelli maintains, “the appropriations of global commodities may alter their meanings and images” (115). Even when there is alteration, such alteration can be termed as reconstruction of home, community and locality (Robertson 28-32). Discussing the view of globalization inevitably brings the idea of immigration. Further, “Immigration has the political dimensions that includes the acquisition and termination of nationality” (Legomsky 44). These two aspects need the special amount of study because the acquisition and termination processes entail various aspects of cultural complexes. Thus, the give and take among the cultures along with the inventions of newer signs forms the important dimension in the life of a culture.

2.6 Cross-cultural Commonality

The preoccupation with civilizational differences among the thinkers seems to have shadowed the commonalities across the cultures. In contrast, relatedness across the cultural board is the marked pre-cultural reality. It does not deny the fact that the cultures have differences and the commonality was present throughout the history. What requires the emphasis is that present century has welcomed plenty of the immigrants and focus over the commonality can cause the minimization of ridges among the immigrants.

If we bring the picture of the human lives before the cultures were begun, we can grasp the similarities among the people across the spaces. After the cultural phases, the divisions seemed pertinent. As the immigration across the world rose to an increased level; the commonalties began to reappear; or they began to contain pronounced visibility. Wolfgang Welsch reminds us the merge in present day cultures, “they are merging and thus commonalties are coming about”(4). The degree of the commonalties is mounting as the interaction between and among the cultures is increasing.

Certain similarities are so much coming that we can discuss the cultural universals in more concrete ways. The macro-level commonalties in the recent cultural scenario might give us the illusion that the cultures have a lot of ways in common. Welsch exemplifies the broader cultural commonalties, “Pertinent examples are human rights debates, feminist movements, and ecological awareness, all of which constitute powerful unifying factors across the cultural board” (Welsch 7). The rebirth of the cultural universals to give us the glimpse of the sharedness among and between cultures has attained the significant attention.

If we focus on the motives behind the formation of the human societies, the important purpose is the co-operation and the increased understanding among its members. The incision for the disintegration cannot bring that result. Thus, we can have a question on why the cultural critics need to align themselves into the ruling out of the commonalities. This vein is continued by Sissy Helff and points to “processes of cultural amalgamation as the very foundation of ‘culture’” (Helff 78). By reexamining the genesis of cultural evolution, Helff submits to us that the roots of the cultures had similar intentions and focusing on that motif can withhold the human settlement more integrated.

It would be a mistake to claim that cultures are similar to each other to all extent (Helff 78; Welsch 4). Had there been no differences, they would never have achieved their independent existences. They have both differing and corresponding elements with them. Since a lot of cultural critics tend to highlight the differences undermining the correspondences; the transcultural theorists have taken to urge “to use both eyes”, and look at the both sides of the cultures- correspondences and differences (Welsch 12). This act of looking at the cultures in rounded way presents a better picture of cultural relations, their evolutionary nature and problems.

The commonalities in between and among the cultural lives had been there in the pre-historical lives and it continues ever since. It is “at the level of Coke, McDonald’s, MTV or CNN” and also in “highbrow culture” (Welsch 7). The culture and personality notion has the basic tenet that the cultures are formed for the lives and the needs of the lives have many similarities. The need universals of human beings present themselves from the pre-historical to these days and the cultures need to serve the needs of the people following it. This fact demonstrates the cultural crossovers throughout the human history. Welsch focuses on “people’s historical genesis” and

“mixed constitution of its members” (10). The cultural constitutions thus contain the commonalities from the distant temporal axes.

2.7 Internal Cultural Contradictions

The conception that cultures are homogeneous entails an untenable stance. Homogeneity and alterity are the major missions of postcolonial perspectives because postcolonial perspectives highlight the idea of otherness. These orientations assume the dichotomic relations of the cultures. Avtar Brah and Annie E. Coombs in *Hybridity and Discontents* discuss Julia Kristeva’s idea of unconscious as “strangeness to ourselves” (5). At individual level, we know very less about ourselves; we are unfamiliar to ourselves. In contrast, we know a lot about others.

Herder’s three part characteristics of the culture highlight the inner sameness and outer delimitation of cultures. The outer delimitation suggests that the cultures are not comparable to each other. Culture and the people associated to it cannot be said to be “an unmistakable instance of precisely this culture” (Welsch 5). A culture’s adherents cannot be same at entirety, and the blanket labeling of the culture needs a careful examination for its likelihood or impossibility.

Speaking of cultures and adherents with absolute identifiable status is all but an unbelievable lie. Cultures cannot be envisaged as “closed spheres” (Welsch 6). The diversity in the adherents and temporal dynamism of a culture obstructs us from developing a definable status of a culture. Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* discusses the dangers of assuming the culture as “fundamentally, coherent and separate”. If we “posit [it] as essentially something” the understandings about the cultures are misleading (31). Culture portrayed as an essentialist entity designates a situation that remains far from reality. Since people’s personal life circumstances and the ways of culture need to be rearranged every now and then, claiming that a culture

is unmistakably same to all the individuals denotes to an open lie. The varied realizations of a culture question the authenticity of a culture. The authenticity is “inaccessible; it can be viewed only as a lost referent” and the quest for authenticity in any culture is “nostalgia for ‘pure origins” (Richtor 60). As the cultural contacts are ubiquitous, longing for the authentic origins and the definability of a culture poses the problematic consequences to the cultural critics.

2.8 Discontents of Hybridity⁴

The term ‘hybridity’ with multifaceted meaning has a powerful connotation after its employment in the post-colonial discourse by Homi K. Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* in 1994; particularly its association with the importance of the agency and subversion. Hybridity turns a discourse “to be representative and authoritative” (Bhabha 162). Bhabha’s employment of the term assumes a dominant discourse and prepares a ground for the counter-discourse. .

Whilst transculturality and hybridity enter a discussion, an attempt to their distinctions is sought after. Hybridity assumes the purity of the cultures and the distinctiveness of the cultures thereby separating them from each other. In contrast, transculturality has it that no culture is distinctive at the entirety. The transculturality discourse considers that mixing and permeation of the culture take place at the formation process of the cultures.

An additional example for the distinction between these terms eases us. Hybridity goes straight to determine the mixture of cultures as if culture A is so decisively same to all of its constitutional elements that when another culture B equally pure comes to

⁴ *Hybridity and its Discontents: Politics, Science, Culture* edited by Avtar Brah and Annie E. Coombes (2000) accounts for the diachronic dimension of hybridity in its multi-faceted usage. In addition, the text elaborates on the problems posed by the term ‘hybridity’.

the contact, culture C gets formed. This equation like $A+B=C$ is what has been taken to be true. Transculturality, there, dissolves this equation highlighting the ideal image of purity of cultures even before they come to the contact. Transculturality assumes that lack of cultural distinctiveness exists always and already.

The postcolonial thought employs the term hybridity for the generation of alterity. It does not intend to minimize the clashes between and among cultures. The sense of alterity and its practice directly leads to the clashes of cultures. Avtar Brah and Annie E. Coombes interrogate the mimicry and alterity, “Bhabha’s argument turns on the idea that because colonial culture can never faithfully reproduce itself in its own image, each replication...produces a hybridized version of the ‘original’” (11). As the colonized subject aims to be as civilized as the colonizer, the mimicry thus lived produces the hybridized culture which resembles neither the culture of the colonized nor the colonized.

Hybridity, apart from its diachronic use, and strictly in the postcolonial sense always intends the subversion and rupture of the power contained in the colonial group. The binary between the colonial and the colonized puts the power at the center and advocates for the subversion and challenge to the dominant discourse. When seen the relations this way, the vision is, invariably, about the otherness from both sides. This vision of otherness adds the suspicion and doubts between the cultures and the co-existence is disturbed. Hybridity discourse “enables rather than disables binary thinking” (Acheraiou 163). As hybridity discourse legitimates the binary and subversion, seed of enmity is infused into the interactions.

To that end, the transcultural theorists have envisaged the commonalities that underlie, permeate through and precede the cultures and call for the harmonious relations in between the cultures. Despite the racial differences and intolerance, the

effort to to understand the other, the attempt to locate the common grounds between and among cultures, can mitigate such intolerance and prejudice. So to speak, transcultural perspective intends to minimize the prejudice and intolerance only because of its emphasis on the location of cross-cultural common practices, perspectives, experiences, behaviours, norms and values. Sissy Helff critiques hybridity that “always implies and thus rejects on notions of subversion” (78). The communities that constitute the immigrants and the native people need the working of theories of amalgamation and not the subversion and counter-subversion. To add, transculturalism proves supportive to the communities that have the possibility of racial, ethnic and cultural intolerance because transculturality prepares the members to seek commonalities in between and among them. This tendency obviously brings forth the ground of convergence minimizing the grounds of disharmony.

CHAPTER THREE

Review of Literature

3.1 Introduction

This review in hand involves a “sensible recording” of the researcher’s reading around the aim that “is usually to ‘fillet’ a publication” directing to the researcher’s own agenda (Silverman 318-23). Transculturality in the literature of immigration intends to sift through extant debates, positions, arguments, and perspectives in three primary texts. The research agenda posed was examining the ways immigrants view and handle cultural differences and similarities in contact circumstances. The objectives of study included: Reflecting on characters who retain roots and adjust to cultural encounter contexts; examining their inclination to roots if they exist, and analyzing suspension of prefiguration for new beginnings in cultural lives.

The scholarship on *EOA* by V.S. Naipaul contains main debates such as the synthesis of worlds and cultures, constitution of self through spatial and temporal dimensions, response to prefiguration of experiences, multiple departures for meanings of arrivals, generic homelessness of the novel, study of the landscape and its healing properties.

The fantasy of perfection, preoccupation with truth and fiction, historical thinking for imaginative interpretation and reenactments, constant reappraisal of values, tentativeness of unsure trespasser, pain of sustaining one’s faith and escaping surrounding of upbringing.

The review of existing literature on *BWW* by Junot Diaz sorts out these major debates : Rebounding from stalemates of immigration trauma, zafa-ing against zafa, novel owning a narrator with extraordinary awareness of character’s actions and

thoughts, dizzying mix of genres, protagonist's *ni de alli, ni de alla* and scripts of hypermasculinity, leaping between languages for resembling lived global communities, wantonness between American and Dominican readership.

The boundary crossing and racial miscegenation, dangers of definitive stories, footnotes for navigating repressive power by communicating secretly, complicated characters for turning stereotypes, refusal of narrative logic, sci-fi and its appropriateness for Diaz's purpose.

The literature on *WT* constitutes central positions like child-rearing practices in immigration circumstances, cultural roots retention efforts, inventive host culture appropriation, perfection paradox in long-time immigrants, challenging original, valuing cultural other.

The adjunct/foil in cultural context, new cultural features through cultural interactions, culinary place with the least restrictions, marital restrictions, contradictory cultures and individuals, cultural syncretism, absolutist principles.

This chapter discusses the review of *EOA* that ensues the scholarship on *BWW*. The penultimate section of this review is the discussion of dominant debates on *White Teeth*. The final section constitutes the conclusion of the review and the research gap.

3.2 Reading the Palimpsest: The Arrivals and Departures

The narrator of *EOA* could comprehend the problems of his landlord although from distance. Simon Cooke adds about the understanding, "The landlord's malaise, the narrator names 'accidia'. 'Accidia –the disease' from traveller's landlord, and the dilapidated manor, suffers (124). The landlord seems to have suffered the disease of the travel, the problem of the connectivity i.e. the trouble from the diverse lands in

terms of knowledge and the ideals of the lands. The relationship between the landlord and the narrator seems to have drawn the attention of many critics including Cooke.

The narrator discerns that his landlord has peculiar affiliation to the Oriental philosophy and literature. Zhu Ying specifies this intimacy, “Though the narrator never meets his landlord in person, his impression of the landlord is formed through the knowledge of the landlord’s illness and his fondness of ivy, and especially through his poems of Indian divinities” (28). This peculiar intimacy between the narrator and the landlord takes myriad interpretations. However, the narrator knows that his landlord loves nature and the Indian values. This brings the narrator, who has connection to the Indian roots himself, closer to the landlord. The topic that is common to each other can foster the intimacy.

The relation between the English landlord and the travelling tenant allures the readers. The narrator, the tenant is very much dubious of the landlord; he knows the peculiar nature i.e. the withdrawn nature of the landlord. Yet visiting the manor grounds are permitted to the narrator. Fawzia Mustafa remarks this suspicious closeness, “When the narrator is assured that he is free to roam the manor grounds, for instance, his initial forays are conducted with the tentativeness of an unsure trespasser” (172). The nature of the landlord could not adequately assure him to freely savor the beauty of the manor grounds. He went around the grounds, but with a lot of attentiveness because the landlord’s persona did not convince the liberty to him in the requisite way. Mustafa, Ying and Cooke focus their attention on the nature of the relationship between the landlord and the narrator. This study, thus, invites the consideration of the cultural relation between the host and the guest. By implication, this relation is the study of the host and the immigrant.

Along with the interpersonal and the cultural dimension, the novel holds the consideration of temporal and spatial origins. The myths, the journeys, and the travel stories presented do not hint any definite conclusions. Susan Spearey talks about the novel that it “deals with journeys which resist closure, and with mythic worlds in which temporal and spatial boundaries refuse to be fixed. In the novel, however, the many journeys which Naipaul chronicles, and the various mythic worlds that he evokes, are freed of their associations with notions of origin”(161). In fact, the journeys narrated do not show concerns to the origins. They are the free associations.

The emphasis on any points of origins is ignored as no origin has been considered the dominant reference for the experiences. Susan Spearey elucidates the insignificance of the origin, “Naipaul turns his attention away from the pursuit of origins-genealogical, mythical, and cultural-to establishing and identifying various beginnings, as he uncovers layers of history and explores relations of contingency and linear connections” (161). Multiple “beginnings” and “linear connections” are enclosed. This hints to the resistance to the closures. The opening of constant avenues in the layers of the experiences for the transcultural setting uncovers the need and significance of various beginnings.

The recurrent revaluation of all values through the various stages of experience has been regularly conducted. The writer as a person and a narrator brings the need to question the cultural status quo for the readjustment in the given spatio-temporal axes. Mark McWatt asserts that the novel:

Seems specifically to be defining the relationship between person and writer-a metafictional concern wherein the transcultural imagination is employed very One sees the formerly despised. Trinidadian world assuming new stature and worth as the old memorial state in Wiltshire,

built on the spoils of Empire, is seen by the narrator to diminish and decay before his eyes. As the novel proceeds, it establishes for the reader a revolutionary logic that invites constant reappraisal of the values ascribed (inscribed) in character, situation.... (281)

The need to be constantly reevaluate one's engagements in the varied temporal – spatial references accommodates the fluidity of the experiences. The free play of the experiences that lead to the ever-expanded cultural visions give rise to a new structure.

The fact-fiction status of the novel is elucidated by the inclusion of sister's death. This incidence in the novel turns out to be his brother's death in reality. Christina Emanuela Dascalu states that the death of narrator's sister "perhaps reflecting events in Naipaul's own life, the novel is dedicated to the memory of Naipaul's brother Shiva, who died a couple of years before [the novel] was published..." (114). When there is a lot of discussion of the fact-fiction stature of the novel, many instances like this can be fixed as fact although in the disguised form. The text is rumination on culture across the places; also, it is about the concept of writing. The discussion of death in the novel must have prompted Naipaul to put an end to the novel. "The feeling of the closeness of death that it awakens in the author urges him into making an even more concerted effort to finish the book" (Dascalu 114). It is the death that prompts human beings of the closure. The resistance to the closure is resisted when we face death. Naipaul must have felt so.

An immigrant does not travel empty-headed. The baggage of cultural legacies is there with him/her. Naipaul's narrator crafts a context in Trinidad where the liberal views of the culture are practised. For David Parkin:

his sister's funeral in Trinidad, where people of Indian Hindu extraction constitute a large minority (40 per cent) coexisting with others of European, African, and Chinese descent and with adherents of other religions, including Christianity... We are given the impression that the priest himself interprets his scriptures very liberally and hesitantly. (13-14)

The priest who is considered to have agency in the time of rituals' practice is found open-minded. This indicates the necessity of going beyond the origins, or rather celebrating the multiple beginnings.

The reference of the sister's funeral in Naipaul is suggestive to one's faith upon faith. When the geographical roots are detached, can the cultural roots be maintained as originally as in the origins? Amitava Kumar states this difficulty about the narrator's sister's funeral:

about the way in which rituals especially among immigrant communities , travel across time and place, Naipaul' s meditation is profound because it captures so well the pain of sustaining faith in a past that might have become attenuated in a diasporic space away from the place of origin. (xxiii)

There is substantial amount of pain in the effort of sustaining the faith. The difficulty indicates that maintaining the faith to all the extent is not the necessity. The architectural historical references discussed in the novel demonstrate the comparison between the narrator's personal history and the history of the buildings. Gillian Dooley points at these details and the significance of "reference to dates and inscriptions on buildings and the rhetoric of architecture itself" (104). This comparison reflects the histories of the place, of other people and of the narraotr that

in turn establishes the patterns of perspectives which need to be read from various positions.

EOA constitutes the vigorous attempts of Naipaul for including his extent of cultural knowledge across the stages of life. The novel “assumes knowledge of his life and work that few writers could assume Naipaul attempts what he calls ‘a synthesis of the worlds and cultures that made me’ ” (Peter Hughes 18). The synthesis constitutes the self of the narrator. His personality ingredients cannot be fixed with definite indicators. The outward markers of the personality are the tips of the iceberg. Below the surface are various cultural ingredients from various places. The novel chronicles those ingredients, especially the cultural ingredients.

Identifying the exact role of the narrator in the novel is the daunting task. Eleonora Natalia Ravizza joins in the creative endeavor of Naipaul, “Metalepsis plays a fundamental role in *EOA* insofar as the narrator, through his acts of interpretation, transgresses not only different narrative levels, but also his role as reader, author, narrator, and character” (93). The narrator assuming so many roles makes a point that perspectival differences in viewing the experience are the indispensable steps.

The recurrences of the events in the text must have the significant implication. Dagmar Barnow claims that the iterativeness in the events has the deliberate significance, “the function” of “intricate literary patterning of recurrences “in the novel “is to make more transparent the temporal layers of experience, the responses to changes in time and places” (130). The significance of repetitions, thus, can be established that the writer wants to make his experiences more categorical, more visible and more palpable.

The narrator in London feels various paradigms of expectations. Sara Upstone sees that the narrator “has a cultural image of London as the province of Waugh,

Maugham and Dickens to which he feels he belongs...” (68). His proximity with London is the result of his acquaintance with the writers from England.

Spatial and temporal concerns are the dormant issues. Eleonora Natalia Ravizza argues, “integration and a constitution of the self and of the spatial and temporal construction of the ‘I’- narrative, and interpretation is the way in which this is attained’ (87). The narrator is truly occupied to interpret his self and others. By so doing, the narrator has seen various arrays of experiences.

3.3 Comforts and Complications of Migration

Naipaul intends to question his upbringing, experiences and broaden his horizon of understanding. As Paul Vlitos, “Indo-Trinidadian novelist” who has the “urge to escape the surroundings of his upbringing and to become a writer in London” (245). His beginnings at India and Trinidad get adjourned for turning himself the writer in London.

The mystery of arrival at London can not be unfolded because of the various arrivals at the various moments. Asako Nakai determines the stature of the novel as the novel “never goes beyond” the “moments of arrival, entrapped within the enigma of beginnings” it “continually looks for an interpretation of the enigma, and the search is an infinite regression, ending in perpetual self-interrogation” (156). The narrator’s search for some understandable interpretations of his arrival at Trinidad, African spheres and even at London is not rewarded with some tangible achievements. Rather, the enigma remains enigma amidst the enigmas of nature, culture, writing, journeys and the relationships with the people. These considerations in regards to the concept of beginning are the important points of the attention to the critics. These efforts to redraw the boundaries in the experiences of an immigrant form the significant areas of

the study in the novel. To add, the idea of the new beginning is the concern for the critics while examining this novel.

The narrator as a man and writer is intending to make a meaning of the texts of his experiences. Daniel Balderston et.al claim that the narrator “finds he can not make his own cultural connection between life and writing until he finally confronts his Indian roots in Trinidad” (521). At the ultimate section of the novel, when the narrator’s sister is dead at Trinidad, he comes to a certain kind of understanding that the rituals begun from Hindu background have undergone required pattern breaks while travelling across the locations and the times.

While in Wiltshire, the narrator’s reading of this location does not profit a single interpretation. The cyclic nature of reading this location creates further mysteries. Robert Fraser demonstrates the multiplicity of the interpretation:

the moving portrait of rural England...set near Salisbury...the protagonist ...learns to interpret the country through its minutest signs...inflections of voice and attitude , inhibitions, secrets. He reads Wiltshire like a palimpsest, layer upon layer. (28)

His layered readings of Wiltshire include the multiple mysteries. This is where the enigma of arrival lies. Eschewing the singular interpretation and understanding of Wiltshire, the narrator learns to interpret the location with the support of various details ranging from the hidden signs to the subtle ways of the people in that area.

We wonder if any reading of a location, place or space is the study of the culture. T.S. Eliot justifies this reading, “culture will have to grow again from the soil” (xx-xxi). Since culture grows out of soil, the actual study of the culture could be the study of soil, the location with people in it.

The novel constitutes the study of a man in locations with multiple heritages. Berna Koseglou shows, “The cultural contradictions of the isolated and alienated Trinidadian man with Indian heritage like V.S.Naipaul” become the concerns of the novel (91). As the narrator of the novel contains the contradictions of the cultural baggages, his isolation can be effortlessly spotted.

The narrator had some already made expectations about London while he was in Trinidad. Simon Cooke deliberates on the expectation of the narrator, “a response to the prefigurations of experience by a generic horizon of expectations, and an opening to wonder” (110). After physically arriving at London, the narrator’s expectations are met and examined both. The wonder that London generated has been attested and invoked for new figurations.

The meeting of narrator’s imagination and the discrepancy he comes across become extortions to the narrator. Philip Dickinson sees that the narrator “presents an additional threat to the landscape’s stability in the specificity of his embodiment: the feeling of ‘strangeness’ he describes in recounting his first walk is also the strangeness ...” (83). Although the narrator was somewhat accustomed to the landscape of London through the textbooks studied in Trinidad, the familiarity turned otherwise when reaching that place.

Coming to England was all but unfamiliar aspect to the narrator, “a man from another hemisphere, another background, coming to rest in middle life in the cottage of a half neglected estate, an estate full of reminders of its Edwardian past...” (Naipaul13). Coming to new land for the settlement would not always be a happy idea as it entails some unexpected challenges in the way ahead.

In England, the narrator sought what was familiar and what was unfamiliar. Geetha Ganapathy – Dore reminds this mixed perception, “the shape and

the structure of the snow that spreads before his eyes in Wiltshire which reminds him of a Trinidad beach, the familiar ground of his origin “ (67). Discerning the familiar and unfamiliar has been an important act of the narrator because the prefigurations, the new configurations and refigurations have constructed a larger contour in the course of living. In fact, the arrival to England and the return to Trinidad is the prime discussion of the novel. For Paul Vlitos:

With great care and attention, the narrator details the effects on his sensibility of his arrival in England, his move to the Wiltshire countryside and interactions with the people of the decaying country house state on which he lives , and a final return to Trinidad for the funeral of his sister. (245)

The effects of the arrival, the humiliations of arrival, the achievements of the arrival and the enigmas of the arrival along with the enigmas of the return to the lands of beginnings are well articulated in the text in order to display the necessary.

Naipaul’s imagination of London was contradicted upon his real arrival. As John McLeod, “Naipaul’s expectations of London were partly derived from the cinema, partly from reading English writers such as Dicken...” “But on arriving in London, he found that the city of his imagination was unavailable” (62). The city of London he read in the school texts were glamorous. He did not find those places there with the degree of beauty as portrayed in the literary texts. This disillusionment of narrator remains one of the central enigmas of study.

The textbooks of Caribbean islands school included the cultural aspects of England than the culture of Caribbean island itself. Daniel Miller shows that the novel:

conveys the feeling of migrants from the Caribbean that they were not just coming to Britain but coming home to the place whose history, geography and culture they had learnt about at school much more than those of the island they lived in. (179)

In this sense, coming to England was more to that of coming to home whose prefigurations had been conducted. The life of Jack and the life of narrator have a lot of parallels. Seeing the lives of others gives the narrator, sometimes, the better way to go through his own life. For Walter Goebel:

The observation of Jack's life, which forms a cycle and seems to offer a model of closure, possibly providing a pattern for the narrator's own life. Then follow a number of flashbacks to former times in Trinidad, to the first and subsequent journeys to England. In Jack, Pitton, the Phillippses, the narrator seems to be collecting alternative patterns for an ordered meaningful or more simple life, while he himself travels to and fro, unable to escape the episodic (103).

The inability to go away from the cyclic feature of narration is symptomatic to the travel patterns a person takes. When one ponders on the enigmas of arrival, how do we arrive at a certain place? What does arrival include? Sara Suleri observes, "the central enigma concerns how many points of departure the narrative has to cover in order to frame its idea of arrival" (171). The frequencies of departures determine the meanings to the arrivals. The arrivals refer back to the journeys of departures. This episodic feature of arrival displays the countless features of the departure.

The novel is about the past of the narrator that is carried further with his imagination. As Zhu Ying, "the historical thinking" "imaginative interpretations" and "re-enactment and hence transformation of past experience" (83) are presented in

Naipaul's creations. However, the past is changed with the imagination that is informed by the reality. The imagination triggered by the real connection with England further paints the picture of narrator's England.

3.4 Myth of Wholeness

The saintly treatment to the places that the narrator visits has been the constant focus of the novel. Apparently, he forms various views of the same places. Even so, he does not like to make a grading out of them. He acknowledges the differences and lives in those locations; the narrator portrayed is:

not as an enigmatic English squire who has finally arrived, but as the sadhu that he might have become. Peace to the traveller, and calm to the mind growing near to that radiance, to the vision that sees all earth as sacred, including his birthplace, and all people as valuable, including Trinidadians. (Stavans 128)

This ability of symphonic treatment glows through the novel. Although a greater degree of concerted effort requires the statements in regards to autobiographical elements of the novel, there are some instances that are apparent to such determination. Joanna Johnson clarifies:

The Journey' refers to the narrator leaving Trinidad at the age of seventeen to take up a scholarship at Oxford University in England, with the hope of becoming a writer, taking him from Trinidad, via New York, to London and then Oxford where he reads English, going on thereafter to write several novels. (64)

A separate section entitled 'Journey' in the novel is about the writer's journey across the places. Basically, his journey to becoming a writer takes a great deal of space of the novel.

There are numerous critics to draw upon the taxonomies of immigration experiences. Naipaul's explanation of Indian culture especially the death ritual with the focus on the food dimensions builds on the notion that no matter how many places the people from India go, they remain partially true to India. Namrata Rathore Mahanta cites Bhikhu Parekh who compares Indian diaspora to a banyan tree that spreads the roots in several soils drawing ...from one when the rest dry... (Mahanta 13). Namrata Rathore Mahanta's metaphor of banyan tree that depends on the cardinal root represents the beginning of all subsequent beginnings.

This focus on the central root system in the novel makes Naipaul understand what departures and arrivals truly mean. Jeffrey J. Folks states, "Naipaul comes to understand the world of 'escapism, self-delusion, and sham in which his contemporaries seem to revel'" (119). Deciphering the individual difficulties of departures, Naipaul seems to be bringing forth the various particulars of the journeys of life. These journeys necessitate the efforts to render the meanings in them.

The narrator's interpretations and explanations of his relationship with other characters are provided with detached views. Gillian Dooley claims, "In describing his relations with other characters in the novel, the narrator is detached, an observer rather than an actor, even when he is personally involved" (106). This detached view as the observer of one's own involvement is more like the spiritual practice in which one chances to see what one has been doing. This frame of being the observer of one's own involvement rings the Indian meditative traditions.

Distancing from one's own involvement to see the absence of presence can be a useful task in reading the experiences. Michael Mitchell finds that the novel contains, "a meditation on De Chirico's painting of an enigmatic borderline between arrival and departure, presence and absence..." (234). The title from De Chirico's

painting highlights the mysteries of arrivals, the journeys in one's life. Building on the philosophical view of the life as arrival and departure-the death, the enigmas of arrivals have been enumerated to see what they consist of and the connections to the overall meanings of life.

Drawing on the structure of the novel, one can come to the idea that the piecemeal of the experience with so much disconnected notions has a lot that offers the material to interpret that the journeys that the narrator undertakes form the multifarious. Maria Grazia Sindoni sees that "episodic structure" "through the random juxtaposition of incidents and sketches " displays " the question of agency" as "problematical" (175). The random "juxtapositions" constitute the important enigma of the encounters in the course of the journey. The systems for living constructed in one location are questioned in the next locations. Thus, forming a fused picture never appears to be an accessible activity.

Repetitions, the repetitions of the events in the novel remind the confusions and delusions that the narrator has felt. Gillian Dooley finds, "a Naipaul style" " frequent repetition" " a particular emphasis on repetition" (103). The multiple arrivals and departures are the repetitive patterns that call for reflections.

Establishing the generic status of the novel is another complicated task. Does this complication have any significance? Simon Cooke respond to this complication, "The generic 'homelessness' is related to the experience and theme of travel" (3). The boring repetitions with the patchwork uphold the value that certainty is uncertain and trying to connect things takes one's energy, on occasions, to the wastage.

Attempting to uncover the cultural meanings even in the nature underlies another significant facet of the novel. The comforting nature is highlighted. For Joanna Johnson, "The narrator has a belief about the landscape of its healing

properties...” (70). To that end, the references of the garden, the framing aspects and even the discussions of the rooks must have been included.

The contextual treatment of life has received the renewed emphasis. Jesse Matz states this emphasis, “Naipaul’s fantasy of perfection to having a contingent life of his won in the Wiltshire” (166). What is fictional and what is truthful has become invariable concern of the writers. Building on the same trend, Naipaul asks us to reflect on this binary. His inclusion of sister’s death in the novel is the representation of his brother Shiva Naipaul’s death. As Judith Levy, “The framing of the book by two real deaths, that of the sister, set in a fictional mode, and that of the brother representing fact, poignantly reflects the ironies of the book’s preoccupation with truth and fiction (116). How are we to understand this irony? One possible framing of understanding that escapes easy efforts is that the truthfulness includes the fiction and fictionality takes support from the truthfulness.

Revaluation of all values that the narrator had about England; the generic status of the novel and narrator’s relationship with the characters in the novel indicate that the narrator has to reconsider his values using the contingent creativity in the land of immigration.

3.5 Cultural Residues at the Contact Zone: Caroming in a Free Fall

Junot Diaz’s novel *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* enclosing the immigration issues constitutes characters who have migrated from Dominican Republic to the U.S. They share a destiny called *fuku* and suffer from this. “Every Dominican family has stories about crazy loves...and Oscar’s family was no different” (Diaz 45). Their stories are different from the stories of the people in America. Yuniors, one of the narrators, in the novel discloses view about *fuku* in the following way:

They say it came first from Africa, carried in the screams of the enslaved; that it was the death bane of the Tainos, uttered just as one world perished and another began; that it was a demon drawn into Creation through the nightmare door that was cracked open in the Antilles. *Fukú americanus*, or more colloquially, fukú – generally a curse or a doom of some kind; specifically the Curse and the Doom of the New World. (1)

Their belief is that whenever they leave their land, they will suffer this predicament called fuku. This shows that leaving the place of birth automatically offers trouble. Fuku, a curse of the new world, becomes inevitable if one visits or wishes to stay in the new world. Caren Irr views that Diaz's novel constitutes, "long and multidimensional detour" which "rebounds from the stalemates of immigrant trauma tales" with the help of the added "geographic and generic vision" (30). The fuku has gripped the life of the characters in the novel. Nonetheless, the novel does not read like a boring tale. Complexities of the land where one has migrated are obviously there. Focusing on the incompetence of protagonist's integration into the new land, Fernando Valerio Holguin asserts:

I will argue that while Yunior assimilates into mainstream American culture, Oscar Wao, the protagonist, fails to integrate into multicultural American space and, as a consequence, becomes the victim of two societies: the Dominican and the American one. (114)

Tradition has it that migration, especially immigration, invites numerous cultural challenges. Seen that way, Junot Diaz's *BWW* entails the cases of difficulty in the hostland. Richard Perez delienates, "Indeed the fuku, or curse, as Diaz puts, designates the foundational characteristic of the Americas and in its violent origins,

gives birth to an anti-Edenic universe and sensibility” (91). The “anti-Edenic sensibility” in the land of migration troubles the immigrants. Particularly, in the Oscar’s story, Oscar has not been able to adjust in the hostland. His masculinity has not been proven. His effort to be a man, success with ladies, has been challenged in the U.S. owing to his heavy physique. Fuku, the problem of the new land becomes one of the central attentions of the critics in this novel.

The characters in the novel wish to do away with the fuku, they passionately want zafa. However, the brief life of Oscar could not attain zafa. Actually, there is no such point of success, solution called zafa. Jennifer Harford Vargas states that the novel “ is not just a zafa. It is a zafa-ing” (59). Instead of providing any quick fix or sure-fire mode of zafa, the solution to fuku, the novel avoids the closure. This resistance to closure can be understood as another point of worldiness of the novel. Further, it suggests the continuous search; the novel does not dictate the solution to the dictatorial powers.

The family of Oscar suffers in the U.S.. The other side of the suffering tale is that Oscar’s family migrated to the U.S. from Santo Domingo because the family was tortured by Trujillo, the dictator there. Junot Diaz reveals, “ One of the longest, most damaging U.S. backed dictatorships” (Diaz 3). The noteworthy point here is that in the Dominican Republic, Oscar’s family suffered, the dictator backed by the U.S. and in the U.S. the fuku caused their suffering.

The father of Hypatia Belicia Cabrel (Oscar’s mother) was imprisoned and killed by Trujillo. Kezia Page highlights , “ As with many other Dominican families, the Cabral/de Leon clan suffered under Trujillo’s fist. Oscar’s mother, Hypatia Belicia Cabrel is orphaned by him...”(229). She was orphaned, her two sisters from the

family were displaced, she never knew their whereabouts. Additionally, Belicia had been handed to someone who would trap her in the chicken coop.

The novel is at the first readings, about the dictatorship and its ramifications. It's not only that. Its layers of representation go over and beyond. As Geoff Hamilton and Brian Jones fix the novel as “an intricate, multilayered and compelling tale of a Dominican- American family and its origins in Santo Domingo” (42). Apart from the direct description of Trujillo regime, the text unearths the cultural terrain of Dominican Republic and the contrasts the family faces when migrating and living in the U.S..

Yunior's narration of dictatorship does not suggest any solutions to the problem. Jennifer Harford Vargas claims, “Yunior's zafa fantasy of narrative justice does not offer a permanent resolution to the problem of dictatorial power or to the curse of coloniality. It is a fantasy” (59). Oscar drowns himself into the world of fantasy and sci-fi because his nerdism is taken as awkwardness. They are welcome shelter for him. The novel contains fantasy holding little real world implications.

The predominant narrator, Yunior is also a person from Dominican Republic. His narration is very intimate portrayal because of his closer connections to the protagonist and his family. David Mura confirms, “This novel is told by Yunior, a Dominican American, about his friend Oscar and Oscar's family. At the novel's start, Yunior's college roommate, which is also Oscar's family's story, is a fuku- a curse-story” (145). The fuku and zafa aspect of Oscar's family have been narrated along with the generational difficulties that Oscar's family has faced.

Yunior is endowed with comprehensive knowledge reservoir of Dominican Republic. Geoff Hamilton and Brian Jones claim, “Yunior is memorable and particularly omniscient narrator, possessed not merely of a wealth of knowledge of

Dominican history and lore, but of intimate awareness both of the actions and the thoughts of the other characters” (42). Yuniors narration appeals the readers with his comprehensive contents and awareness.

As the characters live the experience of the mixed geography, the genre of the novel has the mixed mode. John Alba Cutler maintains, “ Practically every aspect of *Oscar Wao* even its dizzying mix of literary genres, meditates on what it means to live in the borderlands between cultures” (170). The history, politics, culture, scifi elements turn the text into a novel containing a wide range of genres that defy a singular closet.

Oscar, the protagonist, suffers due to genotype, phenotype, his fatherless childhood and his short of capacity for adjusting himself in the U.S.. Brygida Gasztold relates, “Oscar seeks endorsement among his peers to dispel his own doubts, which result from his fatherless childhood...” (217). His approval seeking tendency, as mentioned, must be the effect of the lack of confidence that his father would have advanced while in his childhood. Regrettably, he did not have that opportunity.

Transculturality in which cultural novelty arises, is not a stuff for Oscar. Oscar has no experience, the direct experience of the culture from Dominican Republic. Nor can he imagine how he would appropriate the U.S. culture. This leads him to the further degradation. The expectations by the Dominican Republic and the U.S. culture squeeze him He is shown to have been inept to make his way. Cathy Covell Waegner contends, “ Oscar can not take productive steps towards self-transformation to affiliate himself with socially acceptable strategies of interaction from either of his cultures, much less transculturally from both of them” (122). When a person with certain cultural legacy enters a land with the different culture, a lot of creative

endeavors are expected. The imagination must be given a free play. Oscar fails to perform to that end.

Oscar's body is shown as a heavy affair. Oscar lives a life that contains a brief beauty for various reasons. Political, cultural reasons to his test of masculinity come at the forth. Marissa K. Lopez claims:

The titular Oscar is *ni de alli ni de alla*, from neither here nor there, stepped in US popular culture but living always in the shadow of his skin and the story of his mother's country. Oscar's identity is a distraction from the real matter of *latinidad*, which asserts itself less as a matter of content than of form. (6)

His identity issue takes a deplorable form because, in reality, his life has negligible amount of pleasure. As the title of the novel goes – *BWW*. In fact, the life has very little aspect of beauty, light. It has low-spirited glasses.

The turn taking for narration by Lola, Oscar's sister, is another special feature of of the novel. The cancer cases of Lola's mother and disappearance of Lola are narrated by Lola, Oscar's sister. Geoff Hamilton and Brian Jones describe:

The novel's second section is narrated by Oscar's sister, Lola, a smart, rebellious punk aspirant, who tells the starkly contrasting tales of her mother's nascent cancer and her own sudden disappearance... The third part of the first book tells the story of the mother Beli's tempestuous youth in Santo Domingo during the brutal rule of the dictator Rafael Trujillo. (42)

Lola interprets her mother as strict as the Trujillo regime. This evidences that Lola's mother had not been able to forgive the traits of Trujillo regime, rather she was imposing the residues of the regime in her life. Life of Oscar had brief beauty; the

death did not contain even that degree of beauty. He had been killed because he had supplied all his energy to live upto the expectations of Dominican Republic masculinity image. Maja Horn problematizes, “Oscar’s death was neither wondrous, nor mysterious- no fuku here but rather he is killed as a result of his over-stepping the scripts of hegemonic masculinity in the Dominican Republic” (128) The death of Oscar too could be interpreted in the arrays of levels. But one very logical interpretation is that he died of the hegemonic expectation in terms of masculinity.

As the novel has implicated the end of dictatorship, why Oscar’s mother has reenacted the roles and models of dictatorship in her own home is mysterious. Jill Tolliver Richardson observes:

Belicia’s cruel treatment of her young daughter mirrors her own repression of the violence she endured in the Dominican Republic as a child servant and later in the cane field.” Belicia “ as the enforcer of rules”, she “ demonstrates that she has finally succumbed to the dictatorial and patriarchal oppression of the Trujillo’s regime. (37)

Belicia, who had been the victim of tyranny, experiences and lived a life rescripting herself. She should have invented the scripts of her choice, the choices conducive to her children. She has not done so. Perhaps, this is what happens in the enactment of culture. Some aspects of culture that are not life-friendly must have been discontinued carrying other aspects further. This has not been done by Belicia.

Immigration context, unlike mere migrations, entails the linguistically diversified circumstances. The novel features these contexts. Rick Ayers and William Ayers see that the novel “ leaps between Ebonics, Spanglish, Dominican slang, Standard English.... It revels in the real, the complex, the warm embrace of language as it is lived in our global communities” (121). The communities that have the global

immigration booms take these stances. The languages spoken in the communities vary. This novel has so many language features. This is symptomatic to the real world winds.

Pondering on the code-switching, so much use of Spanish language must have the distinctive purpose. For Frederick Luis Aldama discusses, “Diaz’s use of code-switching is an identity marker, but it also adds to the stylistic beauty and imagistic rhythm of the text.” (34) Diaz would not have used the varieties of languages in the novel merely for the representation reasons. The differences of languages have added the beauty, especially the beauty of the real world. Although so much of fantasy close to the real world communities in the novel grabs the attention of the critics.

The content in the text invites the readers to think of the target audience of the novel. The subcultures and the countercultures in the novel defy the general readership. Andrew Dix et al. show, “*Oscar Wao* positions itself among genres that mobilize subcultural, rather than mass, readerships (86). Why should Diaz have voiced so particular? Why should Diaz have brought the allusions, references understood by so limited audience? The answer could be that he was very occupied to share what he had in mind, and not to share what the general audience preferred.

Accepting that Diaz’s Spanish cum English references must have been targetted to Dominican and American audience, how would one draw a fine line between these two varieties of audience? Kris Anderson deepens, “but Diaz plays even more wantonly with reader’s stereotypes of genre particularly with the difference between writing for Americans and for Dominicans (199)”. Diaz’s mixture of these disorientations further strengthens the immigration novel status of the novel.

The references to Shakespeare’s *Tempest* and Belicia among the canes are special points of references. Jill Tolliver Richardson observes, “Walcott’s poem

invokes Caliban's possibly mixed race character in William Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*. Diaz's use of the term, Chabine, while Belicia is among the cane implicates the fields as the site of fluid boundary crossing and racial miscegenation (32)". The inclusion of these references add up to the boundary crossing of novels of immigration. Since immigration novels can not confine themselves to definite spheres, the fuzzing boundaries are the real representations.

The sexual images and references in the novel form the subcultural power in the novel. The popculture is what has been focused. .Paul Jay finds the text as , " a kind of riff on" "contemporary cultural fascination with the sexualized figure of" "the gangsta" " in hip-hop music ".The modern cultural attraction to popculture is the concern of Diaz.

Oscar's tenacity, determination, yet to be dug why he was killed, get the focus. The masculine role as expected by Dominican culture is tenaciously tried by Oscar. Lyn Di Iorio Sandin thinks that Oscar is " a sensitive person drawn to machista values" (123) Oscar's attraction to the machista values have been enacted with the full force. This primacy of Dominican culture in the U.S. land must have been the instrumental force to kill him. Oscar defies easy classification of his personality make up. However, his body becomes a matter of mention. Yoou Sun Lee observes:

Oscar's obesity, his sheer material bulk, is emphasized to the every end, when three laborers are required to move his body from the sugarcane field where he is killed. The novel's pathos derives largely from Oscar's unsuccessful attempts not only to escape the world but to negate the world.... (148)

His nerdiness as the attempt to negate the world and escape the world forms a base of the interpretation that he is an unable hero. His death as salvation is another node of

discussion. The sojourn to Santo Domingo, before his death, brings to his way. As Caren Irr, mangoose is deemed to be the mobile traveller (16). The visions of mongoose in the culture of Dominican Republic are taken as the good omens. Oscar sees them means his aim of the life has been achieved.

Oscar's longing of Ybon is mysterious. Even after he knows Ybon is marrying the captain who beat him, he longs for her. Geoff Hamilton and Brian Jones argue, "Even when Ybon informs him that she is marrying the captain, the very man who had beaten Oscar, and even after Oscar's lonely return to Paterson, he still longs for her." (43) This implicates that the strongest proof of masculinity, the breach of virginity, the need to be loved by lady, is dearer than the life.

Oscar's love of romance sees various twists. Regarding the romance, Andrew Hoberek asserts, "After a high school romance ends unhappily" "Oscar loses interest in the study of 'Watchmen', the graphic novel" (172). The force of the culture, many a times, shapes the desires, passions of a human being. The masculinity aspect had driven the desires, the reading desires of Oscar.

Despite the difficult discussions of the generic status and content coverage, the novel has been taken as the realistic rendition. Caren Irr evaluates, the novel is "celebrated" for "worldiness" (175). Its status can be appreciated as the realistic one for its incorporation of the U.S. and the Dominican culture, the varieties of languages as that of real societies, among others.

Oscar's easy refuge to the science fiction can be interpreted variously. Robert Eaglestone mentions:

One of the reasons the protagonist is so obsessed with fantasy, comics, and science fiction is precisely because these give a frame to both understanding the evils of dictatorship, Trujillo was 'our Sauron', our

Arawn, our Darkseid, our Once and Future Dictator) and a counter to the sense of superflousness that creates: the all-powerful Dark Lord is always overthrown by a small bond of unlikely heroes. (Diaz 66)

Oscar's shelter in the science fiction is either the escape, or the instrument of exposure, especially that of the evils. Intensification of the degree of dictatorship by Diaz is paramount, " If you think the average Dominican guy's bad, Trujillo was five thousand times worse" (Diaz 217). And, the novel contains the particularities to substantiate the dictatorial aspects of Trujillo. Even when the family of Oscar has left Dominican Republic, his shadow has not left the family. The curses have affected the family beyond the geographical limits.

3.6 Dangers of Definitiveness, Footnotes and Science Fiction

Diaz does not want to present anything definitive. He declares that he lacks a full story. About the narrator of the novel, Sonia Weiner views this lack, "Yunior is cognizant not only of the danger of writing a definitive story, but also of the impossibility of doing so" (117). Diaz's proclamation of uncertain stance can be taken as his lack of certain historical realities because of the Trujillo regime, or it could even be his design for showing the disturbed aspect of life in times of migration, "What's so certain is that nothing is certain. We are trawling in silence... Which is to say if you're looking for a full story, I don't have it" (Diaz 243). His sureness about unsureness is symptomatic of the immigration narratives.

The spatiality of the contents in the footnotes has some specific purposes. Bernardo Bueno highlights the purpose of the footnotes, " We can look at footnotes as a primitive form of hyperlink- a way to connect important information through intertextuality" (93). The relaying of the message to the audience in a secret manner is done in the footnotes. The fictional text is bridged by the true historical realities in

the footnotes. This is considered an effective way of presenting the discourses concerning the dictators.

Further, the footnotes present the disturbances in the lives of the people of the Dominican Republic. Jennifer Harford Vargas connects:

the footnotes structurally mimic the ways subaltern agents navigate repressive power by communicating information indirectly, secretly and below the radar of the repressive regime's gaze. The spatiality of the notational apparatus in *BWW* reproduces the asides and interruptions... This decenters the main narrative, which does not follow a single, direct line but follows multiple ones instead. (54)

The disturbances in the regime and the disturbances in the narratives are tactfully designed to show the framings of the power. Concerning the footnotes, they are also considered the guides for the readers. Alex Watson states that the footnotes “provide an acerbic and irreverent guide to the aspects of recent Dominican history” (143).

The footnotes are essential yet serve as the disrespectful guides to the readers.

Disrespectful, they are, to the characters of history.

Even the unfixed genre of the novel attempts to show the fluid living standard of the immigrants in DR. Bernardo Bueno observes, “*Oscar Wao* challenges the concept of genres as fixed, unchallenged, definitive structures. This uncertainty, ... points of view, and styles serves as a portrait of the Dominican, the immigrant...” (105) The immigrants, to be particular, the Dominicans were expected to be vigilant in times of oppression. Stability and certainty were rejected. The safety, security, definitiveness were beyond reach.

The historical politics coupled with the individual migration realities are presented in the novel. Celia Jaes Falicov delineates the “narratives of individual

migration” along with the “historical contexts” of “politics” (54) form the reasons for the migration. Apart from the group migration, the individual migrations have the distinct purposes. The group migrates for political reasons and economic reasons while the individuals migrate for the reasons ranging from the academic, political to the economic reasons. The migration motivations can vary, however, the challenges and the convergences of the immigration contexts remain somewhat similar.

Dominican singularity, the oppressive regime was a problem. The form of the novel can be the retort to the singularity imposed upon the people of Dominican Republic. Diaz blows against the stereotypes. Allison Amend adds, “Diaz turns stereotypes, involving not only cultural groups but also intelligent social outcasts, on their head to create complicated characters.” (109) For instance, Oscar is a social outcast, a nerd who finds refuge in the books. He is expected to be respected. The nerd derives our sympathy through his tenacity.

Rejecting the traditional narrative logic, Diaz’s text propels the free structure. As said elsewhere, this structure is fit for the Dominican repression and the immigrant uncertainty. Diane Krumrey highlights this structure:

perhaps the most striking instance of an immigrant novel that refuses the narrative logic or closure is Junot Diaz’s *BWW*. Stylistically, as well as in terms of the motion of the narratives, *Oscar Wao* is everywhere at once—not cyclical, not dialectical, not zigzagging, but caroming in a sort of free fall from political history. (31)

Diaz’s structure of narrative and the style goes away from the definite, fixed and explainable pattern. The sci-fi texts are used for incorporating the cultures of nation. Eric D. Smith discusses the significance of the SF narratives, “recent phenomenon of visionary SF narratives originating “in “national cultures” contains Diaz’s depiction

of Dominican Republic (1). The function of SF narrative is considered to have been the act of the promotion of the national landscape and the culture of the nation.

Oscar, for instance, asks that nothing could be more powerful sci-fi than Santo Domingo, “He was a hardcore sci-fi and fantasy man, believed that was the kind of story we were all living in. He’d ask: What more sci-fi than the Santo Domingo? What more fantasy than the Antilles? (Diaz 6) His native political circumstances had more supernatural or horror loaded instances than the imagination by the sci-fi writer.

Oscar’s insistence on the appropriateness of sci-fi genre for capturing the experiences of people of Dominican people can be a justifiable case when we focus on the imagination aspect in the sci-fi genre. Sci-fi genre lets the imaginative rein free, the Dominican torture could be placed in the imagination strain. For Katlyn Williams:

Oscar’s belief that common sci-fi narratives serve as the ideal metaphors for the immigrant experience. Yuniór (and Oscar) suggests that sci-fi, in many ways, is the most appropriate mode of storytelling for attempting to understand the experiences of these characters.

The traditional genres cannot contain the experience, the extra-ordinary experience of the DR people. Yuniór’s narrative in the multiple perspectives also complicates the portrayal. Patrick O’ Donnell relates this fact:

Initially, the novel appears to be told through an assemblage of narrative perspectives, but as it progresses it becomes apparent that the primary narrator of the novel is Yuniór, who relates the story progressively in the first, second, and third person...” Yuniór portrays the identities of characters like that “of the Oakley twins, both singular and plural. (157)

The same narrator in the first, second and third person disguise calls for the complication involved. It stylistically evokes the sense of the complexity in the narration. Obviously, the extra-ordinary cannot be contained in the ordinary.

Thus, this novel too contains the immigration context with the characters swinging in between the cultures. Yunior, Lola, Oscar and Belicia form the important discussion points and open up the avenues for studying the texts transculturally.

3.7 Inventive Appropriation for the Re-signification

Alasna advises Mr. Iqbal that humanity is a contentious issue what one requires is the “protecting one’s culture, shielding one’s religion from abuse” (241). It is not a matter of letting others live. It is a matter of protecting one’s culture, shielding one’s religion from abuse” (241). Similarly, Samad contradicts the love of England “You say you are thankful we are in England, that’s because you have swallowed it whole. I can tell you those boys would have a better life back home than they ever” (203). The children spoil their life in other’s land. This novel is an “an example to evince the optimism about multiculturalism” (Jakubiak 202). It contains “ three different families from three different cultures (Hadjetian Introduction). The novel has also been taken as a frustrating text of the integration of the cultures. Unlike Jakubiak who takes the novel as the clear example of multiculturalism, Ulrike Tancke uncovers Smith’s effort of attempting to show the positive sides of the multiculturalism as a useless effort that needs to be questioned, “ Far from offering an innovatively carefree and affirmative take on the multicultural situation, the novel reveals, above all, that the struggle to uncover one’s roots entails pain and frustration and might very well be a pointless exercise” (238). There are clear instances of the difficulty of retaining one’s roots. Sunita Sinha corroborates, “ In *White Teeth*, Smith chronicled a particular down-at-hill corner of North London from the perspective

of... multi-racial families ...”(232). This novel forms the reservoir of the optimism and the promotion of the culture from the source country hinting at the dilemma that the immigrants carry.

Alsana, wife to Samad Miah Iqbal, is confident about her sons, especially about their identity. As Samad is suspicious of the son's cultural digression and is prepared to send his sons to Bengaladesh, Alsana does not feel so. She, most of the times, accepts what her sons do. Emilija Lipovsek mentions, “Alsana is very protective of her twins” (53). It is Alsana's protectiveness that causes her cross with Samad when Magid was sent to Bengaladesh for the learning of the culture. Regarding the retaining of the cultural roots, Alsana seems very relaxed, while Samad's particularity for preserving his own culture invites a lot of tension in his relation in the family.

Unlike Samad, Alsana goes inbetweenity. Lewis MacLeod claims, “Alsana rejects absolutist principles” (164). Her assertion that the cultural purity as the fairytale establishes her as a character who attempts to strike balance in between the host culture and the native culture. She intends to appropriate what is suitable to her need, she is deliberate about her efforts. The discourse of certitude is against her conviction.

Alsana can tolerate her son changing his name to sound English; but can not bear with his idea of marrying to an English girl. Berna Koseoglu argues, “Although Alsana begins to become a part of the English way of life, she can not break her ties with her own culture” (29). Alsana's selection of the cultural practices represents her transcultural insights. Neither Alsana is a mimic woman, nor a traditionalist like Samad who blindly adheres to his so-called original culture which becomes the shield of his difference thinking.

The absolutist cultural claims by anyone are outrightly rejected by Alsana. This is evinced as Alsana thinks: "... where that madman E-knock someoneoranother gave a speech that forced them into the basement while his kids broke the windows with their steel-capped boots. Rivers of blood silly-billy nonsense" (Smith 62-63). Enoch Powell's effort for maintaining the racial cum cultural purity with his Rivers of Blood is a huge problem to Alsana. This perspective of Alsana terming Rivers of Blood as "silly-billy nonsense" substantiates her position.

Samad's suggestion for Alsana to remain the true Bengali by not buying the prepared meals is not accepted by Alsana, nor does she accept the suggestion by Clara for the name of her child when she is pregnant. Alsana has, as Eva Knopp views, "a very witty and inventive appropriation of English" (66). The contextual intelligence of Alsana and her deliberate picking of values ground her position as the selective lady who is active enough to protect her cultural image and select the cultural practices from the hostland. Zadie Smith in *WT* has such deliberateness in designing the character like Alsana who does not follow her culture blindly, nor is practising the mimicry.

The image of selectivity of Alsana can be exemplified by her stance in not allowing her son to marry to an English lady. "Leaving Alsana with a legacy of unrecognizable great grandchildren" "their Bengali-ness thoroughly diluted, genotype hidden by phenotype. It is both the most irrational and natural feeling in the world" (Smith 327). Alsana seems to have favored genotype rather than phenotype. She stands strongly on the need to protect her genes. At the surface level, when juxtaposed with Samad Miah Iqbal, she seems to be a liberal lady as if she is open to forget all of her cultural roots. In contrast, when seen deeply, her selectivity about the cultural aspects, she turns otherwise.

Alsana's views about her husband attract special attention. Traditional literary texts mystify the body of women and their appearance, emotions as incalculable, intangible and mysterious. Alsana mystifies Samad; the reverse order is present here. She argues that a male called Samad is not understandable. "Besides, I will never know him well. Getting anything out of my husband is like trying to squeeze water out when you are stoned" (Smith 77). Alsana's metaphorical expression that gaining something from Samad is more like squeezing stone presents the extent of her saying. She views that Samad is a subject who is beyond understanding. Perhaps she means to say that his cultural sticking is so abstract that convincing him not to be so has been a real difficulty for her.

The clear claim about Englishness and Indianness by Alsana indicates her standing out from the rest of the character crew. "Do you think anybody is English? Really English? It's a fairy-tale (Smith 236). Alsana contains a bigger truth when she asserts that the cultures have been evolving in temporal and inte-locational sequences. Asserting cultures as the spheres that are distinct from each other is flouted by Alsana.

After the marriage between Clara and Archie, Alsana and Samad are considered for the invitation to dine with Archie and Clara. Clara asks Archie to cook the type of curry. She mentions, "but it's *my* type of curry" (54). Even though Archie reminds Clara that Alsana and Samad are not the royal Indians, his undifferentiated treatment of both needs the revision. Samad might comment upon the curry prepared by Clara while Alsana might not. Alsana would have accepted the curry while Samad must have found some sort of awkward comments as a misfit.

Smith's building on the horticultural, cultural concerns in the novel draws the cultural analysis. The cross-pollination of the plants indicates the cultural encounters

in which a person who has to choose the values becomes more aware not to negate but to select. “The fact is, cross-pollination produces more varied offspring that are better able to cope with a changed environment. It is said cross-pollinating plants also tend to produce more and better quality seeds” (Smith 309). Joyce Chalfen’s belief that the cross-pollinated plants are better than the so-called pure advances the transcultural scenario in which the binary is questioned. It is not the mere hybridity affair; it is the process of careful adoption, selection and addition of the cultural practice that was not in both of the cultures. To sound more solid, hybridity merely connotes to the mixture, while transculturality denotes to the permeation, adoption and inventions.

Self-contradiction in Joyce Chalfen is a point of meditation. On the one hand, she seems to represent the pure English culture, on the other, she advocates the cross-pollination. Joyce as Sylvia Hadjetian observes, a “Feminist horticulturalist” is always bored although she pretends to have a perfect marriage” (3). Her theoretical contradiction is the major source of her sadness. The purity she seems to advocate and the blendedness and its power she wishes to believe bring the difficulty in her congruent personal image and the living.

Joyce Chalfen asks Millat where he is originally from. Millat answers- Whitechapel, an English place. Elahe Haschemi Yekani asserts, “Smith constantly mocks the insistence on a real origin that has become only an imaginary reference point... (226). By this reference, Smith intends to defy the sticking on the original. She presents a character such as Joyce Chalfen who favors cross-pollination and lives a philosophy of purity.

Marcus Chalfen, who is conducting the future mouse project, plans to end the imperfection from the world. He too has the expressions like that of Joyce- the language of cross-pollination- the inbetweenity. Raphael Dalleo views, “Marcus’s

language echoes that of Joyce, and even that of Ortiz” (100). Fernando Ortiz, the Cuban anthropologist, who is considered to have coined the term, transculturality, is referred here and Marcus’s language is shown to be like that of Ortiz.

Transculturation as explained in this paper, denotes to the permeability and miscibility of cultures, beliefs and other world views.

Marcus’s wife Joyce has got the offer of correcting Millat by the Gleonard Oak Comprehensive School. Michael Meyer observes, “Millat’s misbehavior increases her interest in him, as the Other motivates her intervention... ” (489). As Joyce is interested in correcting him, this instance can be interpreted at least in two ways of her contradiction. First, she believes in bringing purity in Millat, second, she loves the existence of the Other. The second interpretation might sound weak; but is one possibility of seeing.

Clara Bowden gets value in terms of her connection to other characters in the novel. Her association is broken from Ryan Topps and is connected to Archie, from the two, Irie gets birth. Clara Squires states, “Her character is very much an adjunct: as wife and mother to Archie and Irie; as the foil to Alsana’s scabrous wit” (659). She is the sounding board to Alsana’s witty expressions and is an appendage to the family.

Clara- Archie marriage is a cultural mismatch. In their marriage, most of the affiliations denied to attend as the opposition. Ginette Curry mentions, “their marriage provoked hostile reactions from family members, friends and colleagues” (424). Clara from Caribbean roots would not be accepted by society. That did not hinder their marriage because Archie and Clara were prepared to adopt and adapt.

Archie- Samad interactions mostly in the O’Connell’s club did not bring much of the clashes in their families despite their distant cultural locations. Samad, having Bengladeshi roots and Archie, the English man did not focus on their differences.

Brian W. Shaffer states, “ The interactions” of Samad’s and Archie’s families “ displays less a set of precise cultural differentiations than an emerging set of new features” (351). This relation between these two families underlies how the families remained intact despite the polar differences in their outlooks to life.

O’Connell’s club in the novel is a place for the food and talk. Archie-Samad meeting place was O’Connell’s club. Anyone studying *WT* gets easily allured by Smith’s invention of an eatery like O’Connell’s. Lia Blaz Ward puts, “O’Connell’s is a heterodox and contradictory location, continuously resignified by means of culinary consumption and talk” (61). Obviously, this is such an ideal place with minimum restrictions.

One can rarely imagine such place of equality where no difference exists. Regardless of identity, O’Connell’s club welcomes people. It is more like that of Byzantium by W.B. Yeats where no temporality and spatiality have any effects. Lia Blaz Ward argues, “It has “Irish name” “a traditional English menu (minus pork menu), a portrait of a Bengali rebel on the wall” “male and over thirty” (61). Later, at the end of the novel, “stranger under thirty, then by bacon and at last by women” (61). Further, the liberty and opportunity are explained, “Simply because you could be without family in O’Connell’s, without possessions or status, without past glory or future hope-you could walk through that door with nothing and be exactly the same as everybody else in there” (Smith 244). In this club, everybody is equal, treated equally irrespective of positions and power.

Respecting differences and incorporating the multiple has been the constant theme of the novel. Samad’s son, Millat is one of the characters who attempts to bring balance while in the contact of various cultural sets. Salwa Ismail asserts, “ engaged in the invention of syncretic cultural traditions out of the multiple registers available

to them, Millat tries to fashion himself as a Muslim in a manner that would retain his desire for becoming a Hollywood style gangster” (25). In fact, Millat is the Eastern-Western image in which sufficient of both and some more creative aspect is gotten.

Smith incorporates a lot of differences with no disrespect to any difference. It is not the matter of multiculturalism where cultures are treated as islands. Philip Tew supports this by observing, “Smith’s ambition to embrace the width and depth of a contradictory culture, where individuals remain innately contradictory themselves” (252). Through these instances, Smith exposes the contradictions even in a certain culture. She exposes the contradictions even within the individuals let alone between and among the cultural practices. Alsana’s inbetweenity, Clara’s adjunct status and Joyce Chalfen’s cross-pollination along with the O’Connell’s club and Millat’s wish to remain true to his Muslim roots even by following the Western tradition call for the transcultural imagination.

3.8 Cultural Purity as a Fairy Tale: A Transcultural Examination

Zadie Smith, born in Willesden, England to a Jamaican mother who migrated to England and an English father houses a plot in *WT* that comprises families migrating from Bangladesh and Jamaica to England. Samad Miah Iqbal and Alsana Begum Iqbal, the couple from Bangladesh has twins who are in the struggle to retain the roots or the adaptation to the English culture. Clara Bowden, daughter of Hortense Bowden, a Jamaican immigrant, has married to Archibald Jones, an English man, and they have a daughter named Irie Jones who is in the quest of her roots. and Characters in *WT* navigate through varied cultural alignments and directions. They display the authentic cultural boards, show the convergence and exhibit the interrogative disposition to the cultural authenticity.

Zadie Smith exposes mono-cultural lines through the instances of the fictional characters. In particular, Samad Miah Iqbal and Hortense Bowden are shown to be engrossed in cultural purity. Hortense BWWden's allegiance to Jehovah's Witness and Anointed ones and Samad Miah Iqbal's loyalty to Islam are the principal examples.

Samad Miah Iqbal fears the idea of cultural mixture. In England, he bemoans, "I am corrupt, my sons are becoming corrupt, we are all soon to burn in the fires of hell" (Smith 192). Alsana Iqbal, Samad's wife, also laments on the loss of her culture. She blames, "I am saying these people are taking my son away from me! ... They're Englishifying him completely! They are deliberately leading him away from his culture and his family religion!" (Smith 345). The corruption of the Muslim culture is the serious issue for Samad, he accepts and deeply desires to correct himself and his family, "I have been corrupted by England, I see that now- my children, my wife, they too have been corrupted" (Smith 144). Samad has incongruently realized the corruption he and his family members have undergone.

The pressures by Samad Miah Iqbal for the unflinching loyalty to Muslim culture have deeply disturbed Magid and Millat. Berna Koseoglu claims that "the cultural conflicts" faced by Magid and Millat leads to "emotional suffering" that in turn "brings about the feeling of uncertainty about their origins" (30). On the one hand, Magid and Millat are disconcerted about the script of their living, on the other, their parents are very much vulnerable about the limpidness of their cultures in the foreign land. Samad's original distress of mislaying the "original background" by Magid is so severe that he resolves to send Magid to his "native land" (Koseoglu 26). Samad, constantly projects and attempts to protect his image that adapting to English culture is the degradation of the self.

Samad's sons's school shows commitment to respecting the religious diversity. While Samad tabled a motion against the Harvest Festival labelling it the "pagan festival" (Smith 129), the headmistress, Mrs Owens reminded, "The Harvest Festival is part of the school's ongoing commitment to religious diversity, Mr Iqbal" (Smith 129). When the motion was not passed, Samad vented, "I am certain the Solar Covenant of Manor School Witches and Goblins will be delighted with that decision" (Smith 131). He cannot accept the decision easily because he thinks what he thinks must be thought and accepted by the people around him.

Samad's inclination to the cultural purity does not only yield into the closed mindset, it also fosters the lack of communication among other members in the community where people from many cultural backgrounds dwell. The sticking to one's culture blindly causes various moral panics. Bahar Davary endorses, "The essential problem with any form of purism, be it ethnic, linguistic, religious, or national, is that it is a myth which is disconnected from reality" (106). The form of any essentialist notion of purism is all but a myth. Further, Dan Ojwang confirms, "purveyors of cultural purity "generate "moral panics" (131). Their intention is to panic people for their purpose.

The advocates of the cultural purity intend their community members to abide by a set of norms. Dan Ojwang concedes, "By generating moral panics, these purveyors of cultural purity have managed to discipline the behavior of their group members" (131). This suggests that moral purism has the immediate purpose of controlling the community members.

Cultural purity escalates the sense of demarcation; it draws the boundaries resulting into the divisive strategies. Simon Harrison problematizes the result of cultural purity, "demarcation of in-group and out-group is drawn in the idiom of

cultural purity” (120). Cultural purity, the concept itself is founded on the divisive ground. The impact of “A cultural ‘other’... is constructed as an alien and as a potential ‘enemy’ who threatens ‘our’ national cum cultural integrity and uniqueness” (Nira Yuval-Davis 64). Purity, the term itself, indicates the easy binary that cannot have more than relatively temporary existence.

The farcical status of of cultural purity can be examined in *White Teeth*. Giles B.Gunn puts forth the pointlessness of such an attempt, “...it has become essentially pointless to talk any longer about cultural purity, or, in the contemporary disciplinary idiom, cultural uniqueness” (150). Gunn’s is the idea that the connectedness in the present world across geography does not allow any place to remain isolated culturally. Celebration of purity is a sweet dream that cannot be actualized; the effort to execute purity is a futile attempt.

In *White Teeth*, Samad Miah Iqbal considers himself to be tempted to the Muslim roots, what is equally true is , “ though he considers himself a devout Muslim, British life is full of temptation for Samad” (Goring 333). He projects himself as the one very willing to live by the prescribed values of Islam. Once Samad recalls his mother’s habit that she never spent money on the “prepared meals” (Smith 62), Alsana labelled him the “traditionalist” (62). Samad is the fan of his culture even though through the lips, if not in the actions.

Samad lacks the integrity i.e. he asks his wife and his sons to be true to their own culture by not observing the culture of England, but he himself is away from such convictions in practices. “With his clipboard and his pedantry, Samad is an equal target of Smith’s satire” because “Samad’s public performance as the devout, principled Muslim is contradicted after the meeting as he flirts with (and subsequently dates) the young, and attractive music teacher, Poppy Burt Jones” (Procter 115). His

“obsessive affair with Poppy Burt Jones” (Buchanan 158) can by no means represent his determination of the norms and values of the Muslim community. Poppy “takes the first step ‘and accosted him in the corridor’ (Smith 131) “‘accost’ having connotations of attack as well as of prostitution” (Ozvalda 199). Poppy Burt Jones had seduced him because “she had spotted the madman in him” (Smith 149). The madness in Samad is his hypocrisy.

Hortense Bowden, although herself a half white, her mother had married to captain Durham, is hell bent to the cultural claims that are exclusive to the Jehovah’s Witness. Bowden’s focus on the “Apocalypticism” is “interlinked’ with ‘cultural movement’” (Botting 25). Being the follower of Jehovah’s Witness, Bowden often has been discusses the judgment day reminding the apocalypse.

Hortense Bowden loathes her daughter Clara because she is married to Archie, a White man and disowns her for losing the faith on Jehovah’s Witness. Mrs BWWden is associated to Ryan Topps, the ex-husband of her daughter Clara because for him faith is “the biggest fuck-off light sabre in the universe “(Smith 509). Hortense Bowden and Ryan Topps ‘cling to the totalizing life recipes their religion offers” (MacLeod 64). For Hortense and Ryan, nothing is superior to recipes of life that are drawn from the religion. They devote their living to the basis of scriptural prescriptions.

Hortense Bowden followed the Jehovah’s Witness because her mother did not like to follow the Anglican Church suggested by Captain Durham, Ambrosia Bowden’s husband. Ambrosia, seduced by Durham did not like his suggestion. Bowden also has been following and spreading the Jehovah’s Witness for her faith. Her obsessive inclination to Ryan Topps are fanatic, once Irie Jones visits her and

Hortense introduces her to Ryan Topps, “*She might have been yours ...*”(Smith 390). Such a rigid woman expects other people to be flexible.

Similar to Samad Miah Iqbal, Hortense Bowden “energetically” inveighs against “the notion of mixture “(Acquarone 149). Considering the fanatical idea of Samad, he could be seen hypocritical especially from his perspectives of sex and masturbation but Hortense Bowden has the unflinching stance to her religious positions. She is prepared to quit her daughter only in the name of religion and the mixture, her daughter has already abandoned Ryan Topps but she has tightly gripped him for the faith reasons. This displays her opposition of the cultural mixture.

Once when Hortense met Irie, her granddaughter, she shared her conviction concerning the mixtures of cultures, “When you mix it up, nuttin’ good can come. It wasn’t intended...” (Smith 385). For Hortense, God loved purity, no human beings should adulterate it, the mixture is a mistake.

Hortense Bowden dislikes the cultural mixture because “she is Jehovah’s Witness who strongly believe in the purity of races” (Curry 284). It is her faith that solely lays the foundation of her character, behavior and actions.

Hortense Bowden does not like her daughter to marry to a White man called Archibald Jones. Esther Lau asserts, “Hortense herself being half white, stops speaking to her daughter Clara when she knows Clara is marrying Archie, a white man, because her efforts in ‘dragging [Clara’s] genes back from brim’(Smith 327) by marrying a black man wasted “(149). Further, Esther Lau covers, “Hortense Bowden.... In the novel ... see blood-mixing as connected with impurity, contamination and even deviation and degeneration” (149). Purity, for her is the firm stance to her inclination.

One must dig deeper to see the purpose of framing the characterization of Samad. The ascribed status of Samad as the descendant of Mangal Pande invites series of questions. Samad is a “firebrand Muslim” and his great-grandfather – Mangal Pande a “Hindu name” “pure-as-snow Brahmin one”. “It is difficult to imagine the descendants of the Mangal Pande of India converting to Islam, let alone a firebrand version of it and that too after the snuffing of the last symbols of Muslim glory in 1857” (Khair and Doubinsky 13). Why should Smith have framed a fictional character Samad whose ancestor Mangal Pande, a historical person of flesh and blood that too a Hindu? One plausible speculation could be the efforts to show cultural cross-overs across the history.

Samad refers to Alsana’s sister’s children and suggests Alsana not to model their sons in that manner. He tells Alsana, “Well, take Alsana’s sisters- all their children are nothing but trouble. They won’t go to mosque, they don’t pray, they speak strangely, they dress strangely, they eat all kinds of rubbish, they have intercourse with God knows who. No respect for tradition” (Smith 190). Attending Mosque is one of the primary identity markers for Samad. His focus on leading his sons to Muslim way of living demonstrates his stubborn pattern of dealing.

It is not only his sons who need to be saved from the mixture, it is himself and his wife who are on the verge of degradation of the original culture. Samad’s provocation to Alsana for the preservation of Bengali culture and consulting Reader’s Digest Encyclopedia (Meyer 487) indicates that need.

The weaving of plot with a character like Hortense Bowden illustrates the artificiality. “Hortense BWWden, an aggressive Jehovah’s Witness”, “the product of a union between a West Indian mother and a British officer” (Tyanan 73) enforces purity of culture and anticipates the same from her daughter.

3.9 Coalescence across Cultures: The Cultural Intermixture

The mixture of the cultural boards draws paramount attention. Above all, the juxtaposition of the characters fanatic to their cultures are set against the characters who are open to retain their own cultures and adjust to the new cultural claims. This juxtaposition calls for the scrutiny in the section that follows.

As Samad blames Alsana to have been too much occupied with the Hindi brain popcorn and paying less attention to her own culture- the Bengali culture, she asks what Bengali culture is, she is suggested to consult Reader's Digest Encyclopedia. It reads:

The vast majority of Bangladesh's inhabitants are Bengalis, who are largely descended from Indo- Aryans who began to migrate into the country from the west thousands of years ago and who mixed with indigenous groups of various racial stocks. (Smith 236)

Alsana cautions Samad "you go back and back and it's still easier to find the correct Hoover bag than to find one pure person, one pure faith, on the globe. Do you think anybody is English? Really English? It's a fairy -tale!" (Smith 236). The debate between Samad and Alsana about the existence of pure culture amplifies differences in them especially regarding the pure/mixed culture. Alsana's finding of Bengali culture having the root in the west and pure English culture as the "fairy-tale" indicates that she does not believe on the existence of the pure culture. The English are not pure, nor are the Bengalis.

Samad wants his sons to continue the legacy of his great grandfather, Mangal Pande. Valerie Hurst connects, "he wants his twins to carry and fulfil the heritage of Samad's great grandfather Mangal Pande" (4). His sticking to his family glory captures the attention of the critics. Alsana wants to go in-between whereas Samad

constantly focuses on the loyalty to his own culture. For all intents and purposes, Samad does not want the mixture of cultures.

Whatever forces Samad tries, Alsana is in no mood to follow him. Joanna O'Leary reviews, " Once impregnated, Alsana exercises full control over the children, not even allowing Samad to accompany her to the ultrasound" (47). Given the nature of Samad, Alsana wants her children to be practical and she wishes to avoid the contact of her husband although not possible. Her efforts to avoid the presence of her husband in the times of ultrasound are an example of such an attitude.

Alsana does not see any significance in trying to upbringing her twins in the Muslim background. She is a lady who knows the benefits of two cultures. She does not rely on the values of the Muslim culture for the upbringing of her sons. Neither has she believed that there is any sense of the purity of the culture. Alsana is all against the traditional patriarchal roles and is bent to the opposition, "When Samad sends Magid away for a cultural immersion experience in Bangladesh, she refuses to speak directly to him until Magid returns years later" (Walters). We are given that Magid is sent back to Bangladesh for the cultural immersion purpose and Millat not, the reason is attributed to the economic one, otherwise Millat too would have been sent for the cultural immersion sense. This mitosis is against Alsana's sense.

Alsana possesses the disposition of taking advantage from both of the cultures. She supports Magid when he is determined to Englishize his name. Emilija Lipovsek substantiates, "Alsana is not the one to decolonize her children. She has the need to belong somewhere in her sons so many times. Magid, when he was nine wanted to be called 'Mark Smith' and she played along" (53). Alsana is able to adjust herself to the surrounding. She is not adamant to the change. Andrea Katherine Medovarski asserts, "She strives to make Willesden her home" (144). Alsana knows

that she belongs to Willesden and she has to commit to this place. Home is the place where one has to remain and spend one's life. Questioning the authentic existence of Bengali culture, Alsana chooses the practical aspect of the cultural life. In England, being Bengali is a problem, she has realized it.

Alsana, from cross-cultural orientation, is open to the adjustment to the changes of the cultural epithets around her. She knows the difficulty of being stuck to a certain cultural roots. Or rather she does not believe on the cultural purity. For her, nothing is pure, everything is intermingled. Sylvia Hadjetian confirms, "Alsana has... been westernized and profits from both countries" (70). Alsana has abandoned the notion of pure culture, pure Bengali, rather she attempts to benefit from both the cultures, she is not the extreme type.

When Millat was recognized to have burned the books that belonged to the people against his ideologies, Alsana burns the books of Millat and tells him, "“Everyone has to be taught a lesson,’ ‘Either everything is sacred or nothing is. And if he starts burning other people's things, then he loses something sacred also. Everyone gets what's coming, sooner or later’" (Smith 237). Alsana can compromise between the cultural claims and statements. She realizes the necessity of compromise. As she comes to know that her son Millat has burnt the books that contain the ideas that are contrary to him. She burns Millat's books.

The submissive and demure lady expected in the Muslim community is what Alsana flouts. In the Muslim community, there is "a fixed image of Muslim woman, eternally submissive and totally overlooked" (Asma Lamrabet 1).The instances that Alsana fights with and beats Samad and does not allow him in the Ultrasound session, prove that Alsana does not conform to the tradition, the role and responsibility that the Islam culture expects from her. The stereotype of the Muslim women as demure, the

follower and the silent objects has been flouted by Alsana. Alsana's aggression is what the Islam culture would have objected considerably. The mutiny between Samad and Alsana shows how upfront she is.

Alsana from Bangladesh does have the features of the ladies from the West; she is dominant, bold and upfront. Her personality make up is different from the East. Charlotte Boyce finds Alsana a lady who "calls attention to Bangladesh's own history of cultural intermixture" (281). Alsana does not see any pure reason and faith in the world. For her the finding of pure person and pure faith is impossible thing.

Hortense Bowden's strict sense in not marrying to a White person is all but a hypocrisy, she herself is from the mixed tradition and the purity she is expecting from her children has been challenged from the initial phase, i.e. she is the descendent of the mixed culture. Elahe Haschemi Yekani demonstrates, "Although Hortense strictly opposes their (Archie and Clara's) marriage because she feels that 'biracial' marriages are doomed to failure, 'racial purity' in this family is questioned from the start" (220). Neither her mother had extended the relations in purity nor there any possibility of her granddaughter doing so.

When Ryan Topps is too unacceptable to Clara, Clara has to find someone whom she could marry, she found Archie and thought as of the Crinthians, that is, not to marry is worse than to marry someone who is opposed by her mother. Clara is found to be meditating on the quotes from Corinthians, "It is better to marry than to burn" (Smith 46). By thinking this Clara marries the heathen Archibald Jones.

Clara realizes that Archibald was so unfit match for her even later, she knew that he was from the White culture, the other race to her, " he was a surprisingly competent cook, but romance was beyond him, passion unthinkable" (Smith 48). For Clara to live with Archie was not easy. One difficulty was the age factor, the second

was the race difference, and the third was that he did not have the romantic aspect of life.

Clara ends the relation with Ryan Topps because while travelling in his Vespa, the accident caused her teeth fall. Her beautiful teeth were lost, she became bucktoothed. It was this incident that caused the relational end between Clara and Ryan Topps. Despite the strong faith of Ryan Topps Clara had to choose the old Archie, the heathen one because of the accident caused by Ryan Topps.

As Clara was determined to be married to Archie, she had to leave her faiths because Archie was a heathen. “By February 1975, Clara had deserted the church and all its biblical literalism for Archibald Jones” (Smith 46). For Clara, the married life was more preferable than the spiritual life.

Even for Archie, the race concerns are negligible, Emilija Lipovsek confirms, “Regarding race-relations, Archie never sees an issue there, as if he did not recognize it at all. When his director does not want him to show up at the company dinner with his Jamaican wife, Archie is just happy to get free Luncheon Vouchers” (55). It was not only Clara who disregarded the race concerns and the cultural issues while marrying, it was Archie as well who went beyond the racial boundaries. Clara and Archibald begin their relations on the foundations of cross-pollinating process. Nick Bentley labels their relations as “cross-affiliations” (144). Not only the relation between Clara and Archie carries the sense of the cross-cultural relations, the affiliations between the Joneses and the Iqbals is next significant instance of the cultural adjustment in the text. Alaa Alghamdi celebrates the relation between the families “Archie Jones and his Jamaican wife, Clara, show a fluid acceptance of racial hybridity. The friendship between the Iqbals and the Joneses demonstrated the possibility of cross-cultural understanding and connection...” (99). The differences

have been minimized and the living has been given due focus on the connection between the Iqbals and Joneses.

Despite every effort by Samad from sending back to Bangladesh for learning the Muslim culture to his family coaching to Magid, Magid goes against the wishes of Samad, he rather chooses to remain faithful to the Western lifestyle. Sylvia Hadjetian demonstrates “Magid has become Westernized... and atheist... and does not care about his Muslim heritage” (68). Samad seems to care his Muslim roots, Magid does not.

Magid does not care about the food that has been prohibited by Muslim culture. Magid even dares to relish the food that is prohibited by his culture, “‘a bacon sandwich’ whispered Magid” (Smith 450). He neglects the approval of his father. Samad feels shocked to know this.

It is not only Magid who goes beyond the cultural horizons that his father or his religion sets, it is also Millat who goes beyond it. Sylvia Hadjetian favors Millat, for him, His “ability to cross cultural lines” gives him a “Floating identity” (70). Instead of only going beyond the cultural boundaries, Millat becomes a person of contextual intelligence. He reads the grammars of the contexts and acts accordingly. He is a “social Chameleon” “who constantly reconstructs his identity to fit in different social situations” (Ilott). This is what the unwritten need of the host land is.

3.10 Review Conclusion and Research Gap

The review begun with the agenda of examining the ways the characters handle the cross-cultural scenario comes to the provisional closure. This closure is the brilliant beginning of the resistance to the ultimate closure(s) in the cultural spheres because the cultures are always in the making. Keeping retention of the roots, inclination to the roots and the suspensions of prefigurations of experiences as the

research threads, along with the review on some key concepts like the transculturality, globalization and immigration and the narrative research methodology, this review went across the past and current scholarships on the three primary texts offering me a researchable gap for mapping foods and clothing codes in the literature of immigration.

Zadie Smith's *WT* has drawn the studies like parenting styles, cultural adaptation, marriage practices, culinary practices and challenge to the notion of the original. This available literature becomes the fulcrum of my study because most of them are based on the cross-cultural concerns, and I am solely engaged to culinary and clothing codes that becomes my contribution to the existing knowledge.

Zunot Diaz's *BWW* has been surrounded with the perspectives such as hypermasculinity, difficulty of definitiveness, inversion of stereotypes and narration logic, the footnoting as a response to the tyranny. Hitching on these positions I come to my path of research to delineate me to the study of foods and clothing particularly in the Dominican Republic and the U.S.A. in these literary representations.

The third text *EOA* by V.S. Naipaul constitutes the trends of the study like the construction of self, one's upbringing, the evaluation of all values, significations of arrivals and departures and the cumbersome faiths. These positions lay my foundation to step further and assure me to focus on the study of foodways and clothing codes.

After the determination of studying the food and attire, the researcher sought after the theoretical paradigms of food and attire. Some texts such as *A History of Food in Literature: From the Fourteenth Century to the Present*, *Mapping Appetite: Essays on Food, Fiction and Culture*, *The Anthropology of Food and Body: Gender, Meaning, and Power* helped the researcher comprehend the issues like the food as conduit for various meanings. *Fashion and Cultural Studies*, *The Face of Fashion:*

Cultural Studies in Fashion, and Fashion, Culture and Identity provided a spectrum of concepts for the analysis of the attires. The finding of research gap was conducted through the study of the scholarship around the primary texts and the further study of the concepts for the consolidation of the understanding.

CHAPTER FOUR

Cultural Variation: Within

When banquets were held in Trujillo's honor, Abelard always drove to Santiago to attend. He arrived early, left late, smiled endlessly, and didn't say nothing.

(The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, 215)

Abelard, the grandfather to Oscar in *BWW*, is considered the most loyal person to the regime in Dominican Republic. However, he has been accused of the treason and perhaps killed. The epigraph backgrounds a scene in which an individual is characterized as a person with many-sidedness. When an individual cannot be attributed with the predictable characterization, claiming the predictability and definability in the culture cannot be a pragmatic affair.

4.1 Untenable Cultural Binaries

Cultures are not the disparate masses that defy comparisons. The decoration and spaciousness of kitchen done up by Phillipeses, the native people from England, and its appreciation by the narrator, the immigrant, is an excellent example that challenges binaries of culture in *The Enigma of Arrival*. The pundit in Trinidad, who had come for the funeral rites of Sati, the narrator's sister, cannot maintain the purity of Hindu way of eating and appropriates the way he eats is another instance that questions the attempts to defend the binaries. The narrator came to England and stayed in a boarding house for some months. At that period, he comes across the smells of milk and he discusses that the pure milk was neither available in Trinidad nor in England. Commercialization and the mixture of various elements in the pure milk are the facts of life in Trinidad and England. This instance also reminds that the binaries are untenable. *BWW* has Abelard, the grandfather of protagonist, and a

prisoner. He is deprived of foods in prison. Allowing insufficient food in the prison is not the culture specific act; it pertains to almost all cultures. Lola, a girl from Dominican Republic, sells French fries that are not her native foods when she has migrated to the U.S. This evidence shows that one cannot stick to one's roots and maintain the binaries. La Inca, a relative of the protagonist in DR, observes fasting for Beli's security. We know that fasting is not a culturally typical activity. It exists in all cultures around the world. *WT* has Alsana Iqbal, an immigrant to England from Bangladesh, she prefers the prepared foods to home-made foods. Magid, Alsana's son, orders the bacon sandwich that is beyond the prescription of Muslim culture. People going beyond the cultural prescription in terms of food cannot be specific to any culture. An old man called Hamilton does not accept any food except the coconut milk for he has no teeth. Losing teeth in the old age and choosing the foods to eat that do not require chewing is common to the people of all cultures. Thus, this section includes the discussion that cultural binaries are not tenable.

Cultures are not the closed spheres nor are they the mounds that can be finely distinguished from each other. As the modern day scenario is accepted by people where there is "a rapid increase in the number of trans-identified celebrities" (Ryan 5) and the identities cannot remain of a pure type that are clearly understood as either or kind. The narrator in *The Enigma of Arrival* is an immigrant from Trinidad whose ancestors had been the immigrants from India finds himself among the English people in England. His comparison of the food rituals and the other details about the food cultures drive the analysts to the cultural differences. Even so, the differences surfaced cannot be taken as the absolute differences because there are numerous commonalities that lead one to question the seemingly apparent binaries.

Mr and Mrs Phillipse, the workers to the landlord of the narrator, had done a kitchen. A “big kitchen of the manor” that “the Phillipse had done up . A warm, inviting kitchen, with a big stove...” (Naipaul 74). This description adds to one’s needs of the cooking place. For this reason, the kitchens are embellished, decorated and additionally furnished. The descriptive detail provided by the narrator who is an immigrant emphasizes that the kitchen is spacious and has a lot of provisions . As Phillipse are from England and narrator is from Trinidad, the beauty of the kitchen is loved by both of them despite their different upbringing. The spacious kitchen is cherished by the host and immigrant alike.

The narrator’s life in England involves numerous experiences. In the section “Rooks” he examines a wide variety of various characters such as Alan, Phillipse and Bray. Bray talks of religion, and he considers Bible “as a sacred object; shared food” and for him, Bible means almost everything (Naipaul 331). By and large, strict followers of a religion such as Bray regard the religious texts as the source of great delight. Following religion with unflinching faith is more like relishing the shared food. A scripture regarded as the shared food does not pertain to a particular religion or culture. It is true to almost all of the cultures. Added to this, Bray supposes Bible as “a hint of companionship, even conviviality, in piety” (Naipaul 331). The scriptural text is an important object for Bray and is so for many who assume faith in the strictest sense.

If the food customs change as the times change, why would the customs change when the places are changed? The evolution of cultures takes place in course of time. The migration brings changes and the binaries are suspended when the cultures come to contact. The pundit who had come for the last rites of Sati, the narrator’s sister, adopted a changed approach for eating:

In the old days he would have eaten sitting cross-legged on blankets or flour-sacks or sugar-sacks spread on the top with cotton. He would have been carefully fed and constantly waited on. Now, sumptuously served, but all at once-he was sitting at a table in the verandah. He ate by himself. (Naipaul 381)

As convention, he should have eaten sitting on the blankets cross-legged but now he ate sitting on the verandah. The change of this eating custom: earlier sitting cross-legged on blankets or flour sacks or sugar-sacks spread on the top with cotton now he ate by himself, earlier he would be fed. This indicates that the changes in the eating custom are either by his locational differences that is Hindu culture in Trinidad could not retain the purity as maintained in India, and, also, the present day India too does not maintain the scriptural purity in India itself. Thus, the changes in the eating customs to a powerful person (religiously) the pundit also displays that claiming the originality or the purity of a culture creates a problem for the person who claims it to be so. The pundit's inability to save the edge of his culture suggests the challenge to the cultural binaries. When a culture cannot be sustained in its purest form for various reasons, the attempt to find the differences with other cultures is all but a futile task. Immigration compels one to sort out the cultural edges as the pundit in Sati's last rite chose to invent the ways for his eating. What was considered the actuality earlier is not continued by him. He had to invent the new manner of actuality. The manner considered actual and appropriate gets changed as the time goes by.

Having noted the complexity of the cultural edge, its inevitable suspension needs to be coveted and striven for. Mr Harding, the manager of a boarding house near the Earls Court Station, where the narrator had stayed for some time before he went to Oxford for his writing career, would be drunk publicly yet not be

disagreeable. The narrator, having the ancestral links to India, born at Trinidad, could not tolerate the way Harding drank. He had the cultural assumption that drinking publicly would not be an enjoyable experience. But this assumption that drinking needs to take place secretly has been flouted in front of him:

Mr Harding, drunk at the lunch table, should not be treated with contempt by his guests but with tolerance and even respect. He was listened to. I cannot tell what sort of accent he had. It sounded good to me, like something from a film. (Naipaul 150).

Contrary to the narrator's social knowledge of drinking, he also approached Mr Harding with tolerance and suspended his cultural assumption because the accent of Harding was good to him. As he had to develop command over English language in England, he willingly suspended his implicit cultural belief.

The cultural other, on occasions, is suspended and turns out to be dysfunctional many of the times. Narrator at England has contact with a girl from Italy. He feels difficult to know about her affair with her boy friend. However, his fondness of her despite the unrecognizability of the menu by Angela, the Italian girl calls up the attention for the food customs. He likes her. He visits her. He wants to see her. He often goes to the restaurant where Angela works as a waitress. The narrator recounts, "I had the dinner there a few times. It gave me an indescribable pleasure to be in a restaurant where I knew the waitress, even though I did not understand the menu and didn't particularly like the food" (Naipaul 148). He does not understand the food menu she prepares. Nor he likes the food she has prepared. This suggests that the food commonality is less a concern for the people to get intermingled. He interrogates her menu, dislikes her food, but likes her. He does not know so much about what to make of the food and menu Angela has prepared. What he must have liked about her

is her beauty. The “indescribable pleasure” that the narrator emphasizes from meeting Angela remind that the unfamiliar food had very less to do with the emotional proximity (148). Angela and narrator derive the proximity despite the origins, the food differences. It is not only the cultural commonalities that bind us together; there are emotional commonalities that draw us close to each other.

Narrator’s journey to New York for his book writing project has been discussed along with his stay at the Wellington hotel. He discusses that the hotel was beautiful; he remembers the beauty of the hotel. What he also remembers is his need to eat the chicken over the wastepaper basket. Since he needed to hide his eating, he needed to restrain himself from the eating of chicken at the eating places at the foreign places, the narrator had to struggle hard. His disciplining and restraining himself in terms of eating carry him to various instances of restrictions in terms of the food. Despite the narrator’s effort to avoid the food that would be considered the polluted food, he did not avoid it. Rather, he intended to cleanse the pollution caused by the eating of the food that is considered not eatable from the cultural expectations perspectives. The narrator, the immigrant, does not stick to his Indian sense of pollution, comes out of it and breaks the boundaries of the pollution. The narrator contemplates about his behavior:

But the writer of the diary was ending his day like a peasant, like a man reverting in his origins, eating secretly in a dark room, and then wondering how to hide the high-smelling evidence of his meal. I dumped it in the waste-paper basket, After this, I needed a bath, or a shower. (123)

The narrator intends to portray the difficulty one faces in trying to protect one's binary, one's culture especially when one has migrated. This portrayal brings forth the cumbersome affair one has to undergo.

Milk is "subjected to a variety of technological transformations" for turning it to the "viable product to the urban markets" (Willey 104). Narrator's visit to New York brought to him in the association with the milk type that was different than he had been accustomed with. In England, he saw the cloying milk, while in Trinidad he had been accustomed with the condensed milk. The Klim powdered milk used in Trinidad was not similar to the milk he had to consume in England. The restriction, the type he had consumed in Trinidad, England had conditioned him to his taste, "A cloying smell of milk- fresh milk was rare to me : we used Klim powdered and condensed milk" (Naipaul 139). Coming to England brought him to a different condition. The narrator mentions that he did not drink the fresh milk. The pure milk was rare to him. In Trinidad, the powdered milk was consumed and in England he was provided with the cloying milk. This suggests that the development of the binaries in terms of the cultures is all but the artificial effort. He neither drank the pure and fresh milk in Trinidad nor in England. The fresh milk was not available in both of the spheres. This could be the result of the commercialization. The unavailability of the fresh milk is not the culture specific phenomenon.

Susan Spearey puts, "the many journeys" of the narrator that "are freed of their associations with notions of origin" can be taken as reminder that the commercialization is not the phenomenon of a particular area and the land (161). This is applicable to almost all of the cultures and the land across the world.

The crumbling away of the binaries and the challenge to the cultural binaries takes place not only in the novel of Naipaul, Diaz's texts *BWW* contains numerous

instances of such type. Fine lines of the binaries cannot be drawn neatly. Even if the cultural critics might try for such differences, the line drawn looks so fragile.

The grains of truth are available in the feminist movement: that females are asked to be inside the four walls. Oscar was dependent upon Lola for his food. When he had closer connection to Nataly, a teacher who worked with him at Don Bosco Tech, he would have the “images of walking into her apartment and ordering her to undress and cook grits for him naked” (Diaz 265). The males get served. This case cannot be taken to be a particular case. The criticism by the females as the males deploying females for the sex objects and the kitchen workers has so much truth. This is considered the matter of course in almost all of the cultural practices. The females throughout the cultural boards have same or similar sort of the predicament. The reproach made by the radical feminists is not baseless. They have some common grounds that the women in general are used as the sex objects and the kitchen workers. Perhaps the degree of the deployment and the nature of the use is different. However, this is prevalent everywhere. This instance in the novel by Diaz supports the claim that the binaries in the name of the female domination are not tenable. The commonality is so striking among the cultures that one dreads the discussion of the particularity.

Food restriction takes place in various circumstances ranging from the affordability to the cultural conditioning. Also, the food forms the basis for reward and punishment. Certain foods are allowed as the form of reward while others are restricted as the basis of the punishment. This is not a case that applies to a particular locality. We rarely hear that the prisoners are provided with the most desirable foods. The thieves, the wrongdoers and criminals are restricted from consuming their favorite foods when they are under the control of the legal authorities. Abelard, the

grandfather of Oscar, was deprived of the sufficient food for meeting his hunger. “On the fourth day a one-armed pickpocket took pity on him and he was able to eat an entire banana without interruption, even tried to chew up the fibrous peel, he was so famished” (Diaz 240). What is noteworthy here is that the food is restricted to people for various reasons. The food deprivation for the punishment reason is squarely the global or cross-cultural case. There must not be anyone across the globe; there must not be any culture that welcomes a prisoner with his most favorite food. There must not be any cultural practice in which an enemy is served with the most luxurious foods. The food, thus, the restriction, the deprivation exists across the cultures acting as the instrument of the punishment. Again, drawing the boundary between and among the cultures in regards to this aspect cannot divide the people in the global picture.

Lola, Oscar’s sister, a girl from DR, comes from a tough childhood background. Her mother was very trying because she was rigid and wanted her children to do what she wanted them to do. Lola states that she got a job selling French fries (Diaz 64) when she had run away from her mother and brother and was staying with Aldo, her lover. French fries suggest that the immigrants particularly have got to be open to other’s cultural foods. Their loyalty to their own cultural foods does not support for their livelihood. In the face of tough times, one needs to be open to the choices of others. The sheer loyalty to one’s culture creates difficulties even for the survival mechanism. Lola has opted for the same. The point of focus is that Lola’s acceptance of selling the foods that were foreign to her is all but lifting the cultural restrictions. She goes beyond the food restrictions dictated by her culture. Her allegiance to her own culture is questioned. Lola choosing the profession that would not be in the favor of her culture particularly the food items emphasizes the need of

the erasure of the binaries. She does not reject the job citing the foreignness of the food.

Eating and drinking customs call for the hygienic times. They call for the cleanliness. This could be for the health reasons. However, this is the universal case, and the cross-cultural case. The degree of cleanliness could differ; however, the cultural expectations of the cleanliness are same. Constantina, a guest at Cabral family would not maintain the required cleanliness, “Constantina arrived to lunch straight from a night of partying, smelling of whiskey and stale cigarettes” (Diaz 112). Cabral family adopted the systematic ways. Constantina in her twenties would attend the breakfasts and lunches straight from the parties with the smell of whiskeys and cigarettes. She did it more than once. This expectation on Constantina is not of a culture. It is rather to all cultures across the geographies. Constantina, despite her own way, has connected to the Cabral family. This amphibian character crumbles the binaries and the character pertaining to the binaries. Also, the Cabral family tolerates Constantina’s ways and Constantina has continued the relations with the Cabral family. This combination suggests that it is not the dichotomy that is at stake.

After the third or fourth level of drinking, Ybon, a prostitute to whom Oscar broke his virginity, started mixing Italian with Spanish. This manner of drinking, mixing of languages or doing strange things as the drinks have higher influences signals that the influence of drinks induce the unusual manners. As Abelard’s strange remarks to Trujillo, Ybon’s mixing of languages can be interpreted that she is open and has no control over her. “Did it matter that Ybon started mixing Italian in with her Spanish after her fourth drink or that she almost fell flat on her face when she showed him out?” (Diaz 282). This can be taken to a macro analysis. No matter which cultural value one adheres to, the influence of drink is the real influence. Alongside,

Y'bon's switching to two languages to express herself better can be connected to the insufficiency to the singularity of the support. She had to go beyond the dichotomies.

Ybon's hidden motives of remaining close with Oscar but staying distant or even killing has been expressed in Oscar's drinking times. This manner of indifference in the eating time by Ybon draws the readers' attention. When Oscar was very open to her and was openly expressing his moments of his past life, she was too indifferent to his concerns. Other times, Ybon would add something to his concerns, this time at Winnebago at DR, while drinking Pabst, Oscar talked about his love to Lola, his sister and his attempt of taking his own life. These instances did not move Ybon. Rather, she poured the drinks to both of them and raised her glass, "He talked about trying to take his own life. This is the only time that Ybon did not say anything. Instead she poured them both drinks and raised her glass. To life!" (Diaz 288). This manner indicates that she has hidden intentions. The food times analysis can show one's intentions. Her manners, behaviors at the drinking times remaining silent, pouring the drinks silently, and raising the glass without articulating anything signal her artificial behaviours to Oscar. Her artificiality and the affectations that holding hands together to show the closeness are understood by the reader but Oscar does not seem to have the sense of this. The manners of drinking times, the semiotics of table manners speak volumes. They tell us a lot about people's intentions and the values. Also, the norms of societies are expressed in the food times. Ybon's intentions are the clear indicators in the raising of her glass, the moments of silences. Particularly, the drinking manners demonstrate the natures of relations between and among people.

La Inca, the aunt of Beli, had been a savior to Beli. She had saved Beli from the crush of Trujillo. After that La Inca had turned to be increasingly spiritual. Her purpose of fasting is for the elevation of the piety. This phenomenon called fasting is

present in almost all cultures. The point of interest is that this applied cross-cultural similarity exists in all cultures in the similar fashions. This cannot be the coincidence that it is present in all cultures simultaneously. “Ate nothing but one orange, drank nothing but water. After that last vast expenditure of piety her spirit was in an uproar” (Diaz 157). The fasting without even drinking a drop of water by La Inca and only an orange reminds the Muslim’s month long fasting and Nepali hillside Teej related fasting. La Inca, the Christian lady demonstrates a behavior so similar to other cultures. Thus, there is no foreign or own. Further, when human help does not avail one, people turn to the divine. This is a practice across the cultures. La Inca resorts to the divine for Beli’s safety. Cross-cultural fasting “a form of abstinence” is present in “spiritual cultures for many centuries” (Diaz 58) and it is “a worldwide religious practice” (Digitalis 60). Except the rare cases, one cannot claim that fasting is tied to one culture of the world. This is the cultural permeation that is present across the cultures.

The two texts *EOA* and *BWW* share the cases of untenable binaries with the text *White Teeth*. Commensality; the act of eating together, in general, enables the connections between and among the commensal group. Many of the times, the food acts as the relational connector. It acts as means to the closeness and intimacy. At times, it does not do that. When intimacies are deeper, the food differences especially the preferences are quite different. In the *White Teeth*, Archie intends to invite his friend Samad to his home. Clara, his wife, puts forth the idea that she can serve them with the curry but not of the Indian type, “I was just thinkin’ if they’re going to want me to cook dem some curry. I mean, I can cook curry –but it’s my type of curry” (Smith 54). Although we know that Samad is not as flexible as Archie assures, he is so at least with Archie. This indicates that many of the times the intimacies between

and among friends are further deepened by the common foods. Meanwhile, the long established intimacies are not disturbed by the presence of mere differences in the food preferences. There are conditions when the foods perform major roles in connecting people. Concurrently, there are times that they perform very negligible roles in the deepening of the intimacies.

The preference to home-made meals to prepared meals is vanishing as cooking is professionalized increasingly. Hence, the chances of being traditional because of preferring the home-made food is decreasing across the cultures and around the globe. Alsana, Samad's wife, asks with Samad about the food provisions. As she is pregnant, she asks if she can eat the China or her clothes. Samad, in turn, reminds Alsana, "His mother did not, he said, spend the household money, as Alsana did, on prepared meals, yoghurts and tinned spaghetti" (Smith 62). "Alsana punched him full square in the stomach. Samad Iqbal the traditionalist!" (Smith 62). This conflict between Alsana and Samad reminds us the evolutionary nature of culture in all the societies. The traditional societies want the home-made foods while the urban societies adopt the prepared meals. As George Ritger highlights, "dabbawalas" instead of "home-cooked foods" to the workers in the railway stations. For Ritzer this practice has become the instance of "cultural convergence" and is uncontainable to a specific culture in the world (258). Trying "to uncover one's roots entails pain and frustration and might very well be a pointless exercise" as Samad has tried to do, in the world of commercialization, recalling the memories of one's culture would look like the reveries (Tancke). The case between Alsana and Samad stands for all the societies across the world. This does not merely stand for their individual family concern.

Discussing the functions of food suggests that the food is the means to the intimacy, closeness, hospitality and respect. Meeting JP Hamilton with these foods would serve the purpose of the respect, “ while Magid and a change-of-heart Millat slip only four cans of past-their-sell-by-date chickpeas ... and a visit to their assigned old man, the one to whom they will offer pagan charity, one Mr. J.P. Hamilton of Kensal Rise” (Smith 161). What we can deduce from this act of twins by Samad is that foods trigger closeness and respect. The foods, thus, must be served to the right people for garnering the feelings. The generation of these feelings with the offering of certain foods is not typical to a culture. This applies to almost all of the cultures around the world. When we go to meet someone, we rarely visit empty-handed. Certain edibles are taken, especially, if we are visiting the aging people like JP Hamilton. Recalling Elahe Haschemi Yekani, “ Smith constantly mocks the insistence on a real origin that has become only an imaginary reference point... can help us establish the notion that there is no origin, there are multiple origins and the commonalities in many cultural practices, if not in all, are present (226). Respecting the aged people is considered courteous and a manner worth respected. The token of respect to the elders cannot be considered typical of any culture. It pervades cross-culturally.

Celebrations are accompanied by special foods. In other words, there can be very rare celebrations wherein foods are avoided altogether. Celebrations with the inclusion of special foods are a cross-cultural practice. One day when Archie knew that he was going to be father, he thought of celebrating this news with his colleagues. He brought some food and gave to Noel, the office junior at the company where Archie worked, claiming that he was going to be father. Noel did not show the favor to the food he brought. Knowing this, Archie asked Noel to have the sweets he

brought forgetting his origin-i.e. Noel's Pakistani background as discussed by Archie and his preference about sweets, "Bloody hell, Noel... it's just a sweet. I'm just trying to celebrate, mate. Don't you hippies eat sweets or something?" (Smith 68) "Noel patted his stomach and looked desperate" (Smith 68). The point of importance here is that Archibald Jones fetches sweets and distributes them to the colleagues as a means of celebration.

The crisis of right way of parenting has been often times lamented by Samad. He does so with the owner of O'Connell's pool house and Archie. Although both of them console him asking him not to worry, he does not seem to be able to control himself. When the waiter of O'Connell's brought a food containing tomato, Archie accused Samad that it was he who ordered the nasty tomato. " 'Sam, that's yours.' 'I resent that accusation. It is not mine. I never order tomato. I do not want some poor peeled tomato boiled to death, then fried to death'" (Smith 188). Instantly, Samad retorted claiming he would not order the tomato. He had ordered the omelette. Archie and Samad both reject the tomato. This instance suggests that the cultures have favor or disfavor to particular foods. The items of favor or disfavor could be different. However, the concept is present in all cultures. Some foods are welcomed whilst others are questioned and forbidden.

It goes without saying that human teeth last shorter than other lower animals. The mouths with or without teeth determine the nature of food one needs to take. The people who have no teeth cannot chew the hard food. This case cannot be a typical instance. It permeates all cultures. Mr Hamilton in the *WT* cannot eat anything brought by Magid, Millat and their friends. He informs them they need to be careful about their teeth when they are young; they should brush them frequently because human beings are mammals and they will have two chances for the teeth; the lower

animals many opportunities for the teeth. By saying all this, Mr Hamilton means to say that he can eat only the coconut milk for his tooth reasons:

‘I can’t eat any of this, you see... too hard, too bloody hard. The most I could manage is probably the milk in that coconut.... ‘ One sometimes forgets the significance of one’s teeth. We’re not like the lower animals-teeth replaced regularly and all that- we’re of the mammals, you see. And mammals only get two chances, with teeth. More sugar?’ (Smith170-71)

The taxonomies for the restrictions of certain foods are framed on the basis of the nature of geographies or the timeframes. The restrictions imposed in a culture in the 17th century cannot be continued in the 21st century: The reasons are simple: the times have changed, people’s understandings have changed. ‘I should like a bacon sandwich. Yes, that is it. I would love a juicy, yet well-done, tomato ketchup-ed bacon sandwich. On brown’” (Smith 450). Some of the foods are prohibited even for the health reasons. At O’Connell’s club, Magid asks for the tomato Ketchup-ed bacon sandwich. Mickey, the owner of the club, reminds Magid that his interest of eating the bacon sandwich could break the heart of his father. Magid, in turn, responds to Mickey that it is the fat substance in the meats that cause the breaking of the heart. The bacon sandwich is good for the health. The interpretation on the restrictions varies here. The heart disease would not be caused by the bacon but by the fat substances added in the meat. The point of focus is that the taxonomy of restriction evolves continuously. Magid, going beyond the cultural expectation in terms of foods, also generates another framework for the food prohibitions. His framework put the health issues first. He does not like to understand why Muslims are prohibited porks and bacons. Rather, he prefers bacon because it could restore his health. The food

restrictions have the particular bases in a time and geography. This suggests that a person's food interests are not dictated by the cultural expectations particularly when the immigration scenes are at the play. Also, some of the members of any culture have inclination to develop the counter-culture or sub-culture. This is atypical of cultures.

4.2 Subject as Multitude

Difference exists even within an individual. An individual cannot be reduced to a set of fixed characteristics. The pundit in *EOA* favors the ecumenical viewpoint who is considered to have possessed a power to consecrate the foods; Shiva, the Hindu God is presented as the drug lover while he obviously has the positive sides and worshipped as God. A lady called Margaret cannot learn to take trays while serving the drinks: wants the job but does not have the skills required. *BWW* has Oscar who wishes to be slim but cannot control his diets; Beli, Lola's mother, scolds her daughter because she is unkind to be kind. Ybon, a prostitute, seems to love Oscar and cooks grits for him but plays an important role in killing him. In *WT*, Samad is a good and consummate waiter but a bad husband and father. Hortense *BWW*den prefers naturalness but disowns her daughter. Samad Iqbal cannot withstand the Bulgarian food but enjoys the alcoholic drinks. These knots of contradictions show the multiple sides of a person.

V.S. Naipaul ends his novel *EOA* with the meditation on death and decay. For that end, he creates a scene wherein his sister at Trinidad is dead and he has to visit the sister's family and accompany the last rites. Immediately before leaving for Trinidad, he has to attend a prize-giving ceremony for his old friend at England. The occasion of the ceremony is not only the congratulatory occasion; the ceremony performs additional function. He could examine "other lives, other views" (377). The lunch was a time of getting together with the old friends and examining the

perspectives of people in regards to living. At the lunch and around that time, the immigrant, the narrator tells the readers that he has been able to view other views and many views. This expresses the need to revisit one's self time and again.

Jack, when at the deathbed, wished to be with the friends and wanted to enjoy the last drink. Before his death, he drove to the pub for the favorite drink. This indicates the required forgetfulness of the fear of the death. When one is afraid of death, the dispelling of fear of death, one needs some means. For Jack, the dispelling has been done with his drink. Narrator does not seem to have favored this English man's way of taking his illness and the last of his breath that way because he was in a difficult condition-such as he had to take the ice for the lungs, he would be fatigued and faint, even then Jack drove himself to the pub for the celebration of his life. It is even his wife who did not want him to do so. "She said, He wanted to be with his friends for the last time.' To be with his friends; to enjoy the last drink; to have the final sweetness of life as he knew it" (Naipaul 50). This displays the difference between Jack and his wife's views about life even though they belonged to the same English culture. This peculiarity of Jack stands for the multitude of a subject. It is not such a predictable thing about one's life. One can hardly tell about one's behavior. Jack's behavior is such a case in point.

The idea of consecrating food seems to be particular to the Hindu communities. However, that is the common practice in almost all the communities. When something is to be made sacred, consecration takes place. When Sati, the narrator's sister died, the final offerings were on the way. The pundit would instruct the son for the process of consecration and further purification of food for the offering to the deceased soul. "The pundit gave his last instructions. One brass plate with consecrated food was to be placed somewhere; another plate of food was to be cast

into the river that had borne away her ashes: a final offering” (Naipaul 385). The consecrated foods are placed in particular places as instructed by the pundit. What is equally significant is the power of pundits. They are endowed with the ability to turn the foods in the pure and impure ones with some forms of mantras from vedas or other religious texts. The pundit questions certain types of other pundits. It demonstrates that his devotion to the scriptures has been liberal. He interprets the scriptures in liberal manner. When the pundit himself seems to be liberal or ecumenical, can it be that the food consecrated by him would take the form that is intended through the consecration. The various versions of the pundit and consecration could not have gone together. A questioning mind is not considered good in the act of the consecration while the pundit seems to have possessed such a mindset. This multi-sidedness of the pundit displays the multiplicity of the subject in Hindu pundit traditions.

Despite the placement of particularities, the foods for eating and foods for offering to the deceased face changes not only because of the migration. The evolution of cultures takes place in course of time. Obviously, the migration does bring changes. The pundit who had come for the last rites of Sati adopted a changed approach for eating. Earlier, he would eat sitting on the blankets cross-legged but now he ate sitting on the verandah. He talked while eating. The change of this eating custom: earlier sitting cross-legged on blankets or flour sacks or sugar-sacks spread on the top with cotton now he ate by himself, earlier he would be fed. This indicates that the changes in the eating custom are either by his locational differences i.e. Hindu culture in Trinidad could/cannot retain the purity as maintained in India, and, also, the present day India too does not maintain the scriptural purity in India itself. Thus, the changes in the eating customs to a powerful person (religiously) the pundit also

displays that claiming the originality or the purity of a culture creates a problem for the person who claims it to be so. Again, the self of the pundit is not fixed. His willingness to change depending on the situation around is the reminder of the multiplicity of the subjectivity. When an individual is so different with oneself, expecting whole the culture to be similar would be a problem.

The narrator's landlord was fond of the Indian divinities: Lord Shiva and Lord Krishna. Lord Shiva's drug taking idea has been highlighted. Although very rare is it to talk about the foods of the gods, the divinities are talked about their magical aspects. The landlord would write poems about Shiva's drug-taking aspects. This eating custom of god and his drug taking habit cannot be a positive trait in England. The landlord writes poems about Krishna and Shiva and the narrator mentions: " And there was knowledge of the sort of the blue aboriginal gods of the Hindu pantheon, the lascivious Krishna and the drug-taking Shiva..." (Naipaul 232). Shiva's food-the drug is very contradictory even for the devotees. To argue from another corner, the Hindus have gods who are bestowed with not only one aspect- all benevolent or good. They are represented with some nasty qualities. Shiva, the god has been shown with the varieties of the Indian sides. Shiva's drug-taking tendency shows the many-sidedness of the Hindu gods:

Shiva is revered as a god of opposites.... Shiva has many different sides to him... He combines elements of the masculine and the feminine. For example, in his guise as Nataraja, the lord of the dance, he wears one male earring and one female earring. (Ramen Npg)

Ramen, thus, focuses on the many-sidedness of the Hindu God- Shiva who has neither masculine dominance nor the feminine one. This is a reminder of the fact that there is nothing called absolute, everything needs to be reevaluated. Mark McWatt's reading

of novel that “ establishes for the reader a revolutionary logic that invites constant reappraisal” ((281) shows that it is not only the human beings who are constantly changing their understandings and impressions of the world, it is also the gods.

As an immigrant, one can neither be true to the native culture nor to the host culture, “ both the traditional and the host culture may influence immigrants’ food selection and how they make up their meals”(Kumar and Wandel 68).The narrator’s visit to New York and his effort to refrain from the foods his culture disallows draws the attention of the food scholars. He cannot accept the roasted chicken for his culture does not allow it to him. For refraining from it, he had taken the banana with him. Nevertheless, he would not resist the offer rather plans, “ eating the chicken over the wastepaper basket” (Naipaul 181). Thus, he accepts it. But the guilty conscience in him that the other members of his culture might know it disturbs him. He tries to hide the smell of the oil from the chicken. Ultimately, he decides to take bath or shower to purify himself from the guilty act he committed. His sinfulness, his own definition of his task, needs to be cleansed. So he takes bath or shower. This food stuff as the restrained food for his culture, the obligation for eating and the cleansing of the guilt are significant for the food customs analysis. In fact, while in the journey from the Indian community cannot eat from the foreign hand and the food that is taken to be impure. For that end, the narrator took the banana while in the journey from the airplane but had to eat the roasted chicken and had to take bath for the impurity he had happened to cause. When the customs for appetite are challenged, a migrant, a tourist, attempts to adjust, avoid the restricted food and endeavors to save himself/herself from something that is untoward. He has eaten what he should not have eaten. As Asako Nakai the novel contains “ perpetual self-interrogation” (156) the narrator is shown as the person with multiple self. This split mindset seems to be

so particular when it comes to the discussion of the plurality of the self. However, this is the general tendency of any subject particularly the human subjects.

Pitton seems to be having the tea time. The indication that the cultures have the fixed foods and food having times is almost similar to all cultures. The breakfast, the lunch, the teatime, the dinner and supper times are fixed. Pitton, at the tea time, stands at the lawn for some sort of relaxation. What is more, Phillips calls Pitton at a fixed time and narrator does not know why Pitton is invited by him. He ponders on the gesture. Was it the friendliness, was he required to call Pitton? Was that the authority on the part of Pitton that he had to call Pitton. These sorts of questions display that the call has various meanings and Pitton's subjectivity along with Phillips's self can be read in multiple ways:

Every afternoon at about three I heard him shout from somewhere beyond the vegetable garden. After sometime I knew what he was shouting. He was shouting: 'Fred!' It was a call to Pitton to tea.

Whether this was a gesture of friendship; whether it was something he was required to do; whether they all had together in the Phillipses' sitting room or in the kitchen ,or whether Pitton just went and took away his tea, I don't know. (Naipaul 243-44)

Phillipses' invitation for the tea and undecidability of his intention of invitation can be read as the multiplicity of an act, by implication, the plurality of a subject.

Mr Phillips would recruit the ladies for the landlord for the cooking and serving purposes. Once, it so happens that Margaret, an old lady has been hired for the purpose. Surprisingly enough, the old lady serves the drinks to the landlord without the tray. " A bottle in one hand and a glass in the other- I ask you. He didn't like it. " A little formality, Margaret," He said to me. " A little formality. It's all I ask. A drink

isn't just a drink. It's an occasion" " (Naipaul 356). Again, next time, the old lady repeats her behavior. She serves the landlord without the tray. This behavior can be interpreted in various ways as that the old dog cannot be taught the new tricks among others. Whatever the interpretations are, the same person who wants the job must have been committed enough, she could not be so not because she was old, we know even the young ones to lack the required commitment for their jobs. In fact, this is the reality of the life. This is the multiplicity of life. One is committed to one's one aspect while seems so careless about another dimension of the life that the people are attracted to draw the conclusion that the person is totally careless and the person is much disorganized.

In Diaz's *BWW*, Lola and Oscar often dine together not only at their home. Their dining at the Douglas dining hall signifies their sibling closeness." Twice a week he and his sister would dine at the Douglass dining hall" (Diaz 50). "Despite swearing early on to change his nerdy ways, he continued to eat, continued not to exercise" (Diaz 50). Oscar has been portrayed as the obese boy. The reason for his obesity account to many: lack of exercise, nerdiness and the continuous eating. He had to have control over his dietary habits even for his health. His eating obsession does not allow being slim. His fatness makes him less attractive and he is not favored by the girls. He deeply wants to be favored by girls. He cannot be so for his habit of obsessive eating. Oscar wishes to lose weight and look attractive but cannot do so because he neither exercises not changes his eating habits. One is against oneself. It is Oscar who ruins himself. His habit stops him from being attractive for winning the love of ladies. He does not have a definable self. He possesses multiple selves which are beyond his control.

Having portrayed the shapeless self of Oscar Wao, another instance appears to bear a relevance of Walt Whitman: “ I am large...I contain multitudes” (84). Abelard, known for his exemplary loyalty to Trujillo, attended a party organized by Trujillo: “ Shortly after the fateful party” invited by Trujillo, some other friend invited Abelard “ for few drinks at Club Santiago”, later on, as “ Abelard was fumbling with the keys to open the trunk he stated loudly, I hope there aren’t any bodies in here. That he made the forgoing remark is not debated” (Diaz 233-34). An absolutely loyal citizen who always attended the banquets “held in Trujillo’s honor” has not been counted on since he is charged of a calumny (Diaz 215). An admirer turns out to be an enemy. *BWW*, “ an intricate, multilayered, and compelling tale” involves a wide variety of such evidences (Hamilton and Jones 42).

In general, the parenting efforts are best executed at the meal times. The drinking and eating manners are monitored by the parents. The food times are not only the food times. They are also the times for the restraining and disciplining of children. The eating/drinking manners are associated with the learning of the civilized odes of living. Lola comes back from the Greek diner, this workplace is disliked by her mother, Beli. Thus, Beli intends to scold her saying that she would not work in the Greek diner. “ Oscar would be at the breakfast table, stammering, I don’t know, Mami, I don’t” (Diaz 60). Mother’s rage fills the house, the rage goes into everything including the children’s food. When the mother asks who let Lola come to house, Oscar would answer strategically. He would say that he did not know. The eating times are restraining times; the disciplining times. Lola had prepared herself that way in the eating times. Her eating times meant the reception of scolding. This behavior can be extended to the cross-cultural connections. Almost every parent would catch the children at eating time for the restraining. That is why the nagging parenting

concept is popular at the parenting genres. Further, a mother, customarily, is a loving figure. However, this novel presents mother as the hostile figure. The customary image has been challenged. More conventionally, the mother should have loved the daughter in the food times. This reminder of the electra complex- mother daughter hostility is the challenge to the mother daughter relationship. This is the manifestation of the varied subject. Mother figure is not always the loving figure, it can be even the hostile figure that challenges daughter to tear up. As Marissa K. Lopez discusses the difficult terrain of Oscar “the titular Oscar is ni de alli ni de alla, from neither here nor there” (6), his mother Beli faces the same plight. Neither she seems the loving mother to Lola, nor is really brutal so that she could kill her daughter when the daughter goes against her. This division in a person’s mind is not so unusual even when we examine our own behavior.

Beli seems to have been very strict to her daughter. She seems to be unkind to be kind. It is not easy to label her kind when we find her to be very tough one. Even then, Beli can be called an unkind mother who has not been able to be kind to be kind. Hortense Bowden in *WT* has a similar trait who tries to be kind by being unkind.

Beli’s dual self best serves the explanation of Oscar’s culinary skills. Oscar was considered “little Porfirio Rubirosa- the third- most- famous Dominican in the world (First came the Failed Cattle Thief, and then the Cobra Woman herself, Maria Montez” by Yunion, the narrator (Diaz 12). Such a famous person lacks the basics of culinary skills; and it was his sister who had to be relied upon for all the cooking at home. Lola imagines Oscar having trouble getting his food cooked when she was a runaway once: “I was the one who cooked for us, the only thing Oscar knew how to make was grilled cheese. I imagined him thin as a reed, wandering around the kitchen opening cabinets forlornly” (Diaz 66). Oscar’s pitiable lack of talent shows that fully

rounded education is what he mostly requires. To pinpoint, such a famous character is lacking in culinary concerns. His infamy and fame constitute his personalty spectrum.

In Beli's bakery, a dentist's wife comes for taking the cakes and not the doctor. The dentist is too lazy to come to take the cakes. The wife collects energy for the fetching of the cakes to the husband's choice. "And now it was his wife who came to the bakery to pick up the cakes. Yel dentist? Beli inquired innocently. That one 's too lazy to do anything, his wife said with no little exasperation" (Diaz 94). We know that the husband: the dentist is good at his task but to the fetching of the cakes. This is easy to be interpreted as the food custom: the patriarchal behavior. The husbands are assigned the tasks away from the kitchen. The wives for the kitchen related activities. The feminist mode of blaming to the patriarchy has been the remarkable reminder. The patriarchy confines the women only in the kitchen. The dentist's behavior is the similar representation of patriarchal dominance. Dentist is too lazy to go to the bakery and this is the universal representation of the patriarchal indicator. A dentist who must have studied hard for his dentistry is represented with the loth especially for coming to take the cake. This is normal to expect as one can not be good at all trades. He cannot be lazy at all times. Laziness for some affairs is the general case. This is the reminder of the multiplicity of the self.

Ybon, the girlfriend to Oscar, draws the analysis especially her drinking manners. She holds Oscar's hands while in the dinner. Verbally, she asks with Oscar for the space to each other. Oscar "wondered why she insisted on holding his hand during dinner" (Diaz 293). This case might seem particular to Dominican culture. However, holding one's hand is universal phenomenon. When one detaches and distances hands, it represents the cold relations. Holding hands tightly generally stands for the relational warmth. Even so, Ybon holding hands in times of dinner, the

eating customs for closeness, the custom she had internalized demonstrates her wish to remain close to Oscar. Next level of reading of this acted out custom by Ybon can be stretched to the food times and treachery. We can easily understand that the relational warmth expected by Ybon is not genuine because she has said to Oscar that a captain might attack Oscar when he sees him with Ybon. This acting out of closeness is so closely associated with treachery. Ybon's captain kills Oscar, we know it later. The point of focus, then, is why are food times so usually used for the execution of the crimes? We have often seen such conspiracies of crimes in the times of the food consumption. This universal looking connection between the warmth sense in the food customs and the planting of the conspiracy execution drives on to go deeply. Ybon's imposition of closeness in food times displays her conspiracy to Oscar. Ybon's hypocrisy to show the love to Oscar and the fake closeness to him have led to the death of Oscar. This displays how a person can have multiple selves. Also, unpredictability in one's behavior is not only Ybon's case; it applies to almost all of the human beings.

The novel abounds in the tyranny of Trujillo and Beli's family has not been able to resist or withstand that tyranny. Beli herself had been the victim of Trujillo's torture. Her body is full of scars. When Beli, Oscar's mother has thought of migrating to the U.S. from the DR, she looks more contemplative, "during her last months in the DR Beli spent more time inside the love motels than she had in school" (Diaz 127). This instance substantiates that the food places function as the solace, the places for relieving the stress. Beli must have been in the severe stress because she had to abandon her birthplace- DR and resettle in a foreign place for her security. She was convinced that Trujillo regime in DR would not allow to live happily in DR and, also, she knows that the US would not be an easy option for her because that is not the land

of her familiarity. Thus, we see Beli in love motels attempting to find the relief. Beli, a bright student at EI Redentor, did not have the ways to save herself from the paws of Trujillo. She had to think of protecting herself from him. The consequence was that she was stressful and needed to visit the love motels. A girl educationally equipped is utterly unequipped when it comes to the security.

The multiplicity of the self is further proved by Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*. This novel corroborates the echoes begun by the two novels. The Sod's Law or the principles of Christianity has it that if a piece of toast is dropped and the butter side is down, there is bad luck:

The principles of Christianity and Sod's Law (also known as Murphy's Law) are the same: Everything happens to me, for me. So, if a man drops a piece of toast and it lands butter-side down, this unlucky event is interpreted as being proof of an essential truth about bad luck: that the toast fell as it did just to prove to you, Mr. Unlucky, that there is a defining force in the universe and it is bad luck. It is not random.

(Smith 44)

This example in *WT* has been presented to justify the accident and tooth fall of Clara Bowden while Ryan Topps remains safe. His self-contradictory nature displays how a character or a person cannot keep the convictions set earlier or in any phase of life. It happens so because of the evolving nature of an individual.

Samad's way of working – cooking and helping people eat has been very significant. Samad is a good Muslim, good husband, good father, good immigrant: we can doubt upon these propositions. However, his upping of the working hours to fourteen hours a day can be read with the special interest, since he is a waiter, he prepares the napkin, corrects the ways the knives are ordered, forks are arranged and

glasses are polished. His honing of these skills stand for his devotion to the profession – waitressing:

No matter how bad a Muslim he might be, no none could say Samad wasn't a consummate waiter. He had taken one tedious skill and honed it to perfection....Outside the doors of the Palace he was a masturbator, a bad husband, an indifferent father, with all the morals of an Anglican. But inside here, within these four green and yellow Paisley walls, he was a one-handed genius. (Smith 141)

Why does he involve himself so much in the profession of cooking and feeding? His continuous refinement on the ways for the cooking, eating, and serving signal a worker's devotion to his profession. His sole involvement in eating and drinking ways can be extended to the people's passions for their professions. Samad, the genius waiter, who love to spend much time in the hotel, has the obsession for the eating and the drinking profession. His way of working is excellent. However, Samad cannot keep the conviction he sets for his wife and children- the purity paradigm. Samad is good waiter, but strict and bad husband father and bad Muslim. His personality dimensions are many and they do not cohere with each other. As Lia Blaz Ward puts about a place where Samad visits so often, "O'Connell's is a heterodox and contradictory location" (61) same is the case with Samad. He is really good at waitressing while such a bad person when it comes to being a husband. He is a knot of contradictions.

In the similar vein, Archibald Jones has the obsession with English breakfasts and DIYs. Jones, an intimate friend to an immigrant from Bangladesh has the love of English breakfasts. He is married to Clara; he has no passions, no ambitions. Clara realizes that Archie has forgotten the romantic side of the life. However, he has the

deeper touches with the English breakfast and DIYs. He is closer to Samad, a man from Bangladesh. However, he is afraid of the foreign foods and foreign customs of eating. He likes nothing else but the English ways of eating ie DIYs –do it yourself ways of English. When one cooks the food for himself, when one serves the food for himself, he could be termed as the independent person, “ No White knight, then, this Archibald Jones. No aims, no hopes, no ambitions. A man whose greatest pleasures were English breakfasts and DIY” (Smith 48). The western notion of solitariness has been applied to him. However, this could be a way for the isolation. This instance of eating habit of Archibald Jones could be stretched to the macrolevel analysis. People have the habits of doubting upon the foods prepared by the strangers. In *EOA*, the narrator would doubt upon the foods prepared by strangers. Even while in the visit, the narrotr would take bananas with him to avoid the foods by foreign hands. This intertextual commonaliyty can be read as the cross-cultural presence of the food customs that involves the avoidance of the strangers in the preparation of the foods. Despite the love of DIY, Archie intermingles himself with immigrants like Samad, visits O’Connell’s Club. His efforts to associate with the immigrants and still holding the love to hisEnglish ways can be read as the marks of contradictions.

The Bengaladeshi/ Indian ways of eating are influenced by the contents they have in their edibles. Since the people from Bengaladesh/Indians love the peepers, onions and chickens in the hot oils, Samad and Shiva work in a hotel. They are waiters there. Once Shiva was asking with Samad about his relation with Poppy-Burt Jones. At that moment, Shiva was catching pepper with his knife, he tossed the onions nd peppers in the hot oil. This way of preparing the food reminds the items eaten at Indian subcontinent. Stitching these details to the customs, the people from Indian subcontinent eat hot foods. Their vegetables are hot and eating times ase hot and the

people who eat these items seem very spirited by these hot peppers: “‘Nothing is going on. I met her only once. I barely know her.’ ‘So: what’s the damage? A grope? A snog?’ ‘A handshake only. She is my son’s teacher,’ Shiva tossed the onions and peppers into hot oil. ‘ You’ve had the odd stray thought. So what?’ “(Smith 144). The point of focus is that the customs of eating sugar and pepper have different effects on those who eat them. The customs of eating these different items invite differentiated practices. Shiva, in England, still tosses the pepper and Indian food. This shows that a person is the mixture of many. He has migrated yet has the habit of the native land.

Some foods are restricted by cultures at large. There are other preferences of an individual. The preferences of an individual forming the bases for the restrictions may or may not correspond to their cultures. However, there are food restrictions at the individual level. One instance of this is that the love of DIY and English breakfast by Archie. His doubt upon the foreign foods is uniquely presented in the text. While Samad and Arhie were involved in the second world war, one day Samad promised with Archie that in 1975 Samad would invite Arhie for the food prepared by his wife, “ ‘ You will have dinner with my wife and I in the year 1975. When we are big-bellied men sitting on our money mountains. Somehow we will meet’” (Smith 104). To this promise, Arhie smile weakly. He understands the sentiment of friendship. But he restricts the foreign foods because he has developed that nature in him. His lack of flexibility in terms of accepting the foods from other cultures shows his awkward personality. He loves the friendship with Samad but not the acceptance of the foods that Samad might offer him. These individual inclinations towards the hatred to foreign foods are not uncommon among the people in the communities. For various reasons, people seem to have developed the love or hatred to the foods that are

unfamiliar to them. Samad lives pragmatically by masturbating with his left hand. However, he envisions the invitation party to Archie down the years. This imagination and pragmatism cannot cohere; rather they collide and form a different picture of the person.

The foods that are unfamiliar to one's body can't be welcomed by one's body. This can be a natural case. Or is it cultural? Is it the cultural conditioning on the bodies? Do the foods have positive/harmful effects on the bodies because of the lack of cultural conditioning? The answer requires further elaboration. Samad has been invited by friends but he denies joining them because he has taken the Bulgarian food and his body has shown the uncomfortable condition. His stomach is turned over and he needs sleep. He feels like sleeping, "Samad looked at Archie for a moment and then shook his head. 'Come on, let's get inside. This Bulgarian food. Turns my stomach over. I need a bit of sleep'" (Smith 103). His needs tell us that it is the body itself that rejects the foreign foods. Presumably, the bodies too are conditioned by cultures. equally, it could be the in-built nature of the bodies. Whatever, even at the level of the bodies, the strange foods are rejected. This is true for everyone. The difference could be in terms of the degrees. Samad is the repertoire of contradictions because he is rigid and is not rigid. To say again, he looks rigid but drinks alcohol and dates with the English girl. Again, he cannot tolerate the unfamiliar foods for himself. He has migrated yet attempts to keep his cultural integrity. He is the knot of the contradictions.

Like Samad Miah Iqbal, the multitudinous character can be spotted in Hortense Bowden. Hortense Bowden convinces Irie that Lord Jesus never wanted the people to follow the path of artificiality. Showing the plasticated orange and flowers, she reminds Irie that the Lord wanted the natural and no adulteration to the natural

aspects. Vandana Shiva from India has a movement against the hybrid seeds that have negative consequences not only to the farmers but also to the consumers. Shiva argues that the borrowed seeds are more prone to pesticides (Shiva10). Hortense Bowden in *White Teeth* advocates similar purity. The point of concern is that the mixtures of foods, the unnatural ways of producing the foods have been prohibited by Hortense. This prohibition is another important framework for the cultural typicality and commonality. Hortense's extra-ordinary inclination to Jehovah's Witness and tiltation to natural makes her unpragmatic. She is stubborn enough because she has disowned her daughter, she has forsaken the motherly love yet advocates for the naturalness of flowers and fruits, "Dat's not a real orange, dear. All de fruit is plasticated. De flowers are plasticated also. I don't believe the Lord meant me to spend de little housekeeping money I possess on perishable goods. Have some dates." (Smith 384). Hortense, who has been for the sake of natural love for her daughter Clara only because she had married to a person of her choice, advocates for the love of natural flowers and fruits. Philip Tew corroborates the theme of the novel, "Smith's ambition to embrace the width and depth of a contradictory culture, where individuals remain innately contradictory themselves" (252). This contradictory nature of Hortense stands for the plurality in an individual.

In the ensuing section, I propose to explain how the representation of the variation within a given culture can have an impact on the challenging to the homogeneity myth. For instance, in EOA, while the narrator was travelling through Montago Bay, he came across the waiters at a hotel who would wait on the tourists but would despise them. It signals the variation of the waiters. In general, the waiters are considered to have the utmost sense of hospitality to the tourists. The waiters here

show such tendency and also have the attitude to hate them. Similar variation exists in a culture in all three texts I have selected as my primary evidence.

4.3 Internal Cultural Variation

EOA has Alan, the writer from England, who mocks the landlord, a native of England, about a toast from the chaffing dish; Phillips a native of England recounts his childhood about the tea to his father and wine to the laborers. A lady with the mental disorder in England is kept in the bread and breakfast place because of her disreputable condition. In *BWW*, Abelard, the grandfather of Oscar drinks excessively when his daughter is to be misbehaved by Trujillo, his wife does not do so. Lola and the Gangster take pescado frito in their outing which is the exclusive food for the outings. Oscar has never eaten toto and still claims that he is Dominican. In *White Teeth*, Samad does preaching in eating time while Alsana dislikes it; the company dinner of Archie is expected to be fancier next time. Luncheon Vouchers are not in use at O'Connell's club which were in use in the past. The variations exist within a given culture.

Examination of variation in a culture begins from a character in *The Enigma of Arrival* named Pitton, who does not wear tie in times of eating ice-cream in the summer Sundays, and when he is angry, while other characters while other characters do not incline themselves to the tie and ice-cream except the narrator who accompanies Pitton in times of eating the ice-cream. He would wear tie on every food eating time. However, on summer Sundays, before the lunch and at the time of eating an ice-cream, he would not wear the tie. "He was wearing no tie. The shirt of the day before, but had no tie. I saw him without a tie only on Sundays sometimes, in the summer, when the ice-cream van passed before lunch and tinkled in chimes, and we both went out to buy ice-cream" (Naipaul 297). Ice-cream, summer and Sundays

denote the special relation. It is the ice-cream that calls up the memory of the summer and vice versa. The ecological sociology discusses this aspect. The type of food one society accepts is the result of the geographical, climatic structures of a place. On the contrary, other characters in the novels such as Bray and Phillips do not share the traits of this tendency as practiced by Pitton. This taking of ice-cream by taking off the tie is not done by other characters from England. This is an example of the internal cultural variation.

Tourism involves the customary hospitality codes. The tourism is also an occasion for eating and feeding. The narrator of the novel left Jamaica and landed at Montego Bay. There were negro waiters who would serve the foods to the tourists with foods. But they were not at all affirmative to the tourists. They would wait for the lunch to serve. But they would despise them. This stands that the lunch time would be a mixed time of love and hatred. Serving times for the tourists involve the cross-cultural issues. The hosts and the tourists would have their own preferences in terms of the cultural practices. They are required to have the sense of commonality for the purpose of business. These people having food together means that they need to suspend their particular cultural values for some moments. This is exactly the scenario in which the food habits/customs get questioned challenged, threatened and a new method gets introduced there. “...landed again at Montago Bay. We stayed there for many hours. A hotel lunch was served by sulky, aggressive Negro waiters who had got too used waiting on tourists and despised them” (Naipaul 179). The same happens when the narrator leaves Jamaica and reaches Montego Bay where the waiters deal with the tourists’ lunch in an ambivalent manner. This way of the treatment suggests the contradictions that involve in a person. The waiters who had to practice the hospitality have not done so. They are divided; have the split way to their

profession. Professionally, they are expected to display the hospitable nature while in reality they are reluctant to display such a nature. Berna Koseglou finds the narrator of the novel with “the cultural contradictions” (31) and this is not only the case of the narrator, this is also the case of the waiters at the hotel who seem to have the disposition to the variation of their profession.

The tourists are not respected as they had to be because the tourists enjoyed more privileges than the waiters. The waiters had to be respectful but hated them as the waiters suffered and the tourists enjoyed. This discrimination cannot be continued. This brings the variation in the profession and the culture.

Alan, the writer, at England in Naipaul’s *EOA* has a typical habit. He eats alone. He loves the solitude. His food time restrictions are truly unique. Once the landlord of the narrator asks Alan if he can bring some toast in a chafing dish. In fact, the landlord wanted to ask Phillips to bring the toast to him. ” ‘Would you like some toast? Shall I get Phillips to bring you some toast in a chafing dish?’ And Alan had roared with laughter...” (Naipaul 316-17). Alan and the landlord were both from England; nonetheless, their food habits were not similar. People from the same culture do not have its followers having the same food habits. For Alan, eating the toast on the chafing dish is not a permissible, acceptable idea, while for the landlord, it was an acceptable idea. This instance stands for the individual differences among the members of a culture. Also, the food restrictions are not the macro level concepts. Rather, they are even the individual entities. Alan and the landlord who are English characters cannot have the same attitude to the chafing dish although they belong to the same culture. Same culture does not mean similar behaviors and the equal weight provided to all the elements in the same fashion. As Robert Fraser reads the behavior of the narrator as “he reads Wiltshire like a palimpsest, layer upon layer” (28), same is

the case with the people in a given culture. There are innumerable variations among them.

The individual restrictions can take the form of individual preferences in terms of food. Jack used to celebrate the seasons. His nature was compatible to the nature. Similarly, his love of pleasures of food and drive to the pubs show that he cannot tolerate the poor qualities of the foods. His love of luxury in terms of food stands for the hatred of the poor quality of the foods. He restricts the food that he does not like, “the pleasures then of food and drive to the pub, the long, muzzying drinks” (Naipaul 255). His going to the pub and tasting the food exhibit that luxury to the food is inevitable. He does not prefer the food that does not appeal to his senses. A comparison has been made between Pitton and Jack. Jack would love the drinking while Pitton seemed very disciplined. Piton did not love the eating and drinking as much as Jack. These two English people have very different dispositions. They have developed their own unique tendencies. Thus, claiming the homogeneity in terms of the culture would not provide us the more accurate picture of the facts.

An individual's food preferences can be merely his or her case or it can be the representation or an example that might stand for all the members of that community. Nothing clearer can be stated about this. Jack's pub going and engaging himself in the pleasures of the food could be his particular inclination. Jack would go to the pubs on Sundays. Not other days. This could be the group behavior because in the western countries, Sundays are holidays. The restriction on pub going on other days shows that the pleasure of the foods is not the whole week or every day of the week idea. On other days, Jack had to be occupied with the tasks that he needed to perform. Sundays were the days of pub joy. This food and joy restrictions on other days indicate that a person in a community enjoys the preferred foods on some days and cannot do so on

other days not only because of the availability of the money rather the cultural and official concerns affect this decision. Jack's pub going habit on Sundays has been dictated by this dimension. To deepen, the food restrictions take place on various grounds from economic to the cultural and individual preferences. This must be the self-imposed restriction for other English characters in the novel do not have this sort of the restriction. This is again another instance for the cultural variation even within a given culture.

. Bray discusses his childhood time. Those days the children would take tea to their fathers who would work on the field. While the laborers would be allowed to consume the beer, the fathers would be provided with the tea. This instance can be stretched to the food restrictions. The notion of tea for fathers and beer for the laborers brings a hierarchy. It was the tea only for the fathers and beer for laborers, "He spoke often of the past to me. He spoke of harvest time and children taking tea to their fathers in the field; of shepherds and their huts on the downs; of laborers who were granted vast daily allowances of beer..." (Naipaul 265). Fathers would not be intoxicated while working on the field. Nevertheless, the laborers would be drunk and intoxicated. They would be much tired; they needed much strength for the field. Thus, they were provided with the alcohol. The fathers simply needed some amount of energy and that could be supplied with the tea. To focus, the food types provided show the food restrictions imposed on the fields. The workers from a culture have different food items compared to the masters of the culture. This variation can be highlighted as evidence against the cultural homogeneity.

Mrs Bray often shares a story in which Mr Bray had gone to fetch a woman who is unidentified by the administration in London. The lady is brought and kept in a bed and breakfast place, a cheap place run by a person with limited finance. The

woman is not kept in a luxury hotel for some reasons. First, she is unidentified, second, a person who is found must have been thought that she was a carefree lady. Whatever, she is restricted from having the high quality food because of her status, “She had told the ticket collector that she had no ticket..... the woman was to be put up in bed-and-breakfast place for the night” (Naipaul 336). Thus, it is the culture that allows or denies the high quality food to the people. This could be particular to any instance or individual, or it could be applied to the society at large. The lady kept in the bed and breakfast place was forced to go through the same plight because of the culture in England. Not all the people would have been sent to the bread and breakfast station. The lady has been sent because of her deplorable condition. This amounts to the understanding that the cultural homogeneity is a problematic concept. The differences are present when we view the cultures in the subtle ways.

BWW corroborates the internal cultural variation instances. Dr. Abelard Luis Cabral attended the party at Club Santiago, in a drunken state had a vigorous mood. “That night at Club Santiago he tried to shake off his sense of imminent doom by talking vigorously about history, medicine, Aristophanes, by getting very drunk” (Diaz 233-34). He made some remarks about Trujillo in his drunkenness. The blame of treason was laid upon him; he was to be punished. The alcohol and people’s state of mind: even the most loyal looking people open up the anger against somebody in the state of drunkenness. If it is the universally accepted phenomenon, what do the particular cultures claim? Drunkenness and openness exist mutually regardless of any cultural values be it Dominican or American or Asian. The point of focus here is the drinking manner has similar consequences all around the globe: across the cultures and across the times. Dr Abelard, a faithful fellow to Trujillo who never spoke against the regime spoke disagreeable and had to be punished. Therefore, the customs of

eating and drinking particularly the drinking of alcohol surround similar sort of environment; the alcohol induces similar sort of occasions i.e. the openness. The drunkenness refers to openness irrespective of the cultural imperatives. Alongside, the text displays that Abelard drinks excessively when he gets to know that his daughter is going to be misbehaved by Trujillo while his wife does not drink. This represents the fact that the culture varies even internally.

In the face of food scarcity in Beli's life, Beli often talks to people about her having of foods in abundance in her life. She relates it to the parties she would attend. "What a world she spun! Beli talked of parties and pools and polo games and dinners where bloody steak was heaped onto plates and grapes were as common as tangerines" (Diaz 86). Also, the commonness of grapes as tangerines in the parties and her imagination of it points to the amounts in abundance. The economic abundance and want for it indicates that the food restrictions in one's life concern the financial availability. Beli wishes for the best foods while La Inca does not. This stands for the variation between and among people of the same culture.

Assigning the function of certain foods be it for luxury or necessity also can be taken as restrictions or prohibitions. There are certain foods in every culture that are expected to be consumed. Either the foods are reserved for an occasion or for certain cultural session. This is so in every culture. This prohibition i.e. the reservation of a food for an occasion can be seen in the novel.. The Dominicans love to have rums and eat pescado frito in their vacations. Samana and Beli went to the beaches, walked along the beaches and had pescado frito and the drinking of the rum. " They did all the stuff we Dominicans love to do on our vacations. They ate pescado frito and waded in the rio" (Diaz 133). This food instance acts as the food for certain occasions like vacation, picnic, outing or any other festival. These special foods for

certain occasions are prevalent across the cultures. Perhaps the foods for occasions had been designed as the modes of celebrations and they are prohibited for daily use for the cost reasons or the cultural reasons. The foods are reserved for special occasions. The variation of food availability demonstrates the differing nature of a culture. As Rick Ayers and William Ayers, the novel “leaps between Ebonics, Spanglish, Dominican slang, Standard English” (121), so is the case with the variations of the food occasions. As a society contains multiple languages, it contains various types of foods reserved for various occasions. This is another glaring example of the homogeneity paradox- a culture is so many and it contains various dimensions. In spite of the economic access, people have special foods on special occasions. However, if there is crisis, people do not have the special food. Nonetheless, whether there is crisis or not, people tend to manage special foods on the special occasions.

The culture at the personal level and the culture at the communal level are very different realizations. The homogeneity factor comes to a question when the individual adherents of a culture have dissimilar food habits, “You ever ate toto. Melvin would ask, and Oscar would shake his head, answer decently, no matter how many times Mel asked” (Diaz 180). We can understand through Melvin’s emphasis that it is toto that Oscar has never eaten; in other words, the only thing Oscar has not eaten is toto. This signifies that generalization of food for a particular culture is a myth. Food familiarity to all the followers of a culture cannot be made because the individual differences and preferences in terms of food always pertain in the cultures across the globe. Caren Irr evaluates, the novel is “celebrated” for “worldiness.” (175) as it contains what happens in the real world. Oscar often implores that he is from DR while others complain against him on the grounds that he has not even eaten

toto. It can be another example of the variation among the groups and the individuals in a culture.

Even if a person is from a nation, s/he may not have familiarity with all the foods of that nation and culture. However, some sort of familiarity with the major foods is a necessity. Even if that is not a case, a person cannot be said to be adhering to the given culture.

The restriction of food for a group of people or an occasion amounts to various reasons. One of the reasons is the level of affordability. The Cabral family in *BWW* is a well-to-do family. So, the case of their privilege is raised time and again. When other people ate rocks and scraps of yucca, the Cabrals dined on pastas and sweet Italian sausages. “ While the rest of the country in that period subsisted on rocks and scraps of yucca and were host to endless coils of intestinal worms, the Cabrals dined on pastas and sweet Italian sausages” (Diaz 212). They were not forced to eat the rocks and scraps of yucca like other people. Their privilege on pastas and Italian sausages stands for their higher level of affordability. The difference in the same culture in terms of food availability shows and qualifies the internal cultural variation.

As internal homogeneity in various forms exists; the outer separation between and among the cultures is not an absolute falsity. There are some differences between and among the cultures. an instance of the goat carcass that Beli felt disagreeable provides the evidence to this assertion. Once Beli was in the association of the Gangster. When she was travelling with the Gangster to an area, she saw a scene of the carcass torn. “ The only visible commerce was a single goat carcass hanging” (Diaz 135). “ Did you see something? Her driver sighed, Please I can barely keep my eyes on the road” (Diaz 135). The carcass of goat was such a scene to her that she could not stand it. The goat was excessively tortured. The difficulty in her by the

scene had been relieved only by the heat in the environment or the two beers she took. This signals to the practice that a community prefers a form of food consumption. While the another community hates that form of food consumption. Beli's disgust to the tortured goat carcass and her relief through the heat or the two beers is a reminder to the existence of the cultural differences ; the food differences. For Beli, such way of eating was a restriction. For the community she visited, that way of killing the goat and eating was acceptable even the most welcoming approach.

The real world happenings in regards to the food resonate in the textual world written by Diaz. What is happening around us is that our norms of ethnic or our cultural foods are greatly questioned by the quicker encroachment of the foods from the cultures that are far from one's cultures. Oscar, at the later phase of his life, visits Santo Domingo from the US and sees various changes in the food geographies of his native culture. His understanding of particular foods only from Dominican Republic has been suspended. He needs to widen his understanding of the food concerns:

there were new better roads and nicer vehicles and brand-new luxury air-conditioned buses plying the longer routes to the Cibao and beyond and U.S. fast-food restaurants (Dunkin' Donuts and Burger King) and local ones whose names and logos he did not recognize (Pollos Victorina and EI Provocon No.4). (Diaz 273-74)

There were bakeries throughout city's outer zones. The older restrictions on the commercial concerns of foods were challenged and newer lines were redrawn. His facing of the US fast food restaurants reminds the questioning to the earlier limitation in the map of food identity. The effects of globalization are presented here. The cultures and their typicalities are questioned. The commonalities are coming about. The culture of DR earlier is changing when Oscar goes to visit it.

Like *EOA* and *BWW*, Smith's *WT* shares the evidences about the differences within a culture. Availability of the richer food at the party occasions stands for the increased pleasure among the attendants. Once Kelvin, the senior colleague of Archibald Jones at Morgan Hero, the printing firm talks about the party organized previous time:

Kelvin prepared to cut to the chase. 'That company dinner last month- it was awkward, Archie, it was unpleasant. And now there's this annual do coming up with our sister company from Sunderland, about thirty of us, nothing fancy, you know, a curry, a lager and a bit of a boogie...' (Smith 71-72).

For him, the dinner was really unpleasant because the organizers of dinner did not manage the required standard of the food for the workers. Kelvin expected that there would be a lot of delicious foods. He would have said that the dinner was fantastic if there were a lot of fancy foods, since it lacked he found it banal. This indicates that the presence of rich foods adds to the joy of the moments. The further substantiates the claim that the lack of rich foods is the lack of pleasures. Kelvin seeks the variation in practices. In fact, the variations are desirable.

Whether new customs of foods/ drinks must be introduced or one should remain conventional by sticking to the old order has been metaphorically discussed by Mickey and Archibald Jones when they had come to view the mouse and gene experiment. Mickey stands for the sticking to the old order. Introducing new items would not be loved by people because they cannot get accustomed to what they are unfamiliar with. In contrast, Archie wants the people to remain unconventional. Mickey claims that introducing L'orange on the menu would not be sold to the English people because they do not know it. Archie sticks to the idea that newness

must be continuously added to menus or other spheres in human lives. To be straight, their discussion is about the mouse experiment. “it’s no good putting Duck a l’orange on the menu if nobody wants it. Vis-à-vis, there’s no point this lot spending a lot of money on some clever ideas if they are not going to do some fucking good for someone” (Smith 522- 523). However, Mickey’s example of introducing L’orange to the menu and its opposition indicates that people love older customs of eating, they love older foods. Introducing newer items, ways could be a shock. Archie’s and Mickey’s stances are partly right and partly wrong. Their opinions combined are what constitute the bigger truth. Introduction to the newer customs may create some difficulty. Nonetheless, there is no escaping of the newness in the name of the traditional mores of foods, ways of eating or drinking. Newness, if it is not the need, it is not desired. Variation exists if it is desired.

Eating and drinking times are often taken as the sharing times. In *BWW*, Abelard had some foul remarks to Trujillo, so he was arrested. Oscar’s mother would catch Lola at eating times. These customs of eating and drinking when the talking of the important issues must have important reasons. Samsd Miah Iqbal watches television while eating and talks about the issues that have been raised on the television. While he was eating, he saw the discussion of immigrant issue. He wants that no more immigration must be continued. While he was speaking to Alsana, that allowing other immigrants to the UK is the recipe for the disaster; Alsana wants him to stop preaching. She clarifies that the preaching has to be done elsewhere; possibly in the mosques. The points of concern are: eating times and the television watching and eating times and the raising of the important issues. “ ‘ Don’t you preach in this house, Samad Miah! There are places for that sort of thing. Go to mosque, but don’t do it in the kitchen, people have to be eating in here” (Smith 289). This could be the

cross-cultural commonality as people do the multitasking. The eating times are the times when the family members come together. This could be another reason for talking and eating concurrently. As Alsana asks with Samad, “ Do you think anybody is English? Really English? It’s a fairy-tale. (Smith 236) about the homogeneity of English culture, same logic applies to the Muslims- Alsana and Samad. Further, Samad and Alsana, members of Muslim community, have the differing understanding about the food time talks: one accepts while the other rejects it.

There seem to be differences between Samad and Alsana. It does not mean that they have no commonalities. Both of them have a lot of worries about their children. Nonetheless, Samad and Alsana possess the variation in between them,

Places for serving foods like hotels and restaurants also have their limitations on the service. They dictate such restrictions either because the economy restricts their scope or they prohibit certain items because their own cultural values do not allow them to do so. For instance, O’Connell’s club has the menu that might serve chips, egg, and beans or eggs, chips and beans but not under any circumstances chips, beans eggs and bacon. That club is Samad and Archie’s home from home. They discuss everything there. They have come to that place for the last ten years. The point of focus is that O’Connell’s pool house cannot serve bacon to the guests because the pool has the norm to follow the Muslim food values. As Muslims prohibit the eating of bacon, pool practices this. This typicality is not only the matter of the pool house. Some level of typicality and restrictions are common. This commonality of the typicality, the restrictions provisions are present in all of the cultures.

Is it the cultures that prescribe the restrictions on an individual’s food behavior? Samad draws an important reminder when he brings the issue that the avoiding of the eating of the pork in Muslim culture is in his culture or perhaps in his

bones. The cultural sense of restrictions goes so deeper that the follower of any culture feels that such restriction is natural. Once, Archie asks why Samad does not take pork:

‘ I’m a Muslim,’ said Samad, pushing a plate of pork away. ‘ And my Rita Hayworth leaves me alone only with my own soul.’ ‘ Why don’t you eat it?’ said Archie, guzzling his two chops down like a madman. ‘ Strange business if you ask me.’ ‘ I don’t eat for the same reason you as an English will never truly satisfy a woman.’ ‘Why’s that?’ said Archie, pausing from his feast. ‘ It’s in our cultures, my friend.’ He thought for a minute. ‘Maybe deeper. Maybe in our bones’. (Smith 96)

Samad’s first stance about his avoidance of eating the pork looks awkward when his son, Magid, wishes to eat bacon. Two characters in a family have the distinctive food habits: one welcomes the meat of pig while the other strongly avoids it. This variation miniaturizes the culture at large.

Joely and Crispin who studied together in the university of Leeds have developed deep empathies to the animals and begin a campaign called FATE-Fighting Animal Torture and Exploitation, “ Joely and Crispin upgraded their vegetarianism to veganism, dropped out of college, got married and formed Fighting Animal Torture and Exploitation in 1985” (Smith 478-79). This absolute that eating meat is bad for animals, killing them is considered inhumane can be considered an ancient and modern idea because the empathy was always there. The vegetarianism to veganism is there in all cultures. Eating meat, avoiding meat: these issues have been there in all cultures. This differing attitude becomes a point of difference within. Alsana finds “ Rivers of blood silly-billy nonsense” (Smith 62-63). Enoch Powell’s effort for maintaining the racial cum cultural purity with his Rivers of Blood is a huge

problem to Alsana. Similarly, the case of attempting to show homogeneity in a culture is problematic. There are people who eat meat, the types of meat and also there is an increase in the advocates of vegetarians and vegans. These differences in a given culture were always there and will be there forever, presumably.

With what means/medium one could buy the foods is always a custom and restriction. Possibly, in the past it was the barter system that one got the food with. These days, it is the credit cards that one uses for the buying of the foods to other items. The provision of Luncheon Vouchers has been repeated issue in *White Teeth*:

The golden age of Luncheon Vouchers ended ten years ago. For ten years Mickey has been saying, 'The golden age of Luncheon Vouchers is over.' And that's what Archie loved about O'Connell's. Everything was remembered, nothing was lost. History was never revised or interpreted, adapted or whitewashed. It was as solid and as simple as the encrusted egg on the clock. (Smith 192)

What are we to make of it? The fact that buying conventions have their own frames. Luncheon Vouchers are of no use currently. The direct use of cash has been the newer convention. Earlier convention of buying has been the obsolete one. The practices change as the time passes by. Thus, sometimes the cultures seem different within a time frame. Other times, the different time frames show the differing practices. Therefore, the cultures evolve and the differences take places as the times change. The point is that it is not only between and among the cultures the differences exist. It is also cultures in themselves, the variations exist.

CHAPTER FIVE

Cultural Permeation: Throughout

He (Mr Phillips) was wearing a wide-brimmed hat. That had obscured the shape or the baldness or otherwise of his head, just as the canvas back of his chair obscured the bulk or otherwise of his back or torso. He (The landlord) was wearing shorts; they were tight around the plump thigh I saw. This wish of my landlord for nakedness and physical self-cherishing went with an opposite reality. (The Enigma of Arrival, 23)

Two English people in the epigraph incline themselves to differences in terms of the apparel choices. Mr. Phillips hides the baldness while the landlord prefers the nakedness thereby questioning the homogeneity of a culture. Also, they do not follow the delimitation set by their culture as their inclination is opposite to each other.

5.1 Homogeneity Paradox

Assuming that a classification subsumes the constituents of exclusively same nature is a faulty generalization. The members of a culture never have everything similar to each other. In particular, their apparel preferences cannot be similar. Besides, a cultural symbol can have differing signifying practice. In addition, intra-individual differences and differences within an individual amount to the larger body of representation. An immigrant cannot maintain the integrity of one's native culture.

The shininess in a person's clothes has an intention that might depend on the wearers. Generally, better apparels stand for the sobriety or prodigality. Sometimes, the apparels seem so sober that they help the wearer seem civil, in test, they are not civil. In *The Enigma of Arrival*, Alan, the writer, carries similar impressions. His clothes have the required gaiety, but his manners cannot contain the gaiety:

Alan's clowning, his mighty explosions of laughter, the extravagant cut and colours and shininess of the clothes he wore at parties in London, where from time to time I saw him. The gaiety of these clothes and the boisterousness of his manner contrasted with the nervousness, almost the shiftiness, of his eyes.... (Naipaul 279)

In contrast, Bray, the car-hire man from England wears in order to be genuinely acknowledged. His peaked cap helps him in the airport to be recognized by the policeman. Alan, the writer, has unintended impression while Bray's intended impression is achieved. These two people from same culture project dissimilar impressions in terms of apparel. Claiming thus would sound simplistic as these individual differences cannot represent a bigger picture. However, the claim that it is the individual differences that account for the larger differences is sought after.

Among the basic purposes of the dresses is the protection from the climatic intensity. From the ancient times, the people must have begun to wear the clothes for the security to the bodies. Since the temperature required for a body could be maintained by clothes, the cold and heat would not directly affect the human bodies, they must have initiated the provisions for the clothes. In particular, in the summer seasons, the thin clothes that may not cover all parts of the body are worn and the other extremity- the winter season is the time when people wear the thick clothes that cover all parts of the body. As the common knowledge holds, the winter has the cold and requires the warmth and summer has the heat and requires the cool composition, as for Jack in *EOA*:

His especial, exaggerated style with clothes: bare-backed in summer at the first hint of sun, muffled up as the season turned. I grew to see his

clothes as emblematic of the particular season: like something from a modern Book of Hours. (Naipaul 29)

Jack's additional sensitivity to the climatic response is not similar to other characters in the novel. This dissimilarity indicates the typical nature of people in a culture.

A dress worn with the changed style can have the changed representation as that of Bray in *EOA*. The homogeneous representation of an item cannot be a believable case. It can even bring the different meaning. Thus, it is not only the change of the dress sets and the formality or informality that brings the changes in the representations and the meanings of the dresses worn. Bray did not wear formally. He did not like to do so. He seldom wore jacket, he wore the cardigan. And the cardigan could be worn differently. Even the peaked cap he would wear has various styles. The cardigan with one style might mean the formality and the cardigan with different way of wearing means a different thing:

Bray himself didn't dress formally. He wore the peaked cap. But everything else he wore went counter to the suggestions, the implied deference, of that cap. He wore a cardigan, mostly; very seldom a jacket. A cardigan can be unbuttoned or buttoned in many ways; it can suggest formality, casualness, indifference, it can suggest, as Bray often made it suggest, a man called away from fireside and slippers and television. And the peaked cap-it could be set at many different angles: it could express regard or disregard: Set correctly, that cap (together with a buttoned-up cardigan) could suggest not deference so much as a man handling himself with care: a self-respecting more than a respectful man. (Naipaul 269)

The emphasis is that Bray wore the cardigan and the peaked cap in a style and that meant one thing. If the same clothes other people wore, the signifying practice would be different. Thus, it is not the items that change; it is the style that changes the signifying practices. Therefore, it is not only the new objects that could signify differently; it is also the styles of a same object that can mean otherwise. The instance challenges the homogeneous interpretation of a clothing object. The differing signification of the object rejects the reduced interpretation. The same cloths may have “ multiple and varying meanings depending upon the context or narrative level” (Wright 169) in any weaving narratives. Asako Nakai incorporates the tone of Wright as the novel “continually looks for an interpretation of the enigma” (156) and this enigma remains enigma perpetually. The signifying process is never ending.

When people restrict whatever comes to them; there is particularity. As Mr Phillips, an English character in *EOA*, there was a man in army camouflage of the farm worker. He would pick the pears climbing on the ladder. His wife would wear the tight jeans. The woman would not wear the cotton clothes and the man would wear the camouflaged dresses to match the color of the trees and plants. He was conscious of the dresses in the sense that he would wear to match the color of the environment around him:

And the man in army camouflage on the ladder was her farm-worker husband. Here, on a Sunday afternoon, they were in the manor grounds, she strolling about the lawn, her lips tight in hard jeans folding horizontally and almost in a straight line.... (68)

The husband would try to match his dress to the environment whilst his wife would not. Similarly, when the clothes of particularities are confined for an occasion, profession, wearing of them in other occasions and professions is prohibited. This

restriction scenario in terms of the clothes can be mapped in *The Enigma of Arrival*. Pitton's extra-ordinary neatness in the fine judgment about the clothes and restriction can be highlighted:

Pitton cared too much for the idea of clothes. If Jack's varied labors and varied dress (as I saw them in his after-hours garden) were like successive illuminations in a Book of Hours, exaggerated and emblematic, Pitton was a more modern man, a man of fashion. Yet in Pitton's fashionableness, his careful but regular buying of clothes that matched the seasons and were meant for that season's wear, in this very steadiness, this absence of waste, there was something like ritual. Clothes and the seasons ritualized Pitton's year. There was a time for the felt hat and the three-piece suit, thorn proof. There was a time for the straw hat; there was a time when the three piece suit became a two piece. There was a time for pullovers, one pullover, two pullovers. There was a time for 'country' shirts, a time for lighter shirts; a time for quilted jacket; a time for a dark, thin, plastic raincoat. His dress was absolutely suited to the work he was doing and the time of year. In that fine judgment about clothes and the weather, as well as his steadiness, his physical pacing of himself, lay Pitton's extra-ordinary neatness.

(Naipaul 249-50)

His attention about the judgment of the clothes is not particular to him. People of this kind are found in every culture. There are people who have the extreme sense of the clothes restrictions. They have tremendous amount of caring to their clothes. They reserve certain clothes strictly for certain times. We can find the subtle differences in

the approach to wearing clothes among Pitton, Bray and Jack. These nuanced differences stand for the challenge to the homogeneity issue.

For the immigrants, maintaining the integrity of their cultures is not easy enough as it is in the source countries. Maintaining the ethos of the culture of origin in the migrated land is more difficult than it is in the land of the origin. This shows the existence of the paradox of the homogeneity. The narrator's sister's son has worn jeans and jumpers in times of the funeral ritual of his mother. These clothes are restricted in the real funeral times. Sati's son did not maintain the prescriptions of his culture for his migration reasons, "The pundit in his silk tunic sat cross-legged on one side of the altar. Sati's younger son sat facing him on the other side. Sati's son was in jeans and jumper-and this informality was also new to me" (Naipaul 379). Sati's son's attire stands for the heterogeneity in a culture though this case is fostered by immigration realities. Sati's son performed the funeral rituals on grounds of Hindu rules. However, his attires do not conform to the rules that would have been instructed by Hindu rites. Thomas Keenan highlights the fact that not "all or none" category but "considerable individual variation" is what supports in believing or disbelieving anything. Also, the idea of "intra-individual differences" (Npg) is present in the study of the habit of the mind. Similarly Dagmar Barnow states "the responses to changes" (130) for the immigration and other difficult times as the required strategy (130). These variations and the forces as the responses bring about the changes that mark the heterogeneity of a culture.

Sati's son could not maintain the purity that his culture expected to maintain. It can be said that he could have tried for that as the consecration of food was attempted. He could have attempted to maintain attire concerns and rituals in the death ceremony. He seems to have tried to do what he thought he could do. He seems

to have lamented the death of his mother. Maintaining everything with the fullest integrity would not have been possible even in India where Hinduism is adopted in its supposedly purest form.

Diaz's *BWW* shares the paradoxical evidences. To add, this novel contains the heterogenous elements in a culture. Possibly, the purposes of the women's dresses are manifold. The attraction of the opposite sex is one of the basic purposes of the clothes be it in the males or the females:

Girl was *luminous*. Beautiful jibara skin, diamond-sharp features, wore her hair in this super-black Egypto-cut, her eyes caked in eyeliner, her lips painted black, had the biggest roundest tits you've ever seen. Every day Halloween for this girl, and on actual Halloween she dressed up as – you guessed it – a dominatrix, had one of the gay guys in the music section on a leash. (Diaz 182)

Oscar also was drawn to her. The reasons for beautiful dresses of the women could be many, but the primary as Jabelese is considered of desiring by the narrator, is the luring of the males. She is a dandy in clothes. Not everyone is dandy in a society. She is typical in her society and is an example of heterogeneous representation in a given culture.

Putting on the mask on the face has the security reasons or the invisibility purposes. Whom is the mask for? In *BWW*, the masking by Oscar in the dream of Yuniar, the narrator, shows that he is trying to hide something from others, “ He's standing in one of the passages, all mysterious- like, wearing a wrathful mask that hides his face but behind the eyeholes I see a familiar pair of close-set eyes” (Diaz 325). He does not like to be seen. The face being hidden but the smiling eyes behind the mask of Oscar shows that he is divided. His smiling eyes behind the mask show

that he is partly happy but partly unhappy. For that reason, he hides and the smiling eyes. In real life, in his brief life, Oscar hid rarely himself. He faced many difficulties and was ridiculed and threatened many times. His approach differed even though after his death. The indiscriminate approach is harmful to one in many circumstances. The people with the better dresses are deemed to be more knowledgeable many of the times. This may not be true. But people take it that way. Beli in a park remembers the foul moods the gangster had last time with her. A lady in the park counsels Beli that Beli should not marry to the gangster and have babies to him:

As if he hung around Bani. Her feet were swollen, her head was sending its surplus ache down her neck, and now two huge men with matching pompadours were grabbing her by the arms and propelling her to the centre of the parque, where a old-dressed old-lady sat on a bench, underneath a decrepit jacaranda. White gloves and a coil of pearls about her neck. Scrutinizing Beli with unflinching iguana eyes.

(Diaz 140)

In DR, the gangster had to kill people for better clothing while this lady is well-dressed. There are always differences in a cultural setting even within itself. In general, people change the dresses for taking photos. When it is the time for the taking of the photos, people change the dresses. There could be various reasons for this. Some of the reasons for this are: a) for the memory b) for the publicity. Why do people wear more beautiful and attractive dresses in the times of the photo taking? We do not want to be remembered in the poor quality clothes. We want to be remembered in the rich environment and the attractive clothes:

The girl's burns were unbelievably savage, (One hundred and ten hit points minimum.) A monsterglove of festering ruination

extending from the back of her neck to the base of her spine. A bomb crater, a world-scar like those of a hibakusha. As soon as she could wear real clothes again, La Inca dressed the girl and had her first real photo taken out in front of the house. (Diaz 257)

This shows that we change the dresses not only for the seasons and festivals but also for the taking of the photo for the publicity and the memory. Also, the better dress in photo taking time represents the variation in cloth wearing conventions. We do not wear equally attractive clothes all the time. Kris Anderson states, “ Diaz plays even more wantonly with reader’s stereotypes of genre (199)” and this idea of Anderson helps break a homogeneity point of Beli- she wears better and she wears worse.

The mothers would be careful about their nudity in front of the grown-up son. Beli is not so. This calls for the questions to the convention of the homogeneity, “ She was standing in front of the medicine cabinet-mirror, naked from the waist up, her bra slung about her waist like a torn sail, the scar on her back as vast and inconsolable a sea” (Diaz 51). The mother looks different from usual mothers. This image of Beli as a mother also challenges the stereotypical image of the mothers who are very careful of their dressing. For Caren Irr “ generic vision “(30) expansion by Diaz shows that mothers do not contain the stereotypes. They go beyond what society has expected them to perform.

As the nudity between the children and mother or the siblings is not very unusual, the nudity with the boyfriends and girlfriends and the husband wife is mostly common. Since they are allowed the sexual intercourse freedom, nudity is not new to them, nor is that weird, “That night while we lay in Aldo’s sweltering kitty-litter-infested room I told him: I want you to do it to me. He started unbuttoning my pants.

Are you sure? Definitely, I said grimly” (Diaz 64). Aldo feels such a pleasure in the unbuttoning of the pants and dresses. Aldo is not so all the times. He is the one who has complained that the pussy of Lola smells (Diaz 65). His differing attitude stands for the challenge to homogeneity. An individual is different in different times. A culture cannot be same all the times.

In general, a girl in love with a boyfriend wears the attractive dresses. This is same even with the boys when they have fallen in love with the girls. Oscar’s girlfriend Olga was from poor family background and a puertorican and had difficulty in buying the appropriate clothes:

He broke up with Olga the following day on the playground, Maritza at his side, and how Olga had cried! Shaking like a rag in her hand-me-downs and in the shoes that were four sizes too big! Snots pouring out her nose and everything! (Diaz 15).

This shows that even though one could be a lover or beloved; wearing of the new or expected cannot be done for the scarcity reasons. To add, no matter which role one would assume, provided there is the short of the resources, the justice to the role and responsibility cannot be rendered. Olga has not been able to wear beautifully when she is with her lover not because she does not want to wear but because she lacks the beautiful attires.

Zadie Smith’s *WT* corroborates the paradoxical elements that take the guise of the homogeneity. In understanding a person’s attire preference, it takes much because one’s preferences are shaped by various circumstances. Magid, Samad’s son, was sent back to Bangladesh for the acculturation. But when he came back to England for pursuing a course in law, he had very strange habits, “One hardly likes to touch him. His teeth, he brushes them six times a day. His underwear, he irons them. It is like

sitting down to breakfast with David Niven” (424). This is particular behavior of Magid. This iconoclasm of Magid and his idiosyncrasy is laughed at and shook his father and people closer to him. The expectation of growing commonly is questioned. Simon Harrison claims that the attempts to see differences in between groups is a problem (120). Magid and Millat are from the same Muslim foundation. However, they have differences.

The response to why a person’s dress preferences change can have multiple dimensions. One of the responses is that a person’s dress preferences change as their affiliations change. A person wears particular dresses if he/she is associated with a particular community and if that affiliation changes, the preferences are changed. This is more so when people are associated with the particular sects of religions. The religions have their own prescriptions of the dresses. For instance, Millat used to wear very fancy dresses earlier. He preferred the jeans and other dresses before he joined the sect called KEVIN. After he became the campaigner of KEVIN, the dress change in Millat was the important norm:

‘shhh’ said Millat irritably, ‘ Not everyone can know. If you want to get near the center, you’ve got to keep them shtoom.’ Millat looked Mo up and down. The kurta-pyjamas that he somehow managed to make look like a late seventies Elvis flared jumpsuit. The huge stomach he rested on his knee like a friend. (474)

Any group has its own identity and dress prescriptions. If one wants to be the loyal member of that particular organization, the inclination to that dress is automatically engineered. Millat is still a Muslim. However, his preferences are changed. His adoption of different clothes questions the stereotypical representation of a community. This stereotype is untenable.

Cleanliness of the clothes show that the wearer is meticulous about the wearing; similarly wearing the convenient and comfortable jeans is meant for the experiment. To add, the heightened sense of the cleanliness and the convenient jeans in the work time show that the wearer is very purposive. When Irie looked at Magid; she could see him spotlessly clean; his clothes were clean; he cared for the hygienes:

Irie looked him square in the face. There was something in there. She had been unable to put her finger on these four months, because it was obscured by his youth, his looks; his clean clothes and his personal hygiene.... Magid gave a little Bow. ‘Naturally. You will excuse me, I have to go and submit my Chicago jeans to the experiment.... (429-30)

Magid wears different clothes for different occasions. For the official purposes, he wears the official clothes and other clothes for home purposes.

The colors of the dresses have the mythological and the corresponding connections. For instance, the goddess of learning in Hindu community stays on the white duck. So the people who value the learning wear the white dresses. Similarly, if anyone wants to display the sophisticated lifestyle, they wear the dresses that exhibit that trait. The dresses are worn for expressing the corresponding values. “... he clasped the hand of the eminent Indian writer Sir R.V. Saraswati. Saraswati was dressed all in white, with his broad-rimmed hat on his head and an ostentatious cane in his free hand” (Smith 287). Further, the purpose of these dresses is that the wearers want to show their connection to the reference they prefer for. Not all the Hindu Gurus wear white dresses. Their dress colors are different. Although they belong to the community of Hinduism, their dress patterns and even colors are different.

Certain fabrics are used for the definite types of the clothes. However, when a person has the economy dwindled, the order gets changed:

On the Tuesday after Archie's wedding, Samad had waited till everyone left, folded his white, flared trousers (made from the same fabric as the table cloths) into a perfect square, and climbed the stairs to Ardashir's office, for he had something to ask him. (Smith 58)

It is Samad's economic crisis that has caused the change in his dresses. He would not have worn the trousers made of the tablecloth if he had the abundance of the economy. He did so because he did not have abundant economy.. We can infer it because he had gone to Ardashir for the pay the rise for his job of the waitressing. The resource constraints also bring about the variation in the dresses despite the members having from the same community and culture. The "totalizing life recipes" (MacLeod 64) a culture is expected to foster is questioned as Samad is different from his cousin. No culture contains the members who have same lifestyle.

The differences are not caused only by economy. They are also the results of the associations to a community and profession. Whatever profession, the quality of one's dress is determined by the accessibility to the economy, however.

The connection between the dresses worn by one and the feelings inside merits a significant study. Does the person get his feeling changed when he/she changes the dresses? Do certain clothes bring the changes in the feelings of a person? Do certain clothes bring the sensibility in a person?

She was young and old at same time, Neena reflected. She acted so sensible, so straight down the line in her long sensible coat, but you got the feeling... 'Oi! Miss! There's shoes back here that need your attention. Keep your tits on, 'said Neena'. (Smith 64)

Neena, the relative of Alsana finds that Alsana is old and young at the same time. She acted sensible and so straight –down the line. In her long sensible coat, but she did not have the sensible feelings. Even in the most sensible looking and sober looking coat, she could be found with the insensible feelings as Neena reports. The inconsistency of the wearer along with the type of clothes is an important point of dress and change concern. One's looks are not constant. Neena's differential looks stand for the challenge to the homogeneity.

Disciplining and restraining business have their prescribed framework. Samad Miah Iqbal intending to restrain the attire behavior of his sons is totally tired of his sons. Magid and Millat are praised by their teacher- Poppy-Burt Jones:

Both twins had always been determined to choose their own clothes, but where Millat bullied Alsana into purchases of red- stripe Nike, Osh-Kosh Begosh and strange jumpers that had patterns on the inside and the out, Magid could be found, whatever the weather, in grey pullover, grey shirt and black tie with his shiny black shoes and NHS specs perched upon his nose, like some dwarf librarian. (Smith 134)

These unusual dress preferences show that Samad's sons are not upto the expectations. They have shocked their parents and their community members. Magid and Millat, the twins have different dispositions. Biological homogeneity is questioned by bringing the case of the twins. This instance has the larger implications in the sense that even the so much common looking people are not common and similar.

5.2 Cultural Permeation

How much clothing is considered underclothing? Why do we clothe the deformed parts of our body fully? Along with these considerations, this section

examines the issues of commonalities. Being better dressed in the big events is a way to garner prestige. Some dresses are associated to a profession that mark the recognition and privileges. Besides, the apparels have the designated purpose; however, such purposes are infrequently flouted. The changes in apparel tastes are not uncommon and dresses have a lot to do with mobility, transportation and even immigration.

An idea still that evokes a lot of sense is the human mobility and pockets in their dresses. What purposes do the pockets serve? Although the sizes of the pockets are different, the purposes are that they play the roles of the bags, boxes and even the means of transportation:

He looked serene, self-sufficient. In the top pocket of his overall (over a very thick, hand-knitted blue pullover) he had an empty, open, flip-top cigarette packet. This was his ash-tray; the gesture with which he flicked his ash into this packet was practiced. It was clearly an old habit or procedure, part of his tidiness as decorator. (Naipaul 358)

His habit of tidiness had been maintained only because of the pocket of the overall. The keeping of the ash into his top pocket would provide him the opportunity of the concentration. He used the pocket for the ashtray purpose. This leads us to the thinking of the functions of the parts of the clothes. To bring the evolutionary story into the sight, in the beginning the people must not have had pockets in their clothes, later on as they must have felt the need of the bags, the boxes, the small stuffs could be placed in the pocket, thus, they must have designed them. The clothes having pockets are prevalent in all cultures. This is not the typical case. As Zhu Ying, “imaginative interpretations” (83) in the novel are necessary and the use of pockets

have many interpretations. The attires with the pockets are not culture specific. They are cross-cultural and permeate across the cultures.

Not all dresses have pockets in them. Looking at the evolutionary phase of the pockets, the women's clothes seem to have fewer pockets in them. However, as the women are growing more professional nowadays, their attires too are having the pockets in them. The businesses dealing with the dresses need to know the purposes of people's dresses:

Many little businesses failed – quickly, visibly. Especially pathetic were the shops that-not understanding that people with important shopping to do usually did it in London-aimed at style. How dismal those boutiques and women's dress shops quickly became, the hysteria of their owners showing in their windows! Not in the turbulence or disorder of their display but in the opposite, a melancholy unassertiveness, not unassertiveness of good taste or old-fashionedness, but something more like a nervous condition....

(Naipaul 338)

They failed because they were not assertive in regards to the the people's dress taste. They needed to focus on the people with important shopping. The reading of the business trends for the intended success is common to all businesses irrespective of the cultural aspects. To add, the tastes for the attires change for various reasons. This is a cross-cultural case.

The dresses especially the professional dresses become the privileges to some places. This is so for Bray, the car-hire man:

He said (when we were some months into or business relationship which had development into something like a village acquaintance)

that he wore the cap because it helped with the police. And he was right, as I saw on many occasions, especially at the airport. The police, uninformed themselves, acknowledged the peaked cap, responded to it, and were easier (in every way) with the badge of a trade. (Naipaul 269)

They are the badges of the trade. Bray wears a peaked cap wherever he goes and his peaked cap gives him the identity that of a driver. This support by his clothes is beneficial to him. Once he went to the airport and the policemen did not inquire him about his going because they knew that he was the driver and the peaked cap was his identity. His clothes provided him the support that is he was exempted from the checking of the police. Dresses stand for the identity and profession. All the cultures across the world have envisaged the provision of dresses to professions and nationality. Eleonora Natalia Ravizza reminds that , “ an integration and a constitution of the self (87)” undergoes various processes. This identity formation through a lot of processes calls for the trademark clothes.

The narrator in the novel has gone to England for his writing career. In the preliminary years, he did not feel like wearing the dresses for the winter season in England. For him, the climate in India and Trinidad and the climatic variations there were different than the variation in England. He did not feel like changing the dresses for the winter in England because the winter in England, Trinidad and India meant different. The novel in the beginning shows the impressions of the narrator. He never felt the need of overcoat and pullover in winter in England. But after living in England for many years he felt like wearing the dresses for the winter, he felt chill inside. “ Indifferent to winter for many years after I had come to England, never feeling the need for an overcoat or gloves or even a pullover, I now had sensation of internal coldness such as I had never had before; I felt chilled in my lungs”(Naipaul

364). When he saw people there wearing the dresses for the winter, he must have felt the need. This shows that one's need of the winter clothes is the result of the cultural conditioning. Initially, he did not feel the cold, later he felt it. This can be attributed to three reasons: the cultural conditioning, the age of the narrator and the temperature type change after so many years. By implication, a person's need of clothes can be determined by cultural prescription. The narrator has been shaped by the culture he has involved with. In this sense, going beyond the cultural prescription requires a lot in a person.

The novel begins with the discussion of a river, the rainfall and the discussion of the narrator's lack of the need of the dress change. When he came to England, he came to know that England had the seasons like the winter and the summer but they did not mean the same in Simla of India and Trinidad. There he did not feel like the changing of the dresses in the summers and the winters. He wore same kinds of clothes throughout the year. One's feeling of the cold and the hot is determined by the degree of the temperature present in the seasons. The winters in England were not as cold in India and Trinidad. For the same reason, the narrator wore same clothes seldom wore pullover and overcoat in the winters in England. England did not have extreme type of climate. In fact, the clothes change takes place if there is the variety in the climate, the temperature. It is not merely the seasons that induce the dress change, it is the temperature variation and the rise and fall of the extremities in the temperatures that induce a person to bring the changes in the clothes he or she is wearing, "In England I wore the same kind of clothes all through the year; seldom wore a pullover; hardly needed an overcoat" (Naipaul 3). This shows the cultural conditioning.

People who have migrated to England have the fascination with their native dresses. They focus on them. This means that they restrict, to some aspect, the dresses of the hostland. This happens because of their attachment to their motherland. The narrator sees a young man of Asia who had the Asiatic dressing gown that was too big for him:

... there came up a young man of Asia, small and small boned, with a pale-yellow complexion, with glasses, and an elaborate, Asiatic dressing gown that was too big for him in the arms; the wide embroidered cuffs hid his hands. He gave out a tinkling ‘Goo-ood morning!’ and hurried past me. Was he Siamese, Burmese, Chinese? He looked forlorn, far from home – as yet, still full of my London wonder.... (Naipaul 140)

Thus, the people who have migrated have the divided mindset. It could be the transcultural oscillation- they follow the dress of the hostland and still carry on the dress codes of the native land. For doing this, they must practice some levels of the restriction on both of the places. They cannot be loyal to both of the cultures fully. Presumably, they create a new way of wearing that is not similar to both of the cultures. The man in this context mimics the English way and possesses the residues of native culture. In the cultural exchange context, similar cases pervade invariably. Often times, it is the general culture that expects and shapes the dress behaviours of the people. They wear the particular dresses and behave in the particular way because their societies have shaped them that way. Whether to wear full, half sleeves, formal or informal or dirty is the matter of the cultural conditioning. The narrator in *EOA* brings the discussion of the cigarette shop in England and discusses the differences

between the shopkeepers in England, China and India, especially the attire dimension of the cigarette sellers:

I bought a packet of cigarettes from the man who was selling, a tall, grey-haired man, as well-dressed and formal and educated, I thought as a teacher, (Not like the Indian shopkeepers of our country villages, men who kept themselves deliberately dirty and ragged, the dirtier the better, to avoid hubris, to deter jealousy and the evil eye. Not like the Chinese in their ‘ parlors’, who wore sleeveless vests and khaki shorts and wooden clogs, stayed indoors all the time, and in spite their wizened , famine- stricken, opium-den appearance, fathered child after child on happy black concubines or blank-faced, flat-chested Chinese wives. (Naipaul 123-24)

By comparing these three nationals, the narrator has tried to show the significance of dress in business. Various kinds of dresses are worn by business people to signify their intended impressions. The common point is that the attires are employed for the impressions desired to achieve. This is another instance for the permeation of impression culture.

Cultural symbols and practices permeate across the cultural boards. This claim has been supported by numerous instances from the novel *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Woo*. The purpose of dressing fully could have at least two reasons: a) look more civilized by avoiding the nudity b) avoid being looked at because being looked could cause the embarrassment. Belicia Cabral migrated in the US in 1962. She would wear dresses with the full sleeves to hide the scars of her body. She would sleep fully dressed. To add the purposes of wearing fully could have further reasons: a) For the protection from the cold and heat b) For hiding the scars she had by being

beaten by the Trujillo's people. She had severe scars and the marks of beatings on her body parts:

And when she wore long sleeves the scar was only visible on her neck (the edge of a larger ruination certainly, but greatly reduced by the cut of her cloth). This was the girl who would travel to the U.S. in 1962, whom Oscar and Lola would never know. La Inca the only one to have seen Bali at her beginnings, when she slept fully dressed and screamed in the middle of the night, who saw her she constructed a better self, one with Victorian table manners and a disgust of filth and poor people. (Diaz 259)

Hiding the deformed body is not typical to any culture. No culture formally asks one to exhibit the scars of body. The cultures ask them to cover for the reputation purposes.

All cultures have the tokens of appreciation. They are the medals or the certain clothes. The victory or the appreciations are maintained by providing some sort of the medals and certain fabrics, Beli reveals, "In elementary school, whenever we had field day I was always the fastest girl in my grade, took home all ribbons; they said it wasn't fair because I was big, but I didn't care" (Diaz 69).

Beli got the ribbons as the tokens of the victory. The ribbons by the school have the purposes of the certification to the person who gets it. A fabric as the token of victory is the cross-cultural feature.

Robust bodies require the flexible clothes. It means that the tighter the clothes, the more difficult one can have for the smooth moving. Lola's fat body has to do with the types of the clothes and the purposes of the clothes, "Breathe, breathe, and breathe! I have got like no fat left on me, and the musculature of my legs impresses

everyone, even me. I can't wear shorts anymore without causing traffic jams ...”

(Diaz 71). The attire sizes are determined by the body sizes. In general this is the case for all cultures except in some dandy trends.

It is a common fact that people wear more attractive when they have to attend these parties where the powerful people. Jackie's first big party was that she was attending the party organized and invited by Trujillo:

Since it was her first big party, who's surprised that it became something of an event for her? She went shopping for a dress with her mother, got her hair done at the salon, bought new shoes, and was even given a pair of pearl earrings by another of her female relatives. (Diaz 231)

Although Jackie does not know that Trujillo has invited her for misusing her, possibly for the sexual misuse, she intends to wear the most beautiful dresses because that occasion was the first big occasion for her. The point of the focus is that people change the dresses for something big. When they are about to meet big people, they change the dresses. When the people have to attend something very big they change the dresses. This tendency of human being is not typical; this is common to all cultures across the world. Bernardo Bueno discusses the use of footnotes as the intertextuality in *BWW*, “We can look at footnotes as a primitive form of hyperlink- a way to connect important information through intertextuality” (93). A girl attending big party and intending to wear better is as common as the texts in the intertextual sense.

The link between the dresses and the parties could exist in manifold manner. The economic sufficiency has caused that better quality clothes could be worn even in

other occasions; one does not need to wait for the special occasions. Even so, the party and festival occasions are rife with the better quality of attires and the foods.

Girls are not expected to show off the body parts especially the reproductive parts even when attending the parties. This restriction would be really imposed by the boyfriends. Lola's boyfriend- Yunion sees one day that Lola was going to attend a farewell party:

And then it was finals, and who of all people do I end up running into?
Lola! I almost didn't recognize her because her hair was ill long and because she was wearing these cheap blocky glasses, the kind an alternative white girl would wear. Enough silver on her wrists to ransom the royal family and so much leg coming out of her denim skirt it just didn't seem fair. As soon as she saw me she tugged down the skirt, not just like it did much good. (Diaz 197)

Had she not felt the restriction need, she would have felt normal. She feels shy means that was not allowed and she wanted to hide her legs. This instance shows that the nudity is acceptable to the boyfriends and girlfriend but not for the public. This embarrassment by Lola is so common that it cannot be termed as the typical case of Dominican Republic. It occurs across the cultures.

Dresses are determined by places and the locations. School's uniform is not worn at home and vice versa. It is not only the periods, times or the geographies that invite the changes in the clothes. Even in the places with the same synchronicity force the people to change the dresses:

Beli didn't have much in the way of friends-only Dorca, the daughter of the woman who cleaned for La Inca, who owned exactly no pair of shoes and worshipped the ground Beli walked on. For Dorca she put

on a show to end all shows. She wore her uniform straight through the day until La Inca forced her to take it off. (Diaz 85)

Why did not she change the dress? The lack of it and lack of the will to change because the scarcity would overpower her. Thus, the change of the dress calls for the change of the state of the mind and the change of the status of the mind. Karl Marx's super structure and base structure analysis comes of help here. One has access to dresses only if one has access to resources. For Patricia O' Donnell, "the primary narrator of the novel is Yuniór, who relates the story progressively in the first, second, and third person" (157) and this omniscience is as common as the differences of dresses in any culture on the grounds of the purposes like school dresses and professional dresses.

For some people, the changing of the dresses is very difficult. Especially the people who have had very difficult life with them and have not worn the attractive clothes very often do not like to wear very beautiful clothes so readily. The tough times they have undergone does not allow them to be open to the wearing of the newer clothes. It must have a lot to the psychology of the rigidity. They are very reluctant to change the dresses:

Not Beli. She never would admit it (even to herself), but she felt utterly exposed at El Redentor, all those pale eyes gnawing at her duskiness like locusts – and she didn't know how to handle such vulnerability. Did what had always saved her in the past. Was defensive and aggressive and mad over-reactive. You said something slightly off color about her shoes and she brought up the fact that you had a slow eye and danced like a goat with a ruck stuck in its ass. (Diaz 83)

The reason behind her overreactiveness and defensiveness is that the upbringing and the life path she came through. She cannot change the dresses to the better ones so easily because of her background. The over stressful situations cause the irascibility. This cross-cultural case.

WT by Zadie Smith also shares the narratives of cultural sharedness. The examples permeate across this text as well.

The addressing of a lady as whore again comes to Karina Cain who wears short dresses. Her wish to the nudity has been reproached by her boyfriend – Millat. Karina wears such short dresses to impress males positively:

Now, while we're on the subject of nakedness, Karina Cain had a nice little body. All creamy chub and slender extremities. And come the weekend she liked to wear something to show it off... Because that's how it worked between western men and western women, wasn't it? They all liked to do it all in public. The more he thought about it, the more it pissed him off. (Smith 371-72)

Although the nudity issue is taken through the liberal approach in the western world, the case is not as easy as it is considered. The nudity of the females is always the contested issue across the cultures. The contestation level and its degree are different. Nonetheless, it is present in all the cultures in the world. Nick Bentley discusses “cross-affiliations” (144) to denote the permeation of cultural practices. The issue of nudity is contested across cultures. For example, Karina finds the issue of nakedness normal whilst Alsana finds that her private parts must not be viewed by even her husband. Even so, the nakedness is an issue with the different degrees of emphasis.

The wedding dresses of brides and bridegrooms are more beautiful than the dresses worn in other times. The reasons behind this must be that marriage between a male and female is the new beginning of the life. And it is the matter of celebration:

She needed no bra-she was independent, even of gravity- she wore a red halterneck which stopped below her bust, underneath which she wore her belly button (beautifully) and underneath that some very tight yellow jeans. At the end of it all were some strappy heels of a light brown suede, and she came striding down the stairs on them like some kind of vision or , as it seemed to Archie as he turned to observe her, like a reared-up thorough bred. (Smith 24)

This description of dresses for the wedding day of Clara and Archie portrays the beautification process of Clara. A beautiful body looks more beautiful by the decorative clothes. The wedding dresses of Clara serve the same purpose i.e. they make her more beautiful and the mood of new life and celebration is enhanced. Thus, the attires beautify the wearer. The wearer's value is added by the clothes they wear. In particular, the brides and bridegrooms wearing more attractive dresses is not the specific aspect of any culture. Given the commonality of the beautiful dresses of the brides and bridegrooms, it can be deduced that this permeates across the cultures. Sylvia Hadjetian calls Millat having "Floating identity" (70). This further implies to the cross-cultural identity that exists in both of the spheres.

The FATE (Fighting Animal Torture and Exploitation) members were attracted to it for its no-violent approach to animals. Additionally, Joely, one of the founders of FATE was really beautiful. Once Joshua Chalfen was in a program conducted by FATE. He should have heard their plans and decisions. He had lost the attention to the decisions and plans.

He wasn't even clear precisely what was going to happen there had been no final decision: and now as they argued it, the core members of FATE cross-legged and spaced out around the great hole in the floor, now as he should have been listening to these fundamental decisions, he had lost the thread of his attention down Joely's t-shirt, down along the athletic dip and curve of her torso, down further to her tie-dyed pants, sown. (Smith 483)

He was captivated by the added beauty on Joely. He was focusing his attention on her dresses. This attraction further has led to the bigger campaign success of FATE. The point, then, is that the dresses are not only the indicators of seasons. They are also the sources of attraction. They, in turn, contribute to the success of a person and organization they are involved in. A male getting attracted to a female and especially by her beautiful dresses cannot be tied to a particular culture. It is a case of all the cultures.

The children of immigrants in the *WT* were breaking the boundaries in regards to the attires. The case is equally applicable even to the daughter of Archibald Jones. He too has some connections to immigration although he is an English man. His second marriage to Clara Bowden, the immigrant from Jamaica gives birth to a daughter named Irie Jones. Irie Jones has fat body similar to her grandmother- Hortense Bowden. She wants to lose her body weight and become an English rose:

Irie Jones was obsessed. Occasionally her worried mother cornered her in the hallway before she lunk out of the door, picked at her elaborate corsetry, asked, ' what's up with you? What in the Lord's name are you wearing? How can you breathe? Irie, my love, you're fine- you're

just built like an honest to – God Bowden – don’t you know you’re fine?’ (Smith 266)

Particularly, ladies wearing tight clothes and attempting to look slim are the generalizable cases. Looking beautiful are their desires. Irie’s case can be read in the same light. Her instance is not only the individual one, it applies to all the people of all cultures. Claiming so cannot be an exaggeration.

In many political and protest contexts, it is the dresses that stand as the protest indicators. All cultures have the dresses that are defined for the specific contexts. The religious contexts have specific types of the clothes, the military contexts, the school contexts, the lawyers wearing the specific clothes and the doctors having specific clothes. In *White Teeth*, once Samad is going to the school with Irie and Magid while on the way he sees:

Magid carrying a recorder, Irie with violin. But beyond these basic details, everything wasn’t as it should be. Unless he was very much mistaken, something was rotten in this Mini Metro- something was afoot. Both children were dressed in black from head to toe. Both wore white armbands on their left arms upon which were painted crude renditions of baskets of vegetables. Both had pads of writing paper and a pen tied around their necks with string. (Smith 149)

The children have worn black from head to toe. They have worn white armbands on their left arms. When Samad asked the purpose of not wearing the school uniform and types of the clothes, the children responded that their dress of that type had a purpose. They had the protest issue for the Harvest Festival. This restricted cloth and the children’s attire behavior means that people practice prohibition to prohibit some people to do something. To add, Magid and Irie along with her school friends wearing

all black and the left arm with the white armband is the unusual dress. They were wearing the dresses that were not permitted in the school. This unusual practice is usual. The uncommonness is common in all the cultures where protest would be carried out.

The functions and the purposes of the dresses change. The handkerchiefs are meant for the wiping of sweats and other dirty stuffs. The function of the handkerchief may not be the same in all times. It can even function as the protection tool in the crisis times. Dr Marc –Pierre Perret uses his sleeves to wipe his face. “ The Doctor used his sleeve to wipe his face, and looked at the boy curiously, double-checking to see if he were serious. The boy looked serious” (Smith 535). This signals that when we are confronted with the sense of immediacy and crisis, the clothes and their conventional functions are questioned and their uses are changed. A shirt would be worn to where pants are worn and vice versa. This shows that the change of the dresses takes place when the crisis times are there. This multiple use of clothes in times of crisis is a cross-cultural case. In times of difficulty we tend to forget the conventional uses of the clothes and we use them in the way we need them to use. This evidence cannot be stuck to a particular case.

A very usual purpose of attires is the protecting of bodies from the heat and cold. Presumably, this must be the most ancient form of purpose of dresses. These days, the attires are worn for various purposes. However, the ancient purpose was single one: that of keeping the body safe from the cold and the hot conditions. Joyce Chalfen asks Irie to take the long winter coat, some gloves and Marcus’s hat with a ludicrous bobble on the top. The purpose of long winter coat and gloves could be the seasonal purpose:

Exactly, dear. And I'm too involved. But you are perfect. Because you know him but you don't know him, said Joyce cryptically. She passed Irie her long winter coat, some gloves and a hat of Marcus's with a ludicrous bobble on the top. ' And because you love him though, though he doesn't love you. (Smith 458)

The gloves and the hat with the bobble on the top, by extension, show that the person wearing these can be in some experiment. Marcus was in the genetic experiment of a mouse. He was in the business of experimenting the effects of the genetic transplantation. The point of focus is that the attires are worn for saving the bodies from the extreme climates and the chemical reactions that take place in the scientific laboratories. This is a global case. It is not the case of the typical culture. People must wear the clothes according to the seasons. Also, they must save their body parts from the possibly harmful chemical they would contact with. The official clothes are taken off, this is cross-cultural case.

5.3 Untenable Cultural Delimitation

As the functions and purposes of culture are not well-defined and definite, the cultural prescriptions are not followed. It is not only the culture that dictates the types of clothes one wears; it is also the nature and the climate. A culture expects people in the way they belong to their social position; some people might not live by the prescriptions. The culture may not always accommodate the taste and style of an individual. Culture, in general, expects harmony among its members; it cannot be followed in the prescribed manner. Beauty is not only the cultural concern; it is also the natural endowment. The cultural imperatives are transcended. Heading the imperatives set by cultures may not always help the progress and contentment of an individual.

A community cannot be said to have the members wearing the same kind of dresses. The differing attitudes in their clothes preferences does not keep them apart. They can still be there and have other forms of exchanges. Their living can be as coherent as the evidence that there is no difference. Sticking to the change point, the people in Salisbury did not have common clothes preferences. “He was wearing no tie. The shirt of the day before, but no tie. I saw him without a tie only on Sundays sometimes, in the summer, when the ice-cream van passed before lunch and tinkled its chimes, and we both went out to buy ice-cream” (297). They were so close in their communities but their attitude that they wear formal/informal and have the extraordinary senses of the dress neatness stands for the interpretation that the clothes and lifestyle in a given culture varies not only diachronically but also synchronically. The cultural prescription has very little to do with the people’s changed preferences; their varying obsessions. The culture cannot delimit their interests.

No matter how powerful physically one is, one has to surrender with the nature of nature. The winters need the clothes for the winter and summer the summer ones. We can not challenge the needs of dresses created by the nature. Mr. Phillips, the stout man, who could lift the heavy weights needed to change the clothes in winter. The narrator claims that he could not see the arms of Phillips in the winter, “He was a man of medium height; perhaps even a small man. The cold weather clothes he wore – a heavy zip-up pullover, for the most part-concealed his physique” (243). This shows that one must bend oneself in the front of the nature. The dress change takes place even to the enduring and robust people when the nature and the climate demand the person to do so. This means to say that the clothes change in a

person or community as the seasons, climates and the temperatures go different. The change of dress is inevitable and this phenomenon is global and cross-cultural.

The “as if” frame in the dress patterns in the people shows that they are in the need to uplift their social positions. The change of dress might mean the change of the social ladder. We need a different level of analysis to come to a conclusion about what causes what. Is it the social positions that demand the change in one’s dress habits or the elevated dress patterns automatically take one to the elevated positions? George Bernard Shaw would implore on the need of the language style change for the elevation of the social position. His play *Pygmalion* claims for the same. A flower selling girl changes herself to the princess only because she has been able to bring changes into her accent. Could it be that the same is true with the dress?

A thin woman of about fifty, as pleased with the solitude and spaciousness of the manor grounds as that other woman or girl had been all those years before, the one who had tied the tails of her shirt above her hair midriff. A different kind of dress on this older woman: she wore an expensive tweed skirt. She had invested much in this skirt. She was like Pitton, I thought: living up to the place and, though a servant, slightly in competition with it. (368)

She was like Pitton in the dress preferences, but her social position was that of the servant to Pitton. The change in her clothes outlook must have been triggered by her wish to change her social ladder, the social hierarchy. Obviously, the people from the higher social positions do wear clothes different from the people from the lower strata. The cultural imperative does not work here. The delimitation is challenged.

Pitton wears the tie in almost all occasions except on the Sundays in summer. The reason for this could be easily detected. He does not want to expose his chest to

the people around. This can be connected to the hatred or the opposition to the nudity. For Pitton, the elevated life or the sophisticated life means the life that avoids the nudity. Or the wearing of the tie most of the times is for hiding the body for looking so much civilized. As for Pitton, “He wore- it was winter when I first saw him- a felt hat, a three piece tweed coat, and a tie”(244). In cultural studies, the meaning of being civilized has been questioned as the high culture and low culture has been a blurred concept. The cultural studies make it a discursive concept. Whatever, Pitton’s sophisticated approach to his body; hiding it shows that the restriction to the nudity is an idea that he favors to. Pitton has the attire quirks. Such people do not follow the cultural prescriptions as the cultural boundaries cannot contain them.

People who wear better restrict people with the uncared clothes. They are optimistic in general. The optimistic people wear better because they want to show that they love the life and they want to impress people and they want to attract the people. Brenda’s sister reveals the attire inclination of Brenda after her death, “I had always assumed it was Brenda, who had encouraged Les to dress up, and had thought that she had chosen things for him. This news about the washing of the hair suggested a lonelier and more desperate man”(82). This shows that those who are very hopeful restrict the careless wearing of the clothes. The point of focus, then, is that the clothes are chosen for the optimism. People like Brenda are rare to culture who would love the added sensitivity to dress.

Nudity and neatness are invariably the matters of discussion in the cultural studies. The idea that “the vision that sees all earth as sacred” “and all people as valuable”(Stavans 128) is the sense to prove that a culture is not enough to contain its member. His/her inclination could be beyond his or her culture.

The sensitivity towards the dresses in some members in a culture is a rare case. It cannot be a generalizable case. Even so, delimitation of a culture is a questionable idea. The culture cannot dictate the behavior, be it the food or clothes or any other, to its necessity.

The narrator had the initial impression that the lady wished to show the parts of her body. Later, he realized that it was not the case. Her husband was careful about the clothes. However, she seemed not so much caring about her body. She wanted to show her body. Such impression caught by the narrator and his impression had been contradicted later:

The man in pink cottage had a new or newish car. On fine afternoons his wife sunbathed in the ruined garden, seemingly careless of her breasts. She was a short woman with heavy thighs. The contemporary fashions she followed didn't flatter her figure; they made her look heavy, badly proportioned, a little absurd. But one day I saw the long dresses of an earlier era, with high, narrow waists and full hips, might have been absolutely right for her, would have made her voluptuous. And I felt that this was how she herself, immensely desirable; and that this sunbathing in the wreck of the garden, this care of what had at first seemed to me a slack, heavy body, was something she might have thought she owed to her beauty. The new car, her husband's careful clothes- these were further tributes. (Smith 43)

The point that is being established here is that the nudity and restrictions are the time concerns. Everyone is naked in some circumstances and there are times, for instance, the market time which do not allow to people to be naked. The man has a style whilst

the woman has, again, another style that is different. The general culture cannot accommodate their tastes. This gives birth to the subculture and counterculture.

Similar to Pitton's neatness of the clothes, Phillips also had some particularities. As Pitton reserved the clothes for seasons and work, Phillips was conscious of the clothes and the environment around:

He, old Mr. Phillips, was carefully dressed, in his very pale colours- no pattern in the fabric of his tie, jacket or shirt, this absence of pattern together with the broad lapels, collars and ties of the period adding to the pallor of the clothes, suggesting chalk below the tints, the way the chalk of the downs modified the color of young grass or corn and in dry weather whitened a ploughed field. (Naipaul 323)

His extra sort of sense in the matching of his dress to the environment especially the color in his surrounding can be taken as the matter of the restriction. He cares a lot about the color of his dress and the color of his surroundings. Phillips' tendency is not an exclusive English tendency. This dress tendency is present even outside England. As Jennifer Harford Vargas comments on the footnotes in *BWW* as they function as "the asides and interruptions" (54) similar is the camouflaging of Phillips that intends to go beyond one's culture (54). A culture cannot contain every individual's interests.

The cases of delimitation in the cultural spheres cannot be tenable. *BWW* also shares the narratives in which the fixity is transcended and the characters do not seem to have been contained in the prescriptions made by their cultures. The scents are added to the clothes we wear for adding the impression; culture cannot reach the

needs and intricacies of a person's life. In this sense, culture is a general umbrella principle. What Beli does when she was in love with Gangster shows this idea:

The next time the Gangster appeared she had dolled herself up lovely a brand new dress, crushed jasmine in her underwear, got her hair done, and even plunked her eyebrows into twin hyphens of alarm. (Diaz 136)

This all effort by Beli had the purpose of attracting the gangster for her cause. Upon reflection, we know that we change dresses for the better for the better impressions and the added favors from the people around us. Beli goes beyond the prescriptions of her culture.

If the resources are scarce, wearing better cannot be effected. Gangster has become gangster for the poverty reasons. When he kills the people for the money, he buys the clothes-new clothes and better shoes:

At age fifteen he killed his first ' communista', a favor for the appalling Felix Bernardino, and apparently the hit was so spectacular, so fucking chunky, that half the left in Bani immediately abandoned the DR for the relative safety of Nueva Work. With the money he earned he bought himself a new suit and four pairs of shoes. (Diaz 119)

The thieves become thieves for the food and clothes purpose in general. When they have money from those criminal activities they spend the money on the glamorous clothes. People get satisfied when they change their dresses from the less beautiful to the more beautiful. People cannot follow the harmony expected by a culture as the gangster cannot do.

For changing the behavior of the people, people expect it through the dress. Lola's mother Beli does not like her daughter working in the Greek diner. When Lola does not like to leave that job, Beli threatens her to tear up her new clothes. For the safety, Lola had to keep her clothes in Karen's house: "When she threatened to tear up my new clothes, I started keeping them in my locker and at Karen's house. When she told me that I had to quit my job at the Greek diner I explained to my boss that my mother was starting to lose it because of her chemo" (Diaz 60). When Beli expects the behavior change ie the daughter changing the profession the location of the job, she warns her to tear the new clothes. People love the new clothes and when they know that they would be deprived of the new clothes they think deeply about their behavior. Are clothes the results of change or the instruments of change? In this strand of the evidence, Lola's behaviour change is effected by the dress. She is expected to change her job as the mother forces it through the dresses. Dresses are dear to people. Also, culture expects mothers to be loving. But this does not happen all the times.

With the beautiful dresses, people want to change the ethos they have projected about themselves. The dresses are the instruments of the beautiful. Even the beautiful people want to be more beautiful by wearing more beautiful clothes:

Ana Obregon- Ana was a talker, had beautiful Caribbean-girl eyes, pure anthractive, and was the sort of heavy that almost every island nigger dug, a body that you just knew would look good in and out of clothes, wasn't shy about her weight, either, she wore tight stirrup pants like every other girl in the neighborhood and the sexiest underwear she could afford and was , a meticulous putter-on of make-

up, an intricate bit of multitasking for which Oscar never lost his fascination. (Diaz 34)

Ana had the body that would look beautiful in and out of the clothes. She wore tight stirrup pants like every other girl and wore the sexiest underwear she could afford. She changes the underwear and wears more beautiful than others only because she wants to change the impression of her by the dresses. This shows that beauty is not only the cultural trait. It is also the natural trait. As Sonia Weiner, “ Yuniors are cognizant not only of the danger of writing a definitive story, but also of the impossibility of doing so” (117). In the same way expecting every member of a culture to follow the culture in the way it expects them to do is all but a problematic idea. Ana’s behavior cannot be explained through the parameters of her culture. Nor the definition of the beauty of a lady comes under the cultural definition. She is beautiful in and out of her clothes refers to her going beyond the cultural boundaries and delimitation.

Ana must not have worn better merely for the attraction to the males. It could be her personal tendency, and the personal tendency transcends the delimitation set by her culture.

Nudity in front of the siblings especially the grown up siblings is prohibited in all cultures. Perhaps the nudity with the spouse is acceptable. However, the siblings cannot have that freedom. Once Oscar when he was alone in the house and the restroom he and Lola and he would be sharing was not to be shared by him with Lola because his sister Lola had gone to the college:

After he showed them out he locked himself in his room, lay in bed for a couple of stunned hours, then got up, undressed in the bathroom he no longer had to share because his sister was at Rutgers, and examined

himself in the mirror. The fat! The miles of stretch marks! The tumescent horribleness of his proportions! He looked straight out of a Daniel Clowes comic book. Or like the fat blackish kid in Beto Hernandez's Palmar. (Diaz 29)

This instance about the nudity, restriction and the freedom shares the idea that one is naked with oneself. Being the naked with the older siblings is prohibited in all the cultures across the globe. Katlyn Williams reminds that “sci-fi narratives serve as the ideal metaphors for the immigrant experience” (Npg) and the nakedness issue is not accepted by the culture at large does not mean it does not exist.

It is true that one is naked to oneself no matter how much clothes one wears. Even if a culture would allow one to remain naked for a long time, one would not be able to do so as in the past. Thus, we continue wearing, even when wearing the clothes, we can understand what the nakedness is or what is covered is known to every individual. Thus, the issue of nakedness is a fascinating issue to the attire critics. Cultures seem to be prescriptive while the practice of them cannot be thus. This line of argument is substantiated by the narrative details from the novel *White Teeth*.

Wearing like a whore is a theme that has been repeated by Zadie Smith when she wants to disprove of the dress. One of the protagonists of the novel- Clara BWWden has been reproached with this comment. In the beginning of the novel, Clara has been in love with Ryan Topps. After the accident in Ryan Topps' Vesta GS Scooter, she lost her tooth. She became bucktoothed and left Ryan Topps. While Ryan Topps became increasingly religious, Clara started becoming atheist. It is then that Clara has been criticized by her mother Hortense BWWden and her boyfriend. Clara started wearing more youthful and colorful dresses because she renounced the

renunciation. This active sense in the world had been commented by Ryan Topps as the lady becoming the whore. She goes beyond her mother's and Ryan Topps' expectation of dresses. By implication, the norms of the community had been flouted by her. There are followers of the culture who would be challenging the culture. This challenge would not be a case that is so unique to any culture. Rather, this uncommonness is truly common to all cultures across the globe:

They should be with their families, not dressing like they do and doing things with them men in that house. You yourself shouldn't be doin' that, neither. And dressing like, like, like-' 'Like what?' 'Like a whore!' said Ryan, the word exploding from him like it was a relief to be rid of it. 'Like a loose woman!' (Diaz 42-43)

Clara does not want to be associated with Ryan. Her dressing is not containable to the culture of Ryan and Hortense. There are people who knock down the cultural imperatives.

People who have renounced the worldly affairs, in general, avoid the beautiful dresses. The reason for this is that for those who renounce the material world are devoted to the the divine and the earthly pleasures are the illusions for them. The people who renounce do not tend to wear attractive dresses. In this sense, they wear the dresses that do not contain the glammers. Ryan Topps, the boyfriend of Clara BWWden wears the clothes and shows that he is old-fashioned or anachronistic. A person of this level of ugliness also prefers the clothes that do not make him more beautiful because he is too devotional to the god and disregards the worldly affairs. The ugly dress could indicate two ideas: wretchedness i.e. lack of finance and the disregard to the attire. The renouncing of the worldly beauty also causes this to happen. Thus, the attire represents a peron's perspective, postion to the matrial world.

This sort of disregard to attire because of the devotion to the divinity exists in all followers of the cultures. “ ... wore ill-fitting grey suits with black polo necks. He wore Chelsea boots after everyone else had stopped wearing them” (27). The culture expected otherwise. Ryan Topps was anachronistic. This happens in every culture and at all times. The finely drawn line by a given culture cannot limit the behavior of each member of any culture. The members can go away from the line drawn by the culture.

One of the basic changes of the dress in a person is caused by the season changes. One of the basic functions of the clothes of a person is the protection from the cold and heat. People change the dresses they have worn for so many reasons. Archie saw a soldier in the world war II who had been wearing the summer uniform – a Russian soldier in the thin material, high-necked collar and oversized and floppy cap. One cannot stick to the same dresses when the seasons change. Even in the seasonal changes, there are various types of dresses. Whatever, the dresse changes for this reason as well:

There were going to be no more wars like this one, everybody knew that. The soldier who had spoken to Archie wandered over. He was dressed in the summer uniform of the Russians: the thin material, high-necked collar and over sized, floppy cap; he wore a belt around a substantial waist, the buckle f which caught the sun and shot a beam into Archie’s eye. (105)

The Russian soldier’s dresses and belt buckle shoot the beam into Archie’s eyes. Clothes are meant not only to the body but also to dazzle someone. The cultures specify the purposes of the clothes. The clothes worn by some people can transcend those purposes.

The sewing of the clothes by a tailor changes as the passion and the devotion of the tailor changes. This is a cross-cultural issue. The clothes with the high quality sewing cost high and they bring the changes in the lives of the wearers and the sewing person. Alsana in *WT* has the job of sewing in the Singer Machine. She would be double stitching around the vacancy of the crotchless knicker. She would not care about the husband and sons. She was very devoted to the job because she had to help and support her family. The Iqbal family had various crises- the economic and understanding. This sense of devotion brings the change in the styles and the quality of dress that in turn brings the change of the life quality. Alsana has expected the higher quality of life of her family members by ensuring the higher quality of sewing, the higher quality of the styles in the sewing:

And this is what is happening as Alsana sews loudly on her monstrous Singer machine, double-stitching around the vacancy of crotchless knicker, oblivious to the father and the sons who are creeping around the house, packing clothes, packing provisions. It is a visitation of repetition. It is a dash across continents. It is a return. But one at a time, now, one at a time. (Smith162)

Alsana is oblivious of anyone around her. This indicates the sense that people cannot pay heed to the cultural prescriptions of respect or care to the children all the time.

A culture has the prescriptions about the attires and going against the prescription is the violation to it. The restriction, if lifted, the member of that community is criticized for not living upto the norms and values set by that particular culture. This is so similar in all cultures. In *White Teeth*, Alsana and Samad Miah Iqbal criticize each other because both of them have not met the prescriptions set by the Muslim culture. For instance, a woman wearing sari should not wear the running

shoes. That refers to the attire mismatch and the purity in terms of the attire norms is broken. Similarly, Samad has not worn lungi:

Look how fat you are!’ He grabbed a piece of her, and then released it as if it would infect him. ‘Look how you dress. Running shoes and a sari? And what is that?’ It was one of Clara’s African headscarfs, a long beautiful piece of orange Kenti cloth in which Alsana had taken to wrapping her substantial mane. Samad pulled it off and threw it across the room, leaving Alsana’s hair to crash down her back.... ‘And that is a beautiful lungi you have on, Samad Miah!’ she said bitterly, nodding in the direction of his blue-toweling jogging suit topped off with Poppy’s LA Raiders baseball cap. (Smith 198-99)

Alsana and Samad could not preserve the sense of cultural delimitation. They had to give in to the change ushered by the contexts in the migration scene. As Hortense Bowden is, “the product of a unison between a West Indian mother and a British officer” (Tyan 73), the immigrants cannot be entirely loyal to their native culture even if they wish for that. No matter how bold one stands for the protection of one’s culture, one simply cannot do so in the migrated land where the cultural coalescence is the major theme.

Alsana and Samad have not been able to protect their culture. They have tried to protect their cultures as Alsana cannot allow her son to marry a white girl and Samad does not allow his son to eat what he wishes to eat. Even so, they are living in England signifies the sense that they are not fully willing to adopt their native culture. Partially, they are open to follow the English culture as the culture is more about the soil (Eliot xx-xxi) and abandoning the soil or land to which a culture belongs to causes numerous problems.

Whether or not women should have their privacy is another concern while discussing the nudity and restrictions in terms of the dresses. Alsana and Samad often discuss that they have not followed the dictated custom by their culture. Once Alsana is with her friends and she is discussing the possible names for their children being born soon. Males should not be allowed to view the private parts of the ladies, Alsana viws. Zadie Smith's this reference of tucking the large feet underneath Alsana's sari and Alsana sticking to the idea of avoiding nakedness and showing off provides her views to the readers. She is different from Karina Cain who prefers the showing off of her body to the males. The point is that any culture has the people who have differing views about the nudity-for and against it. Even there, the restriction issue is favored or questioned. Alsana avoids the nudity and promotes the same:

‘ No, dearie.’ Alsana is reprovng, tucking her large feet underneath the folds of her sari. ‘ He didn’t see anything. He wasn’t there. I amn’t letting him see things like that. A woman has to have the private things- a husband needn’t be involved in body business, in a lady’s... parts.’ (Smith 75)

Alsana's insistence on her private things as her own rights cannot be justified as the society asks a lady to share her body to her husband. Nevertheless, her effort to stop her husband from looking at her private part stands for her personal efforts to be different from the imperatives imposed. The culture intends to delimit the scope while Alsana goes beyond this.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion and the Way Forward

In the realm of cultural studies, an extreme form of 'difference-thinking' is today dominant. Cultural studies flourish under its auspices; to refer to universals there seems almost a sacrilege. But all I want is, first, to urge us to use both eyes- to take a look also at elementary commonalities.

Wolfgang Welsch, "On the Acquisition and Possession of Commonalities"

A dissertation examining the cultural contacts defies the easy conclusion. In lieu of conclusion I revisit the representative concepts and instances in the dissertation. Wolfgang Welsch's essay "On the Acquisition and Possession of Commonalities" asks us "to use both eyes" while researching the cultural contacts. Looking at cultural differences has become worn path; I take a less trodden path- the study of commonalities across cultures and the variation in a culture.

Welsch's theory of transculturality turns out to be useful in the examination of cultures at contact as the theory ushers "to take a look also at elementary commonalities". For him, transculturality is different from interculturality and multiculturalism in that interculturality, multiculturalism⁵ and hybridity assume the purity and definable authenticity of the cultures that come into the contact. This challenge to separatedness between and among cultures is a central advancement in the study of cultures. We After the contact, they begin the process of the mixture. For Welsch, no culture possesses purity as it is always on the evolutionary track. He brings forth the idea of the internal cultural variation. For instance, the followers of a

⁵ *In Resistance to Multiculturalism: Issues and Interventions* (2012) Jeffery Scott Mio and Gene I Awakuni foreground the problem of stereotypical concerns of multiculturalism. They propose that resisting the multicultural scholarship would be the resistance to the scholarship itself. However, the formation of further stereotypes is another problem with the multicultural policies.

culture do not necessarily prefer same attires, nor they love same foods. The assumed homogeneity by the adherents of a given culture is a research problem for this study.

EOA contains the dominant debates like the synthesis of the worlds and cultures, re-seeing at the prefiguration of the experiences, multiple departures for the idea of the arrivals, the constant reappraisal of the values, escaping the surrounding of the upbringing, the self constituted through the spatial and temporal dimensions.

The relationships between the narrator in *EOA* and other characters have been analyzed for the cultural states of immigrants and people from England. Narrator's mysterious perception of his landlord in whose manor he lived for many years shows the attitudes to the foods and apparel. The landlord's love of the short attires traces differences of the landlord and other people from England, in the fictional representation.

The reference of Indian immigrant to England by Namrata Rathore Mahanta by citing Bhikhu Parekh is that they are banyan trees that spread the roots in the soils from far and wide (13) and it is the reminder to the narrator that his prefigurations of the experience are suspended for the renewed understanding. His earlier figuration of England from the textbooks he had studied is questioned. He had to revisit his experiences and reconfigure his impressions. This part of the review helped the researcher for the examination of food and the apparel for they are the basics of one's life.

BWW corroborates the issue deduced in *EOA*. The dangers of the definitive stories, the turned stereotypes, the refusal of narrative logic are the dominant debates in the literature that surround the text. It is the cultural residues that are brought into the discussion while one is at the threshold of another culture. When the cultures are at interaction, what does the immigrant do? Driven by this question, the researcher

was initially taken to see the masculinity dimension of Dominican Republic. Why does Oscar wish to live the life of masculinity? Oscar finds it painful to die a virgin boy. According to the novel, Dominican Republic value has it that a man must not die a virgin. Dying thus would be a shameful act. Throughout the novel, Oscar's attempt to break his virginity has been portrayed significantly. After the intervention, the researcher again determined to go for the food and the apparel of the Dominican and American culture to maintain the intertextual study. The code-switching in the novel reminds that the novel is for the people who understand English and Spanish both. It is a complex text for those who do not understand Spanish. The purpose behind it is the need of the transcultural inclination. Oscar, the protagonist, cannot develop the confidence in him when he is asked to strike the balance between two cultures from the US and DR. He seems to be swinging between the two because he cannot come to the terms between both of the cultures. The transcultural invention is not what is available to Oscar.

I am more attentive to food and attire conventions in the text because the characters from *EOA* and *BWW* interact with the clothes concerns and the food realities. A lot of internal and individual contradictions and the cross-cultural commonalities are what constitute the major portion of consideration.

WT shares the research problem along with the major perspectives of the literature debates. The cultural roots retention efforts, perfection paradox⁶ in the immigrants, new cultural features, the culinary and marital restrictions concern the important interactions and these perspectives share the problem of the immigrant questions in terms of the foods and the clothes in the host countries.

⁶“We are always on our way, and never reach an absolute state” (9). In *Towards a Complex Perfectionism* (2005), Peter Scheers highlights how perfectionism is not a state to achieve because “we never reach” the “absolute state” (9).

When the protagonists have the obsession with the foods- Samad, the waiter, and Alsana, the tailor, the apparel and the food are in the interaction for the discussion. The O'Connell's club, the eating place, has been a great place for the discussion of the foods and the restrictions.

The novel contains the debate about the clothes. Samad and Alsana's debate about their clothes and the changes in the clothes by their two sons- Magid and Millat brings forth the discussion of the clothes conventions.

The foods are consumed not only for the fulfillment of hunger. In *EOA*, Jack's drinking at the deathbed has a purpose of attaining solace at the crisis time. When he is about to die, he drinks to his fullest to dispel the crisis. Pitton's taking of the ice-cream in the summer Sundays shows that he wants to keep the temperature of the body to his need.

In *BWW*, Beli often spends her time in the love motels before she is about to leave DR to America. The purpose of the staying at the love motels is the dispelling of the stress in her that was caused by the tyranny of Trujillo. Similarly, Oscar eats a lot and does very less exercise. His excessive eating causes the obesity. The obesity issue has been also the issue in *WT* in which Irie, the daughter of Clara, is thinking of losing the weight for earning money, also for the becoming of the English rose..

The framework for the analysis contains the frame of the triangular approach in the two analysis chapters. This triangulated approach comes under the headings: The untenable cultural binaries, the subject as multitude and the internal cultural variation. The another frame is: the homogeneity paradox, the cultural permeation and the untenable cultural delimitation.

Mr and Mrs Phillipps, the workers to the landlord of the narrator in *The Enigma of Arrival*, had done a kitchen. The description of the kitchen adds to one's

needs at the cooking place. For this reason, the kitchens are embellished⁷, decorated and additionally furnished. The descriptive detail provided by the narrator who is an immigrant emphasizes that the kitchen is spacious. As Phillipsees are from England and narrator is from Trinidad, the beauty of the kitchen is loved by both of them despite their different upbringing: One from England and the other from Trinidad.

The cultural other is suspended and turns out to be dysfunctional many of the times. Narrator at England in *EOA* has contact with a girl from Italy. He feels difficult to know about her affair with her boyfriend. However, his fondness of her despite the unrecognizability of the menu by Angela, the Italian girl calls up the attention for the food customs. He likes her. He visits her. He wants to see her. He often goes to the restaurant where Angela works as a waitress. This suggests that the food commonality is less a concern for the people to get intermingled. He interrogates her menu, dislikes her food, but likes her. He does not know so much about what to make of the food and menu Angela has prepared. What he must have liked about her is her beauty. The narrator's emphasis on meeting Angela reminds that the unfamiliar food had very less to do with the emotional proximity. Angela and narrator derive the proximity despite the origins, the food differences. It is not only the cultural commonalities that bind us together; there are emotional commonalities that draw us close to each other.

Food restriction takes place in various circumstances ranging from the affordability to the cultural conditioning. Also, the food forms the basis for reward and punishment. This is not a case that applies to a particular locality. We rarely hear that the prisoners are provided with the most desirable foods. The thieves, the wrongdoers and criminals are restricted from consuming their favorite foods when they are under the control of the legal authorities. Abelard, the grandfather of Oscar in

⁷ The cover page of a text edited by Michael Berube- *The Aesthetics of Cultural Studies (2005)* consists of a kitchen scene "as an emblem of dazzling and ingenious aesthetics of cultural studies". It highlights how the kitchen becomes an important place for the connection between beauty and cultural studies.

BWW, was deprived of the sufficient food for meeting his hunger. There must not be anyone across the globe; there must not be any culture that welcomes a prisoner with his most favorite food. There must not be any cultural practice in which an enemy is served with the most luxurious foods. The food, thus, the restriction, the deprivation exists across the cultures acting as the instrument of the punishment.

La Inca, the aunt of Beli in *BWW*, had been a savior to Beli. She had saved Beli from the crush of Trujillo. After that La Inca had turned to be increasingly spiritual. Her purpose of fasting is for the elevation of the piety. This phenomenon called fasting is present in almost all cultures. This applied cross-cultural similarity exists in all cultures. This cannot be the coincidence that it is present in all cultures simultaneously. The fasting without even drinking a drop of water by La Inca and only on orange reminds the Muslim's month long fasting and Hindu's Teej related fasting. La Inca, the Christian lady demonstrates a behavior so similar to other cultures. Further, when human help does not avail one, people turn to the divine. This is a practice across the cultures. La Inca resorts to the divine for Beli's safety.

Lack of food at home when one's wife is pregnant means a big concern. But not having at least the required food with sufficient nutritional value would cause a big problem at home. Alsana, Samad's wife in *White Teeth*, asks with Samad about the food provisions. As she is pregnant, she asks if she can eat the China or her clothes. This conflict between Alsana and Samad remind us the evolutionary nature of culture in all the societies. The traditional societies want the home-made foods while the urban societies adopt the prepared meals. The case between Alsana and Samad stands for all the societies across the world. This does not merely stand for their individual family concern.

Ways of eating, time required for eating differ on the grounds of the varieties, types of the foods. If the foods are of hard type, eating is slowed down and vice versa. The times and efforts for the eating are not affected only by the types of food; they are affected by age of a person. For babies, feeding customs are different. The grown-ups have differences. The older people have their typical ways of eating because their teeth are decayed; they are toothless. When the mouths do not contain any teeth, the customs for eating and drinking naturally change. The aging is not a culture specific phenomenon; it is the cross-cultural one. Mr Hamilton in *WT* cannot eat anything brought by Magid, Millat and their friends. He informs them they need to be careful about their teeth when they are young; they should brush them frequently because human beings are mammals and they will have two chances for the teeth; the lower animals many opportunities for the teeth. By saying all this, Mr Hamilton means to say that he can eat only the coconut milk for his tooth reasons. This instance that the old man can take coconut milk and nothing else cannot be a typical cultural case because aging is not the culture specific phenomenon. Aging is universal and ways for eating at this time are particular; common to all cultures. Losing teeth in the old age is not typical to a given culture. It is biological and takes place to the people of all cultures.

Like the cultures, the individuals and their characters are not fixed and absolutely definable. A character with particular disposition can be found with a differing attitude and disposition other times. The multiplicity of a self has been a theme in the analysis of the characters. The section entitled the subject as multitude includes these overtones.

Pitton in *EOA* seems to be having the tea time. The indication that the cultures have the fixed foods and food having times is almost similar to all cultures. The

breakfast, the lunch, the teatime, the dinner and supper times are fixed. Pitton, at the tea time, stands at the lawn for relaxation. What is more, Phillips calls Pitton at a fixed time and narrator does not know why Pitton is invited by him. He ponders on the gesture. Was it the friendliness, was he required to call Pitton? Was that the authority on the part of Pitton that he had to call Pitton? These questions demonstrate that the call has various meanings and Pitton's subjectivity along with Phillips's self can be read in multiple ways.

The narrator's visit to New York in *EOA* and his effort to refrain from the foods his culture disallows draws the attention of the food scholars. He cannot accept the roasted chicken for his culture does not allow it to him. For refraining from it, he had taken the banana with him. Nevertheless, he would not resist the offer of the roasted chicken. But the guilty conscience in him that the other members of his culture might know it disturbs him. He tries to hide the smell of the oil from the chicken. Ultimately, he decides to take bath or shower to purify himself. His sinfulness, his own definition of his task, needs to be cleansed. So he takes bath or shower. This food stuff as the restrained food for his culture, the obligation for eating and the cleansing of the guilt are significant for the food customs analysis. In fact, while in the journey, an Indian is not supposed to eat from the foreign hand. For that end, the narrator took the banana while in the journey from the airplane but had to eat the roasted chicken and take bath for the impurity he had happened to cause. When the customs for appetite are challenged, a migrant, a tourist, attempts to adjust, avoid the restricted food and endeavors to save herself from the guilt. Nonetheless, the particularities of a culture are questioned because these are different particularities in a so-called foreign culture. The narrator's effort to take the banana because he would not eat the food cooked by the unknown could be for the sticking to his culture. He is

not able to keep it. He has eaten what he should not have eaten. This split mindset seems to be so particular when it comes to the discussion of the plurality of the self. However, this is the general tendency of any subject particularly the human subjects.

In general, meal times are occasions for the parents to monitor their children. The food times are not merely food times as they provide occasions for the restraining and disciplining the children. In *BWW*, Lola comes back from the Greek diner; this workplace is disliked by her mother, Beli . Thus, Beli intends to scold her saying that she should not work in the Greek diner. Mother's rage fills the house, the rage permeates the house including the children's food. The breakfast table would be the biggest occasion for Beli to ask question about how Lola entered the house. Oscar would answer strategically feigning the ignorance. This behavior can be extended to the cross-cultural connections. Almost every parent would catch the children at eating time for the restraining. That is why the nagging parenting concept is popular at the parenting genres. Further, a mother, customarily, is a loving figure. However, this novel presents mother as the hostile figure as the conventional image has been challenged. More conventionally, the mother should have loved the daughter in the food times. This reminder of the electra complex- mother daughter hostility is the challenge to the mother daughter relationship. This is the manifestation of the varied subject. Mother figure is not always the loving figure; it can be even the hostile figure that challenges the established image.

In Beli's bakery in *BWW*, a dentist's wife comes for taking the cakes and not the doctor. The dentist is reported to be too lazy to come to take the cakes. The wife collects energy for the fetching of the cakes to the husband's choice. We know that the husband: the dentist is good at his task but to the fetching of the cakes. This is easy to be interpreted as the food custom: the patriarchal behavior. The husbands are

for the tasks away from the kitchen. The wives for the kitchen related activities. The feminist mode of blaming the patriarchy has been the remarkable reminder. The patriarchy confines the women only in the kitchen. The dentist's behavior is the similar representation of patriarchal dominance. Dentist is too lazy to go to the bakery and this is the cross-cultural representation of the patriarchal indicator. A dentist who must have studied hard for his dentistry is represented with the loth especially for coming to take the cake. This is normal to expect as one cannot be good at all trades. He cannot be lazy at all times.

Samad's way of working in *WT*— cooking and helping people eat has been very significant. Samad is a good Muslim, good husband, good father, and good immigrant: we can doubt upon these propositions. However, his upping of the working hours to fourteen hours a day can be read with the special interest. Since he is a waiter, he prepares the napkin, corrects the orders of the knives, arranges the forks and polishes the glasses. His honing of these skills stand for his devotion to the profession – waitressing is exemplary. Why does he involve himself so much in the profession of cooking and feeding? His continuous refinement on the ways for the cooking, eating, and serving signal to a worker's devotion to his profession. His sole involvement in eating and drinking ways can be extended to the people's passions for their professions. Samad, the genius waiter, who loves to spend much time in the hotel has the obsession for the eating and the drinking profession. His way of working is excellent. However, Samad cannot keep the conviction he sets for his wife and children- the purity paradigm. Samad is good waiter, but strict and bad husband, father and bad Muslim. His personality dimensions are many and they do not cohere with each other.

There has been another mode of discussion about the foods: the debate of organic and inorganic foods. Naturally, people tend to dislike the inorganic foods. However, the commercialization across the globe contributes to the dearth of organic foods. For health reasons, people tend to favor the organic foods. Hortense Bowden in *WT* convinces Irie that Lord Jesus never wanted the people to follow the path of artificiality. Showing the plasticated orange and flowers, she reminds Irie that the Lord wanted the natural and no adulteration to the natural aspects. Vandana Shiva from India has a movement against the hybrid seeds that have negative consequences not only to the farmers but also to the consumers. She advocates for the natural seeds like Hortense BWWden in *White Teeth*. The mixtures of foods, the unnatural ways of producing the foods have been questioned by Hortense. This prohibition is another important framework for the cultural typicality and commonality. Hortense's extraordinary inclination to Jehovah's Witness and tiltation to natural makes her impractical. She is stubborn enough because she has disowned her daughter, she has forsaken the motherly love yet advocates for the naturalness of flowers and fruits. The varied subjectivity of Hortense corroborates the subject as multitude.

The subject positions and perspectives vary as the situations, locations and times vary. In that light, the cultures are different in themselves. Their assumed homogeneity is a questionable concern. The internal variation in a culture is what is mostly neglected by the cultural critics.

Alan, the writer, at England in Naipaul's *EOA* has a typical habit. He eats alone. He loves the solitude. His food time restrictions are truly unique. Once the landlord of the narrator asks Alan if he can bring some toast in a chafing dish. In fact, the narrator wanted to ask Phillips to bring the toast to him. Alan roared with laughter at the chafing dish. He asked the landlord if he had heard anybody speak of chafing

dish. Although the landlord had been familiar with the uniqueness of Alan, he felt it that uniqueness again. Alan and the landlord were both from England, nonetheless, their food habits were not similar. People from the same culture do not have its followers having the same food habits. For Alan, eating the toast on the chafing dish is not a permissible, acceptable idea, while for the landlord, it was an acceptable idea. Same culture does not mean similar behaviors and the equal weight provided to all the elements in the same fashion.

The individual restrictions can take the form of individual preferences in terms of food. Jack in *EOA* used to celebrate the seasons. His nature was compatible to the nature. Similarly, his love of pleasures of food and drive to the pubs show that he cannot tolerate the poor qualities of the foods. His love of luxury in terms of food stands for the hatred of the poor quality of the foods. He restricts the food that he does not like. His going to the pub and tasting the tasty food exhibit that luxury in the food is inevitable. A comparison can be made between Pitton and Jack. Jack would love the drinking while Pitton seemed much disciplined. Piton did not love the eating and drinking as much as Jack. These two English people have very different dispositions. They have developed their own unique tendencies. Thus, claiming the homogeneity in terms of the culture would not provide us the more accurate picture of cultural analysis.

The restriction of food for a group of people or an occasion amounts to various reasons. One of the reasons is the level of affordability. The Cabral family in *BWW* is a well-to-do family. Thus, the case of their privilege is raised time and again. When other people ate rocks and scraps of yucca, the Cabrals ate pastas and Italian sausages. The Cabral family had a broader sense of prohibitions. Their privilege on pastas and Italian sausages stands for their higher level of affordability. This further implies that

the concept of restriction or the prohibitions of foods exist but they are applied to all the families of a community in the most uniform manner.

The real world happenings in regards to the food resonate in the textual world written by Diaz. What is happening around us is that our norms of ethnic or our cultural foods are greatly questioned by the quicker encroachment of the foods from the cultures that are far from one's cultures. Oscar, at the later phase of his life, visits Santo Domingo from the US and sees various changes in the food culture of his native land. He could see the US. fast food restaurants like Dunkin Donutes and Burger King. There were bakeries throughout city's outer parts. The older restrictions on the commercial concerns of foods were challenged and newer lines were redrawn. This variation in a culture emphasizes the changes in a culture.

Alsana in *WT* asks her husband not to preach anything at the dining times while Samad continues doing so. These Muslim characters have differing attitudes about food times. Similarly, the golden age of luncheon vouchers is over in England and this is practiced in the O'Connell's club. Once a popular practice turns out to be obsolete after a duration. This reminds us the fact that a culture changes as the time passes. The variation at a period of time or in different period of the times is a fact in the life of a culture.

The examination of food practices with the focus on the questionable cultural binaries, the multiplicity of the self and the differing points of a culture is followed by the examination of the apparel customs in the lives of the hosts and the immigrants. In this themed conception, the discussion of homogeneity paradox is given adequate consideration. The cultural permeation is analyzed and the delimitation by the culture is questioned as the delimitation is not possible in its truest sense. Transgression is always there when we discuss the notion of the cultural delimitation.

Among the basic purposes of the dresses is the protection from the heat and cold. From the ancient times, the people must have begun to wear the clothes for the security to the bodies. In particular, in the summer seasons, the thin clothes that may not cover all parts of the body are worn and the other extremity- the winter season is the time when the people wear the thick clothes that cover all parts of the body. As the common knowledge holds, the winter has the cold and requires the warmth and summer has the heat and requires the cool composition. This is, in a way, a universal phenomenon that does not count as the culturally specific notion. Jack in *EOA* had the exaggerated style with the clothes. He would be bare-backed in the summer and muffled-up in the winter. This sensitivity of apparel is not present in all characters in the text. Jack's case is extraordinary in comparison to Bray and Phillippses. These individuals from the same culture with differing orientations to apparel challenge the paradox of homogeneity.

The immigrants cannot maintain the cultural codes and the restriction scenarios in the host countries as they can do in the source countries. In *EOA*, the son of sati could not follow the prescribed cultural codes in terms of apparels. The narrator's sister sati's son has worn the jeans and jumpers. His avoidance of the restrictions proves that he is not able to maintain the cultural restriction and prescription. This variation among the Hindu followers justifies the question to homogeneity.

Putting on the mask on face has security reasons or the invisibility purposes. Whom is the mask for? In *BWW*, the masking by Oscar in the dream of Yuniur shows that he is trying to hide something from others. Five years after Oscar's death, Yuniur saw him in the mysterious manner. Oscar does not wish to be seen. The face being hidden but the smiling eyes behind the mask of Oscar stand for Oscar's divided

mindset. When Oscar was alive, he faced challenges of any gravity, after death, he masks himself. This act of masking can be read as the variation in a person that can be extended to the culture at large that contains the differences within.

In general, people change attires in times of photoshoots. This is an example of universal standard. There could be various reasons for this. Some of the reasons for this are: for the memory; for the publicity. We do not want to be remembered in the poor quality attires. After being beaten by the soldiers of Trujillo, Beli in *BWW* wore real clothes, new clothes and took photo. As the soldiers had beaten her to almost death, her dresses had been torn. La Inca helped her to wear the new clothes and asked her to take photo. Beli contradicts the homogeneous interpretation of her condition. She wears better for the photoshoots.

The response to why a person's dress preferences do change can yield multiple dimensions. One of the responses is that a person's dress preferences do change as their affiliations change. A person wears particular attires if he/she is associated with a particular community and if that affiliation changes, the preferences also change. This is more so when the people are associated with the particular sects of religions. For instance, Millat in *WT* used to wear very attractive attires earlier. He preferred the jeans before he joined the sect called KEVIN. After he became the campaigner of KEVIN, the attire change in Millat was the important norm. He started wearing the kurta and pyjamas. If one wants to be the loyal member of a particular sect, the inclination to that attire is automatically enacted. Millat enacts the heterogeneity in his attire preference.

Certain fabrics are used for the definite types of the clothes. However, when a person has the economy dwindled, the order gets changed. On the Tuesday after Archie's wedding, Samad in *WT* went to see Ardashir for the pay increase. He folded

his white, flared trousers made from the fabric as that of the table clothes. When we see that Samad has worn the trousers from the table cloth; we can infer the same as claimed here. It is Samad's difficult economy that has caused the change in his attires. He would not have worn the trousers made of the tablecloth if he had the abundance of the economy. He did so because he did not have a lot of money. Ardashir, Samad's cousin, wears better while Samad does not. Not all the members of a culture are same in terms of attires.

These instances stand for the ground to question the homogeneity in the given culture. In the similar vein, the cultures across possess the commonalities in terms of the apparel.

Attires have the pockets. The evolutionary story of the pockets could be traced to the foundation facts of the means of transportation and even migration. Although the sizes of the pockets are varied, the purposes are that they take the roles of the bags, boxes and other transportation means. A decorator in *EOA* wears an overall whose job is to paint the cars. Since he was a smoker and had to smoke in times of painting, he would flick the ash of the cigarette in his overall pocket. His habit of tidiness had been maintained only because of the pocket of the overall. The keeping of the ash into his top pocket would provide him the opportunity into the concentration. Attires with pockets is not a cultural particularity. This permeates all the cultures.

The professional attires stand for privileges in some places. For instance, the dresses for the journalists provide support when they have to visit certain places. They are the badges of the trade. Bray in *EOA* wears a peaked cap in most of the places. This renders him the identity of a driver. Once he went to the airport and the policemen did not inquire him about his going because they knew that he was the

driver and the peaked cap was the badge of the trade. He was exempted from the checking of the police. The professional dresses are identity and privilege markers. This practice is common to all cultures.

Attires are changed when it comes to varying places. School uniform is not worn at home and vice versa. It is not only the periods, times or the geographies that invite the changes in the apparels. Beli in *BWW* excelled in the school, she developed the locution. But Beli did not have many friends in the school. Darca, the daughter of woman who worked in La Inca's was Beli's friend. Darca wore the school dress at home till evening till La Inca asked her to change them. Why did not she change the dress? The lack of it and lack of the will to change because the scarcity would overpower her. Darca's case that she had to change the school uniform at home suggests the existence of the fact that people have the assigned attires in the designated locations. Not varying the assigned attires in the designated locations is considered a problem. This fact is applicable to all cultures.

A man does not, in general, love a lady who is very beautiful yet wears unattractively. This tendency is cross-cultural and global. Men do want this in all places of the world. This could be for the sexual attractiveness. Lola in *BWW* on the off days from the job would drink with Aldo, would sit on the sand dressed in all black but boys there would be ask her to wear bikini. When they would see her in the black, they would ask her what was wrong with her. The boys at the beach asking Lola not to wear bikini represents the emotional state of men to women. This is not atypical. This takes place across cultures.

Millat in *WT* calls Karina Cain a whore because she wears short attires. She claims that she wears the short skirts to impress the males positively. Karina's belly-top shorter clothes that would leave her nipples clear and her silver pants and navel

showing off had irritated Millat. This debate that clothing and underclothing is present across cultures in differing degrees. Covering the body fully would be a good idea in the winter season from the temperature reasons. But wearing fully even in the hot seasons and expecting this to take place prescriptively could be an instance of autocracy.

In many political and protest contexts, it is the attires that signal as the protest indicators. All cultures have the attires that are defined for the specific contexts. The religious contexts have specific attires, the military contexts, the school contexts, the lawyers wearing the specific attires and the doctors with specific attires. In *White Teeth*, once Samad is going to the school with Irie and Magid while on the way he sees that the children have worn black from head to toe. They have worn white armbands on their left arms. When Samad asked the purpose of not wearing the school uniform, the children responded that their attires had a definite purpose. They had the protest issue for the Harvest Festival. This restricted cloth and the children's attire behavior means that people practice prohibition to prohibit some people to do something. To deepen, Magid and Irie along with her school friends wearing all black and the left arm with the white armband is the unusual dress. The children had to be in the school in the school uniform. They were wearing the dresses that were not permitted in the school. This unusual practice is usual. The uncommonness is common in all the cultures where protest would be carried out.

Even though a culture sets the boundaries of the practices to its members, such boundary cannot be unmistakably maintained. Some members of a culture transcend such delimitations because they intend to do so or the situations they are in invite such transcendence.

The hypothetical behavior in attire conventions in the people shows that they are in the need to uplift their social positions; this is another example of universal standard. The change of attires might mean the change of the social ladder. We need a different level of analysis to come to a conclusion about what causes what. Is it the social positions that demand the change in one's dress habits or the elevated dress patterns automatically take one to the elevated positions? George Bernard Shaw would implore on the need of the language style change for the elevation of the social position. His play *Pygmalion* claims for the same. A flower selling girl changes herself to the princess only because she has been able to bring changes into her accent. Could it be that the same is true with the dress? The lady of fifty in *EOA* would tie the tails of her shirt above the hair midriff. She wore an expensive tweed skirt. She was like Pitton in the dress preferences but her social position was that of the servant to Pitton. The change in her attires outlook must have been triggered by her wish to change her social ladder, the social hierarchy. Obviously, the people from the higher social positions wear clothes different from the people from the lower strata. The point of the focus is that the clothes of an individual are changed not only for the seasonal changes but they have the reason related to the social position change as well. A culture has the unwritten law that people from lower social position wear worse than the people from higher social position. This delimitation is transcended by a lady of fifty.

People who wear better restrict the uncared clothes. They are optimistic in general. The optimistic people wear better because they want to show that they love the life and they want to impress people and they want to attract the people. Brenda in *EOA* expected much from her life according to her sister. She was very careful about her clothes. Her boyfriend Les also learnt to dress up from her. Brenda is similar to the

lady of fifty in EOA in that they do not delimit themselves in terms of apparel conventions. They go beyond what is expected of them.

Beli in *BWW* sometime in her life had to impress the gangster because she had been impressed by him. Beli had dolled herself and crushed jasmine in her underwear. In general, a lady would not have labored so much for the men. As Beli wants to impress the Gangster, she goes beyond what everyone around her does. This is a glaring example of transcending the delimitations set by culture.

Lola's mother in *BWW* does not like her daughter working in the Greek diner. When Lola does not like to leave that job, Beli threatens her to tear up her new clothes. For the safety, Lola had to keep her clothes in Karen's house. A mother, as convention sets, cannot be as cruel as Beli is characterized. However, sometimes, the mothers behave in such a way to bring the children under control.

Alsana and Samad in *WT* often discuss that they have not followed the custom by their culture. Once Alsana is with her friends and she is discussing the possible names for their would be children. When Alsana was asked about the ultrasound, she tucked her large feet underneath her sari and told that it was her business. Males should not be allowed to view the private parts of the ladies, Alsana viewed. When a culture asks a lady to share her body to her husband, Alsana does not allow her husband to be with her in doing the ultrasound. She does not adopt her culture to the fullest. Individuals cannot follow their culture as it expects them to do.

A culture has prescriptions about the attires and going against the prescription is deemed to be the violation to it. In *White Teeth*, Alsana and Samad Miah Iqbal criticize each other because both of them have not met the prescriptions set by the Muslim culture. For instance, a woman wearing sari should not wear the running shoes. Alsana wears that way. Similarly, Samad has not worn lungi but the blue

toweling jogging suit topped off with Poppy's LA Raiders baseball cap. Although Samad and Alsana have transcended the cultural prescription in the migrated land, such transcendence takes place even in the places where a culture is considered to have originated.

Hence, the dissertation ends with a claim that claiming homogeneity in a culture is a mistaken belief and highlighting the differences between and among cultures can not be considered a peccadillo.

The Way Forward

The project had to follow the provisional delimitation. In course of the study, numerous areas of the research have been abandoned for the pragmatic reasons. The concepts about the food and cultural studies such as the gendered politics of consumption and non-consumption could not be continued with. What constitutes one's food is determined by one's gender. In other words, one significant criterion for the gendered difference is food. This criterion for the provisions of food on the basis of one's gender would have been an interesting area for the study. Cultures have made food provisions for males and females. What is considered acceptable food item for male is deemed unacceptable for females. Vegetarianism and veganism as the measures for the environmental conservation are another concepts that can be the interesting ideas to carry out the study. The relationship between food and body, particularly from the medical perspectives and cultural perspectives could be an additional node of study. While a culture accepts a food item, there is the medical intervention that asks the members to avoid the food for the health reasons. Similarly, the concepts about attire that could not be studied in details and can be the beginning points for the future researchers include the fashioning techniques of femininity. Why are the male and female dresses different? Is it for the enactment of the domination or

are there some other purposes? States of undress is another interesting area for the study. How much clothing is underclothing? How do we delimit the sense of nakedness? The study of nudity in the divinity and the human beings could provide some insights for the more consolidated understanding of the attires. Also, attires with racial, ethnic and religious articulations, and urban verus rural clothing articulations could be the other areas of considerations for the enlarged comprehension.

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