

## ABSTRACT

The impact of diasporic experiences on identity construction in selected texts by Caryl Phillips, Monica Ali, Hanif Kureishi and Zadie Smith.

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This research paper will explore the fictional representation of the impact of diasporic experiences on identity construction in *In the Falling Snow* by Caryl Phillips (2010), *Brick Lane* by Monica Ali (2003), *The Black Album* by Hanif Kureishi (1995) and *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith (2000). It will consider the manner in which different generations of immigrant characters in these novels go about negotiating their identities and their relationship with the mainstream in the context of the metropolitan space in Britain. The inescapability of the label of 'immigrant' will also be examined. This consideration of identity will be significant in defining the extent to which first generation immigrants in these texts are able or willing to assimilate, especially when there is an absence of feelings of belonging. It will also explore the productive power of liminality in identity construction for the second generation who often find themselves straddling two cultures and how this negotiation has transformed traditional notions of Britishness. The issues of identity facing third generation immigrants will also be considered whilst exploring the impact of gender on identity construction. This exploration of the evolution of immigrant identity formation in the UK, specifically in the London metropolis, will be undertaken through close textual and comparative analysis of the selected texts. My analysis will draw on a range of theoretical perspectives, including Stuart Hall's theory of culture and identity, Homi Bhabha's theory of postcolonialism whilst feminist critic and thinker bell hooks's theories on black women, race and representation would ground our discussion of the issues facing immigrant women.

Keywords: Diasporic; identity; liminality; immigrants; belonging; mainstream; assimilation; feminist; postcolonialism; Britishness.