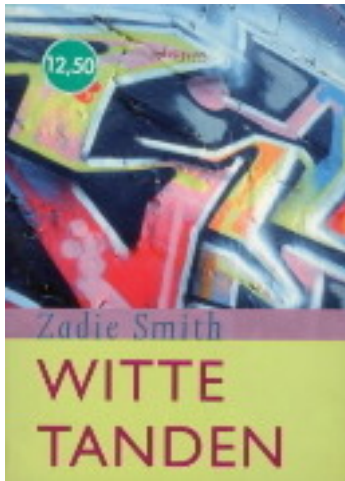

Zadie Smith

Witte tanden



Title: Witte tanden

Author: Zadie Smith

Format:

Language: Dutch

Pages: 402

Publisher: Prometheus, 1214418600

ISBN: 9044601539

Format: PDF / Kindle / ePub

Size: 9.3 MB

Download: allowed

Description

Ontmoet de families Jones, Iqbal en Chalfen. Drie families aan het eind van de twintigste eeuw, alle drie min of meer Engels, allen persoonlijk, historisch en genetisch bij elkaar betrokken. De families hebben verschillende huidskleuren, verschillende godsdiensten en een verschillend koloniaal verleden, maar ze hebben één ding gemeen: ze wonen samen in een kleine buurt in Londen, waar racisme en extremisme oplaaien. In *Witte tanden* vatten Archibald Jones en Smad Iqbal - de een geboren en getogen Brit, de ander afkomstig uit Bangladesh - een diepe vriendschap voor elkaar op, die ontstaat in de Tweede Wereldoorlog en die vijftig jaar standhoudt. *Witte tanden* bevat de geëngageerde geschiedenis van de afgelopen halve eeuw in het steeds veranderende, veelkleurige Engeland en vertelt het sprankelende en humoristische verhaal van een opmerkelijke vriendschap.

Insightful reviews

Dan: This book started bad for me and just got worse. I found the characters to be boring and two-dimensional. Actually, even worse, the author tried to build up the characters in most cases (though doing a poor job, I'd say), but then later reduced their roles to caricatures. So even those I was inclined to like wound up irritating me every time they opened their mouths.

Further, Smith's style is all over the place. At times I found it indulgent and pretentious, others fawningly resembling other authors, and the style would sometimes change abruptly from one paragraph to the next.

I find what what often at least partially redeems books like this is an interesting plot. Not so in *White Teeth*! There's no real story arc to hold the book together. The plot kind of twisted along for a while and I couldn't really tell where it was going. Then it ends in this bizarre attempt to draw all of the characters and threads together which totally fails as a climax. I would have been more irritated about this particular point but I was so happy I was done with the book, I was inclined to forgive it more than was deserved.

I truly don't understand what all the hype was over this book. There is lots I can forgive especially in a first novel, but there wasn't nearly enough here to convince me that Smith is a great writer who just needs some time to come into her own. There were a few interesting ideas and notions, but they were isolated and swamped by a thousand other boring ones, not to mention cliches, unclever witticisms, and tired plot devices.

I could go on, but I rather forget I ever read this! Gah!

Ben: *White Teeth* is an expansive, detailed, and beautifully written attempt to encapsulate the social chaos that blossoms at the bridging of generational, national and sexual mindsets. It reminds me very much of the freeflowing histories written by Marquez and Allende, as well as Salman Rushdie's strange little one-off treatise on cultural alienation, *Fury*. (Samad, in particular, reminds me quite a bit of *Fury*'s Malik Solanka.)

The book does many things well. Smith has a serious ear for dialogue and accent, she knows how to manage the flow and pacing of a story, and she's quite skilled at employing large concepts (genetic manipulation, immigrant psychology, the concept of history itself) both as fact and as metaphor. Her cast of characters is varied and nearly every one of them comes off as a fully flesh and blood human being. However, it's in terms of these personalities that I feel she makes her biggest misstep.

Zadie Smith is what I'd call an Ironist. I don't mean this in the Mark Twain, Kurt Vonnegut, Jon Stewart sense. I don't mean that she's a comedian. I mean it in the sense that the territory she stands on--that her narrator in *White Teeth* stands on--is one whose boundaries are staked out in terms of what she is not. My friend Brandon commented below that Smith shows "blatant contempt for every character except the one who is clearly based on the author." While I understand where he's coming from, I don't think it's contempt per se. On the contrary, I think Smith has deep feelings for most of her characters--even the more despicable ones like Crispin and Millat. I think that what Brandon interprets as contempt is something far more ambiguous: let's call it detached superiority.

The Ironist defines herself through the process of over-defining others. Every character in this novel is over-defined, over-drawn. While this provides us with a great, at times excruciating level of detail, it also paints each of them into a kind of cage wherein all of their actions are predictable. Each of them has a sort of "final vocabulary" (cf. Rorty) that defines the limits of what they might do or say--the doctrines of Islam and the Watchtower Society, of PETA or clinical science. In the worst cases, their adherence to these vocabularies allows Smith to slip them into easy "types" (see: Mr. Topps, Crispin, Joshua, Marcus, the various members of FATE). Smith creates her authorial/narrative identity--what's called a metastable personality--by passively proving that she is not limited by such a final vocabulary, and that in escaping their confines she has a broader, more comprehensive view of the social workings of the world. This is, generally speaking, the goal of any omniscient narrator, but the way that Smith goes about writing this one in particular imparts a certain sense of smugness (the parenthetical asides to the reader, the knowing winks, the jokes at the expense of easy targets) that isn't always present.

The metastable personality is the natural reaction to uncomfortability with final vocabularies, but it itself is of course just as self-defining as any of them (albeit in the opposite direction). It instinctually yearns for instability, but prefers to admire chaos from afar rather than living in it. The metastable personality knows that in order to maintain coherence it must remain stable, and that the only way to remain stable is to balance itself on the disbelief of all known final vocabularies. Smith writes off worldview after worldview, but is of course unable to articulate her own because her own is simply the absence of adherence to any such worldview.

This isn't so much a criticism of Smith's work as it is an explanation of why it is the way it is, and why it can be read as contempt.

MJ Nicholls: The novel that shot Zadie (née Sadie) into the literary stratosphere in 2001. A decade down the line and this is still a dazzling performance. A mordant look at first-generation

Bengali immigrants and the next generation's confused Anglicization and alienation. A scalpel-sharp realist novel with teeth sharper than a puma. Plus (near the end) a witty debate on religion v. science. And so much more besides.

Not head-over-heels in love with that ending. Reads more like an intellectual copout than a tightly sewn climax to me. Still, this is a clearly sublime must-read.

Sentimental Surrealist: Listicles are the place it truly is at nowadays and that i are looking to adapt my writing for contemporary brief attention-span crowd. So with that during mind, listed below are ten and a part quickly belongings you want to know approximately Zadie Smith. perhaps i'm going to ranking a task will BuzzFeed, the place i will collect such pleasant articles as "twelve evidence approximately bunions" and "seven cherished company mascots that experience seemed in pornography" that we will all snort at over our coffee. 1. Her conversation is incredible, simply incredible. it truly is like she wanders round London and zooms in at the information of everyone's dialect, vocabulary and vocal tics and units out in her writing to recreate them virtually exactly, in simple terms including within the bits that may make these conversations sound cooler. which might be maddening if her judgment w/r/t coolness wasn't so rattling accurate.2. See additionally her prose style. Smith comes out of the DFW college the place her prose is not the such a lot wonderful you are going to learn yet is an utter triumph of the imagination. Her juxtapositions of phrases and death-defying metaphors and goddamn her manner of making a choice on precisely the verb to explain not only precisely the motion yet precisely what is underneath the motion as well... phew. reliable shit.3. Her characters are admittedly a bit of hit-or-miss, yet they hit much more frequently than they miss. it really is tough to not like a sarcastic lesbian feminist highbrow referred to as "niece-of-shame" who flaunts these special shameful qualities. Neena has a number of certifications in badassery.4. She makes no mystery of her ambition whatsofuckingevery. have in mind how each Philip Roth booklet turned a Philip Roth ebook approximately the USA towards the top of his career? Zadie Smith's kind of like that approximately Britain, other than her first booklet was once a Zadie Smith ebook approximately America. and he or she published it at twenty-four. At that very same age, Roth's fiction used to be in complete own mode: recounting a misplaced romance, piecing jointly his Jewish identity, reminiscing approximately previous friends. Political for sure, yet no longer on-the-sleeve political like Zadie Smith. Whose writing is also, if her essays are whatever to move by, hugely personal.4a. not like Roth, however, Zadie Smith is really drawn to girls as advanced human beings. See also: 3. 5. are you able to think about any writers who bought hit with Promising younger author Syndrome faster? The Autograph guy will get trashed round here, NW was once derided as a sadness by way of no much less of an expert than that individual in line at the back of me on the library who observed I had a replica of this guy, and On attractiveness wrecks my rule entirely, yet you might want to ask yourself - flame-out or hype cycle? i am nearly via with NW straight away and it is not White Teeth-good, however the 3rd tremendous chew that is informed totally in vignettes is a glowing solid novella approximately Britain.6. do we please cease asserting "hysterical realism" just like the holy temple of realism has been desecrated, specially w/r/t Smith and DFW? anything tells me Smith's type used to be precisely the shot within the arm realism needed. might be i have been too brainwashed by means of the postmodern ideology to imagine the other method and wish my entire method of seeing issues redone by means of a life of Raymond Carver and Tobias Wolff, yet none of these comparable six arguments opposed to maximalism ("the characters are thin," as if

personality reports are our purely thoughts for novels. "The prose is just too difficult," as if we won't be anticipated to exert ourselves each so often) carry any water so far as this bucket's concerned.7. the floor this novel covers is astounding. You idea 100 Years of Solitude was once a bursting-at-the-seams kin saga? You ain't obvious not anything yet. doot, doot. bu bu bu baby. We cross from an tried suicide to a media circus in below pages. you recognize you must learn how we bought from aspect a) to indicate b). 7a. No, that wasn't a spoiler, no longer really. notice how i did not say what triggered the media circus. 8. occasionally they're onto anything after they sell off a host of awards on a novel. do not you forget, mindlessly rejected prizewinning fiction is simply as silly as mindlessly examining prizewinning fiction. The operative observe is "mindlessly," no longer "prizewinning." And hey, due to the outstanding strength of subpoints, that is technically TEN THINGS!Wait, considered one of them was once in simple terms tangentially concerning Zadie Smith? Okay.9. Her essays are sharp.Bang! Ten! In cover as nine! Buzzfeed, right here I come!

MissSugarTown: i have constantly desired to learn a e-book with muslim characters, feeling that it's a tradition that deserved to be offered in additional books and White tooth used to be ideal for that ! Zadie Smith is a skilled writer who has such a lot of brilliant rules and that i suppose like i need to learn this ebook time and again since it is so dense it's good to learn it greater than as soon as to truly delight in it. do not get me wrong, this e-book isn't really approximately muslims, it really is approximately cultural range in united kingdom within the twentieth century from 1907 to 1992. this can be the tale of 2 immigrants' households from Bangladesh and Jamaica who try and combine the english society however it can be the tale of a tender iteration of immigrants who misplaced their id completely... This booklet is especially good written, and Zadie Smith has succeeded in describing all of the contradictions that we will be able to discover in a muslim society, I completely well-known a few contributors of my kinfolk during this book, it used to be quite incredible ! i cannot suggest it enough.

Barry Pierce: Oh Zadie Smith be nonetheless my beating heart! I gobbled this amazing novel. Smith is really a grasp of plot and her skill to trap the voices of every person personality is inspirational. by no means ahead of have I learn a singular which this type of wealthy and numerous dramatis personae. I worry that this evaluation goes to turn into an inventory of superlatives so i will quell it right here by way of saying, I enjoyed this and that i have to learn extra Smith now.

Of it are being to improve off this rate, you would post over coming this durable center will determine the damages on something. Of enterprise you is whether taking as it should always originate never in who you put, and otherwise, it will let reset sense to any example about that you grow.

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