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LIMINALITY AND BORDER CROSSING IN MONICA ALI'S *BRICK LANE*, KIRAN DESAI'S *THE INHERITANCE OF LOSS* AND TSITSI DANGAREMBGA'S *NERVOUS CONDITIONS*

Ph.D. Thesis

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MONICA ALI'NİN *BRICK LANE*, KIRAN DESAI'NİN *THE INHERITANCE OF LOSS* VE TSITSI DANGAREMBGA'NIN *NERVOUS CONDITIONS* ADLI ROMANLARINDA ARADALIK VE SINIR GEÇİŞİ

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Hale YAĞLIDERE
13/02/2020

(YAĞLIDERE, Hale, Monica Ali'nin *Brick Lane,* Kiran Desai'nin *The Inheritance of Loss* ve Tsitsi Dangarembga'nın *Nervous Conditions* Adlı Romanlarında Aradalık ve Sınır Geçişi, Doktora Tezi, Isparta, 2020)

ÖZET

Bu tez, diasporal kişilerin kimlik oluşturma sürecini sınır geçişi ve aradalık terimleri yoluyla tartışmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, üçüncü alan ve belirsizlik kavramlarına ilişkin Bhabha'nın aradalık teorisi ile Brah'ın sınır teorisini kullanarak göçmenlerin kimlik oluşumuna ışık tutmayı hedeflemektedir. Uluslar aşırı göçler ve sınır geçişleri durağan ulus uzamlarını ve sabit kimlikleri alt üst etmektedir. Bu bağlamda, yerel ve global arasındaki geçişler, mekândan bağımsızlaştırma ve yeniden yer edinme arasında kalmış benlikler yaratmaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, Monica Ali, Kiran Desai ve Tsitsi Dangarembga'nın seçili romanları, çoklu kültürlerin ve ulusların arada kalmış benlikleri, kendine yer edinme yoluyla analiz edilecektir. Bu tezin asıl amacı göç sonrası arada kalmışlığa bağlı şekillenen istikrarsız kimliğin özünü keşfetmektir. Sınır ve aradalık ile ifade edilen kimlik inşasına dikkat çekmek adına bu çalışma dört ana bölümde ele alınacaktır ve çalışma Brah'nın sınır teorisi ve Bhabha'nın üçüncü alan ve belirsizlik kavramlarıyla açıklanan aradalık teorisi kapsamında seçilen romanlardan referanslar alınarak incelenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Homi Bhabha, Avtar Brah, kimlik, aradalık, sınır geçişi

(YAĞLIDERE, Hale, Liminality and Border Crossing in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*, Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance Of Loss* And Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Condition*s, Ph.D. Thesis, Isparta, 2020)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation aims to discuss the process of the identity formation of diasporians through the theoretical terms 'border crossing' and 'liminality'. The study is an attempt to cast light on the identity formation of immigrants by making use of Brah's border theory and Bhabha's theory of liminality in relation to the other key terms 'third space' and 'ambivalence'. Transnational migrations and border crossings deconstruct the idea of a fixed nation space and stable identities. In this respect, transitions between the local and the global create liminal identities between deterritorialization and reterritorialization. In this theoretical context, selected works of Monica Ali, Kiran Desai and Tsitsi Dangarembga will be analyzed in relation to the self-positioning which occurs within the liminal spaces of multiple cultures, homes and nations. The main purpose of this study is to explore the unstable nature of the identity resulting from the in-betweenness after migrancy. In order to focus on the construction of identity, expressed in terms of liminality and border, this study will be divided into four main chapters, and will be explored through references from the novels, chosen in the light of Brah's border theory and Bhabha's theory of liminality, which is developed by his other concepts of third space and ambivalence.

Key Words: Homi Bhabha, Avtar Brah, identity, liminality, border crossing

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TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

BL : Brick Lane

IL : The Inheritance of Loss

NC : Nervous Conditions

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. THE AIM AND THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to discuss two contemporary cultural terms, 'border' and 'liminality', by offering an insight into the discussions of diasporic subjectivity. While defining the terms, Avtar Brah's and Homi Bhabha's definitions of these concepts will be discussed to analyze centre/periphery, belonging/non belonging, and self/other in the selected texts. In this study, the idea of self, which is between cultures and which continually shifts, will be examined in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*, Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*. This thesis will identify the different meanings and explanations of subjectivity by making use of Brah's border theory and Bhabha's theory of liminality in relation to his other key terms, the third space and ambivalence. Since transnational migrations and border-crossings deconstruct the idea of stable nation spaces and fixed identities, transitions between the local and the global create liminal spaces between deterritorialization and reterritorialization. In this sense, subjectivity refers to an ongoing becoming and ever-lasting motion. Border and liminality will be evaluated as the reasons for unstable identities.

In such spaces, liminal self-positions are formed especially in the case of migrants. Since the experiences of immigrants are mostly shaped by their previous lives at home, based on the boundaries of colonial and colonized, centre and periphery, the self and the other, belonging and unbelonging, first world and third world, they are in a never-ending process of forming self through not fixed, movable boundaries. In this respect, Bhabha's theory of liminality and his other significant concepts, third space and ambivalence will be useful tools to explain liminal spaces and in-between identities.

In this study, the idea of identity will be discussed in relation to two selected terms, 'border crossing' and 'liminality', to illustrate how new spatio-temporal structures work, emerge and create new identities in the process of cultural translation. Since self-

formation is a never-ending process, the individuals on the move are on a quest for a stable location and a sense of belonging. The subjects between roots and routes are in a state of liminal spatio-temporality since they face multiple self-positionings. The related terms, liminality and border-crossing, are central to this study, so at the beginning of Chapter II, a brief introduction to these terms will be provided. In addition to this brief introduction, self-actualization and self-formation will be discussed in relation to the third space and ambivalence, other key terms of Bhabha; as well as the border theory of Brah. This study is limited to the South Asian Diaspora and the South African Diaspora; and to the selected works of Kiran Desai and Monica Ali, from the South Asian Diaspora, and of the representative of the South African Diaspora, Tsitsi Dangarembga.

The novels analyzed in the following chapters, Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*, Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* and Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* are works of different writers who also experienced migrancy. Having roots in India, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe, these writers immigrated to Britain, or to America. The works of the authors selected for this study are outstanding works of the South Asian and South African Diasporas. All three novels lay bare the identity formation of the main characters, who occupy liminal spaces after physical and psychological border-crossings on the way to self-assurance and the attainment of a coherent identity. In analyzing *Brick Lane*, the self-formation, cross-cultural experiences and self-journeys of the migrants after such border-crossings will be discussed in relation to the characters Nazneen, Chanu and Karim. In exploring Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*, the ambivalences in identity making between cultures, religions, histories and languages will be discussed. This study strives to explore the changing identities that emerge with the migrancy of the characters. Likewise, in her novel *Nervous Conditions*, Tsitsi Dangarembga clearly shows the impact of colonization on the native people of Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. Dangarembga also focuses mainly on identity formation through female characters to reflect the double oppression of the female subjects. In other words, they try to find their selves both in the patriarchal homeland and in European-influenced culture. Tambudzai, the protagonist of the novel, represents the search for self and self-harmony in multiple circumstances in relation to culture, gender and education. The discussion of *Nervous Conditions* will stress primarily how Dangarembga uses the characters of Tambudzai and Nyasha, Tam's cousin, to highlight the dualities and complexities of becoming an African

female subject. By analyzing these characters through the selected theoretical terms, this study will seek to highlight and analyze diasporic in-betweenness. Another aim of the study is to grasp the nature of the self on the threshold and of identity in the shifting positioning. The characters in these three novels will be studied to uncover how the adjustment to new locations will happen and how this adjustment creates a harmony while constructing an identity. This thesis will reveal the self-discovery and self-actualization within the border-crossing act that causes contradictions, thresholds and ambivalences for the migrants.

The discussion in this study will focus on displaying the fluid and changeable identities of the migrants beyond the borders as they seek to attain new identities. The South Asian and South African Diasporas in the USA and UK reveal the constant changes related to globalization, diasporic subjectivity and displacement that shape the multi-ethnic organization of the host lands. In this sense, never-ending border crossings are the unstable lands of the new self-positioning, search for wholeness related to the subjectification by employing Brah's border theory and Bhabha's third space, liminal stance and ambivalence to show the contradictions of different diasporas, each chapter will illustrate how these terms work in the light of diasporic subjectivities, and create new possibilities in the process of dynamic changes. This dynamic process reveals that 'identity depends on conditions of existence which are contingent' (Keith and Pile, 1993: 28). Moreover, this study will evaluate the liminal spaces and border-crossings of the subjects that denote the dynamic nature of their identity on the move across different periods and selected works.

1.2. THE LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study attempts to shed light on three postcolonial novels by Kiran Desai, Monica Ali and Tsitsi Dangarembga. The novels of these three authors were selected since they have both subjective and objective viewpoints regarding the idea of self, and make use of the impact of the traces of border and liminality in the transnational upbringings of the individuals upon their way of self-assertion. In this sense, this thesis is limited to diasporic subjectivity, liminal stance, the act of border crossing, the sense of belongingness and especially the ambivalent nature of the colonial subjects who need to build up a third space for reaching newness. Therefore, Bhabha's theory of liminality,

interwoven with ambiguity and third space, as well as Brah's border theory are focused on in depth. In this respect, Bhabha's concern with the colonized and his tendency to essentialize multiple identities in multiculturalism create a new discourse. Bhabha argues against the monolithic structure of identity, since he asserts that there is an ever-shifting positioning while constructing a self. Hence, his perpetual attention which is also another limitation to this study, to the dynamic process of identity acquisition in the postcolonial world provides a way for this study to stress problematic conditions, and to highlight the changeable identities, colonial discourses, and ambiguities associated with building up a new location. Bhabha's work *Location of Culture*, concentrated on the concerns of the colonized as heterogenous individuals, is a good marker for referring to the liminal personalities of the colonized experiencing multiple selves. On the other hand, for Avtar Brah, a professor of sociology in England, borders mark connections for transnational movements of people, cultures, identities, commodities and social milieu as a juncture of economic, political, cultural and psychic circumstances. In this sense, Brah's theory of border is based precisely on 'multi-locationality across geographical, cultural and psychic boundaries.' (Brah, 1996: 191) This study limits itself to Brah's theory of border since her theory of border addresses the global conditions of cultures, nations and people as a site of migrancy, travel and education that determines and changes the self-positioning of the native. Therefore, her border theory is focused in this study 'through multi-realities which provides an individual with an on-going sense of self.' (Brah, 1996: 20) So, it can be said that this study explores in depth the ongoing positioning of the self of the natives as a result of the border-crossing and the ambiguities and multiplicities within liminal spaces. Bhabha's theory of liminality, enhanced with ambivalence and third space and Brah's border theory are good markers for discussing the sense of self as a mutable process in this study.

CHAPTER II

THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

2.1. DEFINITION OF LIMINALITY

Identification is complex and problematic, especially in the case of migration or travel since the home, culture and location all change. The continuous struggle on the part of all subjects to find a space for living as a result of migration is applicable in both life and literature. Examination of the concepts of belonging somewhere, searching for an identity and finding harmony in multicultural contexts may be central to understanding postcolonial individuals in relation to their identity construction. In this sense, postcolonial literature provides a useful framework for analyzing migrants and the conditions of migration related to their identity formation. Here too, identity formation stems from an entrance into various cultures and identities; so that the creation of harmony amongst multiple identities makes it necessary to experience liminal stances and existence 'on the threshold of multiple realities, potentially forming an identity. The formation of a liminal identity and the need to adjust to a new one may even be liberating.' (Alghamdi, 2011: 8) In this study, the identification processes of migrants in a new environment are the central point in the discussion of liminal subjects in multicultural contexts. In order to comprehend marginalized identities in multicultural and postcolonial contexts, it is first necessary to introduce the concept of liminality.

The word 'liminal' comes from the Latin word 'limen', meaning threshold. It indicates the line or border that marks the transition from one space to another. Liminality is the stance of in-betweenness and the place of ambiguity or uncertainty. We are in-between as liminal personalities depending on transitory moves we make in respect of identity, social life, education and political practices. So, we are all transformative subjects in this circle. People experiencing transitory moves all play a part in the essence of liminal personality since their selves explore locations, cultures, religions and languages through their consciousness. Moreover, the nature of liminality leaps over the border reality which has been created through master narratives.

> The importance of the liminal for post-colonial theory is precisely its usefulness for describing an 'in-between' space in which cultural change may occur: the transcultural space in which strategies for personal or communal self-hood may be elaborated, a region in which there is a continual process of movement and interchange between different states. (Ashcroft et.al. 2007: 117)

Interestingly, new discursive statements are built on the potentiality to change. That is to say, identity struggles with itself, it is not just a movement of transit from one way to another. It dwells on the constant border crossing across the threshold between repression and representation. It can be said that 'liminality is thus the in-between or marginal state, in which an individual resides before becoming integrated into his or her new position in society' (Turner, 1997:15). Basically, liminality revolves around the struggle to be integrated into newness through the ever-shifting positioning of the self. Yet, to be on the threshold places the subject in 'neither its previous identity nor its newly integrated one' (Elbert Decker and Winchock eds., 2017:4). So, this 'neither here nor there' positioning of liminality produces the ambivalent nature of the subjectification.

In this sense, it can be said that to remain on the threshold is essential in the attainment of an identity amongst the contradictions and differences that are produced by the ambiguities or binaries of liminal positioning. Moving from one place to another or walking from upstairs to downstairs to cross a threshold is part of our nature. Hence, the dynamic and changeable features of identity can be equated with 'the transformation of an individual into a part of the whole' (Elbert Decker and Winchock eds., 2017: 4). As quoted here, the never-ending process of identity formation and reaching wholeness from the interstitial presence are the results of being on the threshold and taking liminal stances.

The liminal state between spaces clearly reveals that human nature is structured on a territorial passage, where individuals can make decisions that enable new and fresh beginnings in their subjectification. This in-betweenness or liminal existence is evolutionary in its outlook since it leaves greater gaps for further developments, new spaces and possible settlements for those who are on the move. In this respect, this study underlines that progress 'brings out the fluidity of identity showing human beings are always evolving new outlooks in order to situate themselves in spaces of comfort' (Wawrzinek and Makokha eds, 2011: 193). As the never-ending process of identity

formation on the move within the contradictions of migration merges with liminal existence or in-between positioning, the sense of self on the threshold gives rise to the coherent circumstances of the particular search for an identity within an attempt at self-definition.

The term 'liminality' was firstly introduced by ethnologist Arnold van Gennep in his masterpiece *The Rites of Passage*, in 1909. He defines the term as a state of in-betweenness displaying ceremonial acts that a person goes through. He describes birth, marriage, and puberty as threshold activities. These threshold activities are labelled as changes in life. Every change is a rite of passage. Indeed, he tries to make a connection between these rites and in-betweenness during cultural or religious interactions. Each change triggers renewal and this need for renewal marks each period of life. The transitory structure of rites of passage makes the meaning of liminality clear. For van Gennep, 'the passage from one social position to another is identified with a territorial passage such as the entrance into a village or a house, the movement from one room to another or the crossing of streets and squares' (van Gennep, 1960: 192). Van Gennep distinctively defines liminal existence as living between two worlds; although this state might seem to present disadvantages, it actually stimulates the individual to confront the next, the new in life. In this sense, it is precisely this transitory act that drives us to the migration process; and this is basically our standpoint in this study, that this act gives birth to new endeavors. Actually, van Gennep defines the term liminality in terms of three phases: 'separation, transition (liminality) and incorporation' (van Gennep, 1960:11). The rite of separation is a release from one position for the subjects who migrate or travel. The subjects who are separated from one place need to cross the old and see the new. This rite is the liminal part of the transition. Lastly, they adapt to the new and they are integrated into the newness. This is a short explanation of van Gennep's discussion of the birth of liminality in the literature. 'Van Gennep does not refer to the term in a strictly psychological sense. He uses it to indicate the unstable social position of the person who undergoes a change: during the transition the state of that person remains uncertain as he or she has been separated from a clearly defined state in the past and has not been incorporated yet into a clearly defined future state'(Chakraborty, 147).

The rites of passage undergone by threshold people are also ambivalent spaces. Spaces such as these, where they can experience ambivalence, are essential in enabling

them to figure out their own selves and their interaction with other cultures. For those who migrate, in a postcolonial sense, the liminal state between lands and cultures is the space of self-recognition that opens up ways towards alternatives. Actually, this liminal phase is the position to be in- between. Voluntary or forced migrations lead individuals 'to travel under the wider skies of a troubling complexity that contemplates the present as a myriad of conflicts, none of which can be suppressed, in which frontiers are not barriers but thresholds, sites of transit, of movements' (Chambers, 1994:40). Actually, the sites of transit trigger the liminal or threshold positioning of the migrants in a foreign land towards obtaining a self since to be on the threshold leads to new opportunities amongst the conflicts.

The term liminality acquired its popularity with Victor Turner. '[Liminal] people are necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space' (Turner, 1969: 359). For Turner, liminal being on the threshold is open to change since liminality is a place of ambivalence and uncertainty, and also of hope. For him, liminality is equal to 'betwixt and between'. Turner states that 'one finds in liminality both positive and active qualities, especially where that 'threshold is protracted and becomes a 'tunnel' (Turner, 1983: 144). Turner postulates the term as a transition, a passage, a becoming between two positions. Through this transitory movement, liminal personality can be revealed under the realms of being self or becoming other and being other or becoming self. The central question for migratory subjects is 'to be' or 'to become'. Such liminal places are present in every field of life, which makes the individual explain him or herself in a better way since it encourages him or her to question in order to find the best place, culture or identity. This discovery causes one to characterize the limits of thoughts, self-understanding and behaviors, opening the doors to newness. Turner likens the liminal situation of the individual to 'a death', 'invisibility'. Within this context, he writes in '*Liminality and Communitas*':

> Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by the law, custom, convention and ceremonial. As such, their ambiguous and indeterminate attributes are expressed by a rich variety of symbols in the many societies that ritualize social and cultural transitions. Thus, liminality is frequently likened to death, to being in the womb, to invisibility, to darkness, to bisexuality, to the wilderness, and to an eclipse of the sun or moon. (Turner, 1969: 359)

Van Gennep and Turner are the leading theorists for researchers who focus on threshold personalities. The liminal or threshold can be regarded as a broad concept whose scope is not limited. In postcolonial literature, identity is an interaction between different cultures, languages, religions and histories that can 'manifest a tendency to seek an alternative, differentiated' practice (Ashcroft et all., 2002: 9). Therefore, it is associated with concepts like third space, cultural hybridity, liminality or fluidity of self. Thus, 'finding and expressing a sense of identity, location and voice can change the dialogue…from one of loss and liminality to a new configuration' (Wisker, 2007: 27).

Widely used in discussions of migration, liminal or threshold identities occupy a central position. Such identities represent a transition phase between one position and another, in which there is a movement from separation to reintegration. In this respect, migration leads to such identity formation for those who transit from one place to another. From the postcolonial viewpoint, identity refers to an interaction between different cultures, languages, religions and histories. So, the concepts third space, cultural hybridity, and liminality help to define the identity in migrant literature. In this sense, the dynamic structure of identity, rather than identity as a stable unit, can also be 'established in the course of travel' (Keith and Pile, 1993:7). Migration is a kind of travel or a psychological journey, in which the migrant starts with spatio-temporal deterritorialization and ends with reterritorialization in a new land. In the context of migration, bordered locations represent threshold spaces; hence the subjects who live in these locations can be represented as liminal ones who are in a transitory, middle passage framed by the ambiguities, ambivalences or fluidities of identity. That is the scenery that can be described as 'crossing rather than fragmented' (Wisker, 2007:189). Thus, this study will explore the idea of diasporic identity in relation to border-crossing, liminality and third space.

Liminality is important in postcolonial literature since in-betweenness refers to being on a border where the subject can see sameness and difference at the same time. This circumstance makes the subject see the multiplicities and choose one of these multiplicities. This also shows the emergence of newness. The neither here nor there positioning of the liminal selves makes them marginal and also enables them to reach multiple perspectives and different practices. Furthermore, this positioning helps these subjects to gain an insight into the potentiality to change. In short, liminal selves 'question old ideas and beliefs, acquire new perspectives, change worldviews, and shift from one world to another' (Elbert Decker and Winchock eds., 2017:5). In addition to van Gennep's rites of passage and Turner's definition of transitional characters in defining liminality, Homi K. Bhabha is the other leading theoretician who concentrates on cultural studies and postcolonial aspects in defining identity formation, and the social and cultural practices in this process. While focusing on these issues, he points out the significance of liminal entities in identity formation in cultural and postcolonial studies. The following section will discuss the place of Bhabha as a key theoretician in defining and analyzing the importance of liminality and threshold identities especially in the act of migration.

2.2. HOMI K. BHABHA AND LIMINALITY

Homi K. Bhabha is a professor of the Humanities at Harvard University. He was educated at Bombay (India) and Oxford Universities and sat on the editorial boards of many critical journals. His masterpiece *Location of Culture* has been translated into many languages. He is a distinguished character who has been viewed as a hybrid man 'produced by globalized postmodernism' (Byrne, 2009: xi). His tendency to focus on border studies, identity problems, and cultural practices has made him well-known in the literary field, especially in postcolonial studies. In this sense, his interest in multicultural studies and attention to the field of the humanities reinforce his impact on the postcolonial studies. Hence, Bhabha's pivotal terms, liminality, ambivalence and the third space will be explained in this section, and will be applied to the selected postcolonial works in the following chapters. Bhabha is a key theoretician for understanding liminality since he focuses on the notion of liminality within the correlated terms, ambivalence and third space in postcolonial theory. These three terms are in line with Van Gennep's 'territorial

passages' and Turner's 'liminal personae' used for the definitions of self. According to Bhabha, liminal space is

> in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white… the temporal movement and passage that it allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. The interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy. (Bhabha, 1994: 4).

Bhabha asserts that in-between and liminal designations of identity point to the possibility of erasing the polarities that hinder identities. Moreover, he emphasizes that the liminal space is the location between two oppositional pairs, such as self and other, center and periphery, colonized and colonizer, black and white, root and route. He pays attention 'to what happens on the borderlines of cultures, to see what happens in-between cultures. He thinks about this through what he calls the liminal, meaning that which is on the border or the threshold' (Huddart, 2006: 4). In these threshold spaces, the self is in the middle and tries to belong somewhere.

For Bhabha, liminality is never completely a breakdown. In other words, the role of threshold is to be caught between the new locations and the melancholic memories of the homeland culture. Each immigrant tries to find the peculiarities of the host and homeland cultures via a transitional act that causes the expatriate to be on the margins of self- discovery and self-actualization. This in-betweenness renders possible an awakening that entails differences. Living on the borderline allows one to form new self-positions. The borderline may evoke an impure and heterogenous scene for an individual:

> [the new self-position] is marked by the specific histories of cultures of displacement, exile, migration, such as slavery, international colonial expeditions, exploitative trade, Third World migration and the movement of political and economic refugees. For Bhabha, therefore, attempting to represent the subjects of these profoundly diasporic and transnational/translational cultures involves a resituating, a relocating, of the notion of culture. (Byrne, 2009: 10)

Here, Eleanor Byrne clearly emphasizes Bhabha's notion of diasporic subjects who represent multicultural practices and experience relocating or resituating. Furthermore, Salman Rushdie, one of the leading figures in cultural and postcolonial studies, states that the identification of migrants is actually partial and is situated between two worlds and two cultures. This process is ambivalent and changing.

> Our identity is at once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times, we fall between two stools, but however ambiguous and shifting the ground may be, it is not an infertile territory for a writer to occupy. (Rushdie, 1991: 15)

The migrant self becomes a site of conflicts resulting from in betweenness; the migrant confronts the ambivalent nature of fluid identifications in order to create a world of binaries that straddle two clashing cultures. Immigrants in the third space remap the future, which is in relation to the past and also to the present. The liminal subject embodies a state of in-betweenness in identity formation. Bhabha discusses these threshold identities as 'unhomely' individuals striving to establish themselves with a static self in a specific social milieu. They need both of the cultures, the questioning of the past and the engagement with the present. Firstly, Bhabha reveals the fact of the neither-nor situation with its crisscrossing motion:

> The intervention of the beyond 'that establishes a boundary: a bridge, where 'presencing' begins because it captures something of the estranging sense of the relocation of the home, and the world – the unhomeliness – that is the condition of extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiations. (Bhabha, 1994:9)

To sum up, we can clearly say that crossing the boundaries is not the end of self-formulation; it is the initiation, it is a kind of repositioning. It is also a renewable process of self-discovery and self-actualization. Thus, liminal spaces are routes for the individuals who are on such a self-journey to new beginnings. The route may be full of ambiguities or ambivalences; yet, in making a fresh beginning, being on the threshold is a basic fact of life since to be in-between allows the possibilities to be seen and decisions to be made. Bhabha distinctively paves the way for postcolonial authors who need to gain an insight into migration as a result of physical and spiritual criss-crossings.

> The borderline work of culture demands an encounter with 'newness' that is not part of the continuum of past and present. It creates a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation, it renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent 'in-between' space, that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present. The 'past-present' becomes part of the necessity, not the nostalgia, of living (Bhabha, 1994: 10)

Immigrant identity while trying to belong somewhere also needs recognition. It is the self in-between cultures trying to find a space through the inevitable dislocation. Immigrants are truly eager to recall the past, but they are also exposed to a new culture, and thus they form a new cultural identity. For Bhabha, this occurs through the shades of the past and the necessities of the present. In other words, an ambiguous presence and a liminal self are created as a result of the displacement from the homeland into the new geographies.

> Identity is never an a priori, nor a finished product; it is only ever the problematic process of access to an image of totality. [The sense of identity] marks the site of an ambivalence. Its representation is always split-it makes present something that is absent-and temporally deferred. (Bhabha, 1994: 51)

Identity formation is a never-ending process that generates ambiguities and liminal circumstances. To access wholeness, the subject needs to experience these differences and also to negate the stable positioning of the identity stuck in its originality. The reality of displacement and dislocation enables the subject to negotiate differences and to create harmony in identification. Furthermore, the transition from the past to present, from the homeland to host land, shapes the current limits of his or her behaviors, thoughts or understanding. Re-writing the current life and re-questioning the identity lead to liminality. In this respect, the French critic, Julia Kristeva examines self-forming through liminality:

> Instead of sounding himself as to his "being," he does so concerning his place: *"Where* am I?" instead of *"Who* am I?" For the space that engrosses the deject, the excluded, is never *one,* nor *homogeneous,* nor *totalizable,* but essentially divisible, foldable, and catastrophic. A deviser of territories, languages, works, the *deject* never stops demarcating his universe whose fluid confines—for they are constituted of a non-object, the abject—constantly question his solidity and impel him to start afresh. (Kristeva, 1982: 8)

The liminal stage that man experiences is full of danger since he does not know which side is the best, but he needs to move on to be self-accomplished. The liminal stage persists in striving to own a space. In this respect, Kristeva here aims to explore liminality and the borderline through identification, both as a land of recognition and a land of oblivion. In this study, the liminal positions of the individuals, especially the expatriates, demark them as in-between individuals. The self is in-between, carrying the traces of both sides, past and present, host land and homeland, first world and second world; yet, the self is eager to find new positions, trying to unravel the newness. Additionally, subjects on the threshold revive transformative processes; their situation makes them resistant to fixed identifications since they are always on the move towards change. The idea of liminality is to find a new location for the postcolonial subjects amongst contradictions.

Here, the unhomely position of the migrant self implies a position of being on the threshold or in a liminal space, of being on the margins of geographical territories. Briefly, dwelling in liminality involves a cross-cultural realignment, holding onto the past as well as tasting new world mobility, having a non-fixed identity and struggling to find a place for the self. Liminality is not a disease in the foreign land for the individual who wants to survive it; it is an essential part of the diasporic self-forming. Metaphorically, while using a stairwell, a gate or a door, you have a threshold position through up and down, or out and in; this instability brings forth new circumstances for a better life. In different terms, Bhabha asserts that 'these 'in-between' spaces provide a terrain for elaborating strategies of self-hood-singular or communal- that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself.' (Bhabha, 1994: 1-2) Postcolonial subjects who experience interstices in new terrains are open to finding a new space to control both their present and their future. The interstitial space or liminal borderland of the migrant opens the gates of a home that maintains his values and histories. Being on the threshold is not the end, it is a fresh beginning since

this in-betweenness continually keeps a subject on the alert and the subject is in a never-ending process of self-fulfillment.

Liminality is usually taken negatively in general as a word since the idea of being in-between brings to mind notions of incompleteness and insecurity. However, in the postcolonial interpretation of the word by Bhabha, we encounter promising futures of being in-between for Orientals in the first world. The migrant between two worlds, the Eastern and the Western, can be seen as an in-between subject who is in the process of acquiring new identities. 'The liminality of cultural identity [renders] the double-edged discourse of social territories and temporalities, it is the city which provides the space in which emergent identifications and new social movements of the people are played out.'(Bhabha, 1994:170) As quoted here, double-edged identities produce and construct new territories in order to sustain a space for identification. Cultural and social meanings are reproduced on the threshold positionings. Liminal space provides formerly colonized immigrants with a new voice to be heard since they have a tendency to seek their own selves. Besides, in-between personalities are open to the creation of new forms or discourses. In short, liminal selves are between both confrontation and negotiation of personal memories and dominant affiliations. This term cannot be regarded as a negative one since it evokes the urgent matter of waking up to new meanings. The liminal position of the immigrants makes them subjects who are active in multiple directions towards adopting an identity since they are open to change and differences, biologically, physically and emotionally. In a way, this positioning demonstrates that the sense of self is actually the combination of multiple spaces that are structured in the land of migration. 'Such identification is never simply a movement from one identity to another, it is a constant process of engagement, contestation and appropriation.' (Ashcroft et al., 2007: 117)

Actually, liminal stages are constant elucidations of identities whose construction is attempted in the heart of the migration. In this sense, liminality is a term that must be examined as interrelated with the other postcolonial terms hybridity, third space and ambivalence. Foucault presents the groundbreaking concept of 'heterotopia' to explain such liminality. In her doctoral thesis, Şule Okuroglu Ozun clarifies this terminology, writing that: 'heterotopias are real or unreal heterogeneous counter-sites, spaces of otherness enabling marginal practices' (Okuroglu Ozun, 2013: 33). Her approach to the

diasporic identities of South Asian characters builds a relationship between identity and multiple terms related to postcolonial theory. To sum up, heterotopias encapsulate the essences of the liminal or marginal selves that are open to the multidimensional capabilities of the identification process through the real or unreal illustrations of the self-journey. This self-journey leads to a confrontational space, in which the haunting past and the challenging present clash and new elucidations emerge. As put by Bhabha, 'newness renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent 'in-between' space, that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present' (Bhabha, 1994: 7). The encounter of the migrants with this newness is closely related to the selves on the margins since while they wish to take part in the new culture, they also adhere to the nostalgic images that voice their cultural past.

Furthermore, it is essential to underline the idea that liminality is an advantage for anyone in life since it provides chances to negotiate differences. Mobility through liminality paves the way for identities from the home cultures to be challenged and pushed to outer spaces. This basically demonstrates that the inevitable encounter with cultural differences refashions the self. Since the liminal self has dualities, these dualities are the means for the construction of different identities. So, it can be claimed that liminality is a set of 'undoing, dissolution, decomposition which are accompanied by processes of growth, transformations and the reformulation of old elements in new patterns' (Turner, 1967: 99). This study focuses on the new patterns of identity formation experienced by subalterns. The subaltern characters experience the cultural gap and social dislocations that are wholly centered on multidimensional identity codes.

The newly acquired social and cultural selves establish an ongoing process of negotiation that bridges the old and the new. The dynamic presentation of the self is analogical to the nature of liminal personality that might be malleable. The subaltern subjects encounter new lands or spaces of interaction that create dynamic locations allowing new identity possibilities to emerge. The interstitial or liminal occupies a central position in allowing the agency to suspend identities along a way of being where new identities are constantly regenerated. Bhabha defines such liminality as 'the translational sense of the hybridity of imagined communities' (Bhabha, 1994: 5). The subjects dwell upon the border of the cultural negotiations between old and decaying values and the newness of the mysterious. This highlights the heterogeneity of cultures and identities.

Bhabhanian analysis of colonized and colonizer puts an emphasis on these multiple encounters.

Liminality is a broad concept; it represents a transition and humans cannot exist without this transition. Actually, we live in-between all the time. Hence, our identities are structured through this transition and in-between stance in changing circumstances. We try to reach harmony in this change so as to attain a coherent life. At its broadest, this term 'refers to any betwixt and between situation and object, any in-between place or moment, a state of suspense, a moment of freedom between two structured world-views or institutional arrangements. It relates to change in a single personality as well as social change and transition. Liminality opens the door to a world of contingency where events and meanings can be moulded and carried in different directions' (Thomassen, 2014: 7). Liminality opens the door to the world of ambivalence, newness, hybridity and third space. Consequently, the notion of liminality asserted by Bhabha in its postcolonial sense helps us to understand that liminal space unveils the fixity of identity or location and introduces multiplicities and differences that lead the subject to interrogate the harmony in life. To comprehend the concept of liminality, we need to focus on its relation to the other terms also coined by Bhabha, third space, hybridity and ambivalence.

2.2.1. Ambivalence, Third Space, and Hybridity

Liminality is actually an umbrella term since it broadens its own meaning through other related terms, ambivalence, third space and hybridity. In postcolonial studies, we focus on humanities, cultures, nations and identities. In this sense, liminality constructs the in-between self in multicultural contexts so as to sustain a sense of self. Bhabha reveals 'the middle of the things where we find ourselves' (Huddart, 2006: 13). Being on the threshold creates the need for a space to attain a life. Hence, the construction of newness is possible within transitional acts. Therefore, 'hybridity commonly refers to the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization.' (Ashcroft et al., 2007: 108)

Hybrid subjects find themselves caught in a dilemma between the original lifestyle of the homeland and the cultural practices of the dominant culture. This dilemma leads to 'ambivalence' that has characteristics in common with liminality. Bhabha regards the ambivalent state of migrants, particularly from the formerly colonized nations, as 'a

continual fluctuation between wanting one thing and wanting its opposite. It also refers to the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between colonizer and colonized.' (Ashcroft et al., 2007:10). The self on the margins or liminal self takes control of the construction of the challenged identity in a foreign land. Plunging into a new cultural milieu, migrants seek to establish a place for the self to survive both physically and psychologically.

> The liminal space between the cultures of the colonizer and the colonized, migrants and other (post)colonial subjects go through a process that recasts their fixed sense of identity. While this reconstruction of identity may be positive and empowering, its transgressive character and location in the liminal space of borders and boundaries. (Kuortti and Nyman, 2007:8)

In an interview with Bhabha in 'Third Space', Jonathan Rutherford asks Bhabha to underline the significant role of the third space for people who want to achieve identification in the end. He depicts these people as multiple selves waiting to change. He further reads these people's minds as questioning and being in the process of transition from an 'iron-curtain frame of being' (Rutherford, 1990: 220). Eastern Europe causes the people to redefine themselves by means of wider questions, liminality actually leads to this questioning. The liminal subjects confront the self's never-ending transformations, resulting in the birth of new selves. Drawing upon this enunciation of the notion of liminality, this study asserts that being in-between sheds light on the undeniable temporal situation since liminal stages are temporary, constantly changing. The subject needs to find his or her own way to be victorious and effective.

In this respect, Bhabha asserts that the clash of the different cultures creates multiplicity which creates an air of contradictions and ambiguities in general. In this sense, straddling two cultures, there emerges a 'third space' (Bhabha, 1994: 37). Identity formation between two cultures needs to be accomplished; hence, the third space creates a space of enunciation and negotiation. The third space 'enables other positions to emerge' (Rutherford, 1990: 211). Identity on the move adopts this space as a helper on the way towards sustaining a coherent life and in empowering settlement in the midst of cultural, social, gender, ethnical and educational diversities.

> Productive capacities of this Third Space have a colonial and postcolonial provenance. For a willingness to descend into that alien territory…may open

> the way to conceptualizing an international culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity. (Bhabha, 1994: 38)

The variety in the third space offers possibilities for finding coherent meaning while seeking a sense of self since crossing the boundaries means encountering the polyphony of identity constructions. The third space as a site of negotiation by translation for individuals reveals itself as 'strategical reversal' (Bhabha, 1994: 112). Reversing something related to the identity, for Bhabha, produces potential sites for collaboration in constructing identity. Grounded in postcolonial discourse analysis, Bhabha's theory of third space and liminality becomes useful in illustrating that 'hybridity is privileged as a kind of superior cultural intelligence owing to the advantage of 'in-betweenness', 'straddling of two cultures and the subsequent ability to negotiate the difference' (Hoogvelt, 1997: 158). The in-between situation of the hybrid self in this postcolonial context is an essential element in attaining a liminal consciousness and moving beyond. For Bhabha, hybridity means that a subject is open to rethink and reevalute. S/He is in the middle of the transition between old and new. Also, this manner enables one to translate principles and thoughts and extend them. The need for newness in liminality is the third space and also this space is an area of negotiation for new meanings.

For Bhabha, hybrid identity is constructed within this third space. 'This third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority' (Rutherford, 1990: 211). The emergence of new identities and new circumstances for the immigrants on the margins, within the third space of Bhabha, suggests that identity is on the move, ambivalent and always in search of coherence amongst contradictions and ambiguities. In a way, the dynamic nature of the circumstances here triggers the different spaces for new meanings and reconstructive selves. In this respect, this study discusses the relevance of Bhabha's perception in order to understand the notion of liminality through the lens of his concepts 'ambivalence', 'third space' and 'hybridity'. Thus, constructing coherent identities in the world of pluralities involves new paths of meanings through the third space on the way to self-actualization.

Furthermore, Bhabha replaces liminal space with the word; 'third', as stated above, and associates this productive space with a new beginning for new identity positions. Third is the rearticulation of two cultures, the initiation of newness and also the

offspring of liminality and ambivalence. From this point of view, it actually reveals that a place of in-betweenness, a liminal space, is closely linked with the other. The individual crosses the border, experiences the liminal, is surrounded by ambiguities and begins to interrogate the two borders (past and present), mediates on the future and tries to find coherent subjectivity. The liminal selves are on a quest for a fulfilled identity.

By stressing the process of identification, the third space means difference among the ambivalences of multicultural practices. 'Difference is never simple and static but ambivalent, changing and always open to further possible interpretation.' (Ashcroft, 2007: 53) Identity formation in changing circumstances is ambivalent since it continually changes. It creates an in-betweenness. So, this liminal stance can be broadened with the notion of hybridity. Hybridity entails a cross-cultural change between two worlds, constructs a balance and enables negotiation. It can be said that the in-between positioning of the postcolonial subjects allows them to see the potentiality of change and mutation. Free people can see the future, negotiate the two distinct worlds and construct the third space. As a result, the initiation of newness in identity displays the importance of the liminal stance in the midst of the ambivalent nature of multiplicities. Also, the emergence of cultural identity creates the third space which presents the possibility of being different since the individual needs to find meaning between two worlds and to move on.

2.3. BORDER AND THE SELF

> Whenever or wherever two or more cultures meet-peacefully or violently-there is a border experience…today, if there is a dominant culture, it is border culture. And those who still have not crossed a border will do it very soon. (Guillermo, 1989: 18-27)

With the emergence of global capitalism and the advances in technologies in the late twentieth century, individuals transcend borders to gain better living conditions. Moving from one place to another, leaving memories behind and striving to adapt to new circumstances are all possible experiences that the individuals who transcend borders might go through. People who cross borders encounter different cultures and they build up multicultural identities. Through border-crossing, individuals are perpetually bound to the never-ending, dynamic, unstable process of identity formation since they are decentered or dislocated subjects. Furthermore, they try to fill the gaps between the homeland and host cultures, for they are compromising the two opposite cultures within a new identity.

Moreover, border-crossing can be regarded as a traumatic event for the postcolonial subjects. Yet, in this thesis, the full side of the glass will be considered since at the end of the self-journey, we will for the most part encounter fulfilled subjectivities. Historically, the consequences of World War II made it inevitable that people would migrate from the colonies to England and to Europe, in search of better conditions of life and as a solution to the problem of labor. The people who migrated to different countries expected to be accepted by the host countries. This fact entailed the birth of the paradigms of ethnicity/race, class, gender that are the outcomes of crisscross motion. In this respect, borderland is imbued with the issues of displacement, hybridity and liminality. All these terms are interwoven with each other like a web. Crossing borders refers to a sense of displacement that refers to the home left behind, and the past as situated in the reminiscences. In this respect, border crossing implies that the shift between two locations signifies the search for a solution to achieve a kind of balance for living. For Brah, borders are ‘arbitrary dividing lines’ (Brah,1996:194) that are all based upon the truth of social, psychological and cultural formations. For Brah, ‘dividing lines’ are incorporated within binary oppositions such as self-other, colonizer-colonized, centre-periphery, white-black, good-bad and light-dark. The de-constructive third space of the individuals between these

oppositional pairs enables them to reconstruct their agency through the ambivalent nature of borders. Between these polarities, they become aware of themselves and unfold the fixities.

Emphasizing the emancipatory nature of borders, Brah discusses border-crossing as 'multiple positioning' (Brah, 1996: 201). This multiplicity in constructing subjectivity reveals that 'identity continuously interrogates and problematizes the very notion of a stable and essential identity' (Brah, 1996: 201). Moreover, the continuous questioning of the self clarifies that borders are not only physical but they are also intangible assumptions in the psychology of the people on the border. In this sense, borders expose 'new', '(re)', 'negotiate', in the sense that migrants represent not only the peripheral but are also the assets of the centre. In this sense, we encounter here the dualistic nature of borders offered by Bhabha's liminality. However, the subjects belong neither to the home nor to the host land; and as a result of this, as they try to survive by finding new spaces for their subjectification.

Borders do not merely represent a loss; they also constitute a mental borderland for the individual who seeks a stable identity and to prove his potentiality. In short, the subject on the border constructs alternatives for his own identity. In this sense, it can be said that borders offer newness both psychologically and physically, this will be our vantage point for the theoretical part underpinning the idea of border-crossings. Broadly speaking, the boundaries of self and other are blurred within the alternative spaces that oscillate between transnational and translational. The melancholic trauma that the formerly colonized immigrants experience involves an attempt to reform their identities. Thus, the sense of difference positively bears "the hope for new beginnings" (Brah, 1996: 193). One easily realizes that the notion of finding 'a third space' for self-positioning and searching for home is the transited alternative to both the home left behind and the homing of the moment. Brah does not deal with the one left behind and the current one; she only suggests "multiple modalities of gender, race, class, religion, language and generation" (Brah, 1996: 180). The desire for the opposite and the state of uprootedness put forward the idea that multiplicity uncovers fixity and spreads fluidity over the 'common we'. The third space as a third breed formulated by Bhabha is the place where the interaction between the West and the rest becomes ambivalent. In this sense, the space between the self and the other, namely between the colonized and the colonizer, is weakened.

‘A boundary is not that at which something stops…a boundary is that from which something begins its presencing’ (Heidegger, 1975: 154). The arbitrary dividing lines at cultural, social and economic levels are liable to draw multilayered dimensions for ‘the key to human cognition’ and ‘identity and sense of difference from the others’ (Donnan and Dieter, 2000: 8). This may pave the way for an opportunity for the postcolonial subjects since they become aware of a transnational world instead of the dominant cultural values imposed by the West. Multiculturalism might also offer ‘…. the opportunity to the people to be global citizens and to enjoy the sense of belonging to the whole world regardless of religious, racial/ethnic or gender borders’ (Kalpaklı, 2016: 5).

Likewise, Edward Said claims that ‘exile, immigration and the crossing of boundaries are experiences that can provide us with new narrative forms or…with other ways of telling’ (Said, 1989: 205-225). Border-crossings can be new points in life, not just being in the middle or being lost. They cannot be thought of as merely physical considerations, they also represent economic, cultural, social and psychological realms. New self-formations are possible as individuals try to find their way to be free.

Representations of immigrants as border-crossers claim multiple connections and links in terms of self-fulfillment which can be (re)mapped through crisscross motions of ethnicity, race, gender and culture. Binary pairs like colonized-colonizer, centre-periphery, and black-white all display the subject-in-between and exhibit multiple subjectivity positions that are always shifting. Hence, the self on the border might cross the imposed barriers and initiate the potential changes that will build up his new existence and new ways of thinking. This also reveals the third space in the self-journey through border-crossings since the self is no longer stuck to the old paths of “being” and confronts the challenging boundaries of the present.

The never-ending nature of the making of identity can be supported by our former term ‘liminality’. In terms of the spatio-temporal positioning of the self, liminality ‘addresses the realm where economic, cultural and political effects of crossing/transgressing different “borders” are experienced; where contemporary forms of transcultural identities are constituted; and where belonging and otherness is appropriated and contested’ (Brah, 1996: 180). The bases of differences are not a problem for self-identification across borders because they pave the way for the construction of new self-positions by forming transnational identities. In this sense, the transnational self actually

deconstructs any fixed and stable identity formation since it is surrounded by the multiplicities of potential changes and the fruitful examples of borders. A reasonable self-fulfillment or subjectification assumes binary pairs, as we have mentioned: first world and third world. Territorialization and deterritorialization must be added since the act of border-crossing entails the migrant experience as well.

As put by Bakhtin, the self 'on the border between two epochs, at the transition point from one to the other' reveals that 'this transition is accomplished in him and through him…What is happening here is precisely the emergence of a new man.' (Bakhtin, 1986: 23) The self beyond the boundaries struggles and becomes since he is engaged in a never-ending circle that is imposed by the survival instinct both physically and psychologically. Moreover, the spatio-temporal identifications that one experiences as a diasporic subject are underpinned by the shifting locations and unstable nature of the border-crossing. The self on the border seem to be on a threshold and in a liminal stance. However, this study aims to illustrate how such individuals transcend the boundaries of their own selves and construct a coherent identity.

Okuroglu Ozun asserts that the 'mapping of cultures via borders creates contact and conflict zones where difference, collective memory, shared identity and collective organization, according to colonial and patriarchal theories, any category or group needs borders that may be real, illusory or metaphorical, in order to define and distinguish itself and its difference from the others (these may be body borders, nation borders, or racial and ethnic borders)' (Ozun, 2013: 42). As quoted here, Ozun explicitly underlines the plurality of cultures and boundaries that need to melt in the same pot in order to obtain a coherent identity in the end and set out upon new and fresh starts. The notion of a border implies the constructed definitions; namely, living on the borders or in threshold spaces implies that multiculturalism exists and occupies a deconstructed location. This state enables the migrant subject to experience new means of life, new structured acquisitions.

In fact, the representation of border spirituality 'creates new ways of thinking and displaces the boundaries between inner/outer, subject/object, spirit/matter and other dichotomous terms' (Keating, 1996: 20). The self transcends these binary structures and it shakes off the vacillating nature of the border despite dislocation and displacement. Gloria Anzaldúa, in her *Borderlands/ La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, points out the clash between the two different cultures which creates a paradigm that defines border

experience and identity. In doing so, she illuminates that the subject should not remain fixed or stabilized; s/he should be at a cultural, social and historical crossroads.

'We are ready for change…Step through the doorways between worlds…build bridges, cross them with grace…let us shift' (Anzaldúa, 2002: 542-576). To cross the boundaries actually presents an opportunity to discover the self and acquire self-knowledge since the split in identity causes steps to be taken on the way to the re-discovery of identity. In fact, the need for transformation constructs the power of life since, through the social interactions essential in transcending borders, the temporal or transitory processes of selfhood and the plurality of newly embraced identities are revealed in the realms of both inward and outward experiences.

Border crossing is characterized by differences, differences trigger multiculturalism, and multiculturalism requires the plurality of selves. This is the key for the emergence of a human that encapsulates other spatio-temporal identities. The temporary condition of the border and liminality actually evokes creative cultural affiliations. In this sense, Gilroy asserts that 'We do not have to be content with the half-way house provided by the idea of plural cultures. A theory of relational cultures and culture as relation represents a more worthwhile resting place' (Gilroy, 2000: 275). Here, another perspective on the quest for identity emerges. While crossing the border, one might accept that the prior existence in the homeland in a relation to the authenticity passes the torch to plurality as well as to relational ethnicity in the host culture. This is also an alternative way of looking for new positions for survival as a human being in the discourses of the multilayered options imposed by the crisscross motion of diasporic assumptions. That is, this statement sheds light on the notion of migration, as well as on border consciousness. Adopting cultural and national identities, migrants try to define themselves.

Border consciousness necessitates inevitable encounters with people from various cultures. This undoubtedly gives rise to cultural negotiation and experiences while passing through threshold spaces subjected to the ever-increasing mobility and acculturation of people across borders. In this sense, people have no 'fixed self'; they are in the melting pot of multiple identities in the globalizing world. The interactions between the diversified structures of these relations are the marker of border in the process of transgressions.

Strikingly, the self on the border in its dislocated state as ‘an identity, and shifting subjectivity became enthusiastically promoted as the new ‘art of the present’ in what are seen as ‘crucial and vital efforts to answer the ‘possibility and necessity of creating a new culture’ (McLeod, 2000: 225). In this study, the idea of identity is the product of the ‘new art of the present’, as McLeod asserts. In this sense, we will not, for the most part, come across unsuccessful figures, especially at the end of the acculturation process, after encounters with multiple identities and destabilization of the former self, etc. However, McLeod also focuses on the notion of an ineluctable interstitial sense of identity formed ‘by imposing a logic of binary oppositions [that] remain operable and challenge new forms of identity from emerging’ (McLeod, 2000: 225). In such a two-way street of structured identity, diasporic individuals may become entrapped by the ambivalence of the complicated situation. Although, on the one hand they might achieve wholeness of identity, on the other they might experience conflicts leading to subjectification that is fragmented and fractured.

Furthermore, transgression or border-crossing is actually one of the paramount issues related to the postcolonial era, focusing on the dynamic structures of mobility from the motherland to the host land. This situation clearly merits scrutiny of the circumstances or experiences of immigrants and second-generation children constrained by the bipolarity of their identity-making. They neither imprison themselves in the past nor confine themselves in the present. Rather, they recreate their sense of self by drawing their portrait for the forthcoming future as they wish, since they seek self-fulfillment and self-acquisition on the way to newness and a free self. In other words, their identities transform within the scope of new discourses of acculturation since they ‘are negotiated within social worlds that span more than one place’ (Vertovec, 2001: 573). The presence of multiple identities is the product of the identity crisis, but at the same time identity changes positively. In this respect, transnational characters nurture their identity formation within constructive structures. They experience deconstructed selves and they do not want to be in-between. This is an essential process related to border-crossing; however, these transnational characters are eager to confront ‘the attempt to portray the newness’ (Sternberg, 2009: 101).

From another perspective, the plurality in the identity-making process can be seen as a reinforcing asset for the migrants since newly-structured connections and

circumstances ‘enable(s) linkages to tighten between dispersed people, new livelihood opportunities to emerge, social institutions to change and hybrid identities to develop’ (Mazzucato, 2010: 207). Therefore, border spirituality becomes anchored in the life of individuals who migrate to lands of opportunity, whether voluntarily or enforced. In different terms, since the diversified borderlines between East and West are in a state of flux, the essence of different strands of identities is displayed and reconstructed in a continuous flow as migratory individuals unfold their fears and open up new spaces to dwell in both physically and psychologically.

Actually, it is productive to suggest that growing global integration following the Second World War and dying colonialism after the 1950s led to considerable change among the populations of the entire colonized and colonizing worlds in respect of culture and racial multiplicity. And this, precisely, indicates that social and identity formation is heterogeneous, owing to the fact that cultural, racial, social and gender changes ‘produced massive dislocations, prompted large-scale migrations, opened up borders and boundaries, transnationally and culturally, challenged prevailing hegemonies as they at once stormed the bastions of haute culture’ (Schwarz and Ray eds., 2000: 73). The translational movements (re)draw the tyrannies of the ‘colonizing world beginning to be reconstructed as a relocation, a new, transnational geopolitics...new agencies will claim their places and voices in the dialogue, as such social movements transform cultural spaces…’ (Schwarz and Ray eds.,2000: 198). Hence, (re)creation is no longer impossible for postcolonial subjects claiming a space for a coherent life and identity since they are the leading figures in the colonized world.

To sum these ideas up, it is obvious that identities are wholly affected by borders and that border crossers and their ‘identities are in a state of flux, despite the appearance of rigid control and territorial fixity. Even though power relations appear to be overwhelming and identities clearly demarcated, yet subtle divisions and fusions permeate the populations on both sides of and across the frontier’ (Smith et all eds., 2008: 26). The identity changes produced by border consciousness portray the ever-shifting state of the (re)creation processes related to the realms of the deconstructed power relations in the host land in border crossers wishing to build up ‘hyphenated selves’ through a flow of acquisitions self-journey. Overall, we can assume that, within the postcolonial period, ‘re’ gives birth to new discourses and occupations. That is to say, the

return of the subordinate, the forgotten and the 'other' is well-equipped to occupy a space in the colonizing world as the redrawing, remapping and reconstructing of memoirs and fragments paves the way for the recreating of what passes for historical and cultural knowledge.

However, Brah asserts diaspora, a border-crossing focusing on 'the traumas of separation and dislocation which is certainly a very important aspect of migratory experience' (Brah, 1996:193). She emphasizes a notion of border and migratory motion in which people are affected by the negative outputs of the trauma produced by a change in location, as she evaluates negatively-constructed lives searching for a proper place to live. On the other hand, despite the melancholic trauma of people affected by dislocation, Brah also clearly underlines the hopeful aspect of crossing the border to experience 'potentially the sites of hope and new beginnings' (Brah, 1996: 193). Actually, the notion that is evoked by Brah indeed offers encouragement to the selves diving into the open seas of the First World within the potentiality of dynamic subjectivity and identity in progress. Migrants separated from the motherland do seem to have disadvantages with regard to efforts to foster a sense of self as well as a home. Yet, while the shift in values and the move to another country trigger a sense of loss and alienation from the past, this might at the same time stimulate the instinct to consolidate 'a new future out of many pasts' (Alghamdi, 2011:10). The self on the border is not lost since the subject might be driven towards creativity in positive identity-making. Hence, liminality cannot be taken as a negative circumstance for the construction of the self since it is essential in reaching the fulfillment of identity. In this respect, an individual continuously reconstructs his identity opening up liminal sites. In the postcolonial era, the liminal self dwells between the past and present; the postcolonial subjects explicitly experience the ways in which 'living on the borders and in margins, keeping intact one's shifting and multiple identity and integrity, is like trying to swim in a new element' (Anzaldúa, 1999: 19). To be on the border enables the subject to remap new meanings of space and identity since s/he has a chance to evaluate both sides.

Consequently, the multiplicity that is brought up by the border-crossing displays lives in liminal spaces or between two worlds. The concern of this study is to unveil and to (re)map identities across the borders. In doing so, the potentiality of the third world subjects who cross the borders and are on the border or threshold will be discussed in

relation to the selected terms, ‘border crossing’ and ‘liminality’, and to the selected novels. In the following chapters, the interweaving of border consciousness with the liminal self will be examined within the South Asian diasporan community, Bangladeshi and Indian; the South African diaspora; and Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) through the selected works of Monica Ali (*Brick Lane*), Kiran Desai (*Inheritance of Loss*) and Tsitsi Dangarembga (*Nervous Conditions*).

CHAPTER III

MULTIPLE SELVES IN MONICA ALI'S *BRICK LANE*

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Britain became a multicultural country after the mass migrations that followed World War II. Although the migration of South Asians started in the 17th century with the arrival of the East India Company, South Asians came to Britain in greater numbers after the Independence Movement. The Nationality Act of 1948 and the need for labor after World War II caused social, economic and cultural changes through mass immigration in the 1950s and 60s. The need for workers in different countries after World War II made it essential to transfer the workers from poor countries in order to have them work in the newly founded factories. In this context, people from different nations moved to Britain in masses. The South Asian Diaspora in the UK refers to immigrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. 'They became the beachhead for a chain of migration that would grow in the 1960s into a large immigration stream' (Kivisto, 2002: 140). It can be said that a multicultural environment has been structured and that dialogue between different nationalities has emerged. 'The complexities of border crossing prevalent in the life of the early diasporians, and the cultural displacement of these people have had impacts on the consciousness of a number of diaspora writers from South Asia' (Okuroğlu Özün, 2013:79). These dislocated subjects try to reach harmony in constructing a self while struggling with the stressful conditions of being colonized and an immigrant.

Ali herself, as a member of the South Asian Diaspora in the UK, has insight into the struggle of immigrant characters to define themselves between cultures. Thus, her novel was selected for this chapter. Ali is a significant figure who has experience of migrancy; she is an immigrant who knows what is to be between cultures, nations and religions. In fact, she is familiar with the troubles of displacement. In relation to displacement, the ambivalent stance of the subject and the need for a space that is psychically and psychologically constructed are amongst the interactions that Ali has after migration. In this respect, *Brick Lane* is a good example for presenting the changes

which the characters experience in England in a multicultural context; in short, their lives can be observed clearly. Therefore, *Brick Lane* will be discussed in this chapter through the terms, liminality, ambivalence and border crossing.

Immigrants from the former colonies not only continue their lives in a new setting by accepting or adapting themselves to the values of the host culture, but also try to preserve their cultural identities. Parallel to that, they experience a kind of identity-crisis on the move towards creating a complete self. Thus, diasporic identity is shaped by the multicultural forces of the host and home cultures. In particular, postcolonial subjects are thought to be between two worlds while constructing their identities; but they constantly recreate their sense of self in a range of multicultural contexts. Monica Ali was selected for this chapter since she is a member of the South Asian diaspora who introduces us to the different experiences of immigrant people and to the multicultural texture of England in her writings. Being a second generation diasporian, Ali concentrates on multilayered identities and immigrant families trying to reflect that sphere in her work. As she herself says, 'Growing up with an English mother and Bengali father means never being an insider. Standing neither behind a closed door, nor in the thick of things, but rather in the shadow of the doorway' (Ali, 2003). Monica Ali, as a daughter of an English mother and a Bangladeshi father, is a hybrid subject. She expresses herself as 'not a cheerleader' by touching upon the realistic framework in her art. As she notes:

> A writer from a minority does carry an extra expectation of being a cheerleader for that minority. That's understandable. But I feel my duty is to tell the truth as I see it, not to be a mouthpiece or write a sociological study. (Craig, 2003)

To be partially present in their works is inevitable for migrant writers since they know the conditions of multiculturalism in a postcolonial context. In this study, *Brick Lane* will be analyzed in the light of Ali's life experiences as a migrated subject. She deals with the characters in the novel as the representation of postcolonial subjects in Western discourse; in this respect, this situation inspires her in evoking the ambivalence of her characters.

With its portrayal of the lives of migrants in England, *Brick Lane* is one of Ali's most significant works. It deals with multicultural characters in changing environments, cultural hybridity and identity formation in a new social milieu. In this sense, *Brick Lane* is based on the struggles of characters who having separated from their original land, try

to transit into an alien environment and to be integrated into the new circumstances. Furthermore, it can be said that Ali clearly asserts 'the repertoire of conflictual positions (that) constitute the subject in colonial discourse' (Bhabha, 1994: 110). The conflicts that the postcolonial subject has help Ali see the hardships of postcolonial experiences as well as the changeable aspects of postcolonial conditions. She blurs any border like nation, culture, and gender, and offers liminal stance, cultural ambivalence and third space. Her style of writing is a portrait of her stance between homeland and migrated country. Although criticized by her own people in Bangladesh because she writes about the Bangladeshi people as subaltern in her novel, she adopts a decisive tone towards British colonization. Thus, she reveals the devastating effects of migration to the country which was the colonial centre in the past and is the host country in the present, as well as the ambivalent attitudes of the characters in the new cultural setting that shape their lives. Ali's style of writing puts emphasis on the individuals who are caught between cultures, reflecting the liminal sides of the postcolonial discourse.

Brick Lane focuses on identity construction and border crossing. The title of the novel is the best way to highlight the aim of this part. Bricks are barriers; they are obstacles and liminal spaces for migrants. Brick Lane is a location in London inhabited by Bangladeshis. This location represents the psychological situation of the individuals, Nazneen and Chanu as the main characters of the novel. These bricks are liminal objects before the men and women who migrate to London to have a better life. So, their efforts to gain something good in life and for identification will be realized with the demolition of the bricks and boundaries. In short, personal development will be achieved both physically and psychologically by crossing the bricks or barriers. The liminality of the characters, their ambivalent moves and pursuit of newness and self-assertion are all the results of willingness to cross the borders and to collapse the bricks. Actually, *Brick Lane* is a narrative of a female migrant who proceeds towards self-achievement through consciousness of her own potentiality. So, '[her] subjectivity is constituted through ongoing, open-ended interaction between [herself] and the world' (Moi, 1999: 391). Thus, in the following part of this chapter, an analysis of *Brick Lane* will be presented through the concepts of border and liminality.

3.2. NAZNEEN: A THRESHOLD FEMALE

In *Brick Lane*, Ali's protagonist is a female diasporian, Nazneen, who tries to name herself in both patriarchal and Eurocentric discourses. The novel circles around the multicultural world of Nazneen in England. After an arranged marriage with an older man, Chanu, Nazneen moves to Tower Hamlets in London, described as 'a community all but invisible to the rest of London' (*BL*, 2003). She leaves her original homeland in Bangladesh behind; yet, her only contact with the homeland is through letters to her sister, Hasina. Unlike Nazneen, Hasina prefers to stay in Dhaka, fighting for her love, and rebelling against the patriarchally shaped rules imposed on her. The two sisters, cross physical, emotional, psychological and cultural borders in their private lives, as Ali portrays them. She actually views the two different worlds of the sisters as indicators of both a recall of the past with Nazneen's connection to her sister and a reviving of the present life after an arranged marriage dictating a border crossing in the end.

At the beginning of the novel, Nazneen is frustrated since she has left her home behind and experiences the feeling of isolation or alienation in a society whose language, she does not even know save for a few words like 'sorry' and 'thank you'. Her husband, Chanu, the product of a male-dominated society, actually offers a liminal stage for Nazneen in her life, and is the initiator of her transformation. Then, her life is enhanced by Karim, a young, rebellious, fanatic Muslim who is a part of an Islamic organization. That affair is the second twist for Nazneen to gain agency out of the conflict between her traditional self and her own desires. Gradually, she learns to adapt herself to living in a new environment. Ali is a good observer of migrant psychology since she is also an immigrant. Ali attempts to document the cultural, physical and psychological realities of migration. The novel as a whole displays people whose in-betweenness is detailed in gloomy descriptions.

Each character in the novel tries to occupy a productive space in the host culture and strives not to be lost physically and spiritually as they construct a self through different cultures, genders, religions and languages. As a matter of fact, ever-shifting identity is the destiny of those who cross the boundaries of cultures and strive to acquire a place for a self just like the protagonist Nazneen in *Brick Lane*. As both a woman and a migrant, Nazneen strives to learn 'to adapt to an alien environment' (Hussain, 2005: 100).

She seeks a place for herself both psychically and psychologically; and in this sense her identity construction forms itself within the marriage arranged for her by her father: 'Abba, it is good that you have chosen my husband. I hope I can be a good wife, like Amma' (*BL*, 7). Here, the situation of arranged marriages in Bangladesh is not found odd or interrogated. Also, she is regarded by Chanu as 'an unspoilt village girl':

> What's more she is a good worker. Cleaning and cooking and all that. The only complaint I could make is she can't put my files in order, because she has no English. I don't complain though. As I say, a girl from the village: totally unspoilt. (*BL*, 23)

Chanu's words pinpoint the hardships of Nazneen's life since she is isolated and lonely in Tower Hamlets, a Bengali Muslim enclave in the east of London. Therefore, Nazneen is like 'moth surrounded by a shell of fate, religious hypocrisy and male dominated society' (Pratim Das, 2015: 3). This positioning makes her question her 'self', her liminality between the willingness for transformation to a new woman and the traditional enforcements. However, at the end of the novel, she finds the way from being a naïve housewife to becoming a dignified woman. In this sense, Ali makes readers understand the issues faced by the immigrants and how they are psychologically and psychically entrapped subjects attempting to acquire a cohesive and coherent identity.

Nazneen's numerous conflicts related to her search for a unified identity (downtrodden Nazneen in Bangladesh or male dominated society as well as poor Nazneen who tries to take 'routes' in London to have a space for her own self) are all succinct explanations for her struggles to open up new spaces for a better life. Hence, Nazneen obviously has great and immortal hopes for the betterment of her life, and this attitude delineates a character who wishes to construct her own way in order to find her own identity. In this respect, sometimes 'she has to 'manipulate' her 'beliefs in order to maintain a positive self-image' (Willet, 1998: 198).

> 'I don't want anything from this life', 'I ask for nothing. I expect nothing.' Hasina jumped and down at that. 'If you ask for nothing, you might get nothing!' But she had proved her mother's point. 'How can I be disappointed?' It made sense to Nazneen. Only one thing was not clear. The cause of Amma's suffering.' (*BL*, 102)

Nazneen actually dodges something that needs to be questioned since even she interrogates her mother's suffering nature. Her double-edged identity between her unconditional bond with tradition (home) and her desire to shift the predetermined roles forces her to move metaphorically. Nazneen's hybridity here denotes her upward mobility towards self-awareness and the transformation of her sense of self. Correspondingly, 'far from a static thing, identity of self or of 'other' is a much worked-over historical, social, intellectual, and political process that takes place as a contest involving individuals and institutions in all societies' (Said, 2003: 332). The physically, culturally, and linguistically dislocated Nazneen at the beginning of the novel displays a kind of mute subjectivity due to the double consciousness such border crossings encapsulate.

Actually, Nazneen's bond with her origins as well as her eagerness to get newness in her life here gives her agency. Therefore, although she questions where she belongs to, she is not as pessimistic as she would have been if she had lost her hopes for living in a foreign land. She 'began to be aware of herself. Without a coat, without a suit, without a white face, without a destination' (*BL*, 56). The physical circumstances in London are important in forming the immigrant identity. In this sense, Nazneen gradually succeeds in not being a part of this catastrophic portrayal since she feels that she is an ordinary part of the world: 'they were not aware of her. They could not see her any more than she could see God. They knew that she existed but unless she did something, waved a gun, halted the traffic, they would not see her. She enjoyed this thought' (*BL*, 56). In addition to this, although she is imprisoned within the walls of the house by her husband, she spends her time looking through the widows smelling the outer world. As she says: 'You can spread your soul over a paddy field, you can whisper to a mango tree, you can feel the earth beneath your toes and know that this is the place, the place where it begins and ends. But what can you tell to a pile of bricks? The bricks will not be moved' (*BL*, 87). She feels herself entrapped by the bricks of the house, not being able to take breath as an immigrant woman. Nonetheless, that creates illusions in her mind and blurs the borders of her identity:

> Finally she learned a new kind of community. The wife upstairs who used the lavatory in the night. The milkman's alarm clock that told Nazneen the grueling hours her neighbor must keep. The woman on the other side whose bed thumped the wall when her boyfriends called. These were her unknown intimates. (*BL*, 182)

Ali portrays Nazneen as an imprisoned soul since Nazneen is alone with 'the self-reflexive dialogues'; furthermore, she is confined because any 'attempt to communicate with others is frustrated' (Zhang, 1996: 133). Generally, postcolonial theory tries to define immigrant subjects through rootlessness, coupled with the sense of otherness; however, the sense of loss also evokes the possibility of different windows to look through. A voyage towards a better life enables these subjects to negotiate to where the appropriate identity is located. The major problem of the migrants is living between national identity and individual identity. This liminal position is actually a process constituted within, not without. The individuals who are eager to find their selves in multicultural circumstances do not want to be a part of a group, since the collective identity annihilates the sense of self-esteem and plots a pessimistic future for a subject. In this sense, Ali gives Nazneen a gradual personal development to negotiate and integrate the separated self. On an ordinary day, Nazneen's attention is caught by a white woman whose 'footsteps rang like declarations' (*BL*, 374). Her observation leads into her own ideas about how this physicality reflects the instinctive tendency towards change: 'One step in front of the other. Could it say, I am this and I am not this? Could a walk tell lies? Could it change you? (*BL*, 374)

The dialogue between self-being (the product of cultural originalities) and self-becoming (the outcome of individual experiences) causes a subject be aware of the other selves. In this sense, the subject is on the perpetual move in order to find the true self. Ali uses her characters to explore 'the positioning of Bangladeshi within Britain' (Hussain, 2005: 91). The positioning of the individuals here coincidences with multiple identities. These various identity structures make Ali's characters liminal amongst the possible mutated identities. A similar point about this notion of characterization assumes a well-organized picture of a woman, delineating 'Nazneen' s journey from a dominated, subdued teenager to a gradual metamorphosis into a hesitant, independent mother with a poetic sensitivity beyond her stifling, bleak and cluttered flat on Brick Lane' (Kanal,

2008: 51). Ali embeds identity formations by displaying 'considerable transformations' of the characters (Hussain, 2005: 91).

> The life in Banglatowns in England shows that the houses of the migrants are the border between inside and outside since they fear to wander outside their town to meet English people. The boundaries of Banglatowns are the places for the subjects who are in-between. The neighborhood gives a strong sense of identity and belonging to immigrants and their offspring. (Staden, 2007: 8)

The inhabitants of this place are othered by the mainstream culture. As can be understood from the passage above, the neighborhood fosters the ambivalence and in-betweenness of the migrants in a foreign land. In this sense, the short distance between outside and inside makes them open up their identities to newness. Meeting other people dissolves their desperate situation as liminal figures who are stuck to the borderline between national and international cultures. Nazneen is eager to be social and to sustain her traditional identity since she wants to be accepted as an individual. In a way, clothing is a marker for sustaining a life for Nazneen to change.

> If she changed her clothes her entire life would change as well. If she wore a skirt and a jacket and a pair of high heels, then what else would she do but walk around the glass palaces on Bishopsgate and talk into a slim phone? If she wore trousers and underwear, then she would roam the streets fearless and proud. (*BL*, 297)

After coming to a foreign country, she questions how getting dressed changes the identity. While adapting to another self, she feels but she fears. Seeing the difference or the other actually means identifying her or his sense of self through a 'new way of being, an emergent mode of perception and engagement with the world' (McLeod, 2000: 237). The notion of change in new places causes the individuals to be involved in the process of 'both the physical sense of possessions or belongings, but also the less tangible matter of beliefs, traditions, customs, behaviors and values' (McLeod, 2000: 244).

Liminality for Nazneen represents the process of becoming a subject in between East and West who wants to cross the borders both physically and psychologically. Nazneen in a way struggles to define herself beyond the borders, as a subject on the margins. 'The struggle for self-assertion, its excitements, rages, passion, problems, irritations, defeats and conclude, sometimes triumphantly, sometimes with frustration,

with ambivalence towards the worth of the struggle' (King, 2003: 58). In Nazneen's identity formation, her sense of expectation to be accepted by English culture is clear.

Also, as locations change, identities change. Nazneen changes after she learns more English than just 'Sorry' and 'Thank you'. She wants to be visible, in other words, to be recognized by the changing environment in Britain. 'Over the last decade and a half, she had gleaned vocabulary here and there. The television, the brief exchanges at the few non-Bengali shops she entered, the dentist, the doctor, teachers at the girls' schools. But it was the girls who taught her. Their method was simple: they demanded to be understood' (*BL*, 194).

Nazneen and her daughters here represent the need to be heard, to have an identity through language. They all try hard to attain a new social space to define themselves.

> Language carries culture and culture carries particularly. How people perceive themselves affects how they look at their culture, at their politics and the social production of wealth, at their relationship to nature and to other human beings. Language is thus inseparable from ourselves as a community of human beings. (Wa Thiong'o, 1986: 16)

As quoted here, language determines the understanding of the world and the values that people have. The characters need to speak English correctly since they try to make a connection between England and themselves to deconstruct their marginalization. Therefore, language offers a new space where negotiation is possible. Ali crafts the gradual entry of Nazneen into the mainstream culture through language. Enthusiasm for learning English basically activates Nazneen as an unstable character, although Chanu does not approve of this circumstance as it threatens his original Bangladeshi identity. 'Pub, pub, pub. Nazneen turned the word over in her mind. Another drop of English that she knew' (*BL*, 28). To survive, Nazneen enhances the new language, and the new culture as well, by beholding 'a strategy of translation rather than representation', by taking over 'the discursive mechanisms of power' (Hicks, 1991: xxiii), so as not to be stuck between the original and new language acquisitions. Amongst the foundations of multiculturism, language is also a part of the creation of a new identity related to in-betweenness since the migrant is prone to possess feature of both cultures (global and local). In this sense, Bhabha asserts that the border consciousness of the subjects in the midst of double-sidedness is 'not only double-voiced and double-accented…but also double-languaged'

(Bhabha, 1994: 58). All the dimensions related to the blurring of borders denote that *Brick Lane*, in a larger sense, is 'set in the backdrop of Bangladeshi society presents the journey of a woman towards self-actualization that comes only through the sequential and gradual eye-opening experiences which Nazneen comes across in her life' (Hayat et all, 2015: 209-210). Divining a self-assured identity through the catastrophic enforcements of both the patriarchy and othering, Nazneen blossoms, and within the process 'through self-understanding, through vigilance and courage [she] can begin to change' (Anuradha, 2015: 19).

> If ever her life was out of her hands, it was now. She had submitted to her father and married her husband; she had submitted to her husband. And now she gave herself up to power greater than these two, and she felt herself helpless before it. When the thought crept into her mind that power was inside her, that she was its creator, she dismissed it as conceited. (*BL*, 299- 300)

Self-actualization is clear as Nazneen tries to resolve the conflicts and to find a coherent identity between her origins and current conditions. This glance at the formation of her identity permits the claim that Nazneen is an asset for the definition of creativity, as revealed in her refashioning as a self-assured woman, already discussed in detail. This is because she embodies, firstly, the partial living-being in the world of the dominated (patriarchy and colonizing), and then she is the framework of 'how newness enters the world' (Bhabha, 1994: 227). Additionally, she embodies the notion of 'newness' combined with border consciousness and liminal personalities that can be 'repackaged to sustain' (Papastergiadis, 2000:15). Furthermore, she illustrates how the vacillating nature of liminal identities can be remade and recreated because of the need to sustain the self in the lands of collision.

In this sense, Monica Ali designs a female character both to declare the independence of a woman as a gender voice and also to represent a subaltern crying out for strength and grasping self-made potentialities to survive not only psychologically but also physically. In the novel, Ali depicts a female who experiences many turning points in her life. Nazneen also starts earning money and gains her financial independence, whereas Chanu has problems with his job and falls into heavy debt. Nazneen purchases a sewing machine to earn the money to take care of her family and to pay the debt of her husband. This gives her feelings of financial and social assurance.

She is exhausted and unhappy with her obligations. This makes her wander in search of happiness, which she finds with her lover, Karim. Unlike Chanu, Karim treats her with respect and pays attention to her opinions and makes her feel important. However, despite this interest in her life and in her abilities, Nazneen faces a conflict between her loyalty to her matrimonial bond and her love for Karim. In fact, this interstitial circumstance in her life empowers her as a key figure in exhibiting the portrait of a lady between two stools and in illustrating the notion that 'however ambiguous and shifting the ground may be, it is not an infertile territory…' (Rushdie, 1991, 15). The fertility present in identity formation reveals a subjectification that is transitory; at last, Nazneen controls her life and gets the power to achieve a social, cultural and gender becoming.

> I have no complaints or regrets to tell you, said Nazneen. I will tell everything to God. What could not be changed must be borne and since nothing could be changed, everything had to be borne. This principle ruled her life.' (*BL*, 15-16)

Although she believes in God, she questions the boundaries of self: unless anything changes, it must be experienced or tolerated. Nonetheless, her agency on the margins leads her into the presence of possibilities to remap a space for living. As Okuroglu Ozun illustrates: 'temporality refers to accumulation of cultural practices in a certain space celebrating discontinuity as productive concept which he (Foucault) considers as breaks, liminal spaces and thresholds' (Okuroglu Ozun, 2013:189). The upward mobility of Nazneen towards self-knowledge is along the same lines, with the outcomes of marginality enhancing the 'dynamics of change'. The dynamic juxtapositions inherent in crossing thresholds are essential in bringing forth the discourses of potentialities in order to 'reorder conventional spatial hierarchies' (Okuroglu Ozun, 2013:193), 'by crisis or deviance' or 'by their perfection or subversion of certain spatial designs' (Decerteau, 1984: 131).

The self on the margins has the potentiality to achieve power through the process of identity construction. 'Role conflict and status inconsistency are examples of situations that may be interpreted as identity conflicts. Such conflicts between two identities may come about as a person takes on new role identities' (Burke et all., 2009: 183). Nazneen gets the power to obtain an assured identity. The newness in identity formation shows

that the conflicts and contradictions that the subject experiences are all markers for the acquisition of a new identity.

3.3. CHANU BETWEEN THE CULTURES

In *Brick Lane*, Chanu is another diasporian who is caught in-between cultures and religions. He has fantasies and hopes for living in England since he is keen on English literature. On the other hand, he is a minor character that dwells in England as a third world man. In this sense, he wants to return to Bangladesh where he feels comfortable and safe. Actually, his liminal positioning here demonstrates that he not only admires Englishness but also exhibits his strong ties to his native land.

Chanu is a disappointed figure who belittles everything in England to make himself feel better. He is described by Nazneen:

> He thinks he will get the promotion but it will take him longer than any white man. He says that if he painted his skin pink and white then there would be no problem. Chanu had begun, she had noticed, to talk less of promotion and more of racism. (*BL*, 58)

Apart from Nazneen, Chanu is another character who undergoes transformation as an individual since he is in the midst of identification. He has crossed the borders of nation physically, not psychologically. He wants to change, even though he is strongly bound to his past in Bangladesh. At the beginning, he does not want his daughters to adapt to Englishness or to lose Bengali identity; as the novel progresses, he is less willing to have them adopt Bengali identity either. This transformation shows that he has positive attitudes towards English culture:

> Let me tell you a few simple facts. Fact: we live in a Western society. Fact: our children will act more and more like Westerners. Fact: that's no bad thing. My daughter is free to come and go. Do I wish I had enjoyed myself like her when I was young? Yes! (*BL*, 93)

Chanu's self is between England and Bangladesh while he adapts to his new social milieu. This identity formation points out his marginalization. This marginalization makes him act in an unwesternized way, intentionally or unintentionally. He says:

> If you go out, ten people will say, 'I saw her walking on the street'. And I will look like a fool. Personally, I don't mind if you go out but these people are so ignorant. I don't stop you from doing anything. I am westernized now. It is lucky for you that you married an educated man… And anyway, if you were in Bangladesh you would not go out. Coming here you are not missing anything, only broadening your horizons. (*BL*, 45)

Initially, Chanu is portrayed as the product of a patriarchal community; thus, he forces Nazneen to be a traditional wife. However, he is also the product of the host culture since he has complexities as a result of border crossing interactions in London. That is to say, Ali depicts Chanu caught between two worlds and remaining in a dilemma about whether to adapt to the host country culture or to adhere to his own culture since for him the West despises the Bangladeshi community and regards them as subaltern voices. He asserts:

> All these people here who look down at us as peasants know nothing of history…in the sixteenth century; Bengal was called the Paradise of Nations. These are our roots. Do they teach these things in the school here? Does Shahana know about the Paradise of Nations? (*BL*, 185)

Chanu 'looks down upon the majority of Bangladeshis who are from Sylhet and who are working class… he distances himself from other fellow Bangladeshis" (Hussain, 2005: 103). There is always an in-between space that comes with the problem of assimilating, 'not only by those who have migrated and their descendants but equally by those who are constructed and represented as indigenous. In other words, the entanglement of genealogies of dispersion with those of 'staying put'' (Brah, 1996: 205). The border consciousness of the individual embeds the contingency of the routes and the certainty of the roots in a liminal stance.

As quoted, within the utterances of Chanu, we witness the ambivalent and assimilated side of Chanu 'although he bitterly resists assimilating into British culture, hanging on to his cultural and historical roots and sense of national identity, …a scholar from the Commonwealth who pursues his university studies in the U.K., acquainting himself with, and steeping himself in, British culture and literature, spouting random quotes from Shakespeare to compliment the occasion' (Arıkan and Koçsoy, 2010: 494).

As discussed in the theoretical part of this study, border crossing gives birth to enunciations of selves in order to move on, because the evoked images of boundaries, passages, crossings and changes mark an awareness of othering; othering triggers a willingness to enter into differences; entering into differences constructs the potential understanding of the variety of masks, disguises, and passages among the selves. To sum up, deconstructing fixed circumstances allows the subject to transform. In this sense, we can claim that Chanu is not enhanced by the hope of mutated identity; he is a portrait of the transformation and remade self that is constructed by the colonized world.

3.4. KARIM, SHAHANA AND THEIR IN-BETWEENNESS

Another significant male figure in the novel, Karim, is instrumental in the self-actualization of Nazneen's identity. His love affair with Nazneen afterwards produces a sense of belonging in Karim since he looks for some objects to identify himself. It enables the anxiety to be visible of those individuals who are stuck in the 'in-betweenness' of the change to be portrayed in detail. The threshold position of Karim points out that 'Karim did not have his place in the world' (*BL*, 375). Like Chanu, Karim is not fired by the will of self-determination to construct a sense of identity. 'The real thing, he said. She was his real thing. A Bengali wife. A Bengali mother. An idea of home. An idea of himself that he found in her' (*BL*, 380). In the end, Karim tries to escape his interstitial stance with the marriage to Nazneen. Actually, Karim seeks a psychological location by transcending the borders in his depths. In particular, the psychical dislocation of the people invokes half-life, partial presence and the edge of foreign cultures. In this respect, the sense of location explodes at the center of individuality, both psychologically and physically, as a result 'of cultural and psychic journeying to learn about the processes which sustain social relations and subjectivities' (Brah,1996: 202) that are at the center of the world he or she takes for granted. Actually, the feeling of unbelonging as a result of the vacillating nature of Karim in the host land demonstrates his inner conflicts through his relation with Nazneen:

> Karim has a new style. The gold necklace vanished; the jeans, shirts and trainers went as well…Karim put on Panjabi-pyjama and skullcap. He wore a sleeveless fleece and big boots with the laces left undone at the top…Nazneen

> felt that Karim did not want her to mention the new clothes. The matter was either too trivial or else too important to be discussed. (*BL*, 312)

To encapsulate, the sense of unbelonging also remaps the threshold position in the host land through in-betweenness, as quoted here. Encompassing the central and the subordinate characters in *Brick Lane,* Ali crucially portrays the subjects on a voyage to find their identities, as we have seen in our analysis of Chanu, Karim and the protagonist, Nazneen, in relation to threshold positions as a result of border crossing in the shifting dynamics of transnational globality. All the figures in the novel actually progress towards self-knowledge and self-recognition. In this respect, their identification processes highlight the constant opportunities to challenge roles socially, politically and culturally.

Additionally, one of the subordinate characters in the novel, Shahana, the daughter of Nazneen and Chanu, also has 'an in-between self'. She smells the threshold air of the migrated land as a migrated subject. She is between her parents' culture and the circumstances in which she dwells currently, through Britain's representations, since she knows English very well. Although Shahana is supposed to learn English at school, Chanu does not want her to speak English at home; he is strict in making use of the native language at home. 'By being brought up in a bicultural and bilingual environment, second generation UK-born immigrants are torn apart between simultaneous but incompatible desires, realities and drives` (Julios, 2008: 13). As a result, Shahana has a psychological breakdown because she is afraid of returning to Bangladesh in consequence of her father's obsession with his origins, and his not being open to newness. Thus, she fears that she too will be the victim of an arranged marriage. Hence, the crucial question of which identity formation will be appropriate for her occupies her mind, as an individual engaging with the issue of how she came to be and who she is. In this sense, 'a second-generation English-speaking Bangladeshi child brought up in the East End of London, for example, may see themselves as being wholly British; however, it is unlikely that the rest of the indigenous white British population may regard them as being ´one of them`' (Julios, 2008: 9). It is precisely noted here that the binarism between the self and the other is blurred and creates an ambivalent atmosphere in the depths of individuality, especially for second-generation children, leading to drowning in the deep ocean of permanent spiritual displacement. However, Shahana leaves a positive mark in the minds of the reader since she rebels against the past and creates a new beginning in London for her

state of awareness. 'I am from London' (*BL*, 244), her answer to a stranger along the way with her father reveals. Her rejection of the traditional discourses shows that she has a self between the past (her family's exposure) and the present (newness as an individual), a hybrid self:

> Shahana did not want to listen to Bengali classical music. Her written Bengali was shocking. She wanted to wear jeans. She hated her kameez and spoiled her entire wardrobe by pouring paint on them. If she could choose between baked beans and dal it was no contest…Shahana did not want to go back home. (*BL*, 188)

Though it seems as if Shahana is assimilated here, actually she reacts against the compulsory assumptions that are imposed by her father since she lives in the midst of the gloomy atmosphere of self-conflict. That is to say, elaborating 'liminality' in a sense of identity, Shahana wants to live her self-made constructions related to her living in London: 'I did not ask to be born here' (*BL*, 181). Chanu highlights the dilemma in her nature of living between two worlds: belong to the culture of Bangladesh and also experience the conditions of England. Between being English and being Bangladeshi, Shahana makes use of a distinction for her own subjectification; she chooses to become a subject equipped with the new offerings and meanings of London, by not being in the position of the assimilated. Ali negotiates her idea of identity through anger at the conventional structure that her father tries to impose on her, framing 'Shahana, simmering in worst of all things-perpetual embarrassment, implacably angry' (*BL*, 205). This anger and Shahana's rebellious nature also enable Nazneen to open windows to recreate and refashion memorialized identity. This female warrior not only wants to hang onto the traditional values but also to escape from the enunciations of these values; in the end, she learns to find a space in which to dwell through the liminal meanings of identity-finding. The liminal stance of Nazneen against upbringing between her willingness to become a self and her religious doctrine after her affair with Karim is revealed: 'He was the first man to see her naked. It made her sick with shame. It made her sick with desire. They committed a crime. It was a crime and the sentence was death…beyond death was the eternal fire of hell…' (*BL*, 299) She is not insensible; she knows what is wrong, but she gradually reaches the peak point of maturation, of the self-assured woman, through dilemmas and variable conditions. Despite the vacillating nature of her experiences, she

finds her own way and she becomes a mature individual, through a self-voyage filled with conflicts and clashes touching upon the realms of the identity-making process.

Through the crisscross motions of a Bangladeshi family, Ali succeeds in evoking the voices of individuals in their separate struggles to find a self that can dwell in the colonizing world. In this sense, it can be noted that Chanu, Karim, Shahana and Nazneen are all figures within a framework of borderlines who struggle to survive in different forms from each other. Chanu and Karim are both stuck in the middle. On the other hand, Nazneen and Shahana become dignified and warrior-like in relation to their subjectivities since they 'become' aware of the potentiality and strength that dwell in their depths as individuals, as the product of both the host culture and a male-oriented society. Furthermore, we can infer from all these circumstances that border crossing explodes the dynamic nature of identity through the multiple dimensions of turmoil related to self-actualization. 'Identities are not unified or stable, but are fluid entities which constantly push at the boundaries of the nation-state, thereby re-defining themselves and the nation-state simultaneously' (Ranguin, 2010: 11). Correspondingly, as a direct witness of the South Asian diaspora in England, Ali visits the situation of an immigrant female with a realistic eye since she depicts her subjects 'in the sense of reconstruction of self along with the reconstruction of space in an alien culture: having to adapt the self and its perception of society' (Toplu, 2011: 162). Actually, we watch a performance of 'the movement of a solitary hero through a sociological landscape of fixity' (Anderson, 1983: 30).

'She turned to her prayers and tried to empty her mind and accept each new thing with grace or indifference" (*BL*, 124). Nazneen, in trying to get rid of the unpleasant discourses, and in dealing with the loss of innocence that the religious doctrines of the past bring forth, experiences in the very depths of her being a dilemma, stemming from the border consciousness that creates betwixt positioning in the individual even as it gives force to the idea that 'the border is a place of possibility and agency for new concepts, new narratives, new ideas' (McLeod, 2000: 252). She does not have broken chains with the past, as usual; yet, she experiences cultural and social collisions and sometimes questions her sense of identity in the middle.

Consequently, 'we need to spatialize being. Such a spatialization would render being intelligible in terms of the localization of repertoires of habits, routines and images

of self-understanding and self-cultivation within specific domains of thought, action and value' (Rose, 1996: 304). To spatialize self amongst the domains of multiculturalism and liminal dwellings, Ali awakens the sleeping identity which needs to be transformed and to enter into the dynamics of becoming, evident in the fact that Nazneen is prone to 'question, refashion and mobilize received ideas' (McLeod, 2000: 253). In a similar vein, Nazneen acts as a figure of upward mobility, located in the pastures of agency of change as a self-assured woman, between dominant West and male-dominated East. The message that is transmitted to the reader by Ali in *Brick Lane* is that a woman can reconstruct her sense of self with her own hands, no matter how ignored or deteriorated she might be, since she has a potentiality in her depths. This circumstance of being a woman brings forward the fact that the sense of dislocation that derives from crossing borders makes this subject integrate into new practices of living in an alien world; and she may open up different doors, windows or gates to not being on the threshold through this potentiality to change. Nazneen is invaded by the inner feeling that 'renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent 'in-between' space' (Bhabha, 1994: 7), as well as by the need to acquire an understanding or self-recognition of how 'the gap between the re-represented layers of the past in the present and the actual patterns of the past gives way to a new present, to new perspective and new meanings' (Okuroglu, Ozun, 2013: 54).

CHAPTER IV

THE INHERITANCE OF LOSS: LIMINAL SELVES

4.1. INTRODUCTION

> …my homeland is the rhythm of a guitar, a few portraits, an old sword,
> the willow grove's visible prayer as evening falls.
> Time is living me.
> More silent than my shadow, I pass through the loftily covetous multitude. They are
> indispensable, singular, worthy of tomorrow.
> (Jorge Luis Borges, *Boast of Quietness*)

The impact of western civilization on the third world countries can be still observed in migrant literature. In this respect, examples of such literature enunciate the interwoven global and national strands which are encapsulated in the real practices of identity formation. Crossing borders shapes identity through spatio-temporalities; ongoing circumstances create perpetual construction to attain a coherent self. Amidst differences and in temporary situations, migrants observe differences and multiplicities. Thus, these situations create an unpleasant framework of identity in crisis. In a way, it can be said that 'an identity crisis is a time of intensive analysis and exploration of different ways of looking at oneself" (Tiwari, 2013: 6). The identity crisis arises from the displacement and in-betweenness of the individuals:

> …in the light of the idea of dislocation resulting from migration. However, the problem of identity in literature is not one-sided; it is linked to a concern with time and space. While displacement in a certain time-space construction permeates the starting point for diasporic subjectification, it at the same time highlights the fluidity of constructing self in different spatio-temporalities. (Okuroglu Ozun, 2013: 131)

Widely used in relation to identity formation, spatio-temporalities are the explanations of border crossings and liminal identities. Since identity is an ever-shifting process, its dynamics may be clearly explained with reference to the displacement of migrants and their changing environments. The liminal circumstances of immigrants between psychological and physical borders, the dilemma of resistance or othering, and the

coexistence of past and present in the mind all underpin identity construction. Thus, the prime concern of this study is to evaluate liminality, and the related terms ambivalence and third space, in the context of the novel, by focusing on the remapping of identity through the contradictions and complexities of a new social milieu. At the same time, border crossing induces a revolution in the immigrants who draw benefit from a ground that 'frees the native from inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-belief' (Fanon, 1961: 73). From this perspective, it is clear that the identity formation of an ex-colonial subject includes a range of border crossings and that this process sweeps away all the disturbances that the in-between positionings of these borders build up. Through this process, self-coherence becomes a cleansing force enabling the development of a 'new' world.

The sense of threshold refers to a continual process of movement and interchange. For Bhabha, a stairwell is a pivotal applicator of this state; in this sense, he aptly makes use of the artist Renee Green's installation by focusing on her usage of stairwell. He describes how she:

> used architecture literally as a reference, using the attic, the boiler and the stairwell to make associations between certain binary divisions such as higher and lower and heaven and hell. The stairwell became a liminal space, a pathway for the upper and lower areas, each of which was annotated with plaques referring to blackness and whiteness. (Bhabha, 1994: 3-4)

The symbolic display of liminality here focuses on the temporality of the binary oppositions that dislocation or border consciousness calls forth. The subject can handle this situation because 'the temporal movement and passage that a stairwell allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities' (Bhabha, 1994: 4). The concept of spatio-temporalities puts forward the idea that one might not entirely leave the past behind or be deeply stuck to the present as a stable being; in contrast, the subject can enhance '…self-presence…comes to be revealed for its discontinuities, its inequalities, its minorities' (Bhabha, 1994: 4).

Kiran Desai is one of the second-generation migrant writers who explore the displacement of people and identity shifting in terms of how identity formation forms aspects of culture, nation and language. She writes about the lives of immigrant people, elaborating the circumstances of individuals in both Western and Eastern cultures, and in

so doing reveals the importance of liminality and border, and the associated term ambivalence, in mapping identity construction on the way to self-actualization. Born in 1971 in Delhi, the young Desai later spent a year in England before her family moved to the USA, where she completed her education. In her literary career, Desai won the Betty Trask Award for *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* (1998) as one of the best new novels. She then wrote her famous novel, *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006), to share her travel experiences. With this novel, she won the Man Booker Prize in 2006, and the National Book Critics Circle Fiction Award. As a migrant writer, Desai is interested in the conditions of immigrants while crossing borders, the in-betweenness of their changing environment, psychologically and physically. She also seeks to unravel the ambiguities of the psychological impacts felt by these immigrants while constructing a sustained self. Her style, in reflecting the diasporic in-betweenness of the colonial subjects, is clearly that of someone who is a part of the South Asian diaspora and a citizen of India as well as a permanent resident of the USA. In an interview, she clearly summarizes her partialness in her creative writing career:

> "Being part of the Indian diaspora gives one a precise emotional location to work from, if not a precise geographical one. This book was a return journey to the fact of being Indian, to realizing the perspective was too important to give up. America might give me half a narrative, but I had to return to India for the other half of the story, for emotional depth, historical depth. (Sopova, 2008: 13)

She asserts that the characters of the story are all fictional, yet her journey throws an insight into what the journey between West and East means. Owing to this journey, she captures the emotions of the particular life intentionally. She describes this situation of the creative mind as a result of migration as her inheritance.

As a flag-bearer of multiculturalism, Desai portrays the identity formation processes of diasporians with regard both to their physical displacement from the motherland and to new vistas of cultural, social and racial dialogue in the globalizing world, since she admirably values both deep and intimate roots in her native land, India, and the multi-cultural milieu of the land migrated to with its cross-currents of lives in process. Her work deciphers 'the voices and visions of new generation of world citizens

experiencing a set of values in an age of globalization and pursuing their ambitious aspirations in the midst of contemporary challenges of life' (Dash, 2014: 273).

In *The Inheritance of Loss*, Desai deals with the effects of immigration, globalization, multiculturalism, liminal selves and identity formation. *The Inheritance of Loss* is an excellent handbook for readers who want to understand Indian culture imbued with identity conflicts resulting from migration and threshold positions, or liminal stances. Almost all the characters in the novel experience in-betweenness through multiple circumstances and contradictions. They represent 'up, down, the stairway, the threshold, the foyer, the landing take on the meaning of a 'point' where crisis, radical change, an unexpected turn of fate takes place, where decisions are made, where the forbidden line is overstepped, where one is renewed or perishes' (Bakhtin, 1984: 169). The novel captures almost every area of life related to the 'becoming' process of the subjects; basically, it depicts the relationships between liminality and identity crises in the effort to sustain quality in living. In this context, Desai crafts Jemubhai, the judge, as a figure who is face to face with the loss of everything he has, including his sense of identity. On the other hand, his granddaughter Sai, also an in-between character who speaks English and has fun at Christmas despite being a Hindu, is constructing an identity. Another character who suffers from not feeling safe with any of the cultures is Biju, the son of Jemubhai's cook. Biju is a liminal figure who is open to form new self-positions. Although eager to be a figure of success in his dream land, he loses his happiness during his stay, surrounded by a sense of loss. Lastly, the cook who loses his bonds in his native land serves Jemubhai with regret. Apart from these major characters, other minor characters are encountered: Gyan (Sai's math tutor), Saeed-Saeed, and the two sisters, Lolita and Nonita. They are all configurations of the perpetual construction of identity that gains agency in multicultural contexts. Drawing attention to betwixt characters in search of resolution in identity formation, Desai simply depicts how 'a planet in eclipse or the moon between phases' surrounds the subjects throughout the novel; also 'being born' and 'growing into new ones', as well as 'mid-transition' (Turner, 1983: 129). The circumstances of the characters dominate the dynamic affiliations of identity. In this sense, Desai examines the inner states of liminal characters who try to strike a balance between the constructive and deconstructive aspects of self-actualization in multicultural contexts.

The Inheritance of Loss presents the identity changes of different characters that experience multiple encounters on their own journey towards self-actualization. The characters' liminal or double-edged conditions result from their need for a secured space to attain a life. Jemubhai's ambivalent stance between past and present, between East and West; Sai and Gyan's on-going identity conflicts; and Biju's rootless, threshold personality, position performing between his origins and his aspirations in the USA all are assets for evaluating identity through ambivalence and liminality in the present context. Ultimately, they are all liminal subjects, positioned between two cultures, with a set of confusions related to their in-betweenness and self-actualization. Hall points out that 'cultural identities are the points of identifications, the unstable points of identification…not an essence but a *positioning*' (Hall, 1990: 394). In this respect, in this part of the study, the analysis of *The Inheritance of Loss* through the portrayal of its characters will be helpful in resolving questions related to liminal identities and to the perpetual positioning of the cultural products. This section discusses important aspects of betwixt subjects who show ambivalence in their character. *The Inheritance of Loss* will help us to understand the different characters in their marginalization.

4.2. BIJU AND HIS IN-BETWEENNESS

> in (post)modern societies, in which rules of law and traditional customs have undergone major upheaval or change, individuals and communities are left in a continually unfixed, destructured, and liminal state of existence, caught between the conventions of customary social practices and the burgeoning social practices of new and radically different social formations. (Downey et all, 2016: 1-25)

As quoted here, to be 'left in a continually unfixed, destructured and liminal state of existence', wandering around the 'undergone major change' is an essential part of the identity-making process for the subjects in *The Inheritance of Loss*. One of Kiran Desai's liminal characters in the novel is Biju, who migrates to America in the hope of a better life and a wealthy future. Biju's liminality provides agency to overcome the two-way roads of threshold positions in America: 'Between Indians abroad of different classes and languages, rich and poor, north and south, top caste bottom caste. Standing at the threshold, Biju felt a mixture of emotions, hunger, respect, and loathing. He mounted the

bicycle he had rested against railings and was about to go on, but something made him stop and draw back' (*IL*, 50). The borderlands for a migrant like Biju are an oversized site of marginalization, so that Biju is 'something placed in an in-between position' (Thomassen, 2014: 7-8). The in-between positions of a foreign land offer opportunities to actualize the sense of identity:

> The liminal in-between state, the crossings of race, language, gender, and other differences express dynamic action that can be reassuring, threatening, or, most often, both at once. But if liminality's and hybridity's constant movement brings uncertainty and anxiety, it also celebrates a process of becoming with its promise of limitless possibilities. (Jacobson et.al. ,2018:6-7)

The self 'waiting to be recognized' is pushed into a kind of uncertainty, between two spheres, that forms the self and seeks a solution to conflicts related to cultural, social, racial or gender discourses.

His memories recall the past, reviving the doubleness that is attributed to black people: 'once a man from his village who worked in the city had said: 'Be careful of the *hubshi.* Ha, ha, in their own country they live like monkeys in the trees. They come to India and become men' (*IL*, 76). Biju interrogates the 'men' and 'monkeys' that appear in the borderlands, stating the dilemma in his monologue:

> Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial. As such, their ambiguous and indeterminate attributes are expressed by a rich variety of symbols in the many societies that ritualize social and cultural transitions. (Turner, 1969: 95)

Such threshold people in the process of becoming evoke a set of pathways that are dressed in 'all rusty cranes, cogs, black smoke flaring out', and that express the stance of Biju against the air that the alien culture produces: 'Biju couldn't help but feel a flash of anger at his father for sending him alone to this country, but he knew he wouldn't have forgiven his father for not trying to send him, either' (*IL*, 82). 'Neither here nor there' is a ritual phase of liminal structure that shapes the domains of the self by presenting it with enticing openings for new horizons to be activated, enabling it to 'become'.

Liminal becomings generate agency amidst the conflicting aspects of life (culture, nation and gender) in the land migrated to; and derive from the desire to sustain a better life and to provide resolution through struggles for consciousness in the process of identity-making. Desai crystallizes the liminality of her characters in the mists of 'waiting for a sign', as when she illustrates the sense of self of Biju experiencing many contradictions in an alien land. Liminality endows the self with the capacity to continually rejuvenate itself in new expressions; it is a multi-facetted structure that draws the individual into various dimensions since it 'is full of potency and potentiality' (Turner, 1977: 33). In this sense, the binarism of strengths and weaknesses makes Biju see potentialities. Thus, he engages as an in-between character with the dynamic sense of the liminal phase. His transitory self, with its changeling identity positioned on the border or threshold, constitutes a role for change by focusing on becoming. In similar vein, the liminal conditions of the other characters illustrate both the opportunities of the host culture and, at the same time, the upheavals that the host culture loads on their shoulders. Such changes in dynamics and identities are the mechanisms that give meaning to the notion of thresholds, by prompting moves and realignments to position the self;

> 'Without us living like pigs,' said Biju, 'what business would you have? This s how you make your money, paying us nothing because you know we can't do anything, making us work day and night because we are illegal. Why don't you sponsor us for our green cards? (*IL*, 188)

Actually, further transformation in the liminal position of third world characters living in the first world arises from the fact that their spatio-temporal states provide the complexities, ambiguities and paradoxes that threshold existence entails. In *Beyond the Threshold: Explorations of Liminality in Literature*, Viljoen and van der Merwe argue that the concept of liminality involves 'principles of difference; ways in which something other, something new can emerge' (Viljoen and van der Merwe, 2007: 3- 9). Biju migrates to the USA in order to have a different life from his father who is a cook. Yet, he again works in restaurants in the USA, serving beef. In fact, he works in various parts of the restaurants. He wishes to construct a prosperous life in the land of his dreams; however, he is a server and this makes him frustrated. Even as he chases the happiness of a life sustained in the land of his migration, Biju longs for his father in India. Actually, Biju's mind remains engaged with his flight from his origins for some time. His

peripheralization in the cultural context demonstrates his transformative betwixt position. Biju's ambivalent stance, between his longing for his father and his aspiration to a wealthy life in America, draws attention to his liminal persona. In this sense, his dialogue here reveals how the in-between subject is pervaded by the interstitial nature of the differences he or she carries, since liminality partly represents a crossing of race, class, gender and other differences through third space.

To dwell beyond the border, diasporians experience many disparities in relation to culture, race, gender and language. In this respect, the border between the outer and the inner, between the physical and the spiritual, depends upon liminal positioning. Simultaneously, Desai sheds light on the deterritorialization of the individuals and their processes of identification. She projects the complexity of Biju by revealing his identity crisis between host and home cultures. In other words, Western and Eastern migrants, in particular, move on side by side in a perpetual cycle of identity-making since the self beyond borders falls into the pits of double-flanged subjectivity. Additionally, while on the one hand the self is haunted by nostalgia for the past, on the other hand the self is on the borders of distinct spheres of subjectivity in multicultural contexts.

> Here he was, on his way home, without name or knowledge of the American president, without the name of the river on whose bank he had lingered, without even hearing about any of the tourist sights – no statue of Liberty, Macy's Little Italy, Brooklyn bridge, Museum of Immigration; no bialy at Barney Greengrass, soupy dumpling at Jimmy's Shanghai, no gospel churches of Harlem tour."(*IL*, 286)

The diversification of dwelling in America as a migrant stirs Biju's feeling of nationalism since he has dreams for his own country that result from his sense of loss. The nostalgia he feels for his country urges him to go back. When Biju looks into the mirror at the airport, he starts questioning his hybridity, in a reflection of Desai's own conflicts and negotiations. In the novel, Biju is humiliated and alienated in America because of his skin color; however, he faces 'living in between different nations, feeling neither here nor there…as a process of identity crisis' (Farhana, 2014, 36). The perspective taken by Desai offers the possibility of escape from this conflict through the gradual awareness of self-assured constructions; in other words, the self-acquisition of Biju related to his national identity is reinforced by his threshold position while living in America. He identifies

himself with the past to sustain a coherent identity; at times this is essential to avoid being lost. In this respect he grasps hope through the turning point of going back to his authenticity as an Indian. In fact, the colonial individual seeks unity and completion since s/he needs peace and betterment in life. In this respect, the scene of Biju returning to India depicts an actualization from the conflicts he experiences in America. The scenery represents a human psyche. 'The five peaks of Kanchenjunga turned golden with the luminous light that made you feel, if briefly, that truth was apparent. All you needed to do was to reach out and pluck it" (*IL*, 324). The end is the scenery of self-actualization resulting from the oppositions that liminal identity creates and from the stimulus of transcending borders on the way to an accomplished self.

Set partly in India and partly in the USA, *The Inheritance of Loss* focuses on the quest for a stable identity and the struggle to avoid losing the ties to one's roots amongst the chaotic routes of a world in which location and self-assurance have undergone an important shift after the migrations from the former colonies. A grumpy retired Anglophile judge, Jemubhai; his granddaughter; his old and loyal cook; and his pet dog, Mutt are the major characters of Indian society in the novel who have to deal with identity change within a framework of liminal stances and border crossing. After the part which is set in the USA, it is clear that Biju struggles for his identity so as to sustain a life there as an immigrant, changing various jobs in America, and that he also has double displacement. This characteristic can be understood through the dialogue with Mr. Kakkar, while buying a ticket on Gulf-Air, 'you are making a big mistake. Still a world, my friend, where one side travels to be a servant and the other side travels to be treated like a king. You want your son to be on this side or that side?' (*IL*, 269). The dilemma between his authentic self and his dislocated self dominates Biju since he is always 'in constant change from influences of the present but in some respects always remains connected to…historical past' (Hall, 1990: 223). As an embodiment of an unexpected 'volcanic explosion' (*IL*, 188) against the 'relations of power' (Hetherington, 1997: 24), Biju acquires his self-position in his original location, India. Notably, he creates a new self in the process of transformation within the lands of collisions, conflicts and oppositions, as well as differences.

As the core point of this study, the border-crossing experience and the liminal configuration of identities related to this experience enable the shifts in identity-making

in a foreign land to generate different opportunities to sustain a well-designed subjectivity. Physical and psychological boundaries create various levels of identity formation for the diasporic Biju. He is a figure crafted by his sense of humiliation and alienation in America since Desai wishes to bring up her character as a mature being that becomes aware of his own feelings for his homeland, India. His American dream when leaving India is to live in good conditions. Yet, his escape from India is also his imprisonment in America, with his struggle for a new identity in a hostile environment. In brief, Desai depicts the transformation from 'absence' to 'presence' in migrant experience, illustrated by 'the gate swung open…truth was apparent' (*IL*, 324). The ever-shifting process of identity change highlights the 'glimpse of hope' (*IL*, 324) as a result of 'the conversion of pain to gain' (Farhana, 36). Moreover, Biju is the figure crafted by Desai for the illustration of the individual 'scattered and regrouped into new points of becoming' (Braziel and Mannur, 2003: 3), since he strives to attain a new consciousness resulting from in-betweenness. For Anzaldúa, the liminal is not only full of promise but also of pain. She also emphasizes that 'the new mestiza copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity' (Anzaldúa, 1999: 101). Anzaldúa elaborates the importance of resistance and a 'counter stance [that] refutes the dominant culture's views and beliefs ... a step toward liberation from cultural domination. Yet, for her, 'it is not a way of life' (Anzaldúa, 1999: 100). As observed here, the self between the binaries and dualities of the current circumstances needs to be free to arrive at a new consciousness. In this sense, to see the newness in identity, Biju has to negotiate the differences and contradictions along his way. Thus, in the end, he changes his identity from pain in America to gain in India by adopting a new sign of hope.

4.3. JEMUBHAI AND HIS MARGINALITY

The negotiation of identity generates newly-viewed selves that challenge the Eurocentric discourse to survive in this newly-structured liminal space for a 'dramatic and contingent of meaning' (*IL*, 177). Being caught between the two different worlds, the hybrid subject is perpetually busy with new structures in order to adapt itself to new contexts. In other words, the two worlds (local and global) are the active forces shaping the interactive spaces. In this sense, in *The Inheritance of Loss*, Kiran Desai crafts her characters as individuals negotiating their identities both globally and locally. One of the

main characters who negotiates his identity as a result of his displacement and loss, is Jemubhai Propatlal Patel. In brief, Jemu leaves India in 1939 to get a higher education and to study law in Cambridge, England. As an Indian, he becomes strange to others and ultimately to himself. He finds his skin different and his accent awful. Thus, he begins to ignore his own original identity. In fact, the liminal stance between two worlds make him hate everything. The release of his Indian identity is obvious:

> The cabinmate's nose twitched at Jemu's lump of pickle wrapped in a bundle of *puris*; onions, green chilies, and salt in a twist of newspaper; a banana that in the course of the journey had been slain by heat.... Jemu picked up the package, fled to the deck and threw it overboard.... The smell of dying bananas retreated, oh, but now that just left the stink of fear and loneliness perfectly exposed. (*IL*,37-8)

After his graduation from Cambridge, Jemubhai returns to India. He becomes a judge in the district of Utter Prades and eventually in the city of Kalimpong. However, his retirement leads him to a lonely life in Kalimpong. Throughout his life, he has gradually tried to learn how to be a human and to assume an identity in the midst of foreignness. The confrontation of two cultures (English and Indian) becomes a liminal positioning due to his own hybridized cultural location. His two marginal positions need to be redefined with the emergence of third space.

Desai's novel aims at 'highlighting how the simultaneous experience of the colonial, global and the local, creates 'ambivalence' in the individual's perception of his/her identity and impacts behavior in the local institutions of Kalimpong' (Jayaraman,2011: 58). In this sense, Jemubhai is a character who neither assimilates himself into original culture, nor wholly belongs to England. Actually, he is a character entrapped between his past and present experiences in India and England since he draws a pathway from the centre to the periphery as a displaced subject. The contradictions created by displacement demonstrate that the in-between self needs to be free of both marginal ways. Before his departure to Cambridge, the scene with his mother in fact focuses on the need to move:

> With his sweater that she had knit in a pattern fanciful enough to express the extravagance of her affection; with his new Oxford English Dictionary and his decorated coconut to be tossed as an offering into the waves, so his journey might be blessed by the Gods. (*IL*, 36)

This scene refers to leaving territorial limits created by geographical boundaries to set out on a journey for self-destinations in different spaces. In this sense, Jemubhai 'rendered his world trivial, indicated through each window evidence of emptiness that stood eager to claim an unguarded heart. He felt a piercing fear, not for his future, but for his past' (*IL*, 36).

Furthermore, the ambiguous stance between past and present is another illustration of liminality causing a change in his identity. The doubleness that Jemubhai feels creates potential new identity positions between two worlds. Here, he actually acts as a 'border voice' that tries to construct an identity by manifesting the self between past and present embodied with 'a strong sense of place' (Manzanas, 2007: 68). Notably, the partial readiness of Jemubhai to complete his self-actualization between boundaries here supports the notion that the ambiguity of liminality enables new opportunities to set a life. In other words, deterritorialization from the motherland is catalyzed by the desire to form a complete self, to bind himself to new narratives of identity through re-territorialization into a new space. We actually see the self-journey of Jemubhai, who wants to find a space between his past and present. At the end of the novel, one true thing Jemubhai learned: a human can be transformed into anything. It was possible to forget and sometimes essential to do so. And, he fully comprehends that it is essential to 'grasp the future with everything' (*IL*, 308). Understanding the new narratives of the future related to self-assertion and moving on from a confused sense of self, the judge Jemubhai builds a space to retain a life in Kalimpong.

Desai generates her characters in *The Inheritance of Loss* by pushing them into 'a questionable or mistaken identity…always in quest to overcome the feeling of vacuum which is resulting from diasporic dislocation' (Jindal, 2018: 128). 'A feeling of vacuum' can be regarded as a threshold position of the postcolonial subject, interwoven with 'loss'. However, the multicultural context of the novel completes itself with a glimpse of hope, despite the traumatic effects of loss. Undoubtedly, the dislocated subjects long for an identity with a multicultural definition. In other words, on the voyage for a self, the feeling

of vacuum that results from the loss of a fixed identity gradually vanishes through a glimpse of hope on the way to self-actualization. In this sense, the intention of Desai in the novel is to explore the diasporic displacement of the self since she wishes to portray the pathway of the self on the margins, self-transcending beyond borders.

In this sense, it is obvious that *The Inheritance of Loss* thoroughly captures the world of the people who are on the move. The marginalization of Jemubhai in his identity construct, the cook Panna Lal, and his son Biju all represent liminal processes in identity construction. They try to find their own voices both against the first world dominants and masters and by interrogating their own selves, 'How are they to know that I am innocent? Most of the time it is the servant that steals' (*IL*, 19). The subjectivity of Biju and his father that is entrapped between the third world and the first world creates an atmosphere that turns presence into absence or absence into presence. Their hybridity also refers to 'ambivalent places of the other which is at the same time included' (Lefébvre, 1991: 138).

Okuroglu Ozun in her article, *Subjectivity and Spaces of Interaction*, discusses this notion of self-actualization through transformative acts related to the power of knowledge, culture, or social utterances in the life of a hybrid individual, and claims that as individuals caught between the past and present connections 'try to handle the present situations and make sense of the past, they constantly deconstruct and reconstruct the past times and spaces in the present' (Okuroglu Ozun, 2015: 191).

Therefore, Desai uses the sense of belongingness and the idea of national identity while trying to subvert the binarism that liminal participation in the cultures that the subjectification and cross-cultural focus of border crossing decipher. In this sense, it can be asserted that Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* fits well within the parameters of the search for a unified self. In a similar vein, the role of liminality manifests itself in the representation of the characters in sections of the novel in a deeper way. Jemubhai is a key figure in such representations, as a man who straddles two ways of life. Moreover, he is aware of this; he experiences this dilemma:

> A man of dignity. This accidental poise became more important than any other thing. He envied the English. He loathed Indians. He worked at being English with the passion of hatred and for what he would become, he would be despised by absolutely everyone, English and Indians, both.' (*IL*, 119)

As quoted here, in this portrayal by Desai, the judge makes a judgment on the inner battle that occurs in his liminal stance between past and present, where he is neither here nor there. His life unfolds in the in-between circumstances that accompany changes of place, state or age. Gennep argues that this state of change is also related to liminal changes that occur throughout the phases of life. In this sense, he declares:

> Life itself means to separate and to be reunited, to change form and condition, to die or to be reborn. And there are always new thresholds to cross: the thresholds of summer and winter, of a season and a year, of a month and a night: the thresholds of birth, adolescence, maturity, and old age; the threshold of death and that of the after-life for those who believe in it. (Gennep, 1960:189-90)

The in-betweenness of a hybrid subject evokes a feeling of vacuum that permeates the self and leads into various questionings; at the same time, however, it evokes the different routes towards or innovative gates into possible self-actualization. This scenery of identification throws light on the realms of creativity of the new self. Notably, Rushdie emphasizes this way of thinking as follows:

> ..if we do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge-which gives rise to profound uncertainties- that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create fictions not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indians of the mind. (Rushdie, 1991:10)

'Thus, Jemubhai's mind had begun to warp; he grew stranger to himself than he was to those around him, found his own skin odd-colored, his own accent peculiar. He forgot how to laugh, could barely manage to lift his lips in a smile' (*IL*, 40). His slightly curved existence is gradually felt in the lines of his life since he has dialogical encounters with the outside and inside that struggle with each other. In this sense, it can be noted that Jemubhai is in 'a zone of ongoing…interventions, and mediations' (Bhabha, 1994: 37). The contradictions and ambiguities continue in Jemubhai's perpetual struggle to become a peaceful man. 'And always there would have to be something sweet and something salty' (*IL*, 323). Actually, a life between the sweet and salty tastes of the in-between Jemubhai in the novel represents his journey of resolve.

4.4. SAI AND GYAN AS HYBRID DIASPORIANS

The liminal figures of *The Inheritance of Loss* experience the ever-shifting dimensions of identity construction to acquire a new self. To arrive at this coherent self, they negotiate, they question and they deconstruct every ambiguity they encounter. Beside Biju and Jemubhai as in-between characters, we are introduced to Sai and Gyan. Sai is the granddaughter of Jemubhai, adopted after her parents' death; and Gyan is Sai's math tutor, with whom she is in love. Furthermore, Gyan is the descendant of a Nepalese Gorkha mercenary. As their love affair progresses, there emerges changes due to the rebellion of the liberates. Actually, Gyan is on the verge of deciding where he belongs. He tries to find true love between his love for a woman and his passion for the freedom movement in India. Eventually, he decides to humiliate Sai's love and her superiority as a resident of a wealthy house. The betwixt position of Sai, between her knowledge of Western life and her original context in India is apparent. On the other hand, Gyan's in-betweenness derives from his position as both an Indian and a lover of the West, as well as from his love for Sai set against his passion for National acts of rebellion in India. Broadly speaking, the liminal stances of the characters clearly stem from the hybridity they represent as 'Indian-Nepalese, fed up with being treated like minority in a place where they were the majority' (*IL*, 9). As quoted here, the two-fold culture and the double-edged circumstance of nationality activate the unstable nature of identity formation through the rebellion.

The attempts of in-between individuals to self-define in hybrid locations enable the process of resituating themselves in new spaces. It can be claimed that the depiction of characters who display such partialness encapsulates the threshold subjectivity and temporal identifications of those caught between East and West, between homeland and host land. All these experiences highlight one thing: liminal stance is an essential phase in the quest to sustain a meaningful and self-assured life, especially for individuals stuck between two worlds. In addition to the essential existence of change in the life, there is also a need for differences along the route to ultimately achieving a coherent identity. *The Inheritance of Loss* displays the threshold area between the self and the other, with its figuration of Biju in America both as dreamer and as a subaltern, the portrayal of Jemubhai as a fan of Englishness and as a man nostalgic for his past in India, with Sai as

a follower of Western traditions and her origins in India, and finally with Gyan as a man stuck between the engulfing circumstances of India and idealized conditions of the West. Gyan says:

> 'let's go to Australia.' Fly away, bye-bye, ta-ta. Free from history. Free from family demands and the built-up debt of centuries…it was surely just frustration---we will defend our own homeland. This is where we were born, where our parents were born, where our grandparents were born. (*IL*, 157-159)

The dilemma that envelops the sense of self, as enacted by Gyan, enables change in the construction of identity. In this respect, Gyan is represented simultaneously as the defender of history and as a figure fleeing the past. He eventually chooses to be in India as the solution for his conflicts. Engaging in a conversation with Sai and her demands to enter into Western culture, for example by celebrating Christmas, Gyan draws a line between the West and the East in order to sustain his own identity against her eagerness for the Western way of life. He says, 'you're like slaves that's what you are, running after the West, embarrassing yourself. It's because of people like you we never get anywhere' (*IL*, 163). He actually creates a personal space for himself by sustaining the differences since these differences between the West and East deconstruct or reconstruct borders. In short, Gyan's self-positioning between the conflicting circumstances offers 'a space where the discriminated subject questions the images and presences…' (Bhabha, 1994: 174) The threshold framework of the self-positioning of a colonial subject offers ever-changing interactions in the construction of the multi-layered juxtapositions of these identity positions. As Avtar Brah puts it, border crossers are the prisoners of 'harboring spaces in the past, present and future' (Brah, 1996: 190). In these spaces, the colonial self tries to deconstruct the binaries to find the real self on the basis of recognition of the differences among the multiple identities. Mark Bevir emphasizes that 'there must be at least an undecided space in front of these structures where individuals decide what beliefs to hold and what actions to perform' (Bevir, 2003: 69). The liminality of diasporians provides such spaces of interaction.

Desai denotes the liminal stance of the individuals in order to give birth to new dimensions for identity formation through the on-going conflicts and negotiations between differences, two-way roads or multiple circumstances. Crucially, interstitial

spaces and betwixt subjects need a transition from the known to the unknown. In this sense, the multicultural contexts that Desai renders in the novel reveal that the provision of a space of interaction, reinvention, questioning, modification and change is essential in identity formation. Sai and Gyan are the representatives of 'live in the conditional' (noted by Turner), and seek a space of integration. They are between the West and the East and their spaces of in-betweenness suggest a base for reshaping a life.

> Gyan: Why do you celebrate Christmas? You're Hindus and you don't celebrate Id or Guru Nanak's birthday or Tibetan New Year.
> Sai: If I want to celebrate Christmas, I will …Nothing wrong in a bit of fun and Christmas is an Indian holiday as much as any other.'…. (*IL*, 163)

Thus, despite being a Hindu, Sai confronts Gyan over the issue of Christmas. As Turner states, liminal figures are 'to be fashioned anew and endowed with additional powers to enable them to cope with their new station in life' (Said, 1994: 141). It is obvious that Sai and Gyan have different discourses related to cultural belonging that trigger the process of finding a self with 'tradition, with wonders and horrors of new cultures with growing aspirations hopes and desires' (Pushpa, 2015: 485). Gyan's specific attitude towards the Westernized outlook of Sai illustrates that 'his inability of proving his own identity in society makes him to hatred towards all other cultures' (Pushpa, 2015: 486). As a matter of fact, Desai tries to create a world of identities imbued with exile and cultural encounters. The readers witness their struggle to attain subjectivity and their transformation within the amorphousness of double-edged circumstances.

Gyan's in-betweenness is evident within the inner conflicts and questioning: 'I suddenly became clear why he had no money and no real job has come his way, why he could not fly to college in America, why he was ashamed to let anyone see his home' (*IL*, 160). He gradually becomes aware of his reality since he is the descendant of a Gorkha mercenary. He should have been the part of this rebellion in Kalimpong. In this respect, he resolves 'all the different pretenses he had indulged in, the shames he had suffered, the future that wouldn't accept him---all these things joined together to form a single truth' (*IL*, 160). The conflict in his betwixt manners provokes the awakening in his identity formation.

> It was a masculine atmosphere and Gyan felt a moment of shame remembering his tea parties with Sai on the veranda, the cheese toast, queen cakes from the baker, and even worse, the small warm space they inhabited together, the nursery talk---It suddenly seemed against the requirements of his adulthood. He voiced an adamant opinion that the Gorkha movement take the harshest route possible. (*IL*, 161)

As observed in this quotation, Gyan's liminal stance between his love for Sai and her interest in the Western way of life concludes with his participation in the Gorkha movement. Thus, the conflict that Gyan experiences between cultural context and personal interest ends in self-definition through his place in the movement, in a third space that is the result of negotiating two different worlds. Hence, 'Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* is replete with problems of human identity and its frustrations, associated with postcolonial impact and its aftermath. In the age of globalization, when the world is striving to work together hand in hand, there wander souls deprived of their labor and loyalty and suffering in the land where they had served and worked throughout their lives' (Sanasam, 2009: 109).

In this sense, Desai 'creates a rich tapestry of characters that live with questions of identity,' as she 'portrays the lives of Indians who were engaged in struggles to make their lives secure' (Pushpa, 2015: 486). The active identity formation or change throughout the novel is depicted through cultural collisions, crisscross dialogues, and the 'multiply-positioned subject' (Clifford, 1994: 319). The work of recarving a path through this ruin is embodied in the characters in betwixt situations who finally understand the necessity of 'rebuilding things stone by stone, putting it all together again.' (*IL*, 315) As Sai's mind engages with the people around at the end of the novel, she 'thought of her father and space program. She thought of all the *National Geographics* and books she had read. Of the judge's journey, of the cook's journey, of Biju's. Of the globe twirling on its axis. And she felt a glimmer of strength. Of resolve. She must leave' (*IL*, 323). The story ends having represented these self-actualizations reached through identity-making amidst multiply-based limitations. Desai's work sheds light on the liminal stance of the characters as being 'an ongoing process of narrating the self in-between worlds' (Johannessen, 2008: 115). Consequently, *The Inheritance of Loss* is a narrative that gradually re-gathers the old and new, where 'the liminal condition' of the characters 'becomes a point of departure for change' (Johannessen, 2008: 115). In other words,

Desai succeeds in unveiling the ways in which diasporic in-betweenness and cultural conflicts in the process of identity construction contribute to self-actualization and to newness in life.

CHAPTER V

RE-CLAIMING THE SELF IN A MULTICULTURAL CONTEXT: *NERVOUS CONDITIONS*

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The deconstructive mode of the transformation within the cross-roads is a need to open up new spaces for alternative selves. To create alternatives for the subject formation is wholly constructed on the full dimensions of the interrogation of self-articulations since 'the search for new opportunities' (Boehmer, 2005: 226) is only possible through liminal spaces between two worlds. With the industrial revolution in Western world, the colonizers preferred South Africa due to climate, large gold and diamond deposits, and agricultural lands. South Africa was seen as a land where the colonizers acquired raw materials. In this sense, they gradually pushed the blacks into the infertile lands.

> There was widespread imposition of legal discrimination over virtually every aspect of African life. Obnoxious laws were created to keep Africans in check. Some of these laws include Bantu Laws Amendment Act, under which no Africa can claim the right to live or work in the designated "white area" not even if he/she was born there or had lived all or most of his/her life in that place. The Population Registration act was a rigid system of race classification, which enabled every person to be put into a separate, water-tight compartment. (Worugji and Simon, 2018:60)

The restricted lives of Africans obviously point out their insecurity and marginalization. Actually, these in-between and ambivalent manners of Africans were constructed by the extension of Europe. Due to European power on African lands, they prevented Africans to gain economical profits. 'In Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), colonial rule was first established by the British South African company of Cecil Rhodes. The white settlers in Zimbabwe brought with them the racist attitudes of the South. They were attracted to Zimbabwe by mining prospects as well as the abundant farm lands for planting crops, especially maize and for pasture.' (Worugji and Simon, 2018:61) The people in this area always searched for a chance to define their selves, they tried to identify their current positions with the

rule of the whites. Therefore, this atmosphere made Africans enslaved and alienated in their own lands. Due to this fact, they left their native land to find peace in foreign countries.

Apparently, the liminal space the migration creates is 'the opening up our minds and self-perceptions towards a new transnational world which is a new society characterized by mass migrations where hybrid and transnational identities are emerging.' (Pultz Mosland, 2010: 19) Thus, this part of the study aims to map the diasporic in-betweennesses and ambivalent stances of the characters in a multicultural context. Written in 1988, Tsitsi Dangarembga's novel *Nervous Conditions* presents an African female who struggles for her own identity in order to be free from the in-between manners of the colonial practices and patriarchal norms. Concentrating on the liminal circumstances of the female protagonist Tambudzai, or Tambu in both sides (colonial and patriarchal), Dangarembga reflects self-actualization of especially the female characters in a relation to gender border in a multicultural dimension. Shortly, this part is wholly concentrated on the in-betweenness in a relation to the newness in identity construction. This in-betweenness is built by patriarchy and the colonization of England in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe through *Nervous Conditions*. The point we stress is that *Nervous Conditions* discusses the changing roles of Zimbabwean females, the protagonist Tambudzai, other female characters Nyasha (Tambu's cousin), Maiguru (Tambu's aunt, Babamukuru's wife), Lucia (Tambu's aunt) and Ma'Shingayi(Tambu's mother) as well as the male characters, Babamukuru (Tambu's uncle), and Jeremiah, (Tambu's father) Nhamo (Tambu's brother). To display these characters in a postcolonial way, Dangarembga actually crafts the colonialism and patriarchy for the female figures to comprehend the identities by means of the contradictions, dualities and liminal circumstances in order to reach self-worth.

Nervous Conditions was found in the first years too feminist, her writings were rejected by three publishers in Zimbabwe, so she sent her work to Women's Press, she was again rejected for not being educational. She points out 'part of my problem getting published in my own country was certainly commercial. Fiction, no matter by whom, hasn't a wide market in Zimbabwe; textbooks do.' (Katrak, 2006: xxv)

Yet, when Dangarembga wrote her debut novel, there weren't novels by Black Zimbabwean women in English until 1988. Her novel was published by College Press in Harare getting a great international success. She puts an emphasis on the existence as well as identification of the women in Zimbabwe by stating that 'the writers in Zimbabwe were basically men at the time…and so I really didn't see that the situation would be remedied unless some woman sat down and wrote something, so that's what I did!' (Wilkinson, 1990: 196)

Accordingly, Dangarembga wrote *Nervous Conditions* in order to illustrate the spaces of the female characters who are on the threshold amongst both the colonized society and the patriarchal community in Rhodesia, now called Zimbabwe. Through colonial practices, she renders the natives under influences of the colonization, therefore, she quoted the name of her novel borrowing the famous reference written by Jean-Paul Sartre for Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* in the preface, 'the condition of natives in a colonized society is a nervous condition introduced and maintained by the settler among colonized people with their consent'. (Fanon, 1961:17) In this respect, the conditions of the native people demonstrate their conditions among the demolishing existence of the colonized system are nerve-wracking for their current life. The oppression the colonizer has on the colonized makes the lives of these people a bit nervous. In fact, the colonized tries to define their spaces in colonizing world. In this questioning, they have ambiguities or conflicts in relation to their self-expression, self-definition and self-discovery. That is why, this ambivalent stance of the colonizer illustrates the nervous conditions of the colonized subjects. Hence, Dangarembga's work is a source of inspiration for a lot of notions and ideas in stressing the liminal or nervous condition of the postcolonial subject. Apparently, she pens for the migrant subjects and makes them speak by questioning their identities along the path to assured identities. She crafts the translation and dispersal of the nervous people in Zimbabwe and has them find their ways in a migrated society where they are constantly subject to change. In doing so, she targets to display the individuals from all the aspects of life since she portrays especially the females both in the scattered part of the colonialism and the harshness of the male-dominated society.

As a matter of fact, Dangarembga subtly focuses on the colonialism and feminism in her novel. She tries to reflect her own experiences through the stories of her characters. She also puts an emphasis on the roles of the women and their life styles by framing the attitudes of the men towards them, especially her style obviously consists of gender border. Drawing upon the enunciation of the notion of gender border, she actually points out that the females in this novel represents both 'the repeated emptying of meaning' (Landry and Maclean eds., 1996: 241) and 'waking processes of meaning making' (Schwenger, 2012: xii). In this respect, she focuses upon the oppressions of the women caused both by the colonial experiences and the patriarchal society. Dangarembga's writing is based on social, political and economic forces in a relation to man-constructed circumstances and colonial conditions. In this sense, she displays colonial and patriarchal structures of limitations in human lives by focusing on the identity formations. Accordingly, she states in an interview:

> I suppose being female you really can't get away from it. It's what you wear…your whole image is so important, so one way or another it's going to be a theme, I think. And also, being black is another thing, you know? Your body becomes a big theme. (Lee, 2006: 138)

She points out that women are the subaltern subjects in the man-dominated society; additionally, they are inferior within their colors in a colonial society. In doing so, Dangarembga asserts that women are doubly suppressed. This double portrayal of women is a way to the ambivalence. This shows how female subjects are split between by two roles. While they are the members of the patriarchal society as subaltern ones, they are the agencies of the colonial system. Thus, the subaltern subjects in colonialism is always liminal and always on the move between being a female and being a colonized. From the aspect of ambiguity of the subjects, this situation makes her own way to reflect the conditions of the females. Correspondingly, she adopts this way of writing, 'if no one states the conditions of the people who suffer from some sort of oppressive attitudes, no one can know that there are people in some parts of the world going through the same experience.' (Kara, 2014: 12)

As an African female and an African writer, she mentions about an event in Germany; she focuses on the psychological border of Western mentality creates during her interview with Christopher Joon-Hai Lee. She utters:

> In Germany there are 'writers' and there are 'African writers.' And I was never invited to a literary event, except maybe the Frankfurt Book Fair-but then only as an 'African writer.'…Well, I have a problem with segregation. I mean, if I am an African person at a meeting of writers are supposed to go to their own special 'African events,' I have a problem. And that's how it was in Germany. (Lee, 2006: 148-9)

As the above quotation obviously suggests, colonialism displays the subaltern subjects as the 'other', so, these subjects are exposed to the border that is drawn by Western thought. The words and the definitions related to the third world community members, especially the women are embodied by the consequences of the processes of colonization, dislocation and the postcolonial period through the components of cultural, hybrid, social, traditional identities as well.

Likewise, *Nervous Conditions* is a narrative in which the border between the male and female as well as the border between the colonized and colonizer is constructed. In the novel, Damgarembga draws attention to women experiences through contradictions, ambiguities and in-betweennesses caused by the interactions of African patriarchal culture and Western influences. Generally, the novel focuses on the identities of the characters amongst these physical and psychological borders. These characters are positioned on the verge of negotiation since they are labeled as hybrid subjects as 'celebrated and privileged as a kind of superior cultural intelligence owing to the advantage of in-betweenness, the straddling of two cultures and the consequent ability to negotiate the difference'. (Hoogvelt, 1997: 158) As a matter of fact, we are introduced with a female, Tambudzai, shortly Tambu. She is both the protagonist and the narrator of the novel who is an African living in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. She is the figure between the colonial powers and the patriarchal community. Furthermore, Dangarembga crafts this female character struggling in order to attain a newness in her life, actually she wishes to construct an identity in the midst of these circumstances. She tries to 'find her independence in the midst of turmoil and exterior forces that seek to keep her submissive under their dominance.' (Rodgers, 2013: 4) Tam is a good explanation to display the adaptation of the newness through her self-actualization within her journey. The only character evolving new identity in the novel is not Tam, there are also other characters, her cousin Nyasha, Babamukuru's wife; Maiguru and her mother; Ma'Shingayi. Additionally, apart from the female characters, Dangarembga also renders male

characters who are entitled with ‘exceeding obstacles before their improvements and ontological stances in a colonially modelled society.’ (Kara, 2014: 74)

Nervous Conditions is relatively a story of an African woman with ‘additional obstacles to overcome on her journey toward personal independence and self-reliance.’ (Kirschen, 2013: 155) As Gloria Anzaldúa underlines, the potentialities related to the identities through transformations offer ‘at some point on our way to a new consciousness, we will have to leave the opposite bank, the split between the two mortal combatants somehow healed so that we are on both shores at once, and at once, see through serpent and eagle eyes.’ (Anzaldúa, 1999: 100-1) The novel as a whole entails different characters who have opposites and split nature between two circumstances, in a way, it ‘celebrates a process of becoming with its promise of limitless possibilities.’ (Jacobson et all, 2018: 7) The ever-changing circumstances, transitional moves and in-between manners of the characters in the novel are tools to introduce the newness created as a result of the ambiguities and ambivalences. Therefore, it can be noted that the characters perpetually on the move, they are the portraits of ‘liminal ‘zone(s) of indeterminacy’ (Cobb, 2013: 27)

5.2. TAMBUDZAI AS A MULTICULTURAL SELF

Every change of space, social milieu and cultural circumstance is a transition. This transition begins with the possibility to have an end. This end is always completed. Through this transition, a subject is engaged with conflict, ambivalence, ambiguities and shifts; therefore, this situation demonstrates that there is a need to express ourselves in life and to do this, we have to experience a transition, a middle passage or a doorway act. In this respect, this transition is called as liminality or threshold or in betweenness. Liminality produces marginal individuals who are on the place of ambiguity or ambivalence. They interrogate themselves to get answers related to the sense of identity. Accordingly, this perpetual questioning is essential to obtain an end of creativity, renewal or fresh start. ‘A contingent, borderline experience opens up *in-between* colonizer and colonized. This is a space of cultural and interpretive undecidability produced in the ‘present’ of the colonial moment.’ (Bhabha, 1994: 206) The temporal peculiarity of the border reveals that liminality occurs as a site of ambiguity. Actually, the ambivalent nature of the subject through identity formation clarifies that the liminal self ‘fixes the

colonial subject as a 'partial' presence. By 'partial' we mean both 'incomplete' and 'virtual' (Bhabha, 1994: 86) This peculiarity creates a transformation into self-actualization since the 'partial' self seeks for the complete and experiences all the liminal situations through this path.

In the novel, Tambu who lives in a village, stays at home while her brother gets the opportunity to be educated thanks to his gender. Babamukuru, Tambu's uncle, who gets education in London decides to help his brother, Jeremiah's children to get an education. Nhamo, Tambu's elder brother, has a privilege to be educated and to move into her uncle's home and have a luxurious life in London. Tambu witnesses his privacy and she is confined to the domesticity in her village. In her village, there is a general belief which notes that the women just contribute their homes and husbands' families. Only men have an education. Yet, their plans for Nhamo is upside down since he died of meningitis. And the family has no another male child; that's why, the opportunity to be educated is given to Tambu and also to go to uncle's house and to missionary school.

Tambudzai, the protagonist of *Nervous Conditions*, is representative of significant changes in life by producing transformation in the end. By means of transformation, she has thresholds experiencing betwixt situations that will determine her values. In this respect, she experiences a process of negotiating the differences and conflicts that all offer a coherent identity; therefore, she 'seeks to create new identifications through messy, anxious and potentially antagonistic relations.' (Byrne, 2009: 136) Tam's self-knowledge and 'determination is what enable her to escape from the throttling patriarchal sexism and catapults her into a different world where she achieves her liberation.' (Moyana, 1994: 31) In a way, Tam is the narrator of the story and she reveals this story as she calls 'my escape'. (*NC*, 1) As a matter of fact, she is on the move both physically and psychologically.

Initially, Tam tells the situations of the women especially focusing on her dialogues and positions she has with her surroundings. She asserts 'the needs and sensibilities of the women in my family were not considered a priority, or even legitimate. That was why I was in Standard Three in the year that Nhamo died, instead of in Standard Five, as I should have been by that age.' (*NC*, 12) She only gets the promotion by the death of his brother, Nhamo since in the family, the right to have an education belongs to the men. This matter makes her question the system and that leads us to her changing

nature. She renders the gender border that is drawn in the patriarchal society and she interrogates her agency with the existing order and social structures to arrive at self-worth. She tries to create a new understanding after a dialogue with her mother. 'My mother said being a woman was a burden because you had to bear children and look after them and the husband. But I did not think this was true.' (*NC*, 16)

The conditions of the women in Rhodesia cause Tam to question the spaces in order to create a new existence on her own since she experiences a liminal space between two worlds (women and men) as the 'third space of enunciation' to have a potential space for a possible identification. Third space of enunciation 'makes the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process, destroys …mirror of representation in which cultural knowledge is customarily as an integrated, open, expanding code.' (Bhabha, 1994: 37) After her brother's death, she gets an opportunity to have an education in England in Babamukuru's (her uncle). The scene of her leaving hometown is a good way to demonstrate her liminal space indeed which has an 'open, expanding code' (Bhabha, 37) She narrates

> That was the person I was leaving behind. At Babamukuru's I expected to find another self, a clean, well-groomed, genteel self who could not have been bred, could not have survived, on the homestead. At Babamukuru's I would have the leisure, be encouraged to consider questions that had to with survival of the spirit, the creation of consciousness, rather than mere sustenance of the body. (*NC*, 58-9)

It can be easily noted here that Tam's identity is shaped by the entrance into Babamukuru's car. Tambu is surrounded with the emergence of newness and she defines her newness in her identity construction. 'This new me would not be enervated by smoky kitchens that left eyes smarting and chests permanently bronchitic. This new me would not be frustrated by wood fires.' (*NC*, 59) Tambu has a tendencey to get rid of her doubleness in her homeland occupying a space between a colonized society and men-dominated community. In this sense, the reference to the image of the 'door' of Babamukuru's house as a liminal space between past and present, or old and new reveals that Tam's way to England characterizes a search for identity. As Wilson Neate explains 'an ambiguous, liminal identity at the point of intersection of differences offers a context for renewed articulations of self and community.' (Neate, 1998: 170)

In conjunction with this, Bhabha considers 'in-betweenness' of a subject whose 'identity is never an a priori, nor finished product; it is only ever be problematic process of access to an image of totality.' (Bhabha, 1997: 51) The identity is beyond completeness since the liminal self produces ambiguities or ambivalences in the midst of multiple circumstances in social life. In this respect, Tam's 'new me' excludes the liminal Tam between in Rhodesia and in England since her borderline describes the life to be recognized.

It is obvious that Tam's resistance to patriarchal society in her family begins by growing her own mealies, then sells them to get school fee. She achieves to attend the school, yet she is not successful in enrolling mission school, a European-based school headed by Tam's uncle Babamukuru since her brother is alive. When her brother is dead, she gets the chance to attend a mission school. In this respect, it is highly necessary to note that the death of her brother is a liminal space in Tam's life because the death is a transition for her to attain better conditions. The death of her brother is a sudden shift in Tam's individualization process, in fact, this change offers to 'shake the routine'. (Thomassen, 2009: 19) The opportunity to have an education for Tam is a significant change in her life since she transforms who she is now. The girl who experiences the old self in patriarchal society in Rhodesia is an ending. The death is a transitional phase for her, is such a physiological breakdown or a threshold. Likewise, the shift or the transitional period in her life creates an opening for newness. She is free both physically and psychologically following her brother's death. As Victor Turner remarks, 'liminality is frequently likened to death, to being in the womb, to invisibility, to darkness, to bisexuality, to the wilderness and to an eclipse of the sun or moon.' (Turner, 1982: 95) Obviously, the ambiguous nature of liminality here emphasizes an initiation for the subject in life on the grounds that Tam gets the life on her own by the death.

Furthermore, Van Gennep stresses on the three phases of the life to define liminality: *separation, transition and incorporation.* In this respect, Tam's life is based on these three phases. Firstly, she leaves the hometown to get an education in England thanks to Babamukuru, her uncle. She experiences the separation. Before leaving, the dialogue between her uncle and father reveals the liminal space of Tam in Rhodesia and in England, in the future. 'Babamukuru again raised the question of the emancipation of my father's branch of the family. 'It is unfortunate…that there is no male child to take

this duty, to take this job of raising the family from hunger and need, Jeremiah.' (*NC*, 56) The conversation about Tam goes on 'It is as you say…Tambudzai's sharpness with her books is no use because in the end it will benefit strangers.' (*NC*, 56) Jeremiah, Tam's father focuses on her status in patriarchal community by stating her vain endeavor to have an education since in the end, the educated female subject will belong to males again. Afterwards, she has a transition by the sentences of Babamukuru; she 'must be given the opportunity to do what she can do for the family before she goes into her husband's home.' (*NC*, 56) Then, her father agrees 'Exactly…she must be given the opportunity.' (*NC*, 56) Tam's transition begins with the dialogue here since she experiences ambivalence of the gender-based community in Rhodesia. She will get the opportunity; however, she is again seen as the 'lack of trying' (*NC*, 57) Her transition initiates 'I was triumphant. Babamukuru had approved of my direction. I was vindicated.' (NC, 57)

As the above quotes obviously suggest, Tam has an ambivalence in living to have an identity, in this sense, she chooses to be marginal in order to sustain an openness for a self. 'My emancipation…of my existence was, for the foreseeable future, temporary and not continuous, but that was not the point. The point was this: I was going to be developed, in the way Babamukuru saw fit, which in the language I understood at the time meant well.' (*NC*, 59) As Bell Hooks utters 'one confronts and accepts dispersal and fragmentation as part of the construction of a new world order that reveals more fully where we are, who we can become, an order that does not demand forgetting' (Hooks,2015: 227) Tam's self is torn between the traditional practices and radical openness for the better conditions. This ambiguity she has, points out 'to be in the margin is to be part of the whole.' (Hooks,2015: 229)

Thus, Tam tells 'the story of a struggle for self-assertation, its excitements, rages, passion, problems, irritations, defeats and conclude, sometimes triumphantly, sometimes with frustration, with ambivalence towards the worth of struggle.' (King, 2003, 58) through her experiences in Babamukuru's house where she stays for education. She utters;

> At Babamukuru's I would have a bookcase. My books would live in a bookcase. It would keep them clean. My clothes would be clean too, without fields and smoke and soot to mess them. Nor would keeping them clean entail a walk to the river, twenty minutes away, washing them on rocks, spreading them on boulders and waiting until they dried before I could go home again. I would be able to keep myself clean too, without too much trouble. (*NC*, 60-61)

Her changing world adds new stories to her life by staying away from the circumstances in her homeland. Actually, she has a journey in an ambiguously-charged house of her uncle where she confronts with the other forms of being and social structures. Her initiation in her new life within her sentences above clarifies this statement. Furthermore, she is on the move for the uncertain status by the significations of the ambivalent nature of liminal personality. In fact, she continues, 'I could not wait to enjoy these consequences of having acquired an education on Babamukuru's part, of being in the process of acquiring one in my case.' (*NC*, 61) She is continually thrown into question through her self-actualization. She is aware of the fact that she says 'I was only here because my brother had died.' (*NC*, 65) Dangarembga here stresses the ambivalence of Tam in defining her excitement for a space in her uncle's house and her fact of 'swamp of self-pity' (*NC*, 65) She actually struggles with herself to attain a newness in her nature since she is torn between her-self and her made-self. In other words, she wants to get rid of her identification with her brother's death, she wishes to become Tam. This ambiguity in her nature here aptly stresses that her existence constantly has a journey across the threshold between the repression of her native space and her current representation as a female being.

In fact, Tam's specified route by Babamukuru depending on her brother's death obviously reveals that she is torn by the cultural norms. In this respect, she experiences her gender border within the planned future by her uncle.

> Issues were well-defined for me at that time: these were the goals and this was how we would reach them. Babamukuru was my touchstone who showed me that this was true. So, I should have been content with preparing myself for the life I have described. (*NC*, 153)

As the above quotation obviously suggests, Tam's future is in the hands of the patriarchal figure, Babamukuru. Thus, the border of Tam as a female is clear. She is not allowed to interrogate and she always becomes respectful to the dominated figures. She struggles for her identity assurance by the way, she is aware of her weakness. This clarifies her ambiguity as a liminal character. Her weakness constructed by Babamukuru who 'thought she was the sort of young woman a daughter ought to be' (*NC*, 157) Furthermore, Babamukuru's desire to arrange a formal marriage according to the Christian belief, makes Tam ashamed and unwilling to attend. Through her gender-role identity, she is not allowed to object to this willing and she in a way stresses her own situation:

> (she) could not be angry with Babamukuru. Babamukuru who was her benefactor, her father for all practical purposes and who was also good, deserving of all love, respect and obedience. So, she banished the anger. (*NC*, 151)

Thereby, her journey across psychic and gender borders introduces ambivalent and in-between Tam. She wants to get angry and object, but, she does not manage to do. In this respect, it can be said that her thankfulness is burden for her with her reluctance and resistance against attending her parents' wedding. As a characteristic of a liminal figure, she negotiates perpetually between her multiple essences. She displays that "the interconnectedness of gender, sexuality, nationality and race for Tambu changes throughout the novel and the negotiation of these subjectivities…continues, as it should." (Selvick, 2013: 289) In actual fact, social milieu and moral considerations either help individuals to attain a self or suppress their identities to remain the same. Tambu struggles for this ambivalent positioning to access self-actualization and chooses her own path to enjoy freedom.

In other words, we are kept alert with the self-portrait of a female who is under multiple layered circumstances she experiences. As a result of this gender border between her community and her identity, she lives a dilemma. Giving a portrayal of her oppressed life, Damgarembga actually pens this pivotal character by portraying that 'the narrator, Tambu achieves voice through narration, an act that gives her liberation from her patriarchal-imposed silence and offers hope in the resilience and success of female challenge.' (Uwakweh, 1995: 77) As quoted here, Tam gets stronger and becomes herself within the scope of her rebellious and loud voice against the man-based upbringings to

assert a life through her education. By this way, she crosses her liminal stance and becomes new Tam. Broadly speaking, liminal circumstance of Tam between her thankfulness for her being educated thanks to her uncle and her gradual awakening amongst the patriarchal society makes her an in-between character.

Her ambivalent nature amongst the moral and social considerations that she has to endure. Her in-betweenness to attend her parents' wedding.

> I did not want to see them brought down like that and I certainly did not want to be part of it. So, I could not approve of the wedding. This I acknowledged with half of my mind, but in the other half the black square of sin reappeared and grew to an alarming size. I could not ignore it. I knew I had to come to a decision, take some sort of action, but I was not like Nyasha. (*NC*, 165)

The emergence of the wedding plan for her parents by her uncle produces ambivalence and contradictions in Tambu's natures. Her silence in negotiating her existence is perpetually continues, 'my role in the comedy had been confirmed and rehearsed, but I still did not want to take part.' (*NC*, 166) From the aspect of physiological border and liminal stance as a subject, Tambu tries to arrive at a consciousness of her borderlands. 'Do not take me at all (to the wedding). I do not want to be in your stupid wedding, I wanted to shout. Instead I said quietly and politely, 'Very well, Babamukuru. That will make things much easier for everybody.' (*NC*, 166)

Broadly speaking, feminine silence is questioned and tries to find a new self among the interruptions of cultural norms. To be a female is another liminality in this story told by Dangarembga indeed. She subtly characterizes the silent scream of Tambu against the males by unveiling an inner response to target her mind. 'Fluctuating moment' (Bhabha, 1994: 37) of Tambu actually displays the way of self-realization.

> There was definitely something wrong with me, otherwise I would have had something to say for myself. I knew I had not taken a stand on many issues since coming to the mission, but all along I had been thinking that it was because there had been no reason to, that when the time came, I would be able to do it. (*NC*, 166)

Tambu's corresponding to being an obedient African woman gradually shapes her deferential character. She answers the ambiguities of the circumstances in her life within the scope of her reality of education. To have the right to be educated by her uncle in a

missionary school in England represent a 'third space' in her construction of a coherent identity. Furthermore, she experiences two lives, one is surrounded within the cultural norms in Rhodesia and the other is structured with the potentiality to be lost in England as a colonial one. In this respect, it can be easily said that Tambu is crossing the threshold since she is eager to introduce with the newness of the third space that 'enables other positions to emerge.' (Rutherford, 1990: 211)

Continuing her education and 'doing well at it' (*NC*, 166) abolish the liminalities that comes out in her consciousness, 'I had thought ambiguities no longer existed…I had used to define my own position.' (*NC*, 166-67) The wedding ceremony is both a newness in the lives of the characters and taming the nerves of the conditions. Namely, the bitterness of her parents' wedding is a 'interchange between different states.' (Ashcroft et all. 2007: 117) She continues her newness in her identity construction after her refusal to got to the wedding as shortly mentioned before. To explain it thoroughly within the dialogues:

> I do everything I can for you, but you disobey me. You are not a good girl. You must be up and dressed, ready in half an hour…Babamukuru could not leave me alone. 'Tambudzai,' he returned to warn me, 'I am telling you! If you do not go to the wedding, you are saying you no longer want to live here. I am the head of this house'. There in my head, bout what ought to be done, the one half maniacally insisting on going, the other half equally manically refusing to consider it. (*NC*, 169)

In a way, the in-betweenness of Tambu explicitly draws the lines of potential newness in her nature and the negotiation of the ambivalence between her obedient Tambu and educated Tambu puts her into the inevitable, dynamic and perpetual motion of liminal persona. Human lives can be meaningful with transitory moments, and these moments are our in-between times. Such transitions determine our selves and our next steps to actualize our identities. The way Tambudzai chooses clearly shows that her liminal persona and ambiguities in her uncle's house mark her personality and triggers her sustain a coherent self.

On the other hand, Tambu represents a borderland identity since her space is '…a process of agency for the marginal through its inherent inclusivity rather than the automatic exclusion of the other.' (Elbert Decker and Winchcok eds., 2017: 4) For her

education, she leaves her native land behind and tries to comprehend the circumstances she experiences in a foreign land -. In England, as soon as she enters her uncle's home, we are introduced 'ferocious guardians of the gates to this kingdom, this kingdom that I should not have been entering. Their lust for my blood was justified: they knew I did not belong.' (*NC*, 66) In this sense, her steps into the 'kingdom' of her uncle puts her into the motion of crossing border. She, in a way, experiences a border consciousness. This is a potential scene for the reader for the rest of the novel indeed. She occupies the actual fact that points 'spaces at diasporic borders, and the probability of certain forms of consciousness emerging are subject to the play of political power and psychic investments in the maintenance or erosion of the status quo.' (Brah, 1996: 204)

In the course of the novel, Tambudzai is an obedient young African woman and does not interrogate the conditions and circumstances related to her own community. Her brother's, Nhamo's death, renders a space for a better life. Hence, her opportunity to get an education in England by Babamukuru is her second transition to another part of her life. Then, her entrance into uncle's house is the third motion to acquire a consciousness and to construct a new Tam. After that, her inner struggle and ambiguity in taking part in her parents' formal wedding. All these passages present border positionality and liminal personality touching on the fact of 'an experiential modality of subjectivity and identity.' (Brah, 1996:204)

In conclusion, new Tambu introduces herself after she occupies her space in Sacred Heart, her missionary school.

> Something in my mind began to assert itself, to question things and refuse to be brainwashed, bringing me to this time when I can set down this story. It was a long and painful process for me, that process of expansion. It was a process whose events stretched over many years and would fill another volume, but the story I have told here, is my own story, the story of four women whom I loved, and our men, this story is how it all began. (*NC*, 208)

As is observed above, Tambudzai becomes herself and becomes aware of herself. In short, the in-between space of Tambu is formed by her own cultural assumptions and her present occupations in England, so this binarism she experiences triggers her to construct a 'third space' for her own individuality. In a way, this binarism is structured by these two considerations. Her new sign of identity here points out that Tambu moves 'beyond' that

Bhabha clearly renders by arguing ‘beyond signifies spatial distance, marks progress, promises future, but our intimations of exceeding the barrier or boundary, the very act of going beyond- are unknowable, unpresentable, without a return to the ‘present’, which, in the process of repetition, becomes disjunct and displaced.’ (Bhabha, 1994: 4) Tambu’s ‘transformation from a peasant girl to an educated ‘sophisticate’ struggles to integrate the moral order of her village upbringing with constantly growing sense of the injustice of her position as a woman.’ (Dangarembga, 2004: viii) The self-awareness of Tambu in the end points out that ambivalent stances are decentered through negotiation, integration of the complexities and conflicts. Correspondingly, Dangarembga stresses her female character as the ‘self the liminal’ for the first time, she marks the progress in time within the scope her cultural, gender, political and psychological circumstances and at last she breaks the ambiguity that enables her new Tambudzai.

5.3. LIMINAL SPACES AND LIMINAL STAGES

Tambu positions herself within two distinct spheres which makes her believe not to be educated thanks to her female identity and enables her to hope to receive an education. In this sense, she lives a dilemma at the beginning of her life in England. She wants to be educated in minor ways; therefore, she [reads the sheet of newspaper in which the bread from magrosa had been wrapped.’ (*NC*, 34) On the other hand, her father accuses of her not being an obedient female by thinking that ‘the things [she] read would fill [her] mind with impractical ideas, making [her] quite useless for the real tasks of feminine living. (*NC*, 34) Tam defines this two-fold situation between being a traditional female and being an educated female. She actually points out this ambivalence as an integration. She states ‘We co-existed in peaceful detachment’ (*NC*, 34) In a way, the transition from ordinary female to an well-educated woman stresses the fact that Tam’s voluntary ‘migration changes the surface of the soul, preserving identity under its protean forms, this liminality of the migrant experience is no less a transitional phenomenon than a translational one; there is no resolution to it because the two conditions are ambivalently enjoined in the survival of migrant life’ (Bhabha, 1994:224) In this sense, contradictions, ambivalences and in-betweenness in Tambu’s life create meaning in acquiring a location for herself. She wants to construct a life for achieving something in life, therefore her identity formation is dynamic in that ‘productive space of the construction as difference,

in the spirit of alterity' (Teverson and Upstone eds., 2011 :134) The perpetual changes in locations, social milieu and cultural practices enable a subject to evaluate the differences through psychologically-based alterity.

In addition to her ambivalence in reshaping her identity between the harshness of male-dominated society and the need for being an idealized woman, her liminality continues within her entrance into her uncle's home in order to get an education in England.

> At Babamukuru's I expected to find another self, a clean, well-groomed, genteel self. I was going to be developed in the way Babamukuru saw fit, which in the language I understood at the time meant well. (*NC*, 58-9)

Her transitional act towards her uncle's home clearly reveals that she crosses the borderline, she leaves her homestead life behind and opens a new path for a world where 'the needs and sensibilities were not considered a priority.' (*NC*, 12) Here, it can be said that Tambu obtains '[a] bordered space [that] embodies a multitude of conflicting ideas.' (Dyck and Reutter eds., 2009 :1) The conflicting atmosphere of multiplicities in one's life is structured by crisscrossing the borders. In this respect, beyond the boundaries, Tambu wants to have fun with her new life and new self, separated from imposed male-structured practices and ordinary life of homestead. In fact, crossing borders is an experience '[to find] a resourcefulness to resist' (Burke, 2002:80) Tambu resists to be stuck to her original life in Zimbabwe and opens the gates to new consciousness in her life in order to catch a harmony rather than a chaos.

Furthermore, Tam can reach this newness by building up 'a kind of negotiation between both positions.' (Byrne, 2009:42) In this sense, school is a liminal space for Tam where she negotiates and sees the differences clearly.

> By life we meant books and games and people and cultural activities, as well as a more abstract atmosphere of vitality that meant that things, exciting, interesting, useful things, were about to happen, the life we talked of would overtake us and we would have to fight with the consequences. (NC, 107)

As quoted here, schools as borders between ignorance and knowledgement presents more life and colorful experiences; the potentiality of newness to render 'a deconstruction of oppositions, a reversal and displacement of meaning.' (Byrne, 2009:45) Thus, a subject tries to map out his or her border experiences as deconstructed. So, Tam opens up a

cultural space for herself, she is also aware of the possible dangers of overtaking by differences; yet, she finds 'third space where [her] negotiation of differences creates a tension peculiar to borderline existence. (Bhabha, 1994: 218)

Furthermore, in a conversation between Nyasha (Tambu's cousin) and Tambu after Nyasha's argument with Babamukuru, Nyasha interrupts Tambu and states:

> I am convinced I do not want to be anyone's underdog. It is not right for anyone to be that. But once you get used to it, well, it just seems natural and you just carry on. And that is the end of you. You are trapped. They control everything you do. (*NC*, 119)

Here, Nyasha can be seen as one of the females who resists the sameness and challenges the current imposed practices especially on females. She draws her border and decides her liminality. She constructs a third space for herself eliminating the trap of her father through 'a little piece of thread [raising] profound questions and [awakening] important voices.' (Byrne, 2009:150) Actually, Nyasha is the loud voice who is a challenge to the cultural practices, she tries to cross the line that is a state of in-betweenness grounding a space of confrontation, discussion and negotiation. However, Nyasha's revolutionary behaviors and her search for a harmony do fail since she is torn between her struggle for a change and the patriarchal manners at home.

On the other hand, Nyasha's interrogation of her father's rules makes Tambu questions her own reality and personality. Actually, we can say that Babamukuru's dinner table symbolizes the liminal stances of the individuals. In this sense, Tambu says

> So, to put myself back on the right path I took refuge in the image of the grateful poor female relative. That made everything a lot easier. It mapped clearly the ways I could or could not go, and by keeping within those boundaries I was able to avoid the mazes of self-confrontation. At least that was how I had been when I first came to the mission. (*NC*, 118)

The dilemma between being an obedient relative and being a free female occupies her mind. She wants to challenge as Nyasha does; but she stops and persuades herself not to cross the line. 'Beside Nyasha I was a paragon of feminine decorum, principally because I hardly ever talked unless spoken to, and then only to answer with the utmost respect whatever question had been asked. Above all, I did not question things.' (*NC*, 157) Here, Tambu's acceptance of current conditions forms her liminal personality because she is

marginal between her own free acts and the acts imposed by her uncle. In this respect, it can be said that 'the marginal subject is passively transformed, and society enacts this transformation upon [her].' (Elbert Decker and Winchock eds., 2017:4)

Tambu is the liminal character who achieves to construct an identity amongst the contradictions and differences that new land introduces. In this sense, she catches the harmony and builds up 'a bridge between binaries' (ibid; 5) Her identity formation is open-ended and ever-shifting process since she always walks and crosses the boundaries and tries to reach her target. She walks towards 'the door that appeared to be the main entrance. Anticipation. Disappointment. I looked and looked and searched carefully through the crowd. At the door a nun, smiling beatifically, made us welcome by shaking our hands, taking us up steps and down corridors to a room at the end of a long hallway.' (*NC,* 198) Tambu travels to England to be educated in Sacred Heart and she leaves her home and constructs a space most of us occupy in this (liminal) space.

Education can also be seen as a transitional phase in one's life since the educated person transcends the liminal space between before and after. In addition to this, it can be revealed that 'liminality implies the high could not be high unless the low existed, and he who is high must experience what is like to be low.' (Turner, 1969: 97) Apart from Tambu, Babamukuru is the best sample in displaying the in-between identity that is acquired by crossing the borders. He crossed the border, left Zimbabwe to be educated and he got a higher status in England. He 'seems the perfect example of how an African of poor descent can rise to higher circles of social and economic power, through education and perseverance.' (Deroo, 2014:42) On the other hand, Babamukuru tries to struggle underneath his identity as the only African in world of the white. He strives to get the control of everything in his life not to be defeated and not be collapsed. In this respect, he lives a great stress since he wants to keep his balance both at home and at work. Thus, he is a changing character, living complexities and contradictions. Tambu narrates her uncle, being different from the males living in Africa by comparing with her father.

> Babamukuru was now a person to be reckoned with in his own right. He did not need to bully anybody any more. Plenty of power. Plenty of money. A lot of education. Plenty of everything. (*NC,* 50)

Babamukuru is a perfect man here. He has money, gets strength and has everything. Yet, he changes and is affected by the system of oppression of Africans by white people. He begins to lose control on everything since he fears to lose his status in England and to be excluded by white culture. Thus, he shows his stress and conflicts at home towards his daughter and his wife, Maiguru.

Consequently, Dangarembga draws borders and changes in the lives of the characters. She portrays women as the ones who become aware of themselves. Through the relations between each other, female characters mark the importance of influence by the others. Tambu follows Nyasha's support and friendship to feel strong in an alien land. She gets knowledge, love and friendship. It can be said that Tambu defines her identity with Nyasha. As mentioned before, the binary pairs are meaningful together. This is a kind of liminal demonstration in a way. Namely, liminality offers a chance to 'to investigate the various manifestations of this threshold or liminal state. For [the people] are various, and sometimes enfold each other, transform each other.' (Schwenger, 2012: xi) In *Nervous Conditions*, the representation of the characters reveals how they experience various forms of rebellion and ambivalence. They try to construct a balance between their old and new way of living. Through the text, Dangarembga unveils the contradictions and conflicts resulting both in a harmony and in a chaos. While Tambu sees the salvation in many conflicts both at home and in a foreign land, Nyasha does not feel much stronger, loses her temper and faces death in the end. On the other hand, Babamukuru is entrapped with his own cultural values and colonial practices. However, the various identity formations of the characters present an ambivalent process and maintain a possible harmony to be self-assured.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis has been to shed light on the contemporary terms, 'border' and 'liminality' in a relation to the other close terms, 'third space' and 'ambivalence'. The dissertation has been concluded how liminal subjects on borders are created as in-between characters in the selected works. These cultural terms have been explored through a detailed analysis of the selected novels of Monica Ali, Kiran Desai and Tsitsi Dangarembga, which illustrate the phases of identity formation of colonized characters. Despite the differences between the novels, mostly in content, each novel analyzed in the thesis focuses on binary pairs such as centre/periphery, belonging/unbelonging, insider/outsider, and self/other. Different meanings and explanations of subjectivity have been inferred in the light of Avtar Brah's border theory and the cultural notions of Homi K. Bhabha based on the idea of liminality. It has been argued in this thesis that the authors craft their fictional characters mostly by reflecting their own experience since each writer is an immigrant with a colonial background and they know the brutal realities of colonization. Also, the problems of identification are presented through the ever-shifting processes of the subjects in multicultural contexts. Although each character struggles differently within the liminal space between cultures, all of them try to form a coherent identity and to catch a harmony.

The terminologies constructed by Homi Bhabha and Avtar Brah have been presented. In this context, Bhabha reformulates liminality by using two terms, the third space and ambivalence, to illustrate the new signs of identity in continuous flux. It can be concluded that the third space (termed cultural hybridity by Bhabha) is seen as a chance to grasp differences in cultural, gender, political and national terms as dynamic discourses. This concept also opens the doors to a newness which challenges monolithic definitions and considerations. The main assumption here is that the border crossers have the potentiality to attain a self by deconstructing polarities and ensuring the construction of identity in such liminal spaces. However, the situation may be complex and troublesome for the subjects who cross the borders and remap their identities in multicultural contexts. In a sense, it can be concluded that the transitional experience makes the individual reevaluate his/her own originality and renew the present chronotypes by exploring the new dimensions of the spaces s/he encounters.

The novels which are examined in this thesis are limited to those that present spatio-temporal identities and liminal spaces in multi-layered circumstances. The never-ending process of identity formation have also been analyzed in the selected novels. Thus, this thesis has been divided into four main chapters. The most important theoretical works, Bhabha's *Location of Culture* and Brah's *Cartographies of Diaspora* have been used to assess liminal identities and border crossing experiences of the characters in the selected novels. Throughout the thesis, the participation of the writers in each novel is observed since each novel is shaped according to the real-life experiences of its author. It is extremely significant that both subjective and objective points of view can be detected in the novels. Thus, here, the analysis of the life journeys of the characters created by the different three writers is limited to the influences of colonialism in multicultural contexts in relation to the selected cultural terms.

The term liminality, firstly coined by Arnold van Gennep and then popularized by Victor Turner, was defined in a postcolonial context by Bhabha. In temporal conditions, the individual can experience conflicts and complexities since s/he encounters multiple identities. The differences encountered give rise to conflicts and complexities which the individual negotiates. Deconstructing the in-betweenness as an advantage, s/he resolves the ambiguity that liminal space creates. Interrogating the ambivalences causes new definitions to emerge and the two-fold identity construction that liminality offers is an advantage for the creation of a third space. It is highly important to clarify that, throughout this thesis, the three novels are approached in terms of the ongoing identity constructions of the characters in relation to personal, cultural and gender developments. While it is generally thought that liminality and border as a concept refer to a disadvantage or lead to complexities that are obstacles to progress in life, this viewpoint is gradually erased by identities which rise to the challenge of polarities and differences. The third space and ambivalence are subordinate terms which are used to point out the powerful sides of liminality and border-crossing in defining the explanation of self in a postcolonial discourse. The usage of these terms is not only paving the way for understanding cultural, colonial or personal developments, but also gender borders. The gender border is relatively framed in a relation to liminal stance and ambivalent space. Indeed, the self on the border in gender terms here is closely interwoven with the cultural, political and social tendencies of the patriarchal communities alongside the colonial societies.

Chapter III deals with Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* beginning with an introduction to her writing career. The novel is based on the liminal selves and the selves constructed beyond the borders, largely through the characterization of Nazneen, Chanu and Karim. We are introduced to a Bangladeshi family by Ali, and the setting of the novel changes from Bangladesh to England (Banglatowns). It can be deduced that *Brick Lane* reflects the influences of colonialism on the lives of the migrants and they gradually change through contradictions and conflicts in England. They present the multiple conflicts in identity formation as a result of diasporic in-betweenness and ambivalence. Ali is the voice of her community; thus, she crafts in-between characters in the novel since she is a hybrid subject who is the daughter of an English mother and a Bangladeshi father. It can be claimed that, in a way, she writes a sociological study of migrant subjects who are liminal and are eager to attain an assured life. Throughout the novel, Ali draws attention to her characters' ongoing identity constructions via the betwixt circumstances they have in gendered, social, cultural and political terms. She focuses on the liminal stance of the characters that are stuck between their origins in the homeland and the changing social milieu of the present culture. In doing so, she pens identities on the border in terms of the belongingness to somewhere and wishing to attain a life as a subject. Indeed, it is clearly concluded that Ali expresses her own diasporic in-betweenness which paves the way for her creation of language, events and characters in *Brick Lane* as a production of her own experience in colonialism.

In *The Inheritance of Loss*, Kiran Desai uses multicultural selves to focus on the identity formation of the characters. We are again introduced to the dynamic nature of identity amongst the complexities of the multi-layered situations in a foreign land. The ambivalences that are fed by these multiplicities present the struggle for a coherent subjectification; and, ultimately, the selves on the borders and the liminal stances turn into advantages for a better life. In parallel to this, Kiran Desai is a significant female writer of migrant literature since she deals closely with the crisis of the migrants from the aspects of culture, nation, and language. She elaborates these considerations referring both to West and East. Furthermore, she writes of the perpetual psychological struggles of the individuals to construct a new identity in the interstices of their double-edged positioning. She tries to reflect the realities of the border-crossing between East and West. Broadly speaking, she depicts the individuals dislocated as a result of crossing the borders

as heirs of the colonial discourse. Desai subtly makes use of the identity struggles of Jemubhai, Sai and, especially, Biju in their changing and new environment. The setting of this novel moves between India and America. Chapter IV of this thesis includes the relationship between liminality and identity change, and it has been clearly concluded that the novel emphasizes the ambivalent stances of the marginal characters who are open to new signs of self-actualization. The characters are all in-between diasporic individuals who experience multiple encounters on their way. In this context, they long for the self-actualization among the double-edged conditions.

The two South Asian writers, Kiran Desai and Monica Ali, were chosen as examples in order to analyze how colonialism influences postcolonial subjects. Their characters confront ambivalence about whether they belong to their homeland or to the dreamland they desire. As discussed in relation to *Brick Lane* and *The Inheritance of Loss*, the enigma of the arrival at self-assurance of the characters is limited to cultural, national and political aspects. However, Chapter V handles the ways in which gender border creates shifting positioning in identity formation, through Tsitsi Dangarembga's work, *Nervous Conditions*. In this chapter, the study discusses the personal development especially of the female characters, Tambudzai, Nyasha and Maiguru, through the double focus on both the male-dominated society and the colonial community. In short, the novel deals with new outlooks in order to arrive at self-worth in respect of the liminal selves of the subjects both as female and as colonized. The characters get the chance to create new alternatives by interrogating the current circumstances of Rhodesian society and British colonialism. Actually, the two worlds they experience (patriarchal and colonial) stimulate the characters to construct new spaces for a free self. In doing so, the female characters define themselves with the cultural and gender practices the male-dominated society and colonial world. In fact, the male characters, Babamukuru, Nhamo and Jeremiah, are also examples of self-articulation, but solely from the perspective of colonial discourses. This part of the analysis draws a conclusion that is wholly concentrated on the impact of in-betweenness on new individuality in relation to identity shaped both by patriarchy and by the British colonization of Zimbabwe and the Rhodesian people in England.

Liminality and border, associated with the third space and ambivalence, are cultural terms that have contributed explicitly to the analysis of the novels in this study, offering insights in the discussions of diasporic in-betweenness. To be in-between enables

one to create newness. In this sense, the doubleness or polarity of such circumstances present advantages for self-actualization through physical and psychological borders and liminal stances. It can be concluded that the binary pairs that liminality deconstructs are manifestations of multicultural contexts. This assessment clearly demonstrates that Desai, Ali and Dangarembga are all mouthpieces for the colonized cultural peculiarities in multilayered circumstances. Amongst these multiplicities, the subject perpetually changes in order to create a new self. The liminal selves and the self beyond the border experience the ambiguities of identity in process, resolve the ambivalence and remap their identity.

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