

HYBRIDITY AND THIRD SPACE

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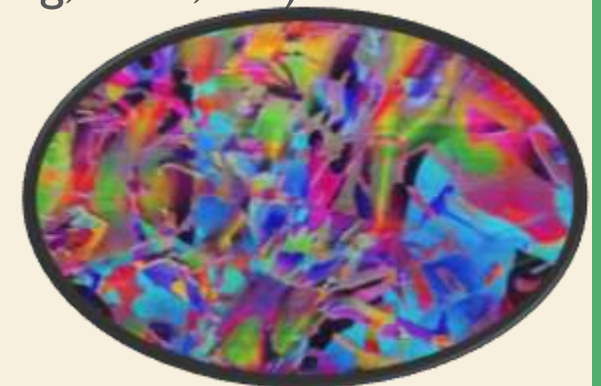
HOMI K. BHABHA

- a post-colonial and literary theorist who challenged the dynamics of sociopolitical power and culture through discourse analysis.
- His most prominent contributions to cultural discourse have been the concepts of Hybridity and Third Space.



WHAT IS HYBRIDITY?

- Originally, the term Hybridity evolved from biological and botanical origins.
- In the nineteenth century, Hybridity - used as a description of the crossing of people of different races.
- Hybridity in this context was put on a level with terms like "half-breed", "mongrel" or "bastard" and therefore had a negative connotation.
- "In the nineteenth century it was used to refer to a physiological phenomenon; in the twentieth century it has been reactivated to describe a cultural one" (Young, 1995, S. 5). The theorist Homi K. Bhabha reinvented the term.



BHABHA'S DEFINITION

- Bhabha described hybridity as, the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity efforts. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination. It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but re-implicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power. (Bhabha 159)



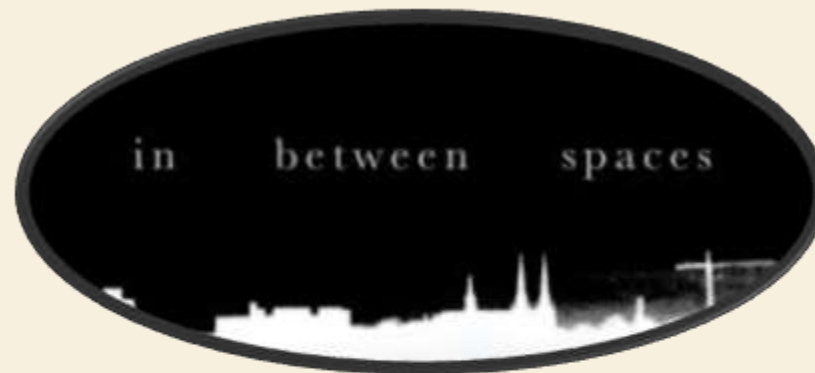
CULTURAL HYBRIDITY

- Cultural hybridity constitutes the effort to maintain a sense of balance among practices, values, and customs of two or more different cultures
- describes the construction of culture and identity within conditions of colonial antagonism and inequity. (Bhabha 1994; Bhabha 1996)
- Bhabha contends that a new hybrid identity or subject-position emerges from the interweaving of elements of the coloniser and colonised challenging the validity and authenticity of any essentialist cultural identity.
- Hybridization takes many forms: linguistic, cultural, political, racial, etc.
- Linguistic examples include pidgin and creole languages,



THE IN-BETWEEN SPACE

- It is the 'in-between' space of cultural hybridity that carries the burden and meaning of culture.
- Hybridity has frequently been used in post-colonial discourse to mean simply cross-cultural 'exchange'.
- Results in the transformative cultural, linguistic and political impacts on both the colonized and the colonizer



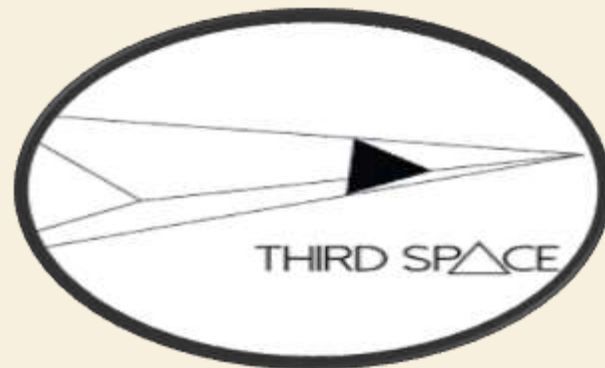
THE NEW TRANSCULTURAL FORMS

- Hybridity commonly refers to the creation of new transcultural forms that are formed within the contact zone produced by colonization.
- Hybridity has frequently been used in post-colonial discourse to mean simply cross-cultural 'exchange'.
- Having access to two or more ethnic identities.



THE THIRD SPACE – THE MIXING AND MERGING OF CULTURES

- The term Third Space is coined by Homi K. Bhabha.
- The Third Space is a transition space, where post-colonial power relations and norms are subverted by political, aesthetic or everyday practices.
- A Third Space is not a physical place
- A space where hybrid identifications are possible and where cultural transformations can happen.
- Third Spaces enable cultural hybridity - identities and practices - perform difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy.



A PRODUCTIVE SPACE, QUESTIONING EXISTING CULTURAL IDENTITIES

- Bhabha posits hybridity as such a form of liminal or in-between space, where the ‘cutting edge of translation and negotiation’ (Bhabha 1996) occurs and which he terms the third space. (Rutherford 1990)
- Thus, the third space is a mode of articulation, a way of describing a productive, and not merely reflective, space that engenders new possibility.
- It is an ‘interruptive, interrogative, and enunciative’ (Bhabha 1994) space of new forms of cultural meaning and production
- It blurs the limitations of existing boundaries
- Questions the established categorizations of culture and identity.



THE CONJUNCTION OF CULTURES

- Despite the disclosure of the third space to contradictions and ambiguities, it provides a spatial politics of inclusion rather than exclusion that “initiates new signs of identity and innovative sites of collaboration and contestation.” (Bhabha 1994: 1)
- The hybrid identity is positioned within this third space, as “lubricant” (Papastergiadis 1997) in the conjunction of cultures.
- Third Space has not been conceptually confined as simply engendering possibilities but, instead, it has been viewed as an active space in which constant production occurred (Bhabha, 1994; Meredith, 1998; Rutherford, 1990).
- Therefore, Third Space was a metaphorical space, without a fixed location, and was produced in and through discursive conditions.



CULTURES REDEFINED

- to de-historicize and de-locate cultures from their temporal, spatial, geographical and linguistic contexts
- to lead to an abstract, globalized concept of the textual that obscures the specificities of particular cultural situations.



REFERENCES

- <https://thirdspace-webseries.com/>
- Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. London ; New York :Routledge, 2004.

