

HYPHEN

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At the Crossroads

Abu Haque

The diaspora community occupies a space that is not only ambiguous but also a liminal space between the one they left behind and the one they live in, which Bhabha (1990) called the 'third space'. Foucault (1984) would identify this as an in-between space, a form of 'other spaces' belonging to neither utopian nor heterotopian¹—spaces that provide a mixed experience, such as a mirror. It is not a utopia, as you can touch the mirror; therefore, it is real. However, the

space is not quite real either, as when you look at your reflection in the mirror, you see yourself where you do not exist. It has elements of both real and unreal at the same time; therefore, it is a mixed experience.

This ambiguous mental space also relates to what Freud called memory residues (2010), as it appeals to memory whenever it gets an opportunity. Sometimes it's a smell, or just the aura of a place, at other times it's an uncanny

resemblance of a familiar view or sound that triggers the memory residue to resurface and they are immediately transferred over to another space and time. The transfer is immediate and it feels very real. It transcends existing space-time to elevate them into that third space—a space of confusion and ambiguity.

How do borders manifest in the psyche of the diaspora? How do they affect their agency? Do they

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1. Heterotopias are imaginary spaces, not real places, but socially construct functions with angles. In contrast, heterotopias are places where people do exist. Some, such as cemeteries, hospitals, libraries, gardens, etc. However, the real and imaginary spaces, both are an essential factor of heterotopia. Some (heterotopias) both require the imaginary and heterotopia (the real)—Foucault. Spatialities in other spaces (Foucault, 1984).



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