

L I M I N A L I T Y

A COMMON GROUND

LINKING:

- My Beautiful Laundrette
- Bhaji on the Beach
- East is East

The Concept

- Justine King, “Crossing Thresholds: the Contemporary British Woman’s Film”
- 1908 Arnold van Gennep, about “rites of passage”
- Further explored and generalized by Victor Turner in the '60s
- A key term in Postcolonial studies, adding a 3rd dimension to “hybridity”

LIMINALITY

- A state of ambiguity, beyond the usual/fixed structure and usual/fixed rules of the social system
- A space existing and necessary **inside** all societies
- Being in-between “here” and “there”, just as standing in the door: **a threshold space**
- A creative space
- A “dangerous” space: deviation from “normality”

“Passage” Moments and Liminal Spaces

- In analogy with the “rites of passage”
- The Laundrette
 - deciding on career and love issues
- The journey
 - deciding on family and love issues
- The Fish-shop, the court, the coat, running away from home, the disco
 - the age for marriage/becoming a man

Liminal Identities

- Being in-between “this” and “that”, thus being “this” and “that” in the same time
- “Fluid”, “border” identities
- Omar and Johnny **but also all the others**
- The “second generation” women but also Asha
- George’s family and others

Escaping

- Liminality is a space of escaping the usual/fixed structure, rules of the society
- also the **under-pressure situations**
- and the problematic social **roles**

- **Migrants, homosexuals, adolescents, nowadays women are usually considered the “in-betweens”**

Escaping Together

- All the main characters from these films escape, in some way, from their own liminal condition
- Creating (temporarily) liminal spaces,
 - where they can try to solve their inner, individual conflicts
 - but also their social problems
 - and where they can meet other people