

NARRATIVISATION OF SPACE IN *NERVOUS CONDITION*

BY TSITSI DANGAREMBGA

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Abstract

The objective of this article was the narrativisation of space in Tsitsi Dangarembga's Nervous Condition. It consisted in the inscription of space in the story since the space has significant place in the narration. The concept of space for narratology is the physically existing environment in which characters live and move called commonly setting. This is defined in other words, as the general socio-historico-geographical environment in which all the actions take place and plays a major role in the meaning of the novel and affects characters' behaviour. As a matter of fact, Western values and traditional ones, represented in these respective spaces of colonialism and tradition, have impacted the African so that they become hybridised or alienated and colonialists racist.

Keywords: Space, Time, Colonialism, Racism, Hybridity, Alienation, Tradition.

Introduction

The story in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* is perceived as a journey through a narrative space. Marie-Laure Ryan and his fellows state that the narrative space is the setting in which the action takes place; a world serving as container for the characters and events; and a *narrative universe*. In addition, Katrin Dennerlein argues that it plays an important role in narrative as it is the environment in which characters move and live and in which the action takes place. It is the material condition and also the cultural frame for the narrated story (Dennerlein, 2009, p.2). Therefore, space is the generator of the meaning in the story. Gennette Gerard's perspective in his *Narrative Discourse*, space is not only passive, and signified but it is also signifying and representative (Lambert, 1998, p. 111).

Spaces Narrative in the Novel

In *Nervous Condition*, the environment in which characters move and live, and action takes place, revolves around four important spaces subdivided into subspaces. The main spaces of the narration are: England, the mission, the homestead of Tambudzai's parents (the village of the protagonist) and the Sacred Heart. The subspaces are respectively the house of Babamukuru, the school of sisters and their Convent. In fact, subspace is delineated as follow: 'they are hierarchically organised by relations of containment (a room is a subspace of a house) and their boundaries may be either clear cut (the bedroom is separated from the salon by hail way) or fuzzy (e.g., a landscape may slowly change as a character moves through it)'. These spaces are important signs and symbols in the meaning making of Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

The discourse of this article was inserted in the narratological approach which consisted in the analysis of space narrative in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*. The presentation of the narration can be perceived as a journey through a space narrative. It is the inscription of space in the story since the space has an important place in the narration. The concept of space for narratology is not limited to the representation of a world serving as a container for existents and as a location for events. The physical existing environment in which characters live and move called in other terms setting, help us to understand the characters behaviour shaped by these spaces. Therefore, the treatment of spaces is considered as a generator of the narrative form or producer of meaning.

In terms of time and space narrative, the following narrative technique has been used: 'As a rule, the more narrative time the narrator devotes to an element, the more important it is and the more it demands our attention' (<https://pressbooks.palni.org/biblicalnarrative/chapter/3-narrative-time-and-space/#:~>). It is more significant and signifying. In the case of the homestead, we have more details, while for England, we do not have many; the narrator slows down the unfolding of events and speeds up in the other.

Summary of the Novel

Dangarembga conveys two major themes in this literary work, the gender with the segregation of the female characters, on one hand, and the colonialism with its aftermath, such as alienation and racism, on the other. Tambudzai, the protagonist in the story, narrates the condition of her education; her parents often privileged and prioritised her brother to her. After his death, Tambu benefits from the support of Babamukuru for her studies in replacement of the latter, thus, she leaves homestead to the missionary. Later, she gains a scholarship to study in the white's convent school, where she is accommodated in a crowded room with other African girls. The story tells us only about Babamukuru's departure to England and his return home with his family, no other details about his sojourn there. These Beentos are alienated by the space of England.

Findings and Discussions

In *Nervous Conditions*, the narration is elaborated in partial spaces, which run progressively. The narrator begins the story with the homestead as a narrative space, where all important members of Babamukuru are living and he extends it to the mission, where he is working with white missionaries. England is remembered as a place where Babamukuru goes to further his education with all his family and ends with Sacred Heart; Convent of Catholic Sisters where Tambuzai, the main character goes to pursue her education. Some of the spaces, like the homestead are repetitive in the novel. The first-person narrator Tambuzai moves from the homestead to the mission and vice-versa, and to the mission to Sacred Heart Convent of Catholic Sisters. Babamukuru and his family move from the mission to the homestead for special occasions.

As a matter of fact, the repetition of spaces helps the reader to have particular insight about those places, the main themes of the story and also their implication in

the lives of characters of the novel. England as a narrative space does not have many details. There is an acceleration of the speed narrative; the narrator Tambu is absent in England, there are no details about Babamukuru's family action from that space, the reader is simply aware of his departure to England for studies, his return, and the impact that England had on his family. Unlike clock time, narrative time refers to the time it takes to tell a story. The narrative can slow down the unfolding of events by describing things in great details or reporting events.

The absence of details of England in the novel is signifying and significant. The narrator is absent in England, it is evil; therefore, no interest is attached for giving details. The space of England is related to the past. It is a past which has affected the present. The absence of the details reveals the attitude of the writer. A psycho critical point of view infers that the novel is a semi-biographical one. It shows the disappointment of the writer about England and her attitudes toward it. It has been said that she spent part of her childhood in England. She began her education in England, but later attended Hartzell High School, a missionary school in the Rhodesian town of Umtali (now Mutare). She later studied medicine at Cambridge University, where she experienced racism and isolation. Dangarembga left Cambridge and returned to Zimbabwe a few months before the country officially declared its independence. In fact, this the main reason why the narrator has put more stress on homestead ([https:// en.wikipedia.org>wiki> Nervous](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nervous)). The coming back of Babamukuru from England to homestead symbolises Dangarembga's return to Zimbabwe by escaping the discrimination and racism she underwent at University in England.

Alienation is one of the negative impacts that England as space has on Nyasha, Babamukuru's daughter with her Englishness; to the point that she has even forgotten her mother language Shona. This is evident when Tambu invites Nyasha to dance-dance is part of African culture every tribe has its own way of revealing its tradition, but she declines. However, her mother defends her for not participating in the dance under the pretext that she does not understand Shona very well because she spent many years in England where she only spoke English as means of communication. We can read this in the following:

When we were dancing, I invited Nyasha, who took a long time to understand. They don't understand Shona very well any more', her mother explained: 'They have been speaking nothing but English so long that most of their Shona has gone (p.42).

Nyasha's refusal to dance and to speak the mother language symbolises the rejection of African culture. This fact is troublesome in the view of Tambudzai; as we can read in the following quotation:

What Maiguru said was bewildering and offending. I had not expected my cousins to have changed, certainly not so radically, simply because they have been away for a while, besides, Shona was our language (p.42).

To abandon the mother tongue is what Chinua Achebe called 'a dreadful betrayal' in his essays: 'Morning Yet on Creation Day':

It is right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling. But for me there is no other choice. I have been given the language and I intend to use it (Achebe, 2012, p. 7).

Being away cannot be an excuse for Maiguru to say that the children have forgotten Shona. It is really an offence because they have mastered a foreign language and rejected their own language which enhances their identity or language which reflects their identity. Moreover, the ability to use a particular language enables one to feel a sense of belonging to a group.

Space has played an important role in Nyasha's Westernised behaviour, especially in her rebellion towards her father. It is stated that 'having spent five years in England, Nyasha is alarmingly Westernised. Most importantly, she lacks any sense of shame and behaves with a scandalous immodesty' (Parekh and Jagne, 1998: 120). Nyasha's attitude pushes 'Babamukuru, gathering himself within himself so that his whole weight was behind the blow, he dealt with Nyasha's face. Never! He hissed. Never, he repeated, striking her cheek with the back of his hand, speak to me like that. (...) Today I'm going to teach you a lesson he told her. How can you go about disgracing me? Me! Like that! No, you cannot do it', I am respected at this mission. I cannot have a daughter who behaves like a whore (p.114).

The challenge that Babamukuru faces is what the space of England has made of Nyasha. She is a rebel who does not heed his advice; but sometimes, she retorts impolitely. The paradox is that Babamukuru is perceived as a good African. From the book, we read: '*the authorities thought Babamukuru was a good African. It was generally believed good African bred good African children who also thought about nothing except serving their communities. So, Nyasha really didn't have to worry*' (p.107).

This is not the case with Nyasha who is ill-bred with the influence of the space of England. Even her friends have qualified her as snobbish. Consequently, Nyasha did not have many friends, the girls did not like the way she spoke. They were still imitating her behind her back when they went back to the mission... 'but Nyasha herself thinks she is white' (94). The way she dresses and acts leads her friend to conclude that she was proud and loose.

Furthermore, she smokes cigarettes, the manners she adopted in England which is not African for a woman but an indication of prestige and pride. In fact, the way she speaks and dresses, shows her disintegration in her community. That is why she does not have many friends. Many girls do not like her. Through her intonation of English, she wants to show the difference; to mock her, her friends say, 'she thinks she is white', meaning that her behavior does not conform to the standard of an African. In fact, one must also realise that Nyasha's action turns around the mission, the white men's space, contrary to Tambu who is seen active in the two opposed spaces; the one of Homestead and the ones of the missionaries and the sacred heart. The two opposed spaces represent, the tradition and the colonialism, respectively. Tambu incarnates the values of the two spaces, which gives equilibrium in her behaviour and

she learns to respect people. This can be seen in her attitude. While serving water to an old person, she had to kneel. From the book, we read that she had a special task: 'I had to carry the water-dish in which people would wash their hands' (p. 40).

Nyasha is a mimic character as her behaviour falls into the postcolonial theory of Homi Bhabha's mimicry. The way she behaves is simply an imitation of the whites that she considers as civilised: 'Under colonialism and in the context of immigration, mimicry is seen as an opportunistic pattern of behaviour: One copies the person in power; because one hopes to have access to that same power. Presumably, while copying the master, one has to intentionally suppress one's own cultural identity' (<http://www.lehigh.edu/~amsp/2009/05/>).

England as a space has made Babamukuru a God in his village because someone who goes abroad gets much esteem from his fellow Africans. Thanks to England, Babamukuru has raised his status and become a benefactor of his kinsmen. It is from this perspective that he takes Nhamo, Jeremiah's son, with him to the mission for his education at school. After the death of Nhamo, it was Tambudzai's turn to be taken by Babamukuru to get the opportunity of fulfilling her dream of furthering her education. One may remember that education was mostly concentrated on the boy child actually. Many people appreciated him because of his ability to help the family financially, his position in the family and his desire to see other members of the family educated.

Babamukuru was concerned about the way in which his family was developing and pointing out that as an individual, he had done what he could for the family's status by obtaining a master degree; that he hoped his children would do as much again, if not more; that he was pleased that he was in the position of providing a fine start in that direction. (...) Now that he has returned, it was time for the member of the family to put their heads together to think of means of ensuring the prosperity of each branch of the family (p.44).

The homestead, a traditional space used for habitation and farming, is another important narrative space in the novel because many episodes of the story happen there. And Babamukuru likes this place because it reminds him of his childhood and African tradition. From the novel, it can be noticed he became emotional when he saw the place; thus, he calls the girls and points out some memories:

Do you see that river, girls? That's where I used to water the cattle as a herdboy on Mandigumbura farm. Mandigumbura! His real name was Montgomery, but we called him Mandigumbura. And he really used to do that. Ha! The man was cruel, but it was good training. He was a good farmer. By the time I went to the mission, I already knew how to work hard. I was a responsible boy from the training I got from Mandigumbura! Ha-a-a Babamukuru chuckled remembering his childhood, and begun to hum a song, a hymn, one of his old favourites (p.122).

The homestead is a very good place in the life of Babamukuru; it made him responsible as expressed in the above quotation. He experiences bliss to manifest the bliss in his heart at seeing this traditional milieu where he feels free from his dispute with Nyasha whom he feels incapable of handling though she is his daughter. The narrator

suggests that 'Babamukuru was happy free of tension and in the best of spirits he looked younger and more lovable than he ever did at the mission' (pp.122-3).

The homestead is a very significant narrative space and it is seemingly valuable to Babamukuru than the mission. That is why he leaves the mission where he is headmaster to spend his Christmas holidays with his family at the homestead. The following excerpt says more: 'As we drove home to the homestead, I repeated the comparison I had made on that first day that I went to the mission but this time in reverse' (p. 123). Not only does Babamukuru go there but so do other members of his family. The homestead embodies tradition and reflects tradition. Generally, it is a place where somebody was born and raised or a place where somebody feels that he belongs. Further, it is also a place where a family or a group lives together and feels united.

This is seen when Babamukuru comes back from England, and he is received in his village by all the members of the family who gather to welcome him with dances. This is an expression of solidarity at his home place, an occurrence reflected in the excerpt below:

Babamukuru came home in a calvados motor vehicle, sighted four miles away on the main road by three jubilant pairs of eyes. Netsai and I and little Shupikai, whose mother was one of the relatives gathered to celebrate the occasion of Babamukuru's return.(...). Ba-ba-mu-ku-ru! Ba-ba-mu-ku-ru! we chanted, running and waving our skinny arms...My aunt Gladys, the one who is my father's womb-sister, older than him but younger than Babamukuru, came first, her husband behind the wheel of a gallant if rickety old Austin... we waved and shouted and danced (p. 35).

In fact, the ambiance of enthusiasm of Babamukuru is reinforced by the English saying that 'there is no place like home'. This is also emphasised by the narrator's recurrent use of the word home. The narrator states that 'Babamukuru came home'. In fact, in Daniel Kunene's theory, *Journey as Metaphor in African Literature*: 'Home is as sanctuary. Its offer of physical and spiritual sustenance is the gravitational pull that ensures that whatever leaves it, will ultimately lose its outward momentum and return. Harmony and happiness prevail. It is a paradise' (Kunene,1996: 190).

My father jumped out of Babamukuru's car and, brandishing a staff like a victory spear, bounded over the bumpy road, leaping into the air and landing on one knee, to get up and leap again and pose like a warrior inflicting a death wound. 'Hezvo! He cried 'Do you see him? Our returning prince. Do you see him? Observe him well. He has returned. Our father and benefactor, he has returned appeased... (p. 36).

The return of Babamukuru to his village, a sanctuary symbolises the return to his tradition. We can see the way he is welcomed by his kinsmen, the use of the spear, which is a tool of a warrior expresses their victory by receiving their brother who went abroad. This the traditional way of expressing the joy at the homestead.

The singularity of this space (the homestead) is emphasised by the narrator's setting with specific characteristics, as we can read in the text describing the road leading to the homestead from the bus station:

The walk home from the bus terminus was not a long walk... the road wound down the fields where there were always some people to pass ten minutes of the day- enquiring about their health and the health of their family, admiring the broad leafed abundance of the maize crop when it was good predicting how many bags the field will yield or wondering whether the plant had tasseled too early or too earlier or too late (p. 2).

In this description, the narrator shows a route to the village which has specific landmarks: the abundance of maize crop. Generally, we can say that they are arranged in a linear perspective. We learn from the text that ‘the stretch of road between the fields and the terminus was exposed to the sun and was, from September to April except when it rained, harsh and scorching so that the glare from the sand scratched at one’s eyes. There was always a shade by the field where clumps of trees were deliberately left standing when meals were being eaten or rested between cultivating strips of the land (p. 4). Through the description of this landscape, we see a romantic view of the writer. People admire the beauty of the field which looks green with the broad leafed of the abundance of the maize.

The natural life of this place symbolises harmony. The narrator lets us know that people could not pass without greeting each other and enquire about the health of their respective family. The praise of this space is also evident in the following excerpt:

From the fields the road grew shadier with shrubs and trees, acacia, lantana, msasa and Mopani, clustered about on either side. If you have time, you could run off the road into more wooded areas to look for matamba and matunduru. Sweet and soar. Delicious’ (p. 3).

The peculiarity of the homestead is the matamba and the matunduru with their distinctive sweet and sour taste and also different types of trees ranged along the road: acacia, lantana, masa and mopani. The fruits mentioned above are qualified as delicious. When we look at the structure of the adjective ‘Delicious’, it is a fragment in the above quotation. However, it is presented as an autonomous phrase; the word is bound by the two colons as if it were a complete sentence. In fact, this shows the completeness of his thought for the appreciation of this place. He just gives us the beauty of the landscape; this place attracts even the children who organise their games there. ‘From this woody section the road rolled down into a shallow ravine, a river valley thoughtfully appointed along its floor with smooth, flat-topped boulders which made exciting equipment for all sorts of games’ (p. 3).

The narrative constructs a figure of space around the forest to show that it is the only remaining natural place that has not been totally affected by the colonisation and its effects:

The river, the trees, the fruit and the fields. This is how it was in the beginning. This is how I remember it in my earliest memories, but it did not stay like that. While I was still quite young, to enable administration of our area, the government builds its District Council Houseless than a mile away from the place where we washed. Thus, it became necessary for all the inhabitants of the dozen or so homesteads that made up our village to cross Nyamarira, as our river is called, whenever we went to our business to the council houses (p. 3).

In fact, the statement, ‘the river, the trees, the fruits and the fields, this is how it was in the beginning’ insinuates the transformations undergone by this natural environment. They have to use an unusual way to reach the council buildings. For him, the ideal place is where we find the river, the trees, the fruits and the fields. The fragment structure signifies something significant; it highlights how perfect the spaces with natural elements are. The so-called urbanisation has destroyed the African natural environment. The narrator asserts that: ‘This is how I remember it in my earliest memories, but it did not stay like that. While I was still quite young, to enable the government of our area, the government built its district council houses less than a mile away from the places where we washed’ (p.3). From this assessment, we are aware of the menace of the destruction of this space which is the incarnation of traditions by the phenomenon of urbanisation. The space is no longer the way it used to be; it reminds the narrator that it is around the space they washed.

The homestead is a very significant space. It shows that it is the remaining place which is not completely contaminated by the colonial system. From the text, we read:

Another thing that was different from the mission was that there were many white people there. The whites on the mission were a kind of white people, especially in the way that my grandmother had explained to me, for they were holy. They had come not to take but to give. They were about God’s business here in darkest Africa (p.103).

The subspace of the missionary conveys another meaning; it is an exclusive place of whiteness. The construction of the houses expresses the discrimination of the latter towards the African and exception is made for Babamukuru. The colour of the houses is very meaningful as we can read in the following excerpt:

White houses sprang up all over the mission. All those white houses must have been very uninspiring for people whose function was to inspire. Besides, natives were said to respond to colour, so after a while the missionaries began to believe that houses would not overheat, even when they were not painted white, as long as pastel shades were used (p. 63).

Moreover, the narrator also adds:

At the time I arrived at the mission, missionaries were living in white houses and in the pale painted houses, but not in the red brick ones. My uncle was the only African living in a white house. We were all very proud of this fact. No, that it is not quite right. We were proud, except Nyasha who had an egalitarian nature and had taken seriously the lessons about oppression and discrimination that she had learned first-hand in England (p. 63).

The missionary’s space denotes racial segregation, only the white persons deserve to live in decent houses. For the egalitarian, all people are equally important and should have the same rights and opportunities in life. In other words, since people are equal, they should enjoy equal social, political, and economical rights and opportunities.

Sacred Heart is another space similar to the mission because of the discrimination of whites against the blacks reigning there. Every race has its own space of accommodation. This is the context in which Tambu is received with Babamukuru and others who accompanied her. The sister directly informs and shows them the

accommodation in these words: ‘All the first formers live on this corridor; she explained as she led the way. And the Africans live in here, she announced’ (p.194). This difference in the accommodation pushes Tambu to wonder. From the novel, we read: ‘the white students needed a careful study if they were different or similar to me, whether they were likeable or not and what their habits were’ (p.195). It is really paradoxical because this space of Sacred Heart sounds like a holy place where there would be love and justice. This is shown by the first contact, when the nun who received Babamukuru and his team expresses joy in welcoming them. From the book we read: ‘At the door a nun, smiling beautifully, made us welcome by shaking our hands and asking us ‘which one is this?’ ‘Before taking us up steps and down corridors’ (p.194).

Shaking hands is a sign of cordiality, that is, friendliness and affection. However, their vocation and their actions are contradictory. This pushes the narrator to say that:

There were nuns to be observed and classified according to whether they were humans or not, lay-teachers whose idiosyncrasies had to be identified so that you did not fall prey to them. The white students needed careful study to decide whether they were different or similar to me, whether they were likeable or not and what their habits were (p.195).

The space of England in *Nervous Condition* is very significant and signifying. It incarnates domination and dictatorship; violence is one of its aspects. Frantz Fanon asserts that:

But it so happens that for the colonised people, this violence, because it constitutes their only work, invests their characters with positive and creative qualities. The practice of violence binds them together as a whole, since each individual forms a violent link in the great chain, a part of the great organism of violence which has surged upward in reaction to the settler’s violence in the beginning. The groups recognise each other and the future nation is already indivisible (Fanon, 1963, p.94).

The quotation above depicts how the mind of the colonised is affected. He is contaminated by the coloniser’s violence which becomes a part of him, since it is the only tool that the coloniser used to subjugate the latter to get his land. Consequently, as Ngugi Wa Thiong’O in the *Name of the Mother* has put it, ‘National liberation then becomes the process of meeting one kind of violence, anti-violence with another, a pro-people violence. In addition, he concludes that violence is elevated to the level where it is seen as the midwife of the nation bringing the various groups together’ (Ngugi,2014, p. 91).

The fact of being in England, Nyasha and Babamukuru have interiorised these qualities of the colonisers, which had completely affected their identity. Babamukuru becomes ‘a god’ in his family; *ipso facto*, he wants to impose his will. He pushes all his members of the family to improve life through study according to his own plan, which is, of course, a positive aspect, but he imposes his will instead of sharing his thought. Furthermore, for the improvement of their lives, Babamukuru asks Tambu’s parent to make a religious marriage. This arrangement surprises and irritates even Tambu. She says:

I did not think my uncle’s plans for my parents were something to laugh about. To me, the question of that wedding was a serious one, so serious

that even my body reacted in a very alarming way. Whenever I thought about it, whenever images of my mother immaculate in virginal white satin or (horror of horrors) myself as the sweet, simpering maid fluttered through my mind, I suffered a horrible crawling over my skin, my chest contracted a breathless tension and even my bowels threatened to let me know their opinion (p. 49).

Babamukuru's plans have put Tambu in a nervous condition. She enters a dilemma, as she fears contradicting what he says considering he is a sponsor of her studies means hurting him. We read:

This also began to happen whenever I thought of Babamukuru and put me in a difficult situation. Naturally, I was angry with him for having devised this plot, which made such a joke of my parents, my home and myself. And just as angry with him since surely it was sinful to be angry with Babamukuru. Babamukuru who was my benefactor, my father for all practical purposes and who was also good deserving of all love and respect and obedience (p.149).

One may realise that Tambu is in an ambivalent situation. She cannot accept Babamukuru's proposal of her parents' religious marriage, on the other hand, she cannot be against him as he is her benefactor. This is, in fact, the characteristic of some of the Africans' attitude towards the coloniser; they consider the coloniser as the benefactor thus, struggling to be divergent or open to them. This view is not totally different from Ngugi's *Weep Not, Child*, where the African finds himself indecisive in revolting against the whites by going on strike since they realised that they were benefactors by giving them jobs through which they fed their children. This is the case of Ngotho; it is said, 'He could not quite make up his mind about the strike. He doubted if the strike would be a success. If it failed, he would lose his job and that would keep him away of from his land' (Ngugi, 1964, p.52). This is exactly what we see with Tambudzai who is unable to object openly to Babamukuru when he tells her to be ready; he wants to take her for the preparation of the wedding that she does not like. Hence, Babamukuru tells her:

Er, Tambudzai, Babamukuru said to me at supper on the Thursday before the wedding, I shall take you home tomorrow, in the afternoon, with Lucia, so that you can help with the preparation over there. Do not take me at all. I don't 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. There was definitely something wrong with me, otherwise I would have something to say for myself. I knew I had not taken a stand on my 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. Coming to the mission, continuing education and doing well at it, these were the things that mattered (p.164).

In fact, Tambu is unable to unveil clearly what she thinks and her position about the marriage for her parents for fear of losing her primary objective, which is education taken charge of by Babamukuru. This is really quite strange for the Africans fearing to lose what they have already lost. Tambu has lost her freedom since her life is backed by Babamukuru whom she cannot give a contrary opinion on his will.

Nyasha's nervous condition pushes her to offend her father, she is late home; the father asks her why she is late, but she just snaps with assaulting words: 'should I worry about what people say when my own father calls me a whore? She looked at him with murder in her eyes'. In fact, she really lacks respect for her father. We learn from the narrator's words that 'you had to admit that Nyasha had no tact. You had to admit that she was altogether too volatile and strong willed. You couldn't ignore the fact that she had no respect for Babamukuru when she ought to have had lots of it' (p. 116). In short, Nyasha is the artefact of colonialism, she is mostly associated with the white persons with whom she was acquainted in England so that Babamukuru complains '... I have observed from my own daughter's behaviour that it is not a good thing for a young girl to associate too much with these white people, to have too much freedom. I have seen that girls who do that do not develop into descent women' (p. 180).

Contrary to Nyasha who is the product space of England, Tambu moves into two spaces: homestead and the mission, the former with tradition and the latter with modernism fruit of colonialism. The two spaces show that she symbolises the two values in her. For her self-realisation, she leaves the homestead to the mission; she says 'when I stepped into Babamukuru's car I was a peasant' (p.58). The car is a new subspace for her in which she has a feeling of a stranger, there is a discrepancy between her appearance and this subspace. In fact, she recognises one fact when she says: "this was the person I was leaving behind. And her view is that "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". In fact, the person she is living behind is the one of poverty and marginalisation; her father considered her just as a woman should be given for marriage, but not for education. It is only a man who is perceived to deserve education.

This new subspace inspires how she will live in this new world of Babamukuru. From the book we read:

At Babamukuru's I would have the leisure, be encouraged to consider questions that had to do with the survival of the spirit, the creation of consciousness, rather than mere sustenance of the body. This new me would not be enervated by smoky kitchens that left eyes smarting and chests permanently bronchitic (p.59).

By leaving the homestead, Tambu realises that she becomes a new person who is going to be transformed by the Western influence with this new milieu, which is mostly characterised by education.

As a matter of fact, the past of Tambu with her condition is infused with the newness of her as a new person, that is, the old culture with tradition and the new culture with modernism. Homi Bhabha sustains, in *The Location of Culture* that:

The borderline work of culture demands an encounter with the 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. Such art does not merely recall the past as social cause or aesthetic precedent. 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 (p.7).

Tambu is different from Nyasha who has rejected her tradition for the sake of Western values. The past for Tambu is her tradition, which mingles with present Western culture and makes her a new person. In this case, we must speak in terms of hybridity. The past and the present are part of her person.

In fact, it is here that the title 'Nervous Condition' is achieved; colonisation has affected everybody. The colonial spaces have alienated characters like Nyasha and Babamukuru. However, Babamukuru has fused African culture and colonial cultures, which have made him a peculiar person fashioned by the two spaces - England and the homestead. England has made him a powerful person by getting him educated. He wants to colonise his extended family by imposing his will. However, the homestead has also shaped his personality; he considers himself hardworking, which he learned from this traditional milieu. Nyasha is a product of Western culture; her opposition to her father shows the difference between the Western culture and the tradition.

All the spaces analysed in this article can be summarised into two: one representing tradition and colonialism. Tambudzai's movement from homestead to mission and Sacred Heart forge her hybridised person. The transformations undergone through education and colonialism does not make her abandon cultural tradition; however, it is simply a new person that she has qualified of as 'a new me'. As Ngugi has put it in *Globalectics*: 'one of the most important questions posed *vis à vis* the colonised was one of identity: because it is a systematic negation of the other person and the furious determination to deny the other person all attributes of humanity. Colonialism forces the people it dominates to ask themselves the question constantly: In reality who am I' (Ngugi, 2012, p.21). In fact, Nyasha's passage in English space makes her an alienated person who finds for model, the whites in her personality. Her traditional milieu becomes strange to her. Above all, he is marked by the moral violence which puts her in a nervous condition on the point she is being seen as a rebel even toward her own father. Babamukuru is a dictator who imposes the colonial system on his kinsmen. The colonised, among the missionaries and the nuns have created an environment in which they are separatist and segregationist.

Conclusion

All in all, in the narrative discourse of Dangarembga's *Nervous Condition*, two more important spaces have been outlined, England and the homestead, including some subspaces. The characters in the novels have lived and moved through this physical environment which have shaped their personalities. The insertion of these spaces was more significant. England symbolised the alienation of the characters, who had imitated the colonial values while the homestead is more representative with the traditional ones. The characters were rooted with the traditional values which involve them to live a split personality in the case of Babamukuru. Nyasha lived a Westernised life of the England's space whereas, Tambu is hybridised. She was influenced by the two spaces. From this perspective or based on what has been highlighted, the title of *Nervous Conditions* is befitting as it projects the challenge faced when characters are conflicted with embracing Western at the expense of traditional values.

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