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Hybridity in Isabel Allende's *The Japanese Lover*: Bhabhaian Approach and Cultural Expressions

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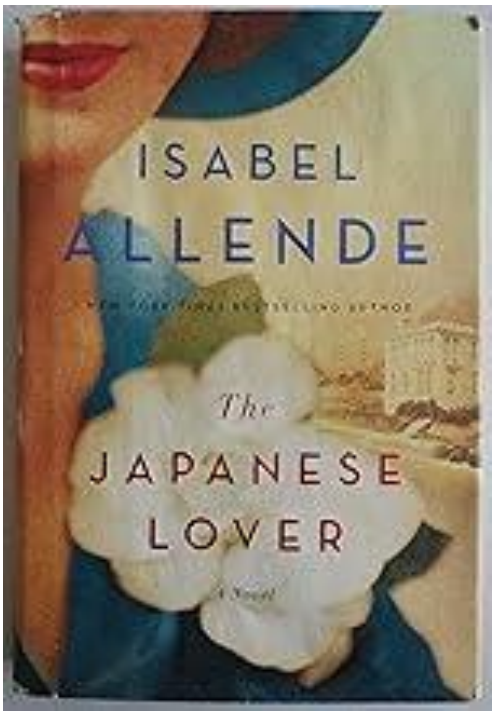

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Identity has been deemed as a crucial concern for people whose living situation is either deliberately or involuntarily altered. Individuals are compelled to adapt to a foreign or new space in which they do not belong and must construct subjectivity. Due to the cultural intersectionality, the immigrants are neither considered as native members of the host culture nor able to claim to

be part of their own. The lack of control and dependency are not under the control of either the coloniser or the colonised. But there is a conscious resistance on the part of the colonised.

Bhabha demonstrates how the histories and cultures of colonialism continuously encroach on the present, forcing us to rethink how we see cross-cultural interactions rather than viewing them as something that is confined to the past. Bhabha views culture is not an unchangeable essence, however, characterized by flux, transformation and most importantly by mixed-ness or interconnectedness, which Bhabha terms as hybridity.

Through this lens, the present research paper makes an attempt to study the causes of hybridity, homelessness and ambivalence in Isabel Allende's *The Japanese Lover* to analyse an unusual blend of simultaneous emotions of repulsion and attraction that exist between the colonizer and the colonized due to liminal status.

Keywords: Isabel Allende, *The Japanese Lover*, Identity, cultural, intersectionality, hybridity, homelessness, ambivalence

Introduction

In the present context of social, economic, and cultural globalization, the term Hybridity is loaded in social and cultural theory. Following the colonial encounter, hybridity highlights the difficulties of returning to any sense of intrinsic national or cultural identity. The process of hybridization is never an even exchange and is always inevitably a lived, power-laden activity, even though the term is frequently employed without question to refer to a balanced and harmless blending of cultures. The porous boundaries, psychological barriers, socially constructed racial superiority, political hegemony, economic domination, or military power to the detriment of others was further eroded by the process of globalization. Any migration is a result of a persistent global crisis or of social, economic, or political injustice on a worldwide scale. Migration alters how people think about identity and cultural understanding in addition to how they see physical location. Divergent opinions on hybridity have been expressed by

academics. Hutnyk (2005) asserts “Hybridity has come to mean all sorts of things to do with mixing and combination in the moment of cultural exchange”.

The term ‘hybridity’ traditionally carried the connotation of being ‘impure’, ‘racially contaminated’, and genetically ‘deviant’, in social evolution theory,” says Hoon (2006). People travel not just physically but also with all of their social, emotional, and cultural quirks, which makes it impossible for them to be mechanically assimilated into the new environment. Their psychology and personality were impacted by the unintentional internalization of other people’s cultural qualities through adaptation and adoption. This gap widened with each generation that followed, diminishing the longing to return to the country. Every community in the world is going through the process of hybridity. In situations where conflicted identity is reflected, hybridity becomes obvious.

The terms “hybrid” and “hybridity” however, have been adopted to denote cultural synthesis in the latter half of the 20th century. The notion of hybridity is referred to as the “new consensual culture of fusion and synthesis” says Lo (2000). Camilleri, F., & Kapsali, M. (2020) says Hybridity refers to mixture and fusion, of species, races, plants or cultures. It is the combination of cultural components from various sources. It creates a fresh, varied and frequently intricated form of cultural expression. Marwan M. Kraidy explains “hybridity involves the fusion of two hitherto relatively distinct forms, styles or identities, cross-cultural contact which often occurs across national borders as well as across cultural boundaries” (*Cultural Hybridity and Communication* 5).

The term hybridity in cultural studies describes the combining and blending of cultural components from various sources to create a fresh, varied and frequently intricate form of cultural expression. When individuals from various backgrounds come together, customs, languages, beliefs and practices blend to form hybrid cultures. It recognizes that cultures are dynamic, ever-evolving products of interactions and exchanges. In biology, the term hybridity refers to the progeny of two plants or animals of different species or varieties. The idea was modified for use in cultural studies to refer to the blending of various cultural components. In

large part of the contributions of postcolonial theorists Homi K. Bhabha, is a well-known theorist in the latter half of the twentieth century who examined the concept of hybridity within the framework of colonialism. Bhabha highlighted the intricate interplay and blend that arise from the collision of diverse cultural traditions. He argues that colonial encounters are marked by power imbalances, where the colonizer seeks to impose their cultural norms and values on the colonized. Hybridity, as conceptualized by Bhabha, involves a complex interplay of different cultural traditions. It is not a simple blending or assimilation but a process of constant interaction and adaptation. He also emphasises the disruptive nature of hybridity, which challenges binary oppositions and fixed identities. This disruption occurs because hybridity exists in the liminal spaces between established categories which introduces ambiguity and complexity, making it difficult to adhere strictly to colonial distinctions between the self and the other. Individuals and communities navigating hybrid spaces may experience a sense of cultural fluidity and multiple affiliations, resisting the imposition of a singular, fixed identity which he brings under cultural ambivalence.

Bhabha is one of the remarkable critics who concentrated on hybridity and addressed the question of identity in a hybridised space. In his collection of articles, *The Location of Culture (TLC)* develops a set of challenging concepts through which he illuminates how both the oppressed and the oppressor's identities are interwoven. It is neither examined nor explored the oppressed individually, however dependent on each other. The condition of migrants stated by Bhabha under his theory of hybridity is "new, neither the one nor the other" (*The Location of Culture* 25). Hybridity became more broadly associated with questions of 'subjectivity' and 'identity', eventually leading to notions of cultural hybridity (Kraidy, 2005)

All of these definitions have one thing in common: hybridity refers to the blending or blending of cultures, or, more generally, the 'creolization' of civilizations. Without much debate, hybridity can all be viewed as expected results at this stage of cultural contact. Ang's pragmatic definition of hybrid her own identity as "suspended in-between: neither truly Western nor authentically Asian; embedded in the West, yet always partially disengaged from it; disembedded from Asia yet, somehow, enduringly attached to it emotionally". She asserts that all

migrants have both positive and negative reflections when they are going through an identity crisis that is "hybrid implies unsettling of identities" (2003). In contrast to Hutnyk, Hoon, and Lo, who see hybridity as a process of cultural blending that creates a unique altered identity, Ang views identity as an entity and interprets hybridity through the changing frames of identity. Hall (1994) says "Not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of identity, which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity," is how diaspora experience is described in the literary texts.

This research paper intends to study the invisible facets of hybridity, unhomeliness and ambivalence in Isabel Allende's *The Japanese Lover* (*TJL*) through the lens of Bhabhaian concepts. When individuals from various backgrounds come together, customs, languages, beliefs and practices blend to form a hybrid culture. Hybridity acknowledges the dynamic, ever-evolving nature of cultural connections and exchanges. Allende presents her characters as migrated from their nation to the USA to survive. Her characters departure from their native land and experience a liminal space in which they find themselves excluded from two cultures. Migration is a common ground in Allende's novel that connects with Bhabha's theory on hybridity.

The term ***hybridity*** is the combination of cultural components from various sources. It creates a fresh, varied and frequently intricated form of cultural expression. Marwan M. Kraidy explains "hybridity involves the fusion of two hitherto relatively distinct forms, styles or identities, cross-cultural contact which often occurs across national borders as well as across cultural boundaries" (*Cultural Hybridityand Communication* 5). M. A. Rafey Habib, an academic humanities scholar, in *A History of Literary Criticism and Theory: From Plato to the Present*, highlights "Hybridity expresses a state of 'in betweenness,' as in a person who stands between two cultures" (750). Bhabha is one of the remarkable critics who concentrated on hybridity and addressed the question of identity in a hybridised space. In his collection of articles, *The Location of Culture (TLC)* develops a set of challenging concepts through which he illuminates how both the oppressed and the oppressor's identities are interwoven. It is neither examined nor explored the oppressed individually, however dependent upon each other. The

same is located in Isabel Allende's *The Japanese Lover (TJL).* The condition of migrants stated by Bhabha under his theory of hybridity is "new, neither the one nor the other" (*The Location of Culture* 25).

Bhabha questions the purity of culture and nationhood, he believes the colonized and colonizer's gathering creates an element of "negotiation" (*TLC* 23) which is a firm ground for how their interaction leads to structuring identities. Huddart denotes that Bhabha's insistence on hybridity's ongoing process sheds light on the fact that how "cultures are the consequence of attempts to still the flux of cultural hybridities" (*Homi K. Bhabha* 4). Thus, Bhabha views culture as not in its unchangeable essence, but characterized by change, flux, transformation and most importantly by mixed-ness or interconnectedness which Bhabha terms as hybridity.

Bhabha in his *The Location of Culture* explains "being in the 'beyond', then, is to inhabit an intervening space" (7) in which the term beyond elucidates border as a controversial position in which some are gathered. The paradoxical nature of the border is in a way that both separates and joins different places. Bhabha then stresses cultural and social differences that enable one to go beyond the fixed groups and bring about fluidity and continuity in the process of cultural formation. It owes to the ambivalent nature of the border that the colonized to establish identity, on the other hand the colonizer's identity is threatened. Under the topic "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences" in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader,* Bhabha advocates "an international culture, based not on the exoticism or multiculturalism of the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity" (209). In the same work, Bhabha denotes the idea of Frantz Fanon "the liberatory 'people' who initiate the productive instability of revolutionary cultural change are themselves the bearers of a hybrid identity" **(**208**).**

Fluidity of Identity

The conception of hybridity emphasises cross-cultural contact which frequently exceeds the cultural boundaries and national borders. The notion signifies the dynamic nature of cultural exchange and blending of diverse influences. The opening part of *The Japanese Lover* is named as "Lark House" (*TJL* 1). Allende introduces the Lark House as a cultural identity bearer which remarks hybridity with the insights of fluidity. Allende delineates that "Lark House had

undergone many changes over the years but still charged fees in line with each resident's income, the idea being to create a certain economic and racial diversity" (1). This is a mansion in which there are main blocks of houses, offices, library, dining hall, workshops and communal areas are fit within ten acres of land. There live white and black old people, most of them are middle-class. The migrants over there are free thinkers, social, ecological activists and spiritual teachers. The aim of the Lark house is to look after two hundred and fifty elderly ones with an average age of eighty-five years who need somebody's help to take care of themselves. Also, it is to bring economic and racial diversity to the house. Irina Bazili, the caretaker of the protagonist Alma and other elders in the house organises a ceremony to celebrate and exchange their cultural and religious festivities with each other. Allende remarks "no one could possibly feel excluded" (66). This house truly means to restore the lives of older people. And also to bring out the blend of different cultures, identities and the reflection of the multiculturalism that exist during the war.

The "The Fukuda Family" (75) depicts the cultural differences of two families that belong to Japan and America. The head of the Fukuda family is Takao Fukuda. He is the father of Alma's beloved Ichimei. In 1912, Takao Fukuda migrated from Japan to San Francisco because of the invasions. Allende calls them as "*issei*" (75) (*"issei"* are the first-generation Japanese immigrants who left Japan after 1907 to North America and entered the United States or Canada) these migrants are not granted citizenship until 1952. The Fukuda family came from a military background and had been loyal soldiers for the emperor of the country for centuries. Takao has been the gardener of the Belasco family for a long period at Sea Cliff. Later he collaborated with Alma's uncle Isaac Belasco to begin gardening. He easily gets fluxed with the entirely different culture and atmosphere of America, but he has not forsaken his cultural practice. Even though he felt bad to see his children adapt to the individualistic values and impudent behaviour of the natives, he strongly followed, practiced and protected his culture to where he got migrated. He always feels "proud of his culture and his language" (75). In the meantime, the family rituals and practices of the Fakuda family have brought impressions on Alma who was ejected from Poland and compelled to live with her uncle, Belasco family. Alma noticed a gesture of greeting from Ichimei Fukuda which is unfamiliar to Western society. When Alma and Ichimei do gardening, Ichimei hears his father approaching him, "he dropped his pair of pruning shears and stood stiffly to attention" (47). In this context, Bhabha's concept of

hybridity acknowledges the agency of the colonized in shaping their cultural narratives. It is not a passive acceptance of colonial influence but an active process of appropriation, reinterpretation and rearticulation of cultural elements. Thus, the culture and lifestyle of the Fukuda family differentiated from the Belasco family is well pertained to Bhabha's concept of hybridity.

In the chapter "Alma, Nathaniel, and Ichimei" (50), Takao Fukuda teaches martial arts to Isaac Belasco's son Nathaniel Belasco, where Fukuda works as a gardener. Allende narrates "Takao Fukuda taught a combination of judo and karate to his children as well as other youngsters from the Japanese community, in a rented garage on Pine Street" (53). Takao helps Nathaniel to learn martial arts to defend himself from his classmates who beat him at school. Similarly, the eighth chapter titled "Seth Belasco" (68) tells the history of the Belasco family and the protagonist, Alma Mendel. The Belascos have become the only family that survived from the grand family of Mendels in Poland which was later swept away. Isaac Belasco follows the hospitality and runs the art of stage dramas and theatre dramas that was started by the most famous ancestor David Belasco. David was "a theatrical director, producer and author of more a than hundred works" (71) in San Francisco. Isaac Belasco takes over the job that his forefather left and all the members of the Belasco family take part in performing dramas which later Alma and Fukuda children combine to stage performances. The theatre culture is not known to the Fukuda family still Takao has been encouraging his children to join the Belascos. It clearly expresses the cultural exchange between two different cultural families. Therefore, Allende's characters are initially entangled in liminal space; they find themselves on the order of two cultures between the culture of their homeland and the culture of the host land. Each character in the novel has undergone the impact of cultural hybridity which has affected their lives in the later part with good and unpleasant outcomes.

Unhomeliness

A further key concept in Bhabhaian theory is unhomeliness. Living in a hybridised space and being confronted with the dominant identity and distant from the native territories, the colonized find it hard to get a fixed identity, because neither they belong to their own culture nor the colonizer. It seems as though they are deserted by both cultures. Therefore, adapting and

adopting a stable subjectivity is challenging on account of living in a hybrid space and being exposed to a superior culture. Needless to say, unhomeliness is a feeling of unhomed within oneself apart from the physical aspect. Lois M. Tyson, a professor of English at Grand Valley State University says, "to be unhomed is to feel not at home even in your own home because you are not at home in yourself: your cultural identity crisis has made you a psychological refugee" (*Critical Theory Today* 421). As a consequence, unhomeliness makes psychological refugees mix their two cultures.

In Bhabha's words, "to be unhomed is not to be homeless, nor can the 'unhomely' be easily accommodated in that familiar division of social life into private and public spheres" (*The Location of Culture* 9). It can be said that Bhabha sees unhomeliness as the point from where one might go beyond the binary opposition of homeness and homelessness. It is observed with the characters like Alma, Irina, Ichimei and his family in *TJL*. These characters get stuck between homeness and homelessness. They regard their life as one moving on the threshold of being and non-being. Here, unhomeliness does not signify homelessness; however, it is an uncanny feel disturbing between self and other.

The "The Polish Girl" (36) tells the first sign of unhomeliness felt by Alma, the protagonist of the story, due to continuous attacks during the Second World War, Alma was forcefully migrated to America in 1939 at her eight years by her parents to stay with her uncle and aunt Isaac and Lillian Belasco in their opulent Sea Cliff mansion at San Francisco. The migration causes Alma an unhomed feeling and alienation in the new home. Her real name Alma Mendel has changed to Alma Belasco. Allende narrates the pain and suffering of Alma as:

> … they were forced apart. When she [Alma] learned that Samuel [Alma's brother] was leaving, Alma had her first ever tantrum. It began with crying and screaming, followed by her writhing in agony on the floor, and only ended when her mother and governess plunged her ruthlessly into a tub of icy water. Samuel's departure left her both sad and on edge, as she suspected it was the prologue to ever more drastic changes. (38)

Thus, unhomeliness evokes pain, agony, discomfort and unease with the people around and caused alienation. It creates a sense of not belonging and being disconnected from one's surroundings or even oneself as Alma feels in the new and crucial phase of life after the departure from her family and native land.

At the outset, Alma notices the differences between herself and her cousin Martha and Sarah, who according to her, "lived in different world" (45) because they always preoccupy with the culture of involving themselves with fashion, parties and potential boyfriends. Martha and Sara never befriend Alma and so she felt alienated. Within the family Alma whimpered and isolated herself inside the wardrobe at night. Later, her cousin, Nathaniel gives refuge and she has a friendly relationship which later becomes a marital relationship. Even after living with Belascos, Alma depends on him. After long displacement Alma finds Nathaniel's friendship as a solace to her pain.

The "The Fukuda Family" (75) explains unhomeliness which is majorly seen in the Japanese family identity. While Isaac Belasco and Takao Fukuda join to improvise their partnership in gardening, they plan to set up a nursery. Their first step to buy land in Isaac's name but not registering with the Japanese identity of Fukuda because "around the 1913 law that prohibited *issie* from becoming American citizens, owning land, or buying property" (82) because *"issei"* are the first-generation Japanese immigrants to North America were. Initially, the *issie* were used to be like immigrants from other nations but due to the consequences succeeding the Japanese assault, they are segregated from other nations and treated cruelly in the course of time because of the "Imperial Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbour in December 1941" (83).

In fact, all Japanese are suspected of spying or collaborating with the enemy country the Japan, an order was issued and forcefully insisted to "be interned in ten concentration camps in isolated areas" (83). The people of Japan are named as "yellow" (83). All the youngsters are separated and forced to work in the military camp. In the meantime, the Japanese' "ancestral

traditions began to disappear . . .” (95) simply led to the loss of the cultural identity of Japanese migrants.

In the “The Yellow Peril” (88), there were “eight thousand evacuees had to live in little more than seven thousand square feet” (94) at Topaz. It reads that the Japanese never took the time to build up a lasting identity; in reality, their identities are always switching from homeliness to unhomeliness. Their inability to find a home for themselves is the reason they start adopting the ways of the colonizer. Allende elucidates that under the surveillance of the American military, the Japanese reform new:

> schools, nurseries, sports areas, and a newspaper. They created art from bits of wood, stones, and other material left over from the construction of the camp. They made jewelry from fossilized shells and peach stones, stuffed dolls with rags, and toys with sticks. They started a library with donated books, as well as theater companies and music groups. (94)

Instead of rioting against the military of America to demand their homes or lands and cultures, Japanese simply built up a region for their fundamental facilities for survival and education to fetch knowledge for children and entertainment. In 1945, the concentration camps began to close and the evacuees are not permitted to return to San Francisco. Then, again the Fukuda family remains homeless. Allende narrates “where they had nothing to go back to anyway. Takao had lost the right to send the plots he used to cultivate, as well as his house; there was nothing left of his savings or of the money Isaac Belasco had given him when they were evacuated” (125).

Another major character suffer from the feel of unhomeliness is Irina Bazili, a young Romanian girl of eleven years raised by her grandparents Costea and Petruta. Irina was forcefully sent from her homeland a Moldovan village. Her grandparents sent her alone in the train to reunite with her mother living at Texas. Irina’s mother Radmila and her husband, Jim Robyns receive her and to take care of her. But in the new home Jim Robyns closed her inside a room where no one could enter and see her. But he took photos and videos of Irina without her

knowledge. Later, Robyns shared her photos and videos on porn channels. Because of this, Irina's face was flashed to the world. When it came to be found by the agent of Wilkins, he rescued Irina and kept his eye over her right after she moved to San Francisco. Later, she started working at Lark House from 2010. In the case of Irina, she kept moving from place to place and remained homeless. Though she got good companions like Alma, Cathy and Seth, Irina feels unhomely. She was alleviated from her sufferings and trauma at Lark house with elder people. Thus, Allende's novel depicts dislocation and unhomed feelings. All her characters have manifested the process of self-realization in hybridity by settling the struggle of identity.

Ambivalence

Another Bhabhaian concept taken for discussion in *The Japanese Lover* is ambivalence. The idea of ambivalence looks culture as consisting of opposing perceptions and dimensions. It is a symbol of authority of colonial power that Bhabha signifies "after the traumatic scenario of colonial difference, cultural or racial, returns the eye of power to some prior, archaic image or identity. Paradoxically, however, such an image can neither be 'original' - by virtue of the act of repetition that constructs it - nor 'identical'- by virtue of the difference that defines it" (*TLC* 107).

Further, Bhabha argues that "the colonial presence is always ambivalent, split between its appearance as original and authoritative and its articulation as repetition and difference" (107). The colonial presence is complex, embodying two dimensions of discourse. On one side, it presents itself as original and powerful, asserting mastery over the colonized. This dimension is marked by invention and control. On the other side, it involves displacement where colonial powers impose their ideas and systems on others, often resulting in a distorted perception of reality. Both dimensions contribute to the ambivalence of colonialism.

The relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed becomes essentially unstable and ambiguous due to ambivalence. In the words of Bill Ashcroft et al. (2007) in *Postcolonial Studies*: *The Key Concepts*, ambivalence is seen as the "unwelcome aspect of colonial discourse"

(10). Therefore, colonial discourse is ambivalent by nature and it contribute to its extinction. Likely, the characters in *The Japanese Lover* have a striking combination of simultaneous sensations of repulsion and attraction of the ambivalent relationship between the colonizer and the colonized due to bordering status.

The protagonist Alma is also Alma's having an oscillating and ambivalent identity; in fact, ambivalence is one of the Alma's peculiarities. Alma neither be assigned a certain location, nor her identity and way of life be defined and stable. She was brought to the USA at her eight years from Poland where she was born. Her memories of her native home follow her everywhere. This polarization persisted throughout her entire life. Ambivalence is not limited to her social life as an immigrant; it also plays a role in her subjectivity. Initially, she was attached to Nathaniel later gradually fell in love with Ichimei Fukuda. They are pulled apart by the interment period in the meantime. The fourteenth chapter "Boston" (130) describes that she has suffered from the indefinite absence of her ardent lover Ichimei. Allende says "had abandoned her: first her brother and her parents, then Ichimei . . . it was her destiny to lose everyone she loved most" (132). When Alma stayed in Boston for her education, Nathaniel cared her and this made Alma to love him. Allende says, "she loved him devotedly" (133). However, Alma builds a life for herself and spent her remaining days in America. In addition to the variations in her nationality, there are disparities in her personal life as well.

Alma Mendel and Nathaniel Belasco got married. Alma was bearing the child of Ichimei which was miscarried. She never forgets Ichimei's love. However, she loves both equally like an immigrant who remains faithful to his native and the host. In her old age, Alma moves to Lark House despite possessing the estate, is another example of her ambivalence. The reason behind the shift to Lark House is the death of her lover Ichimei. Allende remarks the state of Alma's ambivalence as "she moved to Lark House, she began sending the letters to herself . . . She received and read them, treasuring them as if they were new" (319).

Megumi, a daughter of Takao Fukuda, is the one who is primarily responsible for the dual emotions of attraction and repulsion that is called ambivalence. She and her family were

imprisoned in Topaz Camp alongside other Japanese nationals, and just because of their nationality "they saw as the inhumane treatment meted out to the Japanese – Americans" (115). Meanwhile one of the American soldiers named Boyd Anderson had suddenly fallen in love with Megumi Fukuda while working as a volunteer in the internment camp. Initially, she hesitated to get attracted to Boyd because of the unfair treatment by the Americans, she detested the United States on the one hand, but eventually she also falls in love with one of them and found comfort in his company on the other. Megumi too liked Boyd after having many ambiguities regarding her cultural norms and family situations. Megumi could enroll in "two things in life: to become a doctor and to marry Boyd" (119). She also succeeded in finding her true love with that American soldier after the internment camp was over. Thus, ambivalence is demonstrated through love and feeling which are often conflicted due to unstable emotions, cultural indifferences and societal expectations. All these reasons lead to a sense of uncertainty and indecision in the complex relationship of Alma, Ichimei, Nathaniel and Megumi.

Thus, the characters and events of *The Japanese Lover* go hand by hand through the lens of Bhabhaian concepts hybridity, unhomeliness and ambivalence. This is not an everlasting condition for the characters, and they are inevitably led to a hybrid state. In a research paper titled "Post-Colonial Reading of Isabel Allende's *The Japanese Lover*", the authors say, "Hybridity is indeed the product of cultural exchange through which the characters render mixed identities" (Shabrang and Karimi 85). Therefore, Allende's characters are initially entangled in liminal space; they find themselves in the order of two cultures between the culture of their homeland and the culture of the host land.

To conclude, the novel *The Japanese Lover* illustrated the character's sense of displacement and lack of belonging, leading to their journey of self-discovery within the context of hybridity and the resolution of identity conflicts. Both concepts are applied in the lives of Alma, Ichimei's family and Irina who were all dislocated from their homeland and lost their culture due to the war. Though society had pressured the Fukuda family during the internment period, the family tried hard to keep their culture alive in the host land. The Fukuda family was the one who was deeply affected by unhomeliness for years, lost their family members during the

period of battle and when they were freed, they found they had nowhere to live. After being homeless, Alma and Irina found refuge with Nathaniel and Seth subsequently. Ambivalence is demonstrated through the love and feelings which are often conflicted due to the unstable emotions, cultural indifferences and societal expectations leading to a sense of uncertainty and indecision in the complex relationship of Alma and Ichimei. Because of her multiple ambiguities, Alma ruined her relationship with Ichimei by feeling uneasy about carrying his baby and consequently getting married to her cousin Nathaniel. Irina was drowned in ambivalence with her past events like Alma and kept on rejecting the awaiting better life with Seth. All the characters and occurrences in the novel were well endured the concepts of Bhabha.

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