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Editor's Note

Singularities aspires to be a journal which not just records the researches through publishing, but one which also initiates dialogues and urges involvement. True research writing needs to take on the job of intellectually activating untrodden tangents. The Singularities conferences, envisaged as annual events, are meant to be exercises in pursuing the contemporary and wherever possible, to be efforts in leading the contemporary too. Space that permeates our existence, that influences the very way in which one experience, understand, navigate and recreate the world was selected as the theme for the annual conference of Singularities in 2017. The existence of space is irrevocably intertwined with culture, communication, technology, geography, history, politics, economics, and the lived experience. Understanding the spatial relationships, the tensions and dynamics that inform them, enables us to form insights into the process that configure the spaces we move through, inherit and inhabit. Spatial studies, also designated by terms as geocriticism, geopoetics or spatial humanities, is a growing body of critical scholarship, that attempts to discern the metaphysics of a culture from its own material. It frames an alternative method to the historical, biographical and narratological, to the perception of a culture. The papers that are going to be presented in the Singularities Conference on Space, compiled in the special conference volume, not only examined the cultural attributes of a measurable space, but critiqued the imaginary, otherworldly, mythical, fantastic, cyberspace, and even the hybrid zones where fiction meets reality. We are happy to present Singularities Space Conference Issue which offers stimulating read in terms of the experience of Space.

P. K. Babu., Ph. D
Chief Editor

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Eking out Space through Myths: Reading Thomas King's 'Green Grass, Running Water'

Colonization and settlement had devastating consequences on the indigenous communities of North America. Entire cultures were expected to be absorbed into and engulfed by the hegemonic discourse without much ado. The only option left for the Native American tribes was either to assimilate or to vanish. Since assimilation was conceived as an impossibility, it was conveniently assumed that they will vanish sooner or later. The myth of the vanishing Indian, established with the certainty and authority of scientific discourse, was steeped in contradiction. Attempts at assimilation were carried out in full swing, albeit with the conviction that they will not be able to assimilate. Indigenous cultures rendered mute consequent to colonization resist the onslaught of the colonial discourse by finding anchorage and sustenance in their own culture-specific myths. They were deprived of their means of livelihood, their language, their culture and their land. Amidst persistent, yet failed colonial efforts to 'acculture' the indigenous communities, survival became the key issue. Native populations were dwindling, their traditional habitats were plundered, their customs and rituals banned. These uprooted cultures seek out myths to interrogate the pernicious effects of racism, to survive in an exceedingly hostile world and to address contemporary reality. Myths enable them to carve out a space for themselves. In embracing myths, they redefine Eurocentric concepts of space and time, bring together the real and the unreal within the same space, and reiterate the existence of alternative epistemologies. This paper seeks to explore how the mythic in the novel 'Green Grass, Running Water' enables them to situate themselves in the present day world. Besides invoking a mythic consciousness, the novel reconfigures the empiricist notions of space and time in an effort to fathom the mystery of the universe.

In 'Comparing Mythologies', Tomson Highway explains the rationale of going back to myths. "... without mythology, we would be nothing but walking corpses, zombies, mere empty hulks of animal flesh and bone, skin and blood and liquid matter with no purpose, no reason for existing, no use, no point, nothing." (Comparing Mythologies, 18) Myths "delineate the spiritual nervous system (of the community) in all its wondrous, mystical, magical complexity." (Highway, 20) For the Natives, it also served the purpose of decolonization. Returning to myths was more than an attempt to return to the past, it was an attempt to survive in the contemporary. In 'Green Grass, Running Water', mythical figures do not occupy an extraterrestrial space, they intermingle and interfere in the lives of ordinary Indians. The novel presents two strands of narratives one is the realistic story of Lionel, Eli, Alberta and Charlie Looking Bear. The other is the magical story involving coyote and the four Indians. The two strands merge to create what Vizenor calls a complex polyphonic, yet playful "mythic verism." (Vizenor, 190) Coyote crosses a wide range of conceptual boundaries by meddling in the lives of contemporary Indians. The 'constructs' of reality are challenged by another sort of reality that circumvents the established modes of expressing reality. Mythic reality is informed by newer notions of time and space. Space is one vast

expanse that encompasses land, water and the sky. The time invoked is a primordial time that encompasses the past, the present and the future. The identity of the four Indians interred at the mental asylum escape in order to 'fix' the world transcends normative notions of time and gender. The janitor guesses that they could be over hundred years of age, and that they could be either men or women. Every time they escape, they fix that part of the world they deem to be repaired and return. The Native world has been turned topsy turvy in the aftermath of colonialism and they have taken upon themselves the task of setting things right. They interfere in the world around them and make creative changes. The endings of the Westerns in Bill Bursum's Home Entertainment Barn which regularly feature the triumph of cowboys over the Indians are altered much to Bursum's chagrin that he imagines glitches in technology.

Myths operate in the realm of primordial time and space. The novel does not follow the linear notions of time and space. A mythic perspective is brought in to talk about the connections and interconnections in the universe. The novel invokes creation stories where one finds the Sky World and the Water World and where mythical beings like First Woman descend from the sky to the earth. The universe was one wide expanse that came into being through mythical stories. Stories connecting the earth and the sky are narrated in multiple ways to drive home the interconnectedness of both the worlds, as against the Christian notion of a single, male God perched on his throne high up above in the heavens and the world of human beings beneath. According to one version, First Woman falls from the Sky World to the Water World. First Woman and grandmother turtle work to create land. A handful of mud is obtained by diving deep and this grows and spreads to form the land. Another story tells of Changing Woman from the Sky World who sees her reflection in the water world, flies down and lands on Old Coyote. In another story, Old Woman digs and digs falls through a hole into the sky into the water. Babo Jones, the Black woman, who is also a marginalized figure, tells of a woman who falls from sky. She sits on the back of a giant turtle and gets one of the ducks to dive for mud, which leads to the creation of the land.

The relevance of telling stories to create reality is emphasized throughout the novel. Each of the four parts of the novel is a story telling episode that attempts to subvert existing 'reality' and create new ones. The proclamation in the novel that "there are no truths, only stories" is a potent reminder of the impossibility or absurdity of narrowing down the universe into a singular, 'authentic' reading and the dangers inherent in accepting one story as the truth. (Green Grass, 391) In the novel, the characters are incessantly attempting to tell stories to 'fix the world', since stories make up the world. The haphazard world can be set right only through telling stories. Certain stories have become so influential and dogmatic that they masquerade as the 'truth', pushing other stories as fictional and worthless. Hence the imminent task is to dethrone those stories and consider alternative ways of perceiving the world in keeping with Native traditions. It also enabled to forge identities both at the personal and the collective level, through story telling just when colonial attempts were in full swing to stamp out the vestiges of an aboriginal culture, the perishing of which was an inevitability in the march of the human race towards culture and civilization.

The first story that has to be set right is stories on the origin of the universe. According to Native conception, the universe took its origin in and through water. Hence the invoking of the origin of the universe from water is deliberate to understand the world from a Native perspective and to debunk the Christian theory of the origin of the universe from void. The

novel has a very unconventional and abrupt beginning “So, in the beginning, there was nothing. Just the water” (Green Grass, 1) This is quickly contested by the dream that manages to get out of coyote’s head, calls itself dog and then is mistaken for God. This self-styled creator is baffled at the sight of water all around as he is adamant in establishing that the world was created from void, mirroring the White arrogance in appropriating ‘reality’. In an authoritative manner, the conventional story is rendered thus by the Lone Ranger “In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep” (Green Grass, 14) and it is challenged by Ishmael who exhorts him to get the story right.

So pervasive is the wrong story that it can be contested only by a continual process of telling right stories. Stories had to be told and retold until it is got right and this is precisely what the novel aims at. One of the narrators cautions that though mistakes cannot be avoided, it is “best not to make them with stories” because stories construct reality.

Each part is a creation story narrated by four Native elders who impersonate White characters namely Hawkeye, the Lone Ranger, Ishmael and Robinson Crusoe – all characters of imperial master-narratives. Each section delineates a creation story featuring female aboriginal mythical figures namely First Woman, Changing Woman, Thought Woman and Old Woman. Within the novel, these creation figures from diverse aboriginal myths confront White mythical and literary characters, who mingle with present day Natives, creating a complex, magical-realist world where real human beings and mythical beings cohabit, and the past and the present intersect meaningfully. Bringing to the fore creation figures from diverse aboriginal myths, the novelist tries to establish a pan-Indian perspective. Also these myths challenge the Eurocentric myths that masquerade as the ‘Truth.’ Juxtaposing them subverts the veracity of those myths. Hence the unwillingness of the Christian God to share apples with First Woman is re-read as selfishness and egoism from a Native perspective. The Native creation figures are female that challenge the male notion of a creator. The stories emphasize mutuality to hierarchies, harmony to exploitation. These myths establish the indigenous perspectives of gender complementarity and harmonious existence with nature.

The novel exploits the comic subversive potential of the trickster figure coyote to carve spaces for indigenous communities for whom the death-knell sounded with the onset of the ‘civilizing’ mission of the colonizer. Highway describes the trickster as an “essentially comic, clownish sort of character ... (who) straddles the consciousness of man and that of God. The Great Spirit. Without (whom) the core of Indian culture would be gone forever. (Rez Sisters, XII) Trickster stories are inherently subversive. Normative notions of reality are reconfigured through coyote. He is a listener to the story that is being narrated, a very playful narrator who actively interferes in the narrative process. He even argues for his right to tell a story by calling into question the foundations of a democracy in which animals have no say. The anthropocentric notion of the colonial discourse where ‘man’ occupies the centre and everything else is marginal is proved devastating for a harmonious and balanced existence. Alberta’s wish for a baby without having to go through the hassles of marriage is thwarted due to the restrictive rules for artificial insemination. A comic twist is given to the story as the White, heterosexual norms are thrown to the winds with Alberta getting impregnated by coyote. The colonial project of the dam steeped in commercial interests that would devastate indigenous lives and cultures is camouflaged as apolitical and a mark of modernity. Finally the dam is destroyed in a coyote-precipitated earthquake; it is significant

to note that the dam bursts on a Sun Dance day, the annual ritual festival of Natives. The elemental forces are invoked to set right human interventions in the natural world. Hence the final flood assumes mythic dimensions. According to Native beliefs, the universe originated from water. The novel, besides using water as counter discourse, also makes an emphatic call to fall back on the mythic, where dualities are reconciled and where the universe is conceived as a unified one. The flood consumes everything, leaving room for beginning creation afresh. Everything gets destroyed and the cycle of narrating stories resume. The novel ends the way it begins “In the beginning, there was nothing ... Just the water” (Green Grass, 431) in keeping with the circular conception of life. The novel foregrounds the need for replacing the pervasive Christian myth “that is conceived of as one straight line, an arrow that travels with speed accelerating from point A to B to C, and ends there abruptly” with Native myth that is “one vast circle.” (Comparing Mythologies, 43)

The novel realistically portrays present-day Natives, some of whom are lost individuals like Lionel who are unsure of his identity, or ‘apples’ like Charlie who are red outside and white inside, or men like Eli who move to the city but are unable to make it. Strong female characters like Latisha who lives independently after getting estranged from her white husband and Alberta, a professor of history, who teaches indigenous history to White students barely interested in it are representative of notions of female independence in indigenous communities. Native communities were matriarchal. Recourse to myth enables the indigenous communities to repair the damage wreaked by the ‘rape’ of the colonial forces. Highway describes the invasion of colonial forces as a brutal rape when “the circle of matriarchy was punctured by the straight line of patriarchy, the circle of the womb, was punctured, most brutally, by the straight line of the phallus. And the bleeding was profuse.” (Highway, 47)

Hence, the need of a mythic perspective is exigent to repair the damage, to comprehend the world in its complexity and to survive. Juxtaposing one set of stories with the other helps undermine the authority of the dominant. Return to myth becomes imperative to decolonize indigenous communities, to undo the authority of Christian, androcentric, heterosexual perspectives, to reconfigure notions of time and space and to create spaces for survival.

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A Narratological Study of Benyamin's Novels

Abstract

This contribution discusses the connection between the theory of transtextuality and Benyamin's novels. Benyamin (1971) the young and prolific contemporary Malayalam writer who came to public attention with his Aadujeevitham, attempts to master the modern techniques of novel craft as seen from an analysis of his works. His engagement with Narratology is fascinating and interesting. His style of writing helped him to attract a wide range of audience and specialty of his writing is that he never repeats narrative methods in his novels. The idea of transtextuality is proposed by the French structuralist critic and narratologist Gerard Genette. He put forwards four types of textualities include intertextuality, metatextuality, paratextuality and architextuality. Benyamin's novels are here arranged in the framework of Genette's transtextuality.

Key words : Narratology, Intertextuality, Metatextuality, architextuality, paratextuality

“Without craftsmanship, inspiration is a mere reed shaken in wind”

- Johannes Brahms

Benyamin is a narrative craftsman. Being a modern writer, he is very much conscious of the structure of his narratives. He uses various interesting narrative techniques in his works. The reader may get confused thinking whether he used all those techniques consciously or unconsciously. He is well versed in the use of narrative craft with an air of confidence and self satisfaction which add charms to his work. Benyamin himself revealed that he has tried to experiment with the craft in his every novel (Ahemmed 49). He proudly admits that he writes for the contemporary audience, not for the people who scared of modern literary craft. Benyamin expects a new reading community, who can look at the world of literature with hope and curiosity.

Gerard Genette concentrates the greater part of his studies on the nature of narrative fiction. In his trilogy, *The Architect: an Introduction* (1992), *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (1997), and *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (1997), Genette talks about a new coherent theory called transtextuality. Each of Benyamin's novels can be given as example for different textualities. Although it is possible for a single work to represent more than one textuality, this article attempts to limit specific novels for each kind. Transtextuality is basically Genette's version of intertextuality. Among the four textualities, intertextuality is used by Genette as an umbrella term which include all kinds of quotations, allusions and plagiarism that allows intertextual relation between specific elements of individual texts. He explains this concept as the “relationship of co presence between two texts or among several texts (Genette 1992: 1-2). The relationship between Benyamin's twin novels- *Al-Arabian Novel Factory* and *Mullappoo Niramulla* Pakalukal can be considered as intertextual. Here the definition slightly changes into “the actual presence of one text within

another". Their possible references to other works of literature are hardly mentioned here. Next is metatextuality, which is very much close to the definition of intertextuality. It denotes the relation by which one text bears critically on the other. For example, one can see

Metatextual relationship between the Bible and its critical commentaries as they provide new interpretations on Bible. Benyamin's novels *Abeesagin* and *Pravachakanmarude Randaam Pusthakam* are such kind of biblical reinterpretations. Readers can find metatextuality between these works and the Bible. A paratextual analysis of *Manjaveyil Maranangal*, *Aadujeevitham* and an architextual study of *Akkapporinte Irupath Nasrani Varshangal* are also attempted here.

Intertextual Relationship of the Twin Novels

Intertextuality in Genette's idea has more limited dimensions. It is the relationship between two texts according to the co presence. Genette uses this term "for a rich mosaic of echoes of, quotations from, allusion to and parallelisms with other texts in a text such as *The Waste Land* by T.S Eliot" (Mirenyat 534). It also refers to the actual presence of one text within another.

If *Al- Arabian Novel Factory* is taken as text A and *Mullappoo Niramulla Pakalukal* as Text B, one can find that text B lies inside the text A. The events and characters are closely connected together. *Al-Arabian Novel Factory* begins when Pratap, the Torando Sunday journalist reaches an Arab city in order to collect materials for a foreign writer. Pratap gradually learns about a Pakistani girl Sameera and her book *A Spring without Smell*, which is text B. Usually, when suggesting intertextual relationships, it is important to target quotations, but here, no quotes from text B are included in text A. Only events and people appear again. In another way, it can be said that text A completes text B. The former almost succeeds in answering the questions left by the latter. *Al- Arabian Novel Factory* shows the existence of text B as a work. The title of text B is first mentioned in the second part of text A. This section is specifically subtitled as 'Not for Sale'. Text B is written by Sameera Parveen and is banned for sale in that country (*Al Arabian Novel Factory* 90). The narrator of text A (Pratap) gets it from his companion Riyaz, who is also from Pakistan

The next reference to text B comes in text A when Pratap's friend's husband, Perumal, shares his experience about this book. During the investigation about Sameera and her book, the narrator meets many characters, who Sameera had mentioned in her book. He also encounters the aftereffects of Jasmine revolution, especially with the consequences of the suppressed uprising in that country. The narrator gradually becomes more aware about the political condition of that country. Here readers can find that how the same incidents are looked upon from the different perspectives of two narrators. While Pratap learns about the events from other people, Sameera experiences it in her real life. Pratap's curiosity to unravel the mystery behind Sameera and her book leads him to many troubles. Through his experiences, text A explores more relationships with text B.

The role of the characters of text B in *Al- Arabian Novel Factory* become more clear when Riyaz gets arrested by the police for terrorism. Riyaz is later revealed to be Javed's brother to whom Sameera addresses her writings. Text A reveals that Javed was the person who converts Sameera's E- mails in to a book and hands them over it to Riyaz. Towards the end of the novel, Javed meets Pratap and tells his real story. He reveals that his real name is Yasin,

who became friend with Sameera through E- mail. He could never meet her, as she had gone somewhere else before that. At the end, Javed promises to Pratap that he will definitely find her as she is not just a story for him, but his love! (Benyamin 423) *Mullappoo Niramulla Pakalukal* becomes complete only after reading *Al- Arabian Novel Factory*. The two stories are interlinked each other and one is incomplete without the other. This relationship can be seen as an intertextual according to Genette's theory.

Metatextuality : Abeesagin and Pravachakanmaarude Randaam Pusthakam

The relation between a text and its critical commentaries is regarded as metatextual relationship. When text A interprets and criticizes text B, their relationship is metatextual. Different types of interpretation of several books are example for this particular relationship (Mirenayat 535). Such a relation exists between the Bible and Benyamin's *Pravachakanmarude Randaam Pusthakam* and *Abeesagin*. These two novels are written as biblical re- interpretations. Both take their thread from the Bible and subvert them into a different plot. If the Bible is taken as text A, *Pravachakanmarude Randaam Pusthakam* as text B and *Abeesagin* as text C, to prove metatextuality, it is necessary to find the implicit references of text A in text B and C. By implicit references Genette means an implied kind of reference, which is "not stated, but understood in what is expressed" (Simandan 32). Metatextual relationship exists between a text and its criticism written. This relationship is seen in a commentary on literary texts (Mirenayat 535).

Text B acknowledges the specific references in text A. Apart from the direct quotations from Bible; a more baffling kind of metatextuality is evident in text B. In these two novels, the names of the characters are similar to those in the Bible, their characteristics are extremely different. The author deconstructs the public life of Jesus and presents it in a controversial manner. In the cases of events and places, one can find both similarities and deviations from the Bible. The relationship between these two books becomes metatextual as the history of Jesus is criticized and interpreted in a different fashion in text B. Besides Jesus, the characters like Judas, Mary Magdalene, Barabbas, and Lazarus are also subverted here. The life of Jesus, his childhood and three years of public life are recorded in the New Testament. According to Bible, he is the incarnation of God and his spiritual teaching is followed by his disciples. Christian beliefs emphasize that Jesus died for the sins of all people and that he rose from the dead after three days of his crucifixion. One cannot find this divine image of Jesus in *Pravachakanmarude Randaam Pusthakam*, while portrayed as a common man who possesses all kinds of human weaknesses. He is very passionate and sincere towards his duties and at the same time less confident and confusing character as he wrestles with ambitions. Benyamin deconstructs the divine image of Jesus even at the very beginning, as he mentions that he is the child of Mary from her first marriage (Benyamin 35). The author introduces another character Mari, who is the second wife of Joseph and the step mother of Jesus Christ. She is presented as a very powerful character who worries about her elder son (Jesus) and supports him even at his final moments on the cross.

There are also other examples of similar transformations that have taken place in the characters. For example, Benyamin transforms Mary Magdalene into a negative character. He portrays her as a woman who takes revenge on Jesus for rejecting her love. Barabas, who was chosen by the people over Christ, is transformed in this novel as a martyr. The novel tells that Jesus was crucified along with Barabas and Simon Magnus. The Bible mentions these

two only as thieves.

Pravachakanmarude Randaam Pusthakam portrays Judas, who according to the Bible is one of the twelve disciples of Jesus and the one who betrayed Christ for thirty silver coins, differently and interestingly. Benyamin totally re interprets this character and presents him as a faithful, loving and revolutionary companion of Jesus. Unlike the Biblical character, he shows more physical intimacy towards Jesus. The novel's portrayal of their intimate relationship provides a different level of interpretation.

Characters, events and relationships portrayed in the novel are at odds with the Biblical account. In the Bible, Jesus meets Peter as a fisherman. Andrews is Peter's brother. Jacob and John are also brothers according to Bible, but in the novel, there are no such blood relations between Jesus' disciples. Another example is the novels' portrayal of Thomas's attraction towards Mary, and her love towards Jesus. None of these incidents are mentioned in Bible. Christ's crucifixion is also depicted with many changes by Benyamin.

Abeesagin (text C) can also be considered as a critical interpretation of the Old Testament story in the Bible. The story of Abeesagin and Solomon does not appear in the Bible. King Solomon and Abeesagin are Old Testament characters. Abeesagin has a very limited role in both the old Testament and in the novel. Even though she is the title character; the story develops through the narrative of Solomon. The novel claims that Solomon wrote his Songs for Abeesagin, a servant girl was appointed to serve King David during his final days. The Old Testament, mentions that Solomon's step brother Adoniav wanted to marry Abeesagin (1 Kings 1:17), but, Solomon kills all dissenters including Adoniav (1 Kings, 1:25). In the novel, Solomon, who is madly in love with Abeesagin asks his father to free her. David agrees and decides to let them marry. During that time, Bethsheba, Solomon' mother, asks her husband to make Solomon his heir. But Adoniav, who was already promised the crown, offers to exchange the kingdom or getting Abeesagin as his wife. This, in the novel, makes Solomon kill his brother. Abeesagin disappears from Bible after the death of Adoniav. In the novel, the queen Sheba takes Abeesagin to her country in order to marry her brother. The novel does not give any answers about where Abeesagin vanished. According to the Old Testament, King Solomon marries many foreign women, but in the novel, he dies with the memories of Abeesagin.

In both text A and text B, Benyamin deconstructs the story and characters of text A. In a metatextual relationship, the actual characters and events are borrowed from the original text. It does not require citation as the author is focusing on implicit references.

Paratextuality : Manjaveyil Maranangal and Aadujeevitham

According to Genette, paratextuality consists of two sub categories, peritexts and epitexts. Peritexts are the texts which have a close connection to the actual text and epitexts are the texts that are loosely related to the actual text. According to Genette, book cover, titles, sub headings, notes, preface, chapters etc included in the first category and materials like interviews, reviews, editorial letters etc are come in second group. While analyzing the peritexts in *Manjaveyil Maranangal*, one can see that it has divided into nine chapters and an appendix. Each subtitle has its own significance. Benyamin here used the technique of including preface inside the first chapter. The appendix of the novel is divided under many titles. The last peritext related to this novel is its acknowledgement, which is submitted to his

friends, family, authentic websites and other literary materials (351).

There are many epitexts for Adujeevitham including interviews, reviews etc. On book that can consider as an important paratext of Adujeevitham is *Adujeevitham Kathakal parayumbol* (When Adujeevitham Tell Stories). The preface written by Krishnadas, titled 'The Milestone of Literature after Ramanan' is followed by 'looking back', Muzafir Ahemmed's interview of Benyamin (Ahemmed 37), where Benyamin shares his experiences and perspectives. This interview provides a clear idea about how one should separate life from fiction. It is followed by two essays of translators of the book. 'When Arab reads Goat Days', by Suhail Vafi Addrseri who translated Adujeevitham in to Arabi and 'Goat Days and Me' by Joseph Koyippally who produced the English translation. Both share their experiences and difficulties during the translation.

Architextuality in Akkapporinte Irupathu Nasrani Varshangal

Akkapporinte Irupathu Nasrani Varshangal has an architextual relationship with the genres of historical fiction and satire. According to Genette, architextuality is the most implicit among the categories. It is silent in nature. The architextual nature of texts also includes figurative and thematic expectations about texts. Genette states that a very important factor of this type is "the reader's expectations, and thus their reception of the work" (Simandan 33). Architextuality deals with the relation between a text and a text of its kinds (Mirenayat 536). Benyamin's novel is set in the background of the history of Christianity in Kerala. A historical fiction refers to the story takes place with real people, in real world, but with various fictionalized elements. Here in this novel, the background is real, but the characters and their story are combined with many dramatized elements. In the beginning of the text, Benyamin himself reveals that he imposed his imaginative skills upon the real people, living or dead (Benyamin 5). He looks at the historical events from a different point of view. It is interesting to note that these historical facts are presented before the audience in a satirical manner. Benyamin, being an insider and outsider of the system, looks at the events seriously and critically. So one can clearly figure out the architextual relation between the text and these two genres, that is Historical fiction and satire.

If one looks at the different aspects transtextuality in Benyamin's novels, it becomes clear that almost all types are used by him. Benyamin's major intention behind using different narrative techniques is to make the audience familiar with the modern art of narration and explored areas of Narratology. Remember the renowned playwright Bertolt Brecht, who tried to risen the critical ability of the minds of his spectacles. Like him, here, Benyamin's

craftsmanship demands more attention and critical thinking of the readers. His intelligence in presenting various narrative elements makes him an expert in craft.

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Space Memories: A Geocritical Comparison of London City in *Mrs Dalloway* and *The End of the Affair*

“We bring our lares with us”.

To live in the space of memory instead of spaces of the material places is a usually a preferable choice for human being. What tempt them in crowded streets or jammed traffic or serene parks or even before a particular object or place in the city to scroll their memories to the spaces they personally or collectively developed in the course of their attachment with the material places has a lot to do with the psychic evolutions that happens within them. All types of memories have an inseparable bondage with images as “generally, in fact, the word image, in the works of psychologists, is surrounded with confusion: we see images, we reproduce images, we retain images in our memory. The image is everything except a direct product of the imagination” (Bachelard 33). And in the city space, as every other space, “memory and imagination remain associated, each one working for their mutual deepening” (5).

Both *Mrs Dalloway* and *The End of the Affair* have dealt a lot with memory spaces of its characters who had made either emotional or physical or both attachments with London. London and its various ingredients did engrave the memories of characters in a way that they have kept very personal images in their mental spaces about the city. While the most parts dealing with memory spaces in *Mrs Dalloway* are associated with Clarissa's memories about her younger age periods and Peter Walsh's memory about Clarissa as well as the Septimus' abnormal condition which caused him to think about his eventful past, Bendrix and Sarah Miles in *The End of the Affair* had very passionate and emotional memories about the love they had each other and the narrator Bendrix's most of the memories are related to the hatred, “so this is a record of hate far more than of love” (Bachelard4), and it is definitely correct that he commonly speaks with positive minds about the two people he claims to hate, Sarah Miles and Henry Miles. Arguably, the chief characters from each novel lived throughout the narrations in their memories as London had immanently inflicted unforgettable spaces in their mind that point into their past. They would be living in their memories as long as they live in London because all their memory spaces have either directly or indirectly associations with the city. “The space we love is unwilling to remain permanently enclosed. It deploys and appears to move elsewhere without difficulty; into other times, and on different planes of dream and memory” (Bachelard 53).

The cause behind Clarissa's and Septimus' disjointed selves is their past and their incapability to wholly constrain themselves to the present. Though the experiences each of them confronted are totally dissimilar, they share the commonsense of defeat and elimination, which they could not escape from. Besides them, other characters also including Sally Seton and Henry Miles take part in narratives about London through their memory spaces.

There was Regent's Park. Yes. As a child he had walked in Regent's Park - odd, he thought, how the thought of childhood keeps coming back to me - the result of seeing Clarissa, perhaps; for women live much more in the past than we do, he thought (Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* 45-46).

Peter remembers his past life with Clarissa as she meant a lot for him in his past. He cannot stop remaining on retentions of her and yet he believes that women are more sentimental than men. His memory about Regent's park is thus tied with recollections of Clarissa.

Woolf's awareness of memory as restoring past feelings is what enables her fictional characters in *Mrs Dalloway* to live in both the experience of the past and in its backward and forward. While walking up Bond Street in London to purchase flowers for her party in the late afternoon, for instance, the brightness of morning hastens Clarissa's emotional state, and she remembers the times she consumed as a girl at Bourton. After long period, remembrance assists her to create a sensual unity of herself with the past through time, signifying an outlook of self-awareness that constantly transformed self:

What a lark! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to her when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could bear now, she had burst open the French windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air. How fresh, how calm, stiller than this of course, the air was in the early morning; like the flap of a wave; the kiss of a wave; chill and sharp and yet (for a girl of eighteen as she then was) solemn, feeling as she did, standing there at the open window, that something awful was about to happen; looking at the flowers, at the trees with the smoke winding off them and the rooks rising, falling; standing and looking (3).

London thus gave Clarissa joy and pleasant recollections of her younger ages. As the First World War is over, the new and tranquil morning of Bond Street intensifies Clarissa's sensitivity. She recollects scene after scene at Bourton. The morning also brings her of the quiet experience at Bourton, yet she transfers these pleasant moments to the whole of her past. Clarissa recalls Peter Walsh's sayings, their conversations, arguments and his proposal to her along with the serenity of 'flowers, trees...the rooks rising; falling; standing'. These objects become part of her fanciful memories of the past experience at Bourton. Again, Clarissa found her joy in remembering her old days in Bourton, as Woolf writes:

She could remember scene after scene at Bourton - Peter furious; Hugh not, of course, his match in any way, but still not a positive imbecile as Peter made out; not a mere barber's block. When his old mother wanted him to give up shooting or to take her to Bath he did it, without a word; he was really unselfish, and as for saying, as Peter did, that he had no heart, no brain, nothing but the manners and breeding of an English gentleman, that was only her dear Peter at his worst; and he could be intolerable; he could be impossible; but adorable to walk with on a morning like this (5-6).

The adorability of that morning thus allowed Clarissa to pick herself to the pleasurable memories of her teenage in Bourton.

After purchasing flowers for her event in the evening, Clarissa Dalloway senses loneliness, "an emptiness about the heart of life at home" (Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* 24), when

she walks back to home because her close friend, Lady Bruton, requested Richard Dalloway to have lunch without inviting her. She dives at once into her remembrance of past and evokes in mind her lesbian relationship with Sally Seton along with the harmony, joy and pleasure she experienced when they were together in Bourton. Memorizing her affairs with Sally calms her distressed feeling. She finds “the purity, the integrity, of her feeling” (28) through her memories of Sally. Here, the emotional variation happened in Clarissa's mind though she was walking through pathways of Bourton had inflicted a telling impact by her thought of a present loneliness which she healed through her recollection of her past. That why Clarissa remembered the incident of Lady Bruton's attitude of not inviting her to lunch party along with her husband is another matter in concern. Though the traveller Marco Polo have tried to not relate any kind of memory or thought with a city when entering to it, as he says: “But in vain I set out to visit the city: forced to remain motionless and always the same, in order to be more easily remembered, Zorah has languished, disintegrated, disappeared. The earth has forgotten her” (qtd. In Westphal 143), the mind feeds the memory of the place. Thus, it is difficult to dissipate this feeling. “As one skirts the place, one approaches it. Any study of a space must take its geological or archaeological turns” (Westphal 143). Likewise, Clarissa creates the same fanciful concord with her past experience when she perceives Peter Walsh, her ex-lover. Peter comes to visit Clarissa after coming back from his long stay in India, and when she realizes him she is baffled and falls at the same time into memories including the moments that they shared together at Bourton. Clarissa does not speak these recollections verbally, however she departs mutely to her past experiences and invigorates them richly by taking shelter in eternal impersonality as she voices privately. She recalls everything including how Peter Walsh proposed to her, how they debated with each other, as well as their contacts with others around them. Her memory thus goes back to early London where she spent her teenage periods with highly living passions.

For in those days she was completely reckless; did the most idiotic things out of bravado; bicycled round the parapet on the terrace; smoked cigars. Absurd, she was very absurd. But the charm was overpowering, to her at least, so that she could remember standing in her bedroom at the top of the house holding the hot-water can in her hands and saying aloud, “She is beneath this roof... She is beneath this roof!” (Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* 28).

Clarissa remembers she was in the full spirit in her younger ages as London gave her memorable incidents to keep in mind for a lifetime.

Peter Walsh also, like Clarissa, goes through these practices of sensual unison with the past in his memory when he meets Clarissa. After parting Clarissa Dalloway with the reverberation of her saying in his ear, “Remember my party, Remember my party” (Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* 39), Peter Walsh also draws his memory into his past at Bourton. He recalls a number of scenes from his relations with Clarissa when they had been lovers there. Peter remembers that “there was always something cold in Clarissa” (40) and how Clarissa rejected him:

As a cloud crosses the sun, silence falls on London; and falls on the mind. Effort ceases. Time flaps on the mast. There we stop; there we stand. Rigid, the skeleton of habit alone upholds the human frame. Where there is nothing, Peter Walsh said to himself; feeling hollowed out, utterly empty within. Clarissa refused me, he thought. He stood there thinking, Clarissa refused me (40-41).

The silence and gloomy mood of London brings Peter's mind back to the sad fate he experienced from the Clarissa's part. In contrast to Clarissa's pleasant memory of her past in Bourton, Peter's memories related to Bourton have always an unhappy face as it could be cleared from the above passage. Further, his memories about Bourton annoy him when he remembers their quarrels and their acquaintance with Mr Dalloway, Clarissa's husband. Then he comes to realize that he had been very silly in Clarissa's mind; or else, she would have accepted him: "It was as if she said to Peter - it was all aimed at him, he knew - 'I know you thought me absurd...'" (49). Also, Peter Walsh associates London Streets in the present with those here collects from the past. He discovers them changed very much:

The amusing thing about coming back to England, after five years, was the way it made, anyhow the first days, things stand out as if one had never seen them before; lovers squabbling under a tree; the domestic family life of the parks. Never had he seen London look so enchanting - the softness of the distances; the richness; the greenness; the civilisation, after India, he thought, strolling across the grass (58).

Here, he attaches together his diverse reminiscences of the past and the present thoughts together and attemptsto create his view from these memories. This attachment enables him to establish a sensual unity and continuity about London of past and present.

The another character Septimus Warren Smith, like most of his peers, left London to Italy during the war to defend England while he was at his youth since to join in the military was a part of great pride at that time. Thus, "he was one of the first to volunteer" (Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* 71) andhe improves his "manliness" and is "promoted" after serving with great distinction in the war (71). When his close acquaintance Evans is killed, Septimus praises himself "upon feeling very little and very reasonably. The War had taught him. It was sublime. He had gone through the whole show, friendship, European War, death, had won promotion, was still under thirty and was bound to survive" (71). After this incident, however, he starts to ponder overhimself being remorseful because he was mute and did not appear to be careful about his friend's death: "when Evans was killed; that was worst;...and was so pocked and marked with vice that women shuddered when they saw him in the street" (75). The sensation of guiltiness horrors Septimus and makes him agonise emotionally. London thus gives Septimus memories of fight and horror as he could not save his close friend in the wartime though had the pride of sharing his part in the war for his country. According to Fink, "the past can be represented in its entirety, as it undergoes a selective process by memory" (qtd. in Westphal 137).

Staying in the London thus gave Septimus disturbing memories due to the arguable fact that his friend Evans was killed in the war to protect England. The recurrence of certain words in his memory, forexample "dropping dead down" (Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* 16), continuously places him in internal struggle and keeps alive his terrible past experience of the war, in which the illusion of Evans constantly troubles him through his fantasy mind whether he sits in the park of London like "the War was over, and now the dead, now Evans himself" (57)or he stays in his home like "a voice spoke from behind the screen. Evans was speaking. The dead were with him.'Evans, Evans!' he cried" (76). Like Septimus' condition, Woolf states that, there are so many people whose life in London is strange due to their recollections of horrible past:

London has swallowed up many millions of young men called Smith; thought nothing of fantastic Christian names like Septimus with which their parents have thought to distinguish them. Lodging off the Euston Road, there were experiences, again experiences, such as change a face in two years from a pink innocent oval to a face lean, contracted, hostile(69).

In *The End of the Affair*, Maurice Bendrix remembers particular events that occurred between 1939 and 1946 at the same time as he writes them down on paper in 1949, something which appropriately clears the track for the third meaning and shows the interconnection prevailing between the second and the third. As the "relationship between memory and place is most obvious in the realm of material culture - landscapes" (Hoelscher and Alderman 350), Bendrix's living atmospheres in *Common* at London brings him back to his past. The personal relations Bendrix makes with some people in London and recurrent thoughts about them led him to revive the incidents that happened in London years before and he puts it down with his personal mind:

The connection between one and the other makes each what it is while defining how it is: intemporalized, space would lack distinguishable elements. Space, moreover, is filled with memories and hopes which in some way allows it to be personified, felt as a reality whose consistence varies according to who observes it or experiences it. Alexander thinks that "our mental space and our contemplated space belong experientially to one Space which is in part contemplated, in part enjoyed. For all our physical objects are apprehended 'over there' in spatial relation to our own mental space." Figures and objects exist and have significance in a spatial context which they impregnate and by which they are themselves impregnated (Gullón 11-12).

Bendrix, at that level, narrates the events by directly picking them all up from his memory after he watches the places in *Common* that reflect his thoughts toward the past:

I have a vague memory now, after three years have passed, of vigils along the edge of the Common, watching their house from a distance, by the pond or under the portico of the eighteenth-century church, on the off-chance that the door would open and Sarah come down those unblasted and well-scoured steps (Greene 10).

Sarah's mother, Mrs Bertram, is represented in the novel as a financially poor lady who always roamed through the streets and asked cash from Henry. She stands for backward class people of London as they usually face neglect from the responsible people and authority. Bendrix explains their condition through his narration about Mrs Bertram. Mrs Bertram says to Henry about her activities:

During the last year, Henry, I've been so bored I've even collected car numbers. That teaches you about coincidences. Ten thousand possible numbers and God knows how many combinations, and yet over and over again I've seen two cars with the same figures side by side in a traffic block (Greene 101).

The strange but typical behaviours of those who usually wander through streets without any other job is explicitly shown by Greene as Mrs Bertram explains her usual activities in

London.

Bendrix's piece of script is more in the type of autobiography. He puts down about actual not dreamt up but self-experienced happenings which have been stored away in memory. Confused whether to narrate about personal details or plainly enter into the typical London city spheres, he reminds the features of London of 1939:

Now that I come to write my own story the problem is still the same, but worse – there are so many more facts, now that I have not to invent them. How can I disinter the human character from the heavy scene – the daily newspaper, the daily meal, the traffic grinding towards Battersea, the gulls coming up from the Thames looking for bread, and the early summer of 1939 glinting on the park where the children sailed their boats – one of those bright condemned pre-war summers (Greene 13-14).

Bendrix thus prefers to write about personal memory spaces instead of collective memory spaces as he prefers exploration of human psyche that have relations with London.

Both memory and place are woven into the fabric of everyday life in that while personal memory makes place out of space, collective memory contributes to peoples' material and symbolic understanding of place through shared knowledges of buildings, streets, historical events, and other particularities of the place, as well as their sense of belonging to that place and their fellow inhabitants. As Yi-Fu Tuan argues, we strengthen our sense of self by accessing our imaginative and material past; objects anchor time, and place, though shifting, allows us to recapture our personal history (Baker 26).

Near the conclusion of the novel, Bendrix reveals the potential consequences of the suspicious miracles that occurred in the wake of Sarah's death. He remembers the hysterical and vulgar state of London as people were too merciless at that time. Bendrix's psychic intrusion that experienced Sarah's unexpected death toward the material outlook of London reflected on his memories about the city space:

I felt like a swimmer who has over-passed his strength and knows the tide is stronger than himself, but if I drowned, I was going to hold Henry up till the last moment. Wasn't it, after all, the duty of a friend, for if this thing were not disproved, if it got into the papers, nobody could tell where it would end? I remembered the roses at Manchester – that fraud had taken a long time to be recognized for what it was. People are so hysterical in these days. There might be relic-hunters, prayers, processions. Henry was not unknown; the scandal would be enormous. And all the journalists asking questions about their life together and digging out that queer story of the baptism near Deauville. The vulgarity of the pious Press. I could imagine the headlines, and the headlines would produce more 'miracles'. We had to kill this thing at the start (Greene 103).

It seems as when Sarah's presence was lost as she died while Bendrix was putting down his memories his reminiscences about London became over that resulted his lack of ability to recall any more incidents happened there. When the memories of emotional attachment Bendrix kept with London, particularly with Common, was finished by Sarah's death, he

started to wind up the narration and the whole thing comes together to consist of the impression that Sarah “stood at the end of every path” (Greene 73). Such powerful was Bendrix's emotional attachment with Sarah when he lived in London after her death that “even space which never was part of the life of Sarah becomes a reminder of her” (Gravdal 82). Bendrix himself admits his conditions: “I couldn't have thought of her more. Even vacancy was crowded with her” (Greene 87).

Though *The End of the Affair* does not has that much memories about London as in *Mrs Dalloway*, the thematic developments of the both novels, mostly the emotional and personal conditions of the characters, exactly affect the narrative styles used to memorise the place. While, for instance, Clarissa's passionate and joyful memories reflect in her relation with Bourton, Bendrix's emotional deprivation negatively affects his illustration of Common as his love toward Sarah was filled with jealousy and revenge. A psychoanalytical narration of London is what could be read from the geographical analysis of both novels as emotional conditions extremely affect the depiction of the places. Everyone looks upon the city on his or her own condition of memorisation and imagination in mental space. The following lines from *Mrs Dalloway* clears it out: “It might be possible, Septimus thought, looking at England from the train window, as they left Newhaven; it might be possible that the world itself is without meaning” (72).

By means of geocriticism, one gives more importance on the space than on the particular spectator. “This ensures that the textures of all focal networks constitute a kind of architext (perhaps between architecture and architexture) of a referential space, thus becoming a theater of representation, a place of spectacle translatable within the arts” (Westphal 131). Through this focal point, the city, a social space preeminent than any other physical spaces in the modern world, is a combination of several worlds. As the city, like any human space, is a peninsula of different ideas and materials its geocritical study efforts to search the layers that both uphold and record its history, thus giving it its story. One of the chief responsibilities of geocriticism is to make the observer reflect what he gazes, thinks and recalls in all its density, and this job is what has been done in this work by using the reflections about London of different periods sketched in *Mrs Dalloway* and *The End of the Affair*. That is to say, the space must end to look like an understandable one and, hence that, what each observer of London from each novels watches is a manifestation of various possibilities that denies London its easy continuity. To move on this task, human space has a lot to do with the term geocriticism.

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Mapping Ontario: The Poetics of Space in Alice Munro

Alice Munro's fiction is historically, geographically, and socially rooted in the rural south western Ontario. The place, its inhabitants and its peculiar social mores lie at the heart of Munro's short stories. Understanding Munro is essentially understanding the Ontarian life. Her writer's consciousness is steeped in Ontario of the 1930s and 1940s, the years of her growing up. Ontario is more a psychic presence in her writings, an inseparable part of the collective consciousness of the small rural community. Much of Alice's writing appears to be a literary cartography. Munro's world is "one of constant navigation, of locating oneself in relation to others, of orientation in space and in time, of charting a course, of placement and displacement, and of movements through an array of geographical and historical phenomena" (Tally Jr).

Robert Tally Jr in *Spatiality* develops the concept of literary cartography and the idea of writer as a map-maker. A writer is an observer and a surveyor who examines a place taking in even the finest details, to weave all the diverse and distinct elements into a narrative. A writer's map may be a product of imagination alone, and in most cases, an amalgamation of some place real and fictitious at the same time. The suggested paradox is truly in character with the nature of human perception and imagination. A person's imagination always roots itself in the real.

For readers, the narrative makes an image of the world, much like that of a map. Turchi's *Maps of Imagination* employs the image of map as a metaphor for writing. Writing is map-making in the sense that both the writer and a cartographer determines the elements to be recorded in a map (50). In order to know a place one maps it, reads it and narrates it. Geographer Yi Fu Tuan in *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* has written that a space becomes a 'place' as soon as it occasions a pause. A pause provides an observer's eye with the time to make the space a subject of story-telling. It ascribes meanings to a space. This pause must last long enough for the space to attain a concrete presence within an undifferentiated sweep of scenery (51).

Munro tries to understand reality through a cartographic activity, a kind of mapping which establishes a meaningful framework with reference points, which she uses to understand herself and her own position in a social space. Her sense of an Ontarian identity is reflected in the fictional characters that she creates. Bertrand Westphal talks about the referentiality of fiction which allows it to point to a recognizable place, real or imaginary or both, transforming the place and making it a part of the fictional world. Phenomenologists study representation as a process that has two components- the source and the derivative. Representation or re-presentation is a transfer of the source into the derivative. In Munro's writing, for example, Ontario is the source or the real and Jubilee is the derivative or the imaginary. Westphal, elaborates on the translation of geographical space into literature citing Jean Roudaut:

The interface between reality and fiction lies in words, in a certain way of positioning them along the axis of truth, verisimilitude, and falsity, away from any old mimetic fancy or all axiology [...] It is then that literature finds something to say, *to say*- yes, not only to transcribe- into the text. This is “poetic work,” which Jean Roudaut says facilitates the passage from real city to the imaginary city [...] Poetic work gives *being* by naming; it gives birth. (77)

It is unarguably clear that Munro makes Ontario the referential framework of her writing. Ontario, Munro's hometown, assumes a fictional status in her stories, thus demonstrating an overlapping of geography and story-telling. A cartographer must possess exceptional observational skills and an obsession for details.

As a writer who is a mapper, Munro observes the life of Wingham as a flaneuse. A flaneuse is a female version of a 19th century French literary type flaneur. Walter Benjamin famously adopted the figure of flaneur, found in the poetry of Charles Baudelaire, to analyse urbanity and modernity in Paris. Though Munro's writing doesn't set itself in urban spaces, the very figure of a stroller, an idle observer, walking down the streets is of central significance to Munro's cartographic literary aesthetic. But even so, many of Munro's stories record the changes urbanity was bringing forth in her place. In *Fiction* we read:

Most of the children have seen only park swings and plastic units in the backyard. Matt is surely one of the last people in Vancouver to have a childhood swing handy, and to be living in the house he grew up in, a house on Windsor Road on the slope of Grouse Mountain on what used to be the edge of the forest. Now houses keep climbing above it, most of them castle affairs with massive garages. One of these days, this place will have to go, Matt says. The taxes are monstrous. It will have to go, and a couple of hideosities will replace it. (*Too Much Happiness* 35)

Ontario first appeared in Munro's stories with the fictional name Jubilee. Later, Wingham assumed various fictional facades such as Dalgleish, Hanratty, Logan, Carstairs, Walley in her writings. Though Munro maintained for some time that these towns weren't associated with Wingham, the town and its geography, demography, economic bases and cultural ethos were dominating presences in her fictional endeavours. She began using Jubilee to refer to Ontario and its ethos in the 1950s with references to the town in her first work, *Dance of the Happy Shades*. But it attained currency as Del's hometown in Munro's *Lives of Girls and Women*. Munro's image of Wingham stemmed from her locating herself as an outsider, from the Lower Town. It is from this outsider's perspective that Munro constructs Jubilee in her fiction. In “An Open Letter” (1974), Munro describes her experience of fictionalizing Ontario as thus:

When I was quite young I got a feeling about Wingham-the town, of course, from which Jubilee has come-which is only possible for a child and an outsider. I was an outsider; I came into town every day to go to school, but I didn't belong there. So everything seemed a bit foreign, particularly clear and important to me. Some houses were mean and threatening, some splendid, showing many urban retirements of life. Certain store-fronts, corners, even sections of sidewalk, took on a powerful, not easily defined, significance. It is not too much to say that every block in that town has some

sort of emotional atmosphere for me, and from the pressure of this atmosphere came at last the fictional place: Jubilee. (Thacker 39)

Munro's initial position as an outsider in Wingham enabled her to observe Wingham with a renewed curiosity every day. It was a privileged position, which empowered her with the ability to maintain a critical detachment and at the same time attach emotionally to the place with a curious longing. Munro's early childhood spent in Lower Town is thus critical to the formation of Ontario in her creative consciousness. Lower Town was a separate place altogether. When the Laidlaws lived there, there was no real commerce except a little grocery store. Located on the west bank of the Maitland, Lower Town had a disparate population. Munro has characterized the area as a "kind of ghetto where all the bootleggers and prostitutes and hangers-on lived. Those were the people I knew. It was a community of outcasts. I had that feeling about myself" (Thacker 36). This outcast complex is central to the complicated relationship Munro shares with Wingham. The outcast complex compels Munro to associate Wingham with a mysterious emotional aura which lifts Ontario out of reality and places it in the creative fantasy of Munro, and it ceases to be a mere backdrop for her stories. So evidently Munro did place her gaze on her town long enough for it to attain unintended meanings that went beyond a fleeting look at things.

Lower Wingham along the Maitland river stretch is the place that Alice remembered most as a writer, especially the years of her growing up from 1931 to 1949. More importantly this place fed Munro's imagination with its peculiarities, enigma and materiality. Munro's home place is multifaceted, made up of a specific physical and cultural geography, the surrounding society is populated by people Munro knew, infused with culture she came to own, embody, and understand. Her acculturation was shaped by her ancestors, and her writing was wholly derived from the Huron country side which included Wingham and Lower Town. Eudora Welty, one of Munro's profound influences, once remarked, "A place that ever was lived in is like a fire that never goes out" (Thacker 37). This pretty much sums up Munro's relationship with Ontario. The Huron Country remains a fire that never went out, dominated by the felt presences of people such as Laidlaws, Chamney, and others.

A detailed analysis of Munro's Ontario is possible only through a thorough understanding of the nature of memories, and how they shape one's understanding of the past and the present. Robert Fulford remarked in an introductory piece to the first publication of *The Stone in the Field* that "to suggest that she (Munro) conveys...her own background with lucidity and honesty is to hint at only a part of her talent. What happens in a Munro story is vastly more complicated than that, a process involving memory and perception and self-understanding on the part of both the reader and the writer" (Thacker 278). Memory is reliving a past experience. The very idea of memory invokes a sense of temporality. It is a going back. It is a journey to the past. However, memory as a recreation of a past experience is by its nature spatial in character. Munro explores the spatiality of memory in her fiction. I intend to take two of Munro's stories, *Home* and *Working for a Living*, in order to analyse the spatial dimensions of memories in Munro's writing. In *Home*, which is less of fiction and more of a memoir, Munro writes:

Before this, for a long time, I lived more than a thousand miles away and would go for years without seeing this house. I thought of it then as a place I might never see again and I was greatly moved by the memory of it. I would walk through its rooms in my mind [...] In my mind, when I was far away, I

would also see the kitchen ceiling, made of narrow, smoke-stained, tongue-in-groove boards, and the frame of the window gnawed by some dog that had been locked in before my time. The wallpaper was palely splotched by a leaking chimney, and the linoleum was repainted by my mother every spring, as long as she was able. (*Family Furnishings* 395)

Munro's memories of her home is physical, material and spatial. Her memory of home constitutes the chairs, the rooms, the ceiling, the wall paper and more. It is also interesting to note how Ontarian norms get their way into Munro's story-telling. In Ontario, forgetting local names was unmannerly. And what did Ontarians think of reading and writing? Reading wasn't sociable and writing meant 'handwriting' (397). The nostalgia factor is discernible all throughout the story. Munro's position as an outsider, now a married woman who lives in British Columbia, further enhances the process of memorying. In the above passage, Munro writes "I thought of it then as a place I might never see again and I was greatly moved by the memory of it". She admits that it is only the feeling of loss and the irretrievable nature of an experience that makes certain events, things and places find their way as memories into one's fiction. It has greatly to do with Munro's geographical rooting in London then, as a married woman. Munro stayed away from Ontario nearly twenty years post her marriage to Jim Munro, and the stories she wrote during this period (most of her first published works) present an Ontario conjured up from the depths of Munro's memories of growing up in the place.

Another important aspect of Munro's writing is the geographical situatedness of memories. A clear intersection of geography and story is palpable in her stories. Munro's past experiences are often attached to Ontario as a place. There is a dominance of place and its culture in her memories. In the draft of "Changes and Ceremonies" from *Lives of Girls and Women*, called "I Am the Daughter of a River God", Munro details the route she walked from Lower Town to her school in Wingham town. Munro's geography traces the exact route that she walked twice each day for ten years. On her way to school she observed the people and the conditions and was quick to notice social differences in the locality. In 1983, Munro wrote an essay for an Ontarian bicentennial titled "Going to the Lake" on the annual visit that the Laidlaws used to make to Lake Huron in Munro's childhood. Her characteristic geographical detail is readily evident in the essay. Reading its first paragraphs, one may actually trace the route on a Huron country map. In *Home*, Munro writes about the "usual route" that she and father always took on their way to the hospital in Wingham. Route immediately calls upon the image of a map. Munro's inadvertently admits the cartographic nature of her writing in the following passage from *Home*:

In the car I sit beside him holding the can, and we follow slowly that old, usual route-Spencer Street, Church Street, Wexford Street, Ladysmith Street-to the hospital. The town, unlike the house, stays very much the same-nobody is renovating or changing it. Nevertheless it has changed for me. I have written about it and used it up. Here are more or less the same banks and hardware and grocery stores and the barbershop and the Town Hall tower, but all their secret, plentiful messages for me have drained away.

Not for my father. He has lived here and nowhere else. He has not escaped things by such use. (*Family Furnishings* 403)

Munro seems to present Ontario as an inescapable force. As *Home* was a piece written as a memoir, before she returned to Ontario in 1974 post her divorce from James Munro, it might have seemed to Alice that she was no longer in the clutches of Ontario. But she chooses to return to that very place after divorce. Home, despite more than twenty years on the west coast, was still Ontario. *Home* was a product of the interim period in Munro's life, and it anticipates the rising autobiographical strain in Munro's writing in the following years. Her journey back to Ontario in 1975 is described by Robert Thacker, her biographer, as “a long necessary voyage from the house of marriage” (9).

'Literary chronotope' is a term used by Mikhail Bakhtin, which literally suggests time-space, in order to make a clearer sense of the relations between historical time and geographical space in literature. Bakhtin asserts that time and space are inextricably bound together, and the concept of chronotope spatializes time and temporalizes space. Bakhtin's chronotope is a tool for analysing and understanding literary cartography. Bakhtin argues that chronotopes are the organizing centres for the fundamental narrative events of the novel. Chronotopes fuse the spatial and temporal aspects of a narrative, which the produce meanings of a text. The use of particular chronotopes is done to establish meanings and the shape of the world. Alice Munro's fiction exhibit a harmonious intersection of the spatial temporal axes. Her fiction may be understood through a detailed analysis of the intersection of Ontario and the intricacies of human lived reality. Thus we may say that Munro's fiction may be understood through the Ontarian chronotope.

Munro's return to the Huron country in 1975 prompts us to study the changes that her fiction underwent as a result of Munro's new geographical and cultural position. McGrath, her publisher in the 1980s, discerned a rise in the autobiographical impulse in Munro's stories since her return to Huron. From *Royal Beatings* to *Chaddeleys and Flemmings* to *Working for a Living* – all exhibited this autobiographical strain. In the late 1970s and 1980s Munro emerged with stories that created feelings of being alive, that replicated for their readers the very sense of being itself. Virginia Barber, her literary agent in New York, saw in the draft of *Working for a Living* certain new qualities—a richer and deeper meditation on the home place. The stories that made up both of the Munro bonanzas (a collection of Munro's stories), which were collections published after her return to Huron country, reveal “a writer who has discovered nostalgia” (286). *Working for a Living* is chosen as a representative work to study the Ontarian presence in Munro's consciousness in the post-return phase of her writing.

Working for a Living displays a curious spatial-temporal conjunction in that it is a recreation of a past, by a writer who wasn't living then. But she exerts an authorial power over the temporal narrative and the spatial geography she hasn't experienced first-hand. It was begun as a short story, but became a memoir. Munro, however, is able to create a memoir out of events she hasn't ever witnessed or have a memory of. For Munro, memoirs become imaginations of heard facts within a lived geographical space. They are imagined scenarios that stem out of the question- what might have happened to *my* ancestors/parents at this place years back. They are factual when it comes to the realistic and the geographical details. They are heard facts that she imaginatively interprets with extraordinary spatial details. The fiction/reality boundaries are blurred. Ontario looms large as a chronotope, with her father being described as an Ontarian country boy. We read:

My father being a Huron County farm boy with the extra, Fenimore-Cooper perception, a cultivated hunger, did not turn aside from these boyish interests at the age of eighteen, nineteen, twenty. Instead of giving up the bush he took to it more steadily and seriously [...] He was edging away from the life of a farmer[...] was edging towards a life he probably could not clearly visualize, since he would know what he didn't want so much better than what he wanted. The life in the bush, on the edge of the farms, away from the towns; how could it be managed? (*Working for a Living* 19)

Working for a Living demonstrates that “a cherished fact is never far distant” (Thacker 19). Why is her parents' past so cherished a fact? Is it the desire to trace and locate one's position in a historical, geographical and familial space? What is so evident in a piece of memoir like *Working for a Living* is Munro's ability to locate herself within the historical and geographical space of Ontario. This aspect of Munro's writing may be interpreted in the light of Frederic Jameson's notion of 'cognitive mapping'. Jameson uses the term 'cognitive mapping', in various senses, but what is relevant to our study is the term's definition as an individual's attempt to locate his or her position within a complex social organization, or spatial milieu, attempting to gain a concrete sense of place in relation to other places on a mental map. Jameson writes in *Postmodernism* thus, “to enable a situational representation on the part of the individual subject to that vaster and properly unrepresentable totality which is the ensemble of society's structures as a whole.” (50)

This desire for location may be analysed in the light of a postmodern anxiety for a sense of place. Munro's obsession with Ontario betrays an anxious desire to locate and root oneself in a concrete place. This anxiety is an essential human condition as per the existential theorists. The human condition, according to the existentialists, is one of not-being-at-home. However, an individual may overcome this sense of homelessness through a schematic representation of the world and one's place in it. This project is a kind of figurative cartography which makes sense of or gives a form to the world. This mapping may be “a metaphor for constellating the various forces that directly and indirectly affect human life, but here with a specifically spatial valence” (Tally Jr 67). *The View from the Castle Rock* exemplifies this project. It is a collection of stories that focuses on the history of Scot-Presbyterians in Canada and other memoirs. Tracing the journey of the first Scots to Canada, that of her great grandfather and other relatives, Alice Munro positions herself in the history. This very aspect of *locatedness* in Munro's fiction characterises the cartographic nature of her writing. Her return to Ontario brought an enriched awareness of her home, culture and her relation to it. She locates herself in the historical narrative of Scot-Presbyterians in Ontario. She could place her in the familial narrative of the Chamneys and the Laidlaws in *Working for a Living*. All of her later fictions have been about rooting herself in Ontario.

Place-centred writings are not uncommon in Literature. Twain's *Mississippi*, Dicken's *London*, Marquez's *Macondo*, RK Narayan's *Malgudi*, Anita Desai's *Mussorie* are excellent examples of geocentric writings. The places with their geography and culture elevates themselves from being a mere background into literary forces. In Amitav Gosh's *The Hungry Tide*, the Sundarbans is a suprahuman central character. Sarah Joseph's *Aathi* almost entirely tells the story of the place through human characters. Dicken's *London* as depicted in *The Great Expectations* is a literary map of London city under the effects of the Industrial Revolution. Even fictional spaces like that of Marquez's and Narayan's works are examples

of cartographic writing. Imagined geographical spaces are real. Every fiction has a starting point in reality. The writer's fictionality and sense of geography is formulated by her own experiences with reality. In all these writings, the place transforms into a meaning generating space. All of the above writers work on the poetics of space. As a mean of understanding the world, literature takes its data from life and organizes it so that its readers can navigate through these literary maps. Borges in *On Exactitude in Science* metaphorizes the significance of mapping project for human existence. The one paragraph short story goes thus:

[...] In that Empire, the Art of Cartography attained such Perfection that the map of a single Province occupied the entirety of a City, and the map of the Empire, the entirety of a Province. In time, those Unconscionable Maps no longer satisfied, and the Cartographers Guilds struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it. The following Generations, who were not so fond of the Study of Cartography as their Forebears had been, saw that that vast map was Useless, and not without some Pitilessness was it, that they delivered it up to the Inclemencies of Sun and Winters. In the Deserts of the West, still today, there are Tattered Ruins of that Map, inhabited by Animals and Beggars; in all the Land there is no other Relic of the Disciplines of Geography. (*On Exactitude in Science*)

Written in 1946, the story captures the descent of spatiality in the twentieth century. The neglect of spatial studies in the contemporary era, as opposed to the undying fascination for mapping in previous centuries is expressed through the above lines. But the 'Spatial Turn' in the 1970s and 1980s brought space to the centre of literary studies. Geography re-invented itself as a subject, extending itself to other disciplinary studies, banking in on the popularity of interdisciplinary studies of the present times. The recent technological developments such as Google maps and GPS systems only reassert the importance of spaces in a postmodern subject's existential consciousness. Writers, including Munro, are well aware of man's need for maps to understand the world, as they themselves make sense of the world around them through maps-imaginative, figurative and literary maps. And in doing so they transform themselves into map-makers.

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All it Takes is One Bad Day... Lunacy and Space in *Batman: The Killing Joke*

Abstract:

This paper is an attempt to situate the complex relationship between madness and space in Batman: The Killing Joke in both the comic (1988) and the film version (2016). With references made to the Dark Knight trilogy (Nolan), drawing inspiration from the same comic- the focus here, will be on physical space and the corresponding 'mindscapes' of the characters, especially that of Batman, Gordon and the Joker. The Killing Joke is Alan Moore's finest to express that one bad day is enough to reduce the sanest man to a lunatic. Gotham City is a spatial extension of ethical and moral deliberations; Arkham Asylum functions as the "little anarchy that upsets the established order"; the dilapidated Amusement Park, a symbol of what could happen to a sane man under appalling circumstances- insanity! A thorough contrast of the above spaces with the previous workspace of The Joker in his 'reveal scenes' and his broken shambled sad excuse of an apartment adds to the sardonic stain of space on the minds of the characters. A few anchor questions this paper purports to answer: How does 'space' in sequential art and in the visual media inform the audience of the transformation of a Milquetoast-timid soul failed comedian into a Machiavellian criminal mastermind? How do colors and spotlight images add to the plot? This paper is more interested in reading the on/off-screen implications of the objective correlatives of space and its objects. It will highlight the subliminal encoding of character mindset through space and comment on storytelling in the context of Imagology. Let the 'joke' unfold within its own space and be nothing short of 'killing' in its appeal!

Keywords: Space, Lunacy, Anarchy, Subliminal encoding, Imagology.

Have you ever wondered, what makes a madman mad?

Batman: The Killing Joke is a 1988 DC Comics, a one-shot graphic novel featuring the characters Batman and the Joker written by Alan Moore and illustrated by Brian Bolland. *The Killing Joke* provides an origin story for the supervillain the Joker. Taking place over two timelines, *The Killing Joke* depicts the Joker attempting to drive Jim Gordon insane and Batman's desperate attempt to stop him.

The story is reflective and renders an irrational yet meticulously worked out 'plan' of the Joker. Crazy has a habitat? This is Arkham Asylum. Literature has always tried to manipulate the concepts of 'time' and 'space'. It is an artistic manipulation of two important entities that govern reality. Comics is essentially a story of 'what happens between the panels?' Will Eisner uses the term 'sequential art' when describing comics. There are single panel art, but when a series of panels are placed in a sequence it implies plot and movement. This is manipulation of space. The basic difference between a film and comics is that in the former images are sequential in 'time' but not spatially juxtaposed as comics are. We see this detailed in *Understanding Comics (The Invisible Art)*:

Each successive frame of a movie is projected on exactly the same space-the screen-while each frame of comics must occupy a different space. Space does for comics what time does for film (McCloud 7).

Comics are a grand narrative of SHOW AND TELL.

We now live in a world of images. Milan Kundera in his book *Immortality* discusses the concept of 'Imagology'. It is a shift from a previous ideology dominated world to a world of concocted reality. This neologism has launched the world as re-presented by advertising agencies; politicians and their campaign managers; designers who devise the shape of everything from cars to gym equipment; fashion stylists; showbiz stars and celebrities dictating the norms of physical beauty that all branches of Imagology must obey or perish.

All ideologies have been defeated: in the end their dogmas were unmasked as illusions and people stopped taking them seriously. Reality was stronger than ideology. And it is in this sense that imagology surpassed it: imagology is stronger than reality, which has anyway long since ceased to be what it was. Imagologues create systems of ideals and anti-ideals, systems of short duration which are quickly replaced by other systems, but which influence our behaviour, our political opinions and aesthetic tastes, the colour of carpets and the selection of books just as in the past we have been ruled by the systems of ideologues (Kundera 99).

This is a little more than a mere rhetoric, images reach far deeper than words. A word is an icon whose meaning is determined and understood in a context, but an image floats into our subconscious and controls our deepest desires. A subliminal message is a signal or message designed to pass below (sub) the normal limits of perception. It might not get picked up by the conscious mind, but it strikes a chord with the unconscious. It is the inception of a new reality. In fact, it is the only reality we are really made to feel conscious about. This is exactly what the Joker does with the pictures he clicks. He casts his 'a single bad day is enough to induce insanity' spell on Gordon by stripping him not only of his clothes but also of his staunch belief in the reality of the law. He uses images of his daughter suffering in pain in various states of undress to substitute his faith with a new distorted reality. The pictures emotionally manipulate the otherwise sane Gordon. There is no greater manipulator of space other than the camera lens. It not only freezes time within a frame, it also chooses or more aptly privileges a certain section of the space where the action takes place. The Hegemon of lunacy chooses this action induced space and wants us to witness it as he presents and re-presents spatial reality. All other realities are blurred and the focus length determining the angle of view, presents the Joker's 'meticulous madness'. The subject is magnified to represent a particular inclination of the mind. If Laura Mulvey would talk about 'male gaze' in cinemas, this could be seen as the 'Joker's gaze'. However, interestingly he is able to tap into the neural pathway of Gordon, triggering his disillusionment with the idea of a safe space. His gaze is the portal of insanity. It is the instrument of anarchy.

Comics and Film- a meta manipulation of space

The interplay of camera lens capturing and framing space within a stipulated space outlined by a panel in sequential art. It is 'space' within space, within space, and the many

copies of 'space' are ever on the increase and is directly proportional to every image ever created. In the movie, from frame to frame sanity is fragmented and insanity is introduced to complete the cycle.

The differences between the two versions with regard to form are:

In the Comics, juxtaposed pictorial and other images are arranged in deliberate sequence. In the film version, these juxtaposed images circulate the same space within a particular framework of time. In the film version, we begin with the Batgirl, foregrounding the reality of the action-space of Gotham. There is a foreboding, a warning that a storm is about to break out. True to this all the characters are washed into a whirlpool of tempestuous swirls of emotions. The identity of the Batgirl is foregrounded. This forms a valuable addendum to the plot of backstories. Not only do we witness the creation of the Joker presented as bouts of flashback at a subconscious level, but also learn about the creation of the Oracle-the computer brain to aid the future crime fighting stints of the Batman. We also learn of a greater emotional bond and connection between the Batman and the Batgirl (whose secret identity is Barbara, the daughter of commissioner Jim Gordon). She provides a good counterfoil to the character of 'Jeannie' the Joker's pregnant wife from his 'reveal scenes'. This important parallel representation of the love lives of the Caped Crusader and the otherwise anonymous Joker helps the spectator in understanding the intensity of a 'single bad day'. It highlights the antics of both the characters, indignation in the case of Batman and lunacy in the case of the Joker.

Another relevant tweaking in terms of the episodes portrayed is the 'torture scenes' of Jim Gordon. Before he is taken on the horrible ride into the sea of images to question his sanity, a mock trial scene is introduced. The film version adds this particular episode to show the Joker mocking Gordon by throwing the book of law at him. The Joker renders 'order and justice' seem like redundant entities floating across space. This novel scene adumbrates the petty regard the Joker has for any totalitarian establishment or an institutionalized system.

Taking both versions to decipher *The Killing Joke* is like toying with the central idea of how we define 'space' in art. It is no greater than what Rene Magritte means by *Ceci n'est pas une pipe*. There is no escaping the treachery of images. It is surreal, just like madness. Without it, we might not understand the 'real' or 'sanity'.

Is there a method to his madness? Or is madness, his only method?

What could explain this better than a poem by Emily Dickinson?

Much Madness is divinest Sense -

To a discerning Eye -

Much Sense - the starkest Madness -

'Tis the Majority

In this, as all, prevail -

Assent - and you are sane -

Demur - you're straightway dangerous -

And handled with a Chain -

Connect it with how the Joker ends up at Arkham Asylum. The Joker has always been the most quizzical of all DC characters. The Killing Joke is an important text as it records the back story of this strange Mastermind. The transformation of the criminally challenged Milquetoast failed comedian into an insane Machiavellian criminal lunatic. Note the cheeky amalgam of humour and lunacy we find in his personality. His innocent former self who tries and fails miserably to impress people as a comedian. The core of his misery arises from his financial and economic instability, being unable to support his pregnant wife. His future is practically doomed and the physical dilapidation of his sad excuse for an apartment reflects the paucity of hope in his mind. This domestic space is a remnant of pain and misery. When we later revisit this space in the comics, we find an open confrontation that Batman has with the Joker. However, the point of view is a little warped for the panel shows an upside down view of the apartment drawing hall. The Joker uses broken furniture from the projected space to injure Batman, literally picking up fragments of his past to add colour to his mad attack on the Gotham hero.

The comics open with the panel showing the portal to Arkham Asylum. A place specified for 'the criminally insane'. The first full set of words to appear on the panel (as a board placed on the reception desk of the Asylum) are:

You don't have to be crazy to work here. But it helps (Moore 4).

What a wonderful parody of sanity, is this? A complicated relationship that exists between sanity and insanity. You make the call, whether to 'assent' or 'demur'. The story begins with a joke and ends with one too. How does one understand sanity? Does the existence of the insane space of Arkham Asylum validate the existence of sanity outside its gates?

The first cell that is shown bears the name 'Harvey Dent'. How convenient was this for Christopher Nolan to adapt it into his trilogy? In fact, Nolan makes the character of Harvey Dent as the 'mind space' where sanity meets insanity. His two faced avatar combines the sane, restraint of the Batman with the insane, criminally indulgent Joker. The second cell shown in the panel is that of the Joker, with a tag: 'name unknown'.

*Too much sanity may be madness — and maddest of all:
to see life as it is, and not as it should be!*

-Man of La Mancha.

The public mask of sanity

Madness is an understated form of reality that a few manage to embrace after breaking the shackles of preconditioned pristine public systems. The Joker is symbolic of the latent 'Everyman' representing humans tired of sanity and all things 'normal' lying its wake. Civilization is a roundabout search for the 'normal', the 'sane'; a lifestyle that vacillates between the importance of being an individual and an all inclusive citizen of this world. The lid of civilization opens and closes as we breathe in and breathe out 'sanity'. The Joker is a victim who triumphed suffocation with insanity. He is an evil very visible to the eyes, but quite puzzling to the mind to process. What OODA (observe, orient, decide, and act) loop could Batman practice when he cannot predict anything. The success of the Joker's lunacy is in being unsure and sure at the same time. He seems to be deferring all markers of sanity by being absolutely erratic but his plans somehow work within the space he commands and

manipulates. Remember the bank heist scene from Nolan's *The Dark Knight*? It is completely insane, but the Joker is able to predict every move of his 'sane' hired accomplices. He plays them from the very beginning.

The Joker functions as a 'roman a clef', the supreme satire of the relationship between nonfiction and fiction. It is eccentric and unhinged in the eyes of the world because one man's sanity is another man's insanity. The nuances of normality suffused with bouts of insanity is the Joker in action.

Nobody realizes that some people expend tremendous energy merely to be normal.

-Albert Camus (*An Absurd Reasoning*)

Gotham –the super space of sanity

Is the Batman stark raving sane? He craves for the normal. In fact, he creates the 'supernormal' by turning into the un-appointed Gotham sheriff- The Dark Knight in Nolan's version. This physical space of the Gotham city represents his previous fear of darkness and bats and his subsequent victory over it. He has had a bad day too. He lost his parents at a tender age, saw them murdered by a criminal during a robbery. He could have easily become the Joker. Rather, he chooses to walk down the path of sanity. This Caped Crusader does not possess any superpowers; rather, he relies on his genius intellect, physical prowess, martial arts abilities, detective skills, science and technology, vast wealth and an indomitable will to fight crime. He develops into the reality he imagines in his mind. His reality needs the dark and stealth of Gotham to identify and hunt criminals. He falls into a routine of combing the streets at night to control crime. He embraces darkness of the physical reality to throw light on the darkness of his mind, ensuing from the guilt that he was a helpless spectator to the murder of his parents.

Compare and contrast this with the Joker. He chooses well lit places. He chooses a multi-coloured attire. He takes pride in exhibiting his colours. He is no different from a Comic hero, his purpose is to entertain. His humour begins and ends at the edge of sanity. It is essentially a farcical view of the world and its concerns. The sanity pockets within his insanity bolus makes it impossible for Batman to reconcile with his evil. The colours mask his insane nature normalizing his personality at a given moment. One even loses guard when confronting his countenance. It is this moment of vulnerability that the Joker uses to manipulate his victims. The colours disguise the various somber 'mindscape' of his head. On the contrary, Batman thrives because of the dark and gloomy space outside of him. He is most vulnerable in a well lit place and avoids illuminated spaces of any sort. But this is in direct contrast to the mental spaces within his head. By residing in umbra, be it in the bat cave or his secret identity in the dark and mysterious billionaire, playboy, philanthropist, and owner of Wayne Enterprises- Mr. Bruce Wayne he spreads light and cheer by battling crime. Batman takes his sojourn in black and gray. Both the characters wear masks, with only the Joker able to tear down the invisible masks of others around him using his own (his heavily powdered and adorned face) as a weapon.

The Joker- An Ode! Alle Guten, alle Bösen (JUST AND UNJUST)?

Rain and gloom- predominantly intersperses the portrayal of space in the Comics. The

story begins with the water puddle panel- huge drops of rain creating little pools of eddies. The concentric circles symbolize the structured chaos that rains on the characters of the story. The Joker is like the rain, he descends down as he pleases. It's raining madness everywhere. The plot begins with, "There were these two guys in a lunatic asylum..." Batman reciprocates by talking about the end almost in an eerie Poesque manner.

I've been thinking lately about you and me. About what's going to happen to us in the end. We're going to kill each other aren't we (Moore 6)?

The next panel shows Gorgon through the little watch-window, playing spectator to this sober confrontation scene. His face is framed like how the Joker would capture the emotions from his camera. Shots of increasing lunacy. The air is tense and taut but the Joker coolly arranges his deck of cards. The gamble between sanity and insanity begins. Batman seems to don the role of a very sane, reasonable person ready for a talk, a compromise perhaps? See how he changes his mood in the same page when he realizes that he has been tricked by the Joker. The man sitting opposite him is an imposter, the Joker has escaped. When Batman charges on this sham of a man, Gordon thinks that Batman has probably lost his patience and barges in,

Dear God, He's gone berserk (Moore 7).

He instructs the guard to open the door to warn the Dark Knight of the laws of treating the inmates. Funny how he accuses the Batman of already losing his sanity. Jim Gordon is a man of the book of law, he dare would not dream of an alternate reality. In the torture scenes later on, the Joker attempts to break his belief in doing things according to the law, repeatedly. He strips him naked, tortures his mind and body, but Gordon at the end reminds Batman to catch the Joker by the book.

The next scene cuts to the dilapidated amusement park. This space symbolizes the mental states of the Joker. He describes the place as:

Well, it's garish, ugly and derelicts have used it for a toilet. The rides are dilapidated to the point of being lethal and could easily maim or kill innocent little children (Moore 8).

This scene begins with the small panel that first shows the Joker from behind, a 'flâneur' like appearance with his purple glove and fashionable walking stick. When the owner of the amusement park gives up hope in his buyer and whispers in dismay, "So, you don't like it?". The Joker turns around to show the biggest grin ever and replies: "Don't like it? I'm crazy for it". Almost three fourth of a single page is devoted to capturing his physiognomy. The space portrayed on the panel amplifies his taste for the ruined and unusable- a connection we as readers and spectators make when we are taken down his memory lane. The next episode is a trajectory into his past, documenting his life-as a struggling comedian trying to make both ends meet. The change of scene is sudden and jolting but note the connect between the state of dilapidation which is common between the amusement park and his sad excuse for an apartment. His life is in shambles, only in the 'now' of things he has managed to maneuver the talent and courage to manipulate the surrounding space. In an intensely emotional scene, the pregnant wife and the frazzled husband discuss their current financial burdens and reach out their hands to each other expressing love even in horrendous circumstances that breaks the will of a person. In close parallel to this panel you see the Joker reaching out to the poster of 'The Laughing Clown' in the run-down amusement park. The spatial aesthetic connections between the 'memory-triggers' and the 'context of dilapidation' is phenomenal. In both the

panels, there is a mirror placed at the back reflecting the expression on the Joker's face. In the one with the wife, there is hope lost in disillusionment, but in the 'now time' of the comics, one finds a slightly more macabre mien. This an example of both 'sequential unity' and 'non-sequitur distortion' when we note the difference in the personalities, the transformation of the helpless comedian into the scary lunatic. He enjoys a good laugh at anyone with serious considerations about life; especially a life in which, one believes to triumph over chaos or anarchy.

Paradoxically, we next get a sneak peak into the world of order- the Batcave, Batman tries hard to figure out the Joker. He stares into a well lit screen of the Joker's face and turns away with dismay to confess to Alfred that he is unable to predict the Joker's plans.

How can two people hate so much without knowing each other (Moore 13)?

The Joker and his antics drive the Batman up the wall. He always gets triggered by the erratic working style of the Joker.

With regard to the portrayal of the home ground, Jim Gordon and Barbara's apartment comes next. Here the illustrator has used bright and loud colours instead of the somber gloom ambience seen otherwise. While the father documents the newspaper articles about important criminals, Barbara, a stickler for organizing things suggests some tips about her work at the library. This seemingly irrelevant conversation is of dire importance as it serves as a premonition for Barbara to become the computer expert and information broker known as Oracle, much later in the comics.

The following panels are a beautiful play of colours filling the spaces in and around. The striking yellow of her dress stands as a stark contrast to the impending violence. An innocent knock on the door and the next moment: she is shot at the waist by the Joker and falls back onto the coffee table, sending splinters of glass everywhere. When the shocked and anxious father reaches out to the daughter, this is what the Joker has to say in an offhand, flipped comment:

Please don't worry. It's a psychological complaint common among ex-librarians. You see, she thinks, she's a coffee table edition (Moore 16).

His humour is crisp and appreciable, but a little too dark to digest because the Joker places it at difficult spaces. Spaces, physical and mental that would elicit a more intense and alarming emotion. Dressed as a tourist, he adds colour and flavor with his first appearance to the protagonists. Sporting his camera, he fulfils the curiosity raised by the cover of the comics with the grinning Joker-photographer uttering "smile". Stepping out of his svelte purple suit for the first and only time.

He resumes his villainy with aplomb as he proceeds to undress the injured Barbara after giving instructions to his hired henchman to prepare Gordon to be the show-stopper at the run-down amusement park showcasing weird talents. Barbara manages to blurt out: "Why are you doing this?" and the Joker with casual callousness says: " To prove a point " and toasts to crime with a drink in hand. In this last panel, Barbara's yellow brightness gets reflected in the Joker's grin, his shirt covered upper torso and his drink with a sparkle. He seems to observe the painful brightness of Barbara's plight. His radiance is owing to his triumph that she neither Batman really understands his methods. He disguises his insanity with sane sarcasm that trips people from deducing his evil mastermind. He is like Milton's Satan, a Renaissance humanist kind of Megalomaniac, he alone will have the last laugh!

Spooling back, the panel greets us with a mellowed down innocuous comedian, the young Joker holds a drink in hand and all donned in a dull mustard yellow like the old yellow pages of a worn out notebook. The next few pages details how in his desperation to support his pregnant wife Jeannie, he agrees to guide two criminals through the chemical plant where he previously worked so that they can rob the playing card company next to it. During the planning, the police intervene, calling him aside for a brief conversation only to inform him that his wife has died in a household accident. Grief-stricken, the Joker tries to withdraw from the plan, but the criminals strong-arm him into keeping his commitment to them. In this scene one finds a strong adherence to the colour 'red'. Brian Bollands' colours are characteristically thoughtful and restrained. The redness of the shrimp on the table is magnified into the red mask and cape the criminals advice the Joker to wear. If one notices closely, the crowd in the background seem to be frozen in some other world. There is spotlight focusing on the criminals persuading the reluctant comedian, but when the idea of the red mask is explained as 'additional identity concealment' a random man at the resto-bar seems to elicit a half muffled laughter, also drenched a little in the red colour.

Later, we find that the Joker has imprisoned Gordon in the run-down amusement park. His henchmen strip the commissioner naked and beat him and cage him in the park's freak show. It is implied but not explicitly said that the Joker gives Gordon drugs to continue his mental torture. The Joker chains Gordon to one of the park's rides and forces him to view giant photos of Barbara, lying down and in pain. Once Gordon has run the horrifying gauntlet, the Joker puts him on display in the freak show, ridiculing him as "the average man," a naïve weakling doomed to insanity. This is his trump card. The show down:

When the commissioner questions his reality and asks himself as to what he is doing here.

Gordon: Somebody, please tell me what I am doing here?

The Joker: Doing? You're doing what any sane man in your appalling circumstances would do? You're going mad (Moore 22).

Can anyone else justify a descent into madness like the charming Joker? Incredible, yet true. His perfectly calm paced words show that it is almost honourable to give up one's sanity as a supreme sacrifice when someone hurts our loved one. Sounds familiar, doesn't it? This is what happens to Nolan's Harvey Dent.

The Joker's description of the past strikes down any faith left in 'sanity'. The word 'remember', he recounts triggers unpleasant memories for both the characters alike. The Joker says:

Memory's so treacherous. One moment you're lost in a carnival of delights, with poignant childhood aromas, the flashing neon of puberty, all that sentimental candy floss... the next, it leads you somewhere you don't want to go. Somewhere dark and cold, filled with the damp ambiguous shapes of things you'd hoped were forgotten. Memories can be vile, repulsive little brutes. Like children, I suppose. But can we live without them? Memories are what our reason is based upon. If we can't face them, we deny reason itself! Although, why not? We aren't contractually tied down to rationality! There is no sanity clause! So when you find yourself locked onto an unpleasant train of thought, heading for the places in your past where the screaming is unbearable, remember there's always madness. Madness is the

emergency exit... you can just step outside, and close the door on all those dreadful things that happened. You can lock them away... forever (Moore 23).

The above dialogue is a clear indication that we are not dealing with any Orlando Furioso who leaves his 'wit' in the moon, but a clever and calculating wit who alone can, convincingly justify the perks of madness. This is madness made by conscious choice. This scene mimics how the Joker himself was set on a pillory, by the criminals, for the society to laugh at. Gordon goes through a similar experience. He is literally taken for a ride. The next few episodes chronicle the looney bin, the Joker has prepared for Gordon, he projects larger than life images all around Gordon. On one side, we see the Joker advocating lunacy and on the other side, he projects naked pictures of Barbara in pain. Notice how he projects these magnified images to show that the problem at hand is really big and that Gordon is stripped of all hope and is defenseless hence the only escape route is to embrace 'madness'. None of this would matter if he does so. We find that 'space' has taken a new meaning now. As in the case of pathetic fallacy, space takes on the mental states of the characters. The run-down amusement park, a den of marginalized lunatics, freaks created by the sane species of the society. We love to watch their horror. We are thrilled to witness the abnormal. It is the only way in which, we can assure ourselves that we are normal. And the only way the freaks can function, is by going mad; if you are being tortured you might as well laugh at the gravity of the situation, in order to escape it. This is dark gallows humour, it is not about being a masochist, but you 'pooh pooh' the entire system. You laugh, it is even cathartic.

The first appearance of madness

This is what the Joker went through at the chemical plant. There, the criminals make him don a special mask to become the infamous Red Hood. Unknown to him, the criminals plan to use this disguise to implicate any accomplice as the mastermind and to divert attention away from themselves. Once inside, they encounter security personnel, a shootout ensues, and the two criminals are killed. The Joker is then confronted by Batman, who is investigating the disturbance. Terrified, he jumps into the chemical plant's waste pound to escape Batman and is swept through a pipe leading to the outside. Once outside, he discovers to his horror that the chemicals have permanently bleached his skin chalk-white, stained his lips ruby-red and dyed his hair bright green. The comedian's disfigurement, compounded with the loss of his family, drives him completely insane and marks the birth of the Joker.

Now, we understand why he remains the unconquerable archenemy of Batman. While Batman embraced and triumphed over his fear to fight crime, the Joker embraces madness to entertain the world, only this time, he ups his game with charismatic villainy. His humour is now gut-wrenching and appalling. He emerges altered and laughing his guts out. He has nothing more to do than create a new reality for himself. His madness is not a mere form of escapism, but a deeply thought about manner of living in this world to put to test every moral injunction that had laid a shadow of guilt in his mind.

His theory, the best ever validation for turning mad:

Ladies and gentlemen! You've read about it in the papers! Now witness,

before your very eyes, that most rare and tragic of nature's mistakes! I give you: the average man. Physically unremarkable, it instead possesses a deformed set of values. Notice the hideously bloated sense of humanity's importance. Also note the club-footed social conscience and the withered optimism. It's certainly not for the squeamish, is it? Most repulsive of all, are its frail and useless notions of order and sanity. If too much weight is placed upon them... they snap. How does it live, I hear you ask? How does this poor pathetic specimen survive in today's harsh and irrational environment? I'm afraid the sad answer is, 'Not very well'. Faced with the inescapable fact that human existence is mad, random, and pointless, one in eight of them crack up and go stark slaving buggo! Who can blame them? In a world as psychotic as this... any other response would be crazy (Moore 35)!

Thus the best freak in the house, is actually the sane man who thinks and dreams that order will be restored. It is at this juncture that Batman arrives and resumes his conversation, "Hello, I came to talk". In the ensuing tussle, Batman contemplates what would become of them, the end, perhaps? He chases after the Joker when Gordon shows immense fortitude and resilience by instructing Batman to catch the Joker by the book. He wants to prove that order and sanity still exist. See how the 'space' incorporates all the three characters drenched in misery. While the Joker alone still seems to poke fun at the sanity upheld by the other two. What follows is a parallel to the chemical plant scene, excepting the pursued is now more dangerous.

Mirrored madness.

Space is re-presented in the form of the 'Hall of Mirrors' which is what 'space' ultimately is. Both the characters reflect their past, in fact the main theme, that both are two sides of the same coin is brought out here. Batman is the sane orderly version of the Joker. They are the mirror images of each other. The story itself shows how the Joker and Batman came to terms with their respective life-altering tragedies, which both eventually lead to their present lives and confrontation. Both are creations of a random and tragic 'one bad day.' Batman spends his life forging meaning from the random tragedy, whereas the Joker reflects the absurdity of life, and all its random injustice. There is always a 'nugget of insanity' within all of us. To what degree do we bring it out determines our life and destiny. In a world speeding towards relentless violence and moral nihilism, madness does not seem so 'mad' anymore.

No joke is devoid of meaning if you know where to look for it.

The Joker, in a final attempt, tempts Batman to kill him after wielding a toy gun at him. When Batman replies that he wants to give him a chance to change, the Joker performs his best joke. The Killing Joke:

See, there were these two guys in a lunatic asylum...and one night, one night they decide they don't like living in an asylum any more. They decide they're going to escape! So, like, they get up onto the roof and there, just across this narrow gap, they see the rooftops of the town, stretching away in

the moonlight...stretching away to freedom. Now, the first guy, he jumps right across with no problem. But his friend, his friend daredn't make the leap. Y'see...y'see, he's afraid of falling. So then, the first guy has an idea...He says 'Hey! I have my flashlight with me! I'll shine it across the gap between the buildings. You can walk along the beam and join me!' B-but the second guy just shakes his head. He suh-says... he says 'What do you think I am? Crazy? You'd turn it off when I was half way across (Moore 47)!

So what really happens, at the end of the joke, the two laugh hysterically together, and the book ends as the cops show up to take the Joker to prison, or it is open ended and ambiguous. Full twenty years later, Bolland, the illustrator continues to keep things ambiguous. From the end of his afterword to the 2008 deluxe edition:

Speaking of which, it's time I revealed what really happened at the end of The Killing Joke: as our protagonists stood there in the rain, laughing at the final joke, the police lights reflecting in the pools of filthy water underfoot, the Batman's hand reached out and.....

The joke is funny enough to make the normally stone-faced Batman laugh. They continue to laugh as the police approach. Batman then grabs the Joker and the story ends, leaving it up to the reader to determine the Joker's fate. Sanity or insanity, we are not only the exponents, but also the judge.

No joke is devoid of meaning if you know where to look for it, but just sometimes 'meaninglessness' could be the meaning you were looking for.

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Imagining the Yakshi: A Study of the Novel *Yakshi* and the Movie *Ennu Swantham Janakikutty*

Abstract

Yakshi is a popular figure in the folklore of Kerala and represents the sexual demonic female. There are many folk and popular narratives that deal with the yakshi that reinforce the stereotype of the yakshi as a voluptuous, sensual and monstrous figure who needs to be tamed or destroyed. This paper studies two texts, the wellknown novel Yakshi by prominent Malayalam writer Malayattoor Ramakrishnan and the critically acclaimed movie Ennu Swantham Janakikutty (script by M.T Vasudevan Nair) that differ from the other narratives of the yakshi as a blood thirsty vengeful female spirit that has to be tamed/defeated by the patriarchal representative. In both narratives the protagonists who undergo psychological disturbance imagine the yakshi but in different ways. While Srinivasan imagines his wife to be a yakshi in order to deny his own sexual dysfunction, young Janakikutty sees in Kunjathol, the neighbourhood yakshi, a friend and confidante to aid her initiation into adulthood and her own sexual awakening.

Keywords: Yakshi, lethal women, female sexuality, Kerala

Ramanujan classifies certain folktales as 'woman's tales'. These are tales 'told by women' and tales 'centered around women'. In his essay, 'Towards a Counter-System: Women's Tales' he classifies and explores the folktales that have women as subject, listener or speaker. According to him, while Indian classics like Mahabharata, Ramayana and other pauranic mythologies act as texts that expose or initiate listeners into the culture of the location of the tale, folktales are a parallel presence that has the potential to act as a counter-system or subversive narrative. For instance, in the ancient epics and pauranas, we can find women who are models of chastity, while in women's tales (i.e. tales told by and about women) focus on their experiences, and while reflecting the patriarchal nature of Indian Society, can be simultaneously seen as "creations of women's fantasy that deny in imagination, the restrictions of reality, the constraints of family and custom, even within themselves.... The second alternative world speak of what the first cannot- the incest, the secret wishes of good men and chaste women, the doubts and imperfections of idealised heroes. This paradox found in folktales – patriarchal as well as subversive, can be applicable to the figure of yakshi as well.

The yakshi can be seen as dating back to the Sangam Period and the influence of Buddhism and Jainism. Usually, in Buddhist and Jain mythology, yakshis are female tree spirits that represent fecundity and life. But the Yakshis found in the folktales of Kerala are malevolent sexual females who entice and trap their 'male' victims with promises of sexual pleasure and ultimately devour them. In this form, there are striking similarities between the Yakshi and the European Vampire. There are similar figures in folk traditions across the world – in Trinidad, China, Malaya, Philippines, Arabia, Turkey and Africa. Therefore

Dr. Roopa Philip is lecturer, Jyotivivas College, Bangalore

yakshis can be seen as part of an archetype found across cultures, of the demonized, sexual and aggressive female. The 'vampire' of Europe, the 'yakshi' of Kerala, the 'petni' of Bengal, the 'churail' in Hindi, the 'soucouyants' in Trinidad all fall into the archetype of 'lethal woman'. The 'lethal woman' represents monstrous female behavior that defies acceptable cultural norms. These figures become the 'othered' women, constructed from the male point of view: "one of the core fantasies of Indian culture [becomes] the horrific vision of an overpowering feminine sexuality that exhausts, sucks and drains even the most powerful male to death." (Gupta, 35).

It is possible that the yakshi might have its origins in a female centric culture. This is put forth by the close connection between the 'Bhagavati' figure and the yakshi. Sarah Caldwell in *Oh Terrifying Mother: Sexuality, Violence and Worship of Goddess Kali* explores the striking similarities between yakshi and Bhadrakali:

In the traditional Devi cults of Kerala,...the male warrior coopts female power to attract and kill his enemy. Female power (sakti) is simultaneously an abstract cosmic force and an immanent aspect of the human female body which arouses erotic feeling in human male bodies. This revelation explains one of the most important reasons for the male actor dressing as the female Kali in Mutiyettu and other Kerala ritual arts: to cultivate power which can kill and destroy evil. The sakta worldview in the Dravidian context focuses this force in the female breasts; and it postulates the source of aggressive, destructive powerin the erotic attraction wielded by women over men. (301)

However, this does not mean that the yakshi becomes a feminist or woman centric tradition. The yakshi in folktales and popular culture is the product of paranoia attached to female sexuality, found in Kerala and elsewhere in India. Brinda Bose in the 'Introduction' to *Translating Desire* speaks of the "conspiracy of silence regarding sexuality in India" where the "belief that sexuality corrupts and taints the moral and social fabric of a nation and must therefore be suppressed. Since sex/uality is associated with woman as whore and man as fallible, the negative image becomes coterminous with being female." (XI)

The psychoanalytical approach to folktales study them as reflections of the repressed fantasies of the people – "the psychic repressions of the community." Thus myths and folktales act as "cultural control mechanisms" that shape our perspective of others and self. The yakshi in Kerala society signifies malevolent feminine power and can be contrasted with the Bhagvathi, the maternal and loving, albeit punishing femininity.

There are multiple versions of the yakshi folklore, but they all follow a general pattern – yakshis are female, sexually alluring and a threat to men. Sometimes, they are the vengeful spirits of women who have been wronged by some man (most often their husband or lover). They are always beautiful, sensuous and found in lonely places at night waiting to entrap lonely male travelers. In the folktales of Malabar, women who suffered an unnatural death would return as yakshis. They symbolize both violation and vengeance: "the twin themes of humiliation and revenge are essential aspects...in the folklore of yakshis...when women die of some accidents, they become yakshis...they bring harm to males. We never hear about females having any problems with yakshis." (Caldwell, 237-38)

Then the question that arises is, if the yakshi can be seen as a symbol of feminine power.

However, the yakshi is primarily a fantastical creature, bearing little or no resemblance to the 'hypermasculine' society of Kerala. Fantastical women have the twin functions of expressing and expelling through the expression, a socially unacceptable or potential threat to social balance and order. According to Nilanjana Gupta in "Fears and Fantasies: Controlling and Creating Desires; or Why Women are Witches," the monstrous feminine becomes the other that has to be repressed or destroyed or controlled in order to 'secure and protect the social order.' The yakshi fulfills this function by stereotyping female sexuality as demonic and ultimately to be brought within the purview of patriarchal control. Yakshi becomes the contrast to the docile, tame and unthreatening femininity acceptable to patriarchy.

Though the yakshi has its roots or beginnings in ancient times, it continues to exist as a popular symbol in contemporary society of Kerala for the patriarchal paranoia of vocal, assertive and sexual women. In modern Kerala, ideals of feminine behavior continue to be defined by modesty, self control, selflessness, naivety and stoicism in the face of adversity as evident from the extremely popular Malayalam serials and the types of good and bad women found in them. Sarah Caldwell notes that "women especially are not encouraged to verbalise negative emotions....Such behavior is considered disruptive, antisocial and childlike, and for women, is only permitted in very formalized settings such as intense weeping at death ceremonies or in the culturally accepted avenue of possession by lower spirits (Caldwell, 204).

And therefore in contemporary Kerala, the yakshi continues to reinforce images of sexual women as aggressive and disruptive, and a challenge to male power, control and selfhood. In contemporary depictions of yakshi, they are aggressive, destructive and at the same time sensual and irresistible. Though there are variations to the conventional depiction of the yakshi as the monstrous and demonic figure in contemporary narratives, especially cinema, they all end with either the yakshi being destroyed by a 'male' figure or liberated and idolized as a goddess (another form of asserting patriarchal control). Whichever of the two is followed, she is defused as a threat and brought under patriarchal control. For instance, in the movie, *Yakshiyum Njanum*, an attempt is made to depict the yakshi as misunderstood and demanding our sympathy and understanding. But in the end, she needs the help of the male hero to fulfill her revenge on her behalf, after she has been destroyed thus reinforcing the image of masculine power and the archetype of the 'saving hero'.

Even the statue of the yakshi in Malampuzha depicting a naked, voluptuous, long haired woman stretching with her legs wide apart, become not necessarily a celebration of female sexuality but of male voyeurism and objectification in a sexually repressive and patriarchal society. However, amongst the many contemporary narratives of the yakshi, this paper will study Malayattoor Ramakrishnan's novel *Yakshi* and the movie *Ennu Swantham Janakikutty* and the construct of the yakshi in it.

Yakshi written in 1967 is narrated from the first person point of view of the protagonist Srinivasan who is in a mental asylum. This aspect of the narrator makes the narrative highly problematic at the offset itself, where the reader is not able to discern truth from delusion. He is suspected of murdering his wife, Ragini who he claims is a yakshi. Srinivasan after a horrific chemistry lab accident that leaves him disfigured finds himself shunned by all, including his love Vijayalakshmi and the only person who seems to not be bothered by this disfigurement is a lonely, beautiful woman he meets on the road one night – Ragini. The stories about yakshis usually have her encountering men at night in lonely places. And

Srinivasan who had started to dabble in the occult and magical cannot escape this allusion.

As he faces his own sexual dysfunction brought on possibly by the trauma of his disfigurement and subsequent isolation, he projects the reason on to his wife and her supposed identity as a yakshi. Before the accident, Srinivasan is an extremely moralistic man and this is evident in his reaction to a student Vanaja who makes advances to him: "Let me tell you Vanaja, the way you behave is dangerous.' I'd spoken as severely as I could...Girls should behave with more propriety." (10) His sense of morality dictates that girls should be 'modest, pure/chaste and passive' and Vanaja and Ragini later, deviates from that and becomes 'dangerous' for his sense of selfhood. In Srinivasan's othering of Vanaja and Ragini can be seen the paranoia of patriarchal society to female sexuality, especially outside the acceptable confines of the institution of marriage.

After finding himself demonized and shunned by people due to his accident, he turns to the study of yakshis. This could be because of their demonic status in society which matches his. While, Srinivasan is disfigured and monstrous physically, the yakshi is beautiful and alluring on the outside and demonic within (her intention is to seduce and devour men). Another reason for his obsession could be his own raging desires. In a society that believes unpoliced and uncontrolled sexuality as dangerous, Srinivasan, finds himself having to repress his and transferring it into an interest on yakshis- the negative and demonic but sexual female. Often mythic and other conventional references to sex and sexuality are codified in 'vampiric terms' – the weakening of male power, but without similar loss to the female. And the yakshi's vampiric nature reflects this. So his obsession with yakshis is both attraction to their sexual nature and fear of what they could do to him.

In Kerala, there is a male counterpart to the yakshi, the gandharvan. The gandharvan is a celestial male who seduces and abandons young women and are therefore often worshipped by families with young girls in the hope that their daughters will be spared. However the gandharvan is less demonic than the yakshi who not only seduces but also consumes the man. But both yakshis and gandharvans are metaphors in a sexually repressive society that seeks to control and demonise female sexuality and power. Srinivasan's internalization of patriarchal values is expressed in the nature of his relationship with Vijayalakshmi where he constructs her as a patriarchal stereotype of the acceptable, passive, innocent and virginal woman and contrasts her with the sexual and 'dangerous' Vanaja. Ragini wandering alone at night and her willingness to visit him in his house before their marriage later on become some of the reasons for his belief in her as a yakshi. Because of her largely unconventional behavior and secretive manner, it becomes convenient for Srinivasan to project his own inadequacies and fears on to his wife and deny that the problem may lie with him.

Masculinity in patriarchal society is defined through control and power and often this is manifest in the assertion of control and power over women – physically and sexually. For Srinivasan, the sexual dysfunction becomes problematic to his sense of self, especially his identity as a man. In the essay, "Psychiatric Disorders in Malayalam Cinema" by Badr Ratnakar et al, the term used for his condition is "delusional projection of the protagonist's sexual dysfunction...to the wife." It is interesting that he chooses to do so by imagining or constructing her as a yakshi:

Sitting on the bed, I looked at her. Each part of her seemed to be made of the essence of beauty. I felt excited...Suddenly my blood cooled. The exhilaration ended. I am Incapable...impotent...a cruel voice from my

heart.....Judy had died when Ragini had touched her. So what was Ragini?...How had the pala tree flowered on the day she had come?.....Ragini's beauty had the power to enslave any man...(61-66)

The doubts in Srinivasan regarding Ragini's identity start soon after a realization of his own impotency. What had till then been most likely coincidences, take on meaning. For instance, the pala tree that had laid dormant in the garden happens to flower after Ragini comes. The pala tree and flowers are associated with yakshis in the folklore of Kerala.

In Srinivasan's imagination and also in the reader's (whose entry point to the narrative is Srinivasan) these become signs that reinforce Ragini's identity as that of a yakshi. It reaches the point where, he makes it the reason for his own impotency:

Was it that my body had understood what my brain could not? As I thought more about it, I was convinced. A man who made love to a yakshi would die. The brain can make mistakes...Bu the body is more careful. It protects itself....Ragini was a yakshi...If I behaved like a husband to her, I would die. That should not happen. That was the reason for my failure in bed. My body had found its own protective talisman. (100-101).

The novel explores through Srinivasan's psychosis, the effect of yakshi on society. Yakshi becomes a patriarchal cultural fantasy of the female as the aggressor, which is in reverse to what is usually the case in reality. This folk figure enables Srinivasan to demonise his wife's unconventional behavior and reason out his failing and dysfunction. The novel highlights this problematic nature of the yakshi figure by making Srinivasan's narration unreliable. So instead of seeing the yakshi as a real supernatural figure, she is projected as an imaginary one – a possible figment of Srinivasan's psychosis.

The other text *EnnuSwanthamJanakikutty* is a critically acclaimed 1998 Malayalam movie directed by Hariharan and written by eminent writer M T Vasudevan Nair. Like in Ramakrishnan's novel, in the movie the protagonist, Janakikutty, experiences 'dissociative disorder' and possibly hallucinates a yakshi. Like in the novel, here as well, the yakshi is constructed as possibly both real or imagined. If in the novel, Srinivasan's psychosis makes it impossible for the reader to conclusively determine the validity of his claims, in the movie, the yakshi is shown possibly as both a hallucination as well as being real. There are two incidents in the movie that problematise a reading of the yakshi as only a hallucination. One is the discovery of the flowers and rice in the hand of the dead muthassi which Janakikutty believes she attended with Kunjathol (the yakshi) and 'muthassi,' though muthassi was pronounced dead the morning of the wedding. The other one is when Kunjathol visits Janakikutty in the hospital to bid farewell after she has supposedly been cured and is ready to be discharged. These two instances in the film problematise a simple reading of the yakshi in the movie as hallucinatory.

Kunjathol is different from the conventional depictions of the yakshis in folklore and popular culture. She becomes a friend and confidante to the lonely and isolated Janakikutty struggling to make sense of the world of adulthood and come to terms with her growing romantic feelings for her neighbor Bhasker. Janakikutty, is a young girl of 14 years, living an isolated and solitary life in a joint family with no female companionship – her older sister and cousin Sarojini barely tolerate her and do not allow her to accompany them in their outings or secrets. Sarojini is the epitome of beauty against whom Janakikutty compares her own

gawky teenage self. Poised on the threshold of adulthood, Janakikutty has no companion to share or aid this transition. She has no one to talk to – about her feelings for Bhasker and of the heartbreak and rage on discovering that he loves Sarojini. It is in this instance that she first encounters Kunjathol – she encounters her when she falls and sprains her ankle while running away from where she had come upon Bhasker and Sarojini kissing.

In the essay, “EnnuSwanthamJanakikutty: An Exploration of Dissociative Disorder” by VidyaChathoth, the hallucination is seen as a disconnection from the world and people around due to trauma. For Janakikutty, Kunjathol becomes a defense mechanism insulating her self from pain and suffering induced within the family. The family is often a microcosm of society, playing out the relationships of power, control and violence found in society. And this is the case in Janakikutty's family. Janakikutty, within the familial space, encounters sexual repression – Sarojini and Bhasker's affair is conducted in secret. She also encounters a world where women are denied agency and power - her mother is frustrated by the possibility that her absent husband might be having an affair with his new maid and is waiting anxiously for the monthly money order from the father to arrive – the assurance that he hasn't forgotten them; the freedom for her brother to come and go as he pleases is in contrast to the demands made on her, to not roam around but stay indoors like a good girl (like Sarojini and her sister – both of whom have not been educated past 10th standard and are now waiting to get married); Sarojini ultimately bowing to family pressure to marry a man 'chosen' as a suitable groom by her father. All these experiences of lack of freedom and control are contrasted with the life stories of two women – Muthassi and Kunjathol.

Muthassi is a destitute grand aunt who lives in the house but has a disreputable past that is the subject of family gossip when she first arrives. The 'karyastan' gossips that she had run away with a Tamilian labourer, when young, abandoning her children and returned years later, possibly after he abandoned her. The other one Kunjathol is a Namboodiri woman who returns as a yakshi after her womanizing husband murders her because she dared to object. Among the narratives of patriarchal control, these two women become the counternarratives but not socially acceptable or positive. Muthassi is destitute, alone and isolated like Janakikutty. Likewise, Kunjathol is feared and abhorred by all. This could possibly be the reason for the strong connection that Janakikutty has with them. Like her, they are also social outcasts/misfits and there exists between them an empathetic connection. Kunjathol and her companion, Karineeli (a lower caste yakshi) are both unlike the conventional depiction of yakshis. In the movie, they are friendly and true – Janakikutty refers to Kunjathol as an 'honest' yakshi indicating that she stands for justice and truth. Initially, for Janakikutty, Kunjathol is a means to take revenge on Sarojini and an outlet for the anger and hatred she feels for her cousin. In one instance she, with Kunjathol, destroys Sarojini's clothes.

It is interesting that, like Srinivasan, Janakikutty also imagines/hallucinates a yakshi in a moment of extreme betrayal and anger. Yakshi is the negative stereotype in Kerala society – representing the angry, vengeful and violent female in contrast to the positive stereotype of the 'maternal' goddess (tolerant, forgiving, loving). And therefore, Janakikutty's anger and desire for vengeance can be expressed only through the figure of a yakshi. In a society that dictates that she be passive and decorous, the yakshi becomes a figure facilitating the expression of her anger, desire for revenge, disappointments and frustrations. For Janakikutty, Kunjathol, though a fearful figure becomes possibly an empowering model. However, the ambiguity regarding the figure of the yakshis – as both possibly a powerful

female model and fearful or demonic one is present in Janakikutty's own reactions to Kunjathol. She vacillates from love and affection for Kunjathol (considering her a friend and companion) to fear of her demonic and malignant form when she witnesses marriages.

As the movie progresses, the relationship between the two change –Kunjathol grows from a potential source of revenge against Sarojini to that of a companion and confidante for Janakikutty. In the end, when Janakikutty is recovering the hospital, Kunjathol visits to say goodbye and it is with sadness and a sense of loss that Janakikutty lets her go. Bhasker is her new companion – reciprocating her feelings of love and therefore Kunjathol becomes redundant and can leave.

The two texts are interesting in the way the folkloric figure of the yakshi is used to explore the inner psyche of the protagonists. For both Srinivasan and Janakikutty, the yakshi becomes the stereotype through which they mediate and experience sexuality. Srinivasan stereotypes his seemingly distant, mysterious and unconventional wife as a yakshi. Likewise Janakikutty refers to women involved in romantic relationships outside the bonds of marriage as 'yakshis,' like her brother's lover and Sarojini herself. The idea that yakshi is the 'othered' female in the culture of Kerala is reinforced through this. But because of their gender, their reactions to the yakshi vary. While Srinivasan uses the 'yakshi' tag to oppress and alienate his wife and to deny his own problems, Janakikutty sees the yakshi as a companion and friend and towards the end envisaged her as a symbol of pure love and positive change – she imagines that Kunjathol can reunite Sarojini and Bhasker despite familial opposition.

While Srinivasan's vision of the yakshi conforms to patriarchal norms, Janakikutty's imagined yakshi is a stark contrast. For Srinivasan, the yakshi is to be feared as a powerful sexual femininity that can destroy his self; for him she is the 'other'. But for Janakikutty, the yakshi becomes a friend – the word 'sakhi' denoting 'companion, mate and girlfriend' is used to refer to their relationship; the yakshi here is a catalyst or important figure in Janakikutty's realisation of selfhood. And this difference in perspective is manifest in the endings of the two texts. While in the novel *Ragini*, the yakshi figure is destroyed by the patriarchal male self, in the movie, Kunjathol continues to exist, undestroyed.

Thus it can be concluded that both the texts explore the folk figure of the yakshi and its effect on the human psyche and the powerful effect it has on their perception of self and those around. Yakshi becomes a cultural metaphor through which sexual experiences and desires are mapped and mediated to be finally rejected or accepted. The yakshi in these texts serve both as expression and expulsion of the repressed sexuality. The two narratives explore yakshis as products of the human imagination affected by the cultural archetype of the deviant women – an instance of patriarchal demonization of powerful femininity and at the same time the possibility of women coopting the same as symbols of power and identification. On one hand she is the fetishised female body and on the other a source of female defiance and selfhood. Thus they move beyond the simplistic narratives of yakshis as supernatural vampiric figures to seeing them as cultural metaphors and fantasy that simultaneously reinterprets and reinforces the relationships of power that exist in a patriarchal society.

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The Quest for Survival Space Beyond Caste, Gender and Religion; En route Bama's *Karakku*

The awe inspiring achievements in the field of science and technology, the rapid changes in the spheres of education, the rich source of intelligentsia all make India the focus of world's attention. Everybody predicts that India in near future will be one of the powerful nations in the world. But even in this tech-savvy world we are still outmoded when we analyse some of our social customs and practices. Even though the Indian constitution ensures equality for all Indian citizens irrespective of caste, creed or gender, the discrimination based on caste and gender hinders our development. A lot of hue and cry regarding the suicide of Rohith Vemula the PhD Scholar at JNU, New Delhi and report of several other related incidents from several parts of the country points out that even if India is openhearted towards Liberalisation and Modernisation the nation is conservative to certain sensitive issues. Throughout the history of India the social stratification and injustice born out of the concept of caste have been questioned repeatedly by thinkers and social reformers.

When and how did the caste system originate in India, is a debatable question. According to Manu Dharma, the entire humanity is divided into four Varnas, the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Sudras. The Sudras were destined to do all the menial jobs. They were denied the right for education and the right to own property. So one can say that a person is born into a caste, and once born an upliftment is impossible. The four varnas or four castes eventually developed into more than 300 sub-castes with the untouchables or the Harijans or the Dalits lying at the bottom of the list or sometimes outside it. Though untouchability has been abolished by law, the social, economic and political backwardness which the Dalits endure persist.

The word Dalit which means the oppressed is now no longer in usage, as from 2008, the National Commission for Scheduled Caste called the term unconstitutional and asked the governments to end its use; Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes are the different official terms used instead of it. When compared to the earlier times the situations have changed a lot but they have not yet escaped from the deplorable state. The humiliating situations faced by these downtrodden people entered a new phase by 1960's. The Dalit Literary Movement and the Dalit Panther Movement helped them to articulate a physical space, both in the literary as well as social field. They had to fight against the inferior position thrust upon them both spatially and normatively. "The space that they occupied outside the village in real life was ensured its purity by relegating the untouchable to a luminal space, literature went a step further. It ensured that the untouchable would not pollute its world even by touching that space" (Limbale 29). By the mid half of the twentieth century the Dalits found an impetus to form their own survival space, especially through their writings. They had to deconstruct the existing norms and codes of the society. It was not at all an easy task. "By Dalit Literature, I mean writing about Dalits by Dalit writers with a Dalit consciousness. The form of Dalit literature is inherent in its Dalitness, and its purpose is obvious, to inform Dalit society of its

slavery and narrates its pain and suffering to Upper Caste Hindus” (19). Their literary outputs in the beginning constituted many moving poems. A spirit of rebellion echoed in the poems of Narayan Surve, Namdeo Dhasal and Daya Pawar. They dreamt of leading a life of dignity. More than giving an aesthetic pleasure they wanted to refine the people about the true nature of their sufferings.

By 1980's an outpour of Dalit autobiographies which were a true portrayal of their life helped to acknowledge the world that they too exist. As they had no models to copy, they were free enough to adopt a style of their own. The Dalit Literary Movement had its origin in Marathi Literature and the Dalit autobiographies created a new space. As they were denied the right for education they were only familiar with the social circle to which they belonged to and in fact about which the outer world was ignorant of. So the writings were initially ridiculed, mainly because of the regional dialects or colloquial language used in it. But from the first Dalit autobiography *Baluta* by Daya Pawar to Limbale's *The Outcaste*, a new arena for securing a dignified footing in a highly discriminative world was activated. Though Dalit writing flourished in Maharashtra, soon it had its impact in other states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu. Tamil Dalit writer Bama through her writings gives a mirror image of the lamentable state of the deprived class. She herself being a victim of its monstrosity, through her works she urges the society to break its clutches upon their existence. This paper tries to analyse analytically her autobiographical work *Karakku* and brings out the different sociological and personal elements against which a victim of caste system had to fight, right from the moment of birth.

Karakku is about the experience of a Dalit Christian woman. As this being a work by a Dalit about the sufferings of the Dalit, it fully gives justice to the marginalisation they suffer. Dalits fully knew that nobody from outside their milieu could portray a veracious account of their sufferings. They neither wanted any sympathy nor do they want any spokesmen. *Karakku* the first autobiographical work by a Tamil Dalit writer fits in very well with this attitude. In the beginning section of the work the writer herself acknowledged that “*Karakku* written by a wounded self has not been dissolved in the stream of time. On the contrary it has been a means of relieving the pain of others who were wounded. *Karakku* has been of comfort to many who have been brought low and who suffer the pain of caste discrimination, untouchability, poverty and destitution; it has given them courage and helped them to love life once more. *Karakku* stands as a means of strength to the multitudes, whose identities have been destroyed and denied”(x).

When the book was published it was not well received. Those people whose upliftment Bama dreamt of themselves become hostile to her. Slowly the resentment changed to applause when they realised the true intention of the work. The English translation of the book by Lakshmi Holmstrom brought about world wide acclaim to it. The title *Karakku* is nowhere mentioned in the memoir but Bama selected the title intentionally. *Karakku* means the leaves of the Palmyra trees which are double edged. It will cut and it will bleed. On one side the Caste Hindus and the outside world debase them on the basis of their caste, never acknowledge their achievements, and never give them an identity as a human being. Despite this Bama exhorts her fraternity to rise up, get educated, organise as a force and agitate. Her work is a testimony about how caste, religion and gender hinder the lower caste people from leading a normal life.

The writer herself belongs to Parayar community. They are Dalits converted to

Christianity in the vain hope of gaining an upward march in the social strata but in vain. There are Nadar Christians, Udayar Christians, Pallar Christians and Parayar Christians in the place she belongs to. The excruciating dilemma these people face is that they themselves are divided into upper class and lower class Christians. The Paraya castes who are converted to Christianity are even denied the benefits of Scheduled Caste. They do not even come together under the group of Dalit Christians.

In the society, if you are born into a low caste, you are forced to live a life of humiliation and degradation until your death. Even after death caste differences does not disappear. Wherever you look, however much you study, whatever you look up, caste discrimination stalks us in every nook and corner drives us into frenzy. It is because of this that we are unable to find a way to study well and progresses like everyone else. (Bama 26)

Bama blames not only the upper castes but also the Dalits themselves for their pitiable condition. Instead of standing together united, they create petty issues to fight against each other. The incidents of rivalry between Parayas and Chaaliyars regarding certain land issue and the quarrel between Parayas and Pallas regarding the stealing of two bananas by a Palla boy, all highlight the disunity. “Instead of uniting together in a village of many castes, if they keep each other to fights, what will happen to all these men in the end?”(47) is a thought provoking question from the narrator. From childhood onwards the narrator saw only the Paraya and Palla communities toiling hard day and night. Despite their hardwork they remained the downtrodden. They never received proper wages. They had the same monotonous life of hardships. Even little children instead of going to school and playing like other children go off to work in the match factory. “ These tiny crab like little children pour their kuuzh into their carrier half asleep, totter along to the van climb in and go off to work” (55). Nobody bothered to give those little children proper education or proper care. Their own parents feel that, that was the natural way of upbringing and the upper class society find no need for those backward classes to be educated living amidst all those discrimination.

Bama was fortunate enough to get proper education. Her brother who was the first postgraduate among the Dalits in their village, exhilarate her by pointing out that if one gets proper education no one can discriminate them on the basis of caste. “The words that Annan spoke to me that day made a very deep impression on me. And I studied hard with all my breath and being in a frenzy almost. As Annan had urged, I stood first in my class. And because of that many people became my friends, even though I am a Paraichi.” (18). To throw away the burden of being an outcaste, to gain dignity the only way out is to enliven through education.

The humanitarian efforts of the missionaries led to the conversion of Dalit Communities to Christianity. Many thought that the conversion to Christianity may liberate themselves from the clutches of caste system. Another factor that attracted them was that they could acquire the holy book. Till that day they were not able to gain access of the Bhagavat Gita or the Ramayana. The promise to dissolve oppression and inequality in the society by the Gospel rendered hope in them. Despite their conversion to Christianity they were still the underdogs. As children Bama recollected the nuns always narrated the story of Devil and sins. They never narrated any cheerful ones. On the other side, the converted Christians even didn't know the importance of Christmas, but they celebrated it with all its pomp and glory as for them it was a day of liberation. “At Christmas, Easter and on New Year's Day, people hang up posters of Rajanikant and Kamal Hassan here and there. Nobody seems to know

what the festival is really about or what it is celebrating” (70).

Bama confessed that only when her father did arrive on holidays she had sumptuous meals. Those people who toil hard to have two meagre meals a day offer gifts and fruits to the priest and Mother Superior on New Year. In return for that they seek their blessings. The church authorities who promised equal opportunities and freedom forbid even to touch them. In some way the Dalits faced the same humiliating experience from the Caste Hindus. In schools and convents the nuns who took the vows of chastity and poverty always were partial to the students who belong to the upper class. They made the Dalit children clean the premises. That infuriated Bama. With the sole intention to work for the Dalit children she resigned her secure job as a teacher and joined the convent as a nun. To her surprise she realised that inside the convent too the discrimination persist. “I really wanted to teach such children. But I understood, after I entered the order, that the convent I entered didn't even care to glance at poor children and only wished to serve the children of the wealthy” (77). Even amongst the priests and nuns, it is the upper castes that hold all the high positions and priests and nuns belonging to the Dalit communities were marginalised. It was meaningless for her to continue in the convent. “There was no love to be found in that convent; among these people who declared all the time that God is loving. There was no love for the poor and the humble” (106). Coming out of the religious order though economically insecure, Bama vowed herself to set her life aside to work for her community.

Dalit women who face triple subjugation of caste, class and gender were not at all a subtle voice for Bama. Despite their hardships, they laugh and remain cheerful. They are so strong at heart, that they did not need the help of men folk to run the family. They face physical violence at home and at work place. Women retain strength and pleasure even after worst hardships and crises in their lives. A Dalit woman is a Dalit among Dalits. Being a Dalit woman herself and a true feminist, Bama resists all kinds of oppressions on Dalit women. She wants Dalit women to rise up and break all the social and cultural barriers which inhibits a physical space for her.

Arjun Dangle writes that “ Dalit is not a caste but a realisation and is related to the experience, joys and sorrows and struggles of those in the lower stratum of society ” (256). In *Karakku*, Bama shares her anxiety about the unfulfilled hopes of Dalits and their struggle for a survival space in the patriarchal society ,where caste and religion have the hegemony. Like the Karakku leaves Bama wants her fellowmen to strive hard, even though they are hurt by the humiliation and marginalisation they face as Dalits. In a nutshell, she urges them to educate themselves, and understand their worth to have a dignified stand in the society.

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Ibis as Transcultural Space: Zooming Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies

Kandian philosophy regards time and space as the two fundamental categories that structure human experience. Narrative is widely recognized as the discourse of human experience (Fludernik 1996); yet most definitions, by characterizing stories as the representation of a sequence of events, foreground time at the expense of space. Representations of space are not necessarily narratives, (geographical maps, landscape painting etc)- but all narratives imply a world within spatial extension. Narrative space is the physically existing environment in which characters live and move (Bachholz & Jahn 2005). We may call it “setting”, but this intuitive notion of setting needs to be further refined: just as in theatre, we can distinguish the stage in which events are shown from the broader world alluded to by the characters, in written narrative we can distinguish the individual locations in which narratively significant events take place from the total place implied by these events. (Ronen 1986).

Amitav Ghosh has emerged as one of the prominent writers of postmodern literature. Ghosh's novels centre on various issues of postmodern age. The important traits of postmodern fiction such as fluid identity, migration, plurality, hybridity, multiculturalism, blending of fact and fiction and human insecurities appear as major themes in his works. Exhibiting a profound sense of history and space, his novels explore the human drama amidst the broad sweep of the political and historical events. Ghosh prioritizes space over time as the structuring principle in his narratives. In “the March of the Novel Through History”, he applauds the novel's speciality to eloquently communicate a sense of place and also to interweave the entire spatial continuum from the local to global.

In Ghosh's fictional realms, local or global, seen or unseen space is perceived and imagined in the narrator's memory as a fundamental facet of individual, national, familial, and communal metamorphoses. Space is not merely remembered as an imaginative construct but is represented as a domain of political and cultural encounters which actually shape the connection of different characters with territory and location. Hence, space is represented as a dynamic arrangement between people, places, cultures and societies. According to Clifford, space is composed through movement, produced through use, at the same time an agency and result of action or practice. The construction of space in Ghosh's novel does not simply manifest territorial struggles but serves to show the interplay between local and global influences, national and transnational reconfiguration and above all the search for community and alliances that cut across boundaries of cultural and ethnic identity. Ghosh compels the reader to imagine space above the narrow confines of a singular culture, nation, territory and community, a free space (in a world without binaries) which is supposed to be above all temporal or spatial constraints. This contentious space is a transcultural space--- a space of cultural and ethnic transactions where characters seek to overthrow artificial frontiers to come to terms with the reality of cultural and political transformations. This space, as Naida Butt argues, is of “overlapping histories, territories, shifting countries and continents where different people, cultures, nations and communities communicate above

the 'shadow lines' of social, national and territorial barriers” (Butt 2008: 4).

Set in 19th century, immediately before the first Opium war, *Sea of Poppies* chronicles the journey of *Ibis*, from the coast of Calcutta to Mauritius. Central to the novel is *Ibis*, once a vessel that carried slaves, now fitted for human cargo, and later, for opium. It brings together merchants, indentured labourers and their guards, convicts, lascars who ply their trade, one white woman trying to build an independent life in another country, a black man passing as white, etc. The narrative focuses the idea that on *Ibis* everyone is part of a unified community of forced migrants irrespective of the reasons behind their migration and their previous situations in life.

While travelling in *Ibis*, the characters try to reconstruct their identities in order to free from all kinds of cast and racial origins and ultimately restart their lives to fill new essence and like this Ghosh transform *Ibis* as a transcultural space. The identity transformation of the main characters in the novel takes place on the ship *Ibis*. Deeti becomes Aditi, Kalua becomes Maddow Colver to hide their real identity or perhaps they want to live a new life with a true and respectful identity. Mr Zachary Reid, runs away from the American racial discrimination is transformed into Malum Zikri, Jodu turns to be Azad Naskar, Raja Neel Rattan Haldar becomes Neel and transported as a convict for the offence he has not committed. Cut off from the older personal, familial and national ties, all these migrants forge new identity and adopt the *Ibis* as new cultural community.

As Deeti wants to free from the clutches of social customs like Sati, she transforms herself into new identity by marrying Kalua who rescued her from Sati.

Even then she did not feel herself to be living in the same sense as before: a curious feeling, of joy mixed with resignation, crept into her heart, for it was as if she really had died and been delivered betimes in rebirth, to her next life: she had shed the body of the old Deeti, with the burden of its Karma; she had paid the price her stars had demanded of her, and was free now to create a new destiny as she willed, with whom she chose... (178).

Deeti is married to Hukam Singh, a crippled worker in the Ghazipur Opium Factory. The unfortunate Deeti runs from pillar to post to discover the identity of her daughter's father. It turns out in the end to be the Subedar of her village. Once her husband dies, Deeti looks almost certain to meet her doom in the customary Sati Pratha. She says “listen to me: I will burn on my husband's pyre rather than given myself to you.” (154) She is saved by Kalua, an untouchable from a society which is ruled by patriarchal laws. Kalua saves her from the burning pyre and jumps in the river Ganga. She discards discrimination and marries Kalua as her second husband. She had shed the body of the old Deeti, with the burden of its Karma; she had the price stars had demanded of her, and was free now to create a new destiny with Kalua, until another death claimed the body that he had torn from the flames. (175)

After her rebirth she sheds meekness and weakness possessed by her as Deeti. She becomes confident and independent to take decisions about her future. The meaning of her new name 'Aditi' suggests to a mythical Hindu goddess who releases from sin and to a person having a deep inner desire to use her abilities in leadership and to have personal independence. Towards her fellow people in the ship, Deeti's conduct is typical of a considerate and trustworthy leader. Soon she comes to be known as Bhauji and for many she is a friend, protector and confidant. It happens naturally as she takes responsibility and speaks for

truth and justice. Even Deeti shoulders the responsibility of guarding the single woman like Muna, Sarju and Heeru throughout their journey to Mauritius. Here Ghosh treats the *Ibis* as a space where woman like Deeti gets empowered as they are free from social and territory barriers.

The novel also features Paulette, a French orphan, grown up in India. She brought up by Jodu's mother who becomes her 'Tantima'- 'aunt mother' but Mr. and Mrs. Burnham take Paulette into their home after her father's demise. She becomes determined to run away because Mr. Burnham has behaved in an obnoxious manner with her in private. Also, he is trying to get her married to his friend, the stern, elderly justice Kendalbushe. Desire to lead a new life; Paulette joins the *Ibis* under the guise of Brahmin's daughter. She recreates her identity under the strong influence of her upbringing by an Indian family. So she easily disguise herself as an Indian woman, using her glib Bengali, bright vermilion *alta* to colour her feet and her arms and hands were covered with intricate, henna designs, ghungta to cover her face, which she learned from Jodu's family:

...she had also disguised her appearance in a number of other ways: her feet were lacquered with bright vermilion *alta*; her arms and hands were covered with intricate, henna designs that left very little of skin visible; and under the cover of her veil the line of her jaw was obscured by large, tasselled earrings...(359)

However, Paulette represents the woman of today who do not believe that woman are inferior beings and must remain passive and submissive. Instead she gives a tough fight against the established order and comes up with new concepts of gender identity. She refuses to surrender before anxieties, indoctrination, social conditioning, and resultant oppression. She is presented as an extremely courageous woman who faces the problems of her life boldly and also manages to come out of them. Her courage and confidence is evident in a conversation with Zachary whom she requests to allow herself to join the crew. "Paulette repeated, 'that is my request to you: to be allowed to join your crew, I will be one of them: my hair will be confined, my clothing will be as theirs...I am strong... I can work...'" (307). Ghosh transform *Ibis* as a space for Paulette to become autonomous and self-determining woman who struggles to obtain selfhood by overcoming hardships, inculcating the strength to survive with dignity.

Zachary Reid is the mulatto freedman son of an American slave-owner, but whose colour doesn't overtly reveal his black heritage. He has been on the *Ibis* since the Scooner started her journey, and hopes to die with it. He maintains that in his lifetime he has never seen a more admirable article than the *Ibis*. It is no less than a mother to him, supporting him in his dark hours and rejoicing with him in his happiness. With the support of Serang, Ali, he becomes the second in command of the ship. He hides his mixed parentage from his British employees fearing discrimination. Serang Ali transforms Zachary's identity to such an extent that the latter occupies a hybrid cultural space beyond recognition (439). Zachary realises that this crew is itself "had nothing in common except the Indian Ocean; among them were Chinese and East Africans, Arabs and Malayas, Bengalis and Goans, Tamils and Arakanese" (Ghosh 13). Disrespecting all racial and cultural boundaries, Zachary strongly endorses the principle of posthumanism which enables "two people from worlds apart to find themselves linked by a tie of pure sympathy, a feeling that owed nothing to the rules and expectations of

others” (Ghosh 403). These ties between individuals, unrelated by blood or kinship or race, suggest a world of possibility imagined outside of categorical boundaries of race, class, and nationality. On the *Ibis*, these seamen are a group of workers bound to each other in an oceanic kinship.

Ibis is portrayed by Ghosh as a metaphor for a huge womb where the characters are socially reborn. While on land, these characters behaved on different manners, each of them belonging to a certain community, religion or cast and were bound to strict conventions. But in *Ibis*, the new setting, however, gradually blurs the thick borderline between them as regards cast or culture being dissolved by their predicament. Only way out of it is to cross their own ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic borders and to communicate to their own good. In the view of Anupama Arora, the *Ibis* “gets invested with new symbolic meanings by the migrants and is remade into a vehicle of transformation from which new selves and identities emerge. Different characters feel the “birth of a new existence” on the ship” (Arora 38).

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A Psychoanalytic Reading of Jhumpa Lahiri's "The Treatment of Bibi Haldar"

Abstract

A few tenets of psychoanalytic criticism can be applied to, while interpreting Jhumpa Lahiri's short story, "The Treatment of Bibi Haldar." This text has a 'psychic' context in which the individual 'psycho-drama' subdues the social drama. Freud's interpretation that it is that part of mind, called unconscious, has a strong influence on the actions of Bibi Haldar, a twenty-nine-year-old girl, who has been afflicted with a mysterious ailment. The cause of her illness can be attributed to the psychoanalytic technique that it is the repressed feelings which are brought into the conscious mind than remaining buried in the unconscious. Bibi Haldar might be the projection of the author's (Jhumpa Lahiri's) psyche, according to Michael Delahoyde.

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytical tenet is articulated by Peter Barry in the introduction to "Psychoanalytic Criticism," that is, "Psychoanalysis itself is a form of therapy which aims to cure mental disorders 'by investigating the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in the mind'" (as Thesaurus Oxford Dictionary puts it) (96). A few techniques of Freud's psychoanalysis can be employed in the interpretation of Jhumpa Lahiri's short story "The Treatment of Bibi Haldar."

"The Treatment of Bibi Haldar" begins with a reference to a mysterious ailment, Bibi Haldar, a twenty-nine-year-old girl, was afflicted with. People "had her screams and throes in the night, when her wrists were bound with ropes and stinging poultices pressed upon her..." (158) Various descriptions of remedial measures were attempted and tried by taking her to people from secular (friends, therapists) and religious (priests) walks of life. All branches of medical arts such as allopaths, homeopaths, ayurvedics were consulted. Doctors took x-rays, auscultated and gave injections. As these arts did not yield the desired result, religious remedies such as kissing the tombs of saints and martyrs, chanting Vedic verses at specified intervals throughout the day, and girding her arms with amulets to ward against the evil eye, and adorning her fingers with auspicious stones were also tried but in vain. The people in the neighbourhood suggested to her "to shun garlic, consume disproportionate quantities of bitters, meditate, drink green coconut water, and swallow raw duck's eggs beaten in milk" (159).

As a result of frequent attacks she was confined to a storage room on the roof of the apartment in which she was living with her cousin, Haldar, and his wife. She was recording inventory for the cosmetic shop her cousin owned. On account of her terrible sickness which seemed to her incurable, she bemoaned her fate and challenged her stars and she was all the time wearing cracked plastic shippers and she paid no attention to her dress and hair, and usually any girl who was of her age would be interested to dress well to the taste of the modern time, and do her hair by going to beauty parlour.

According to Freud, "it is the unconscious which is the part of mind beyond

consciousness... has a strong influence upon our actions” (96). So the unnatural and abnormal behavior of Bibi can be attributed to the 'unconscious.' Once when Bibi was questioned whether was it fair for a girl of twenty-nine to sit out her years wasting her prime life just listing labels and prices without thinking of a bright future for her, she retorted: “Is it wrong to envy you, all brides and mothers, busy with lives and cares? Wrong to want to shade my eyes, scent my hair? To raise a child and teach him sweet from sour, good from bad?” (160). And immediately the thought of a pall of gloomy future gripped her and as a consequence of her ailment she vocalized in non sequiturs: “I will never be painted with sandalwood paste. Who will rub me with turmeric? My name will never be printed with scarlet ink on a card” (160-161). When the neighbours heartened her and anticipated her to be optimistic about her future with her prospect of marriage, again drowning in the valley of depression, she sulked and sighed: “Where do I go, who would I dress for?... Who takes me to the cinema, the zoo-garden, buys me lime soda and cashews? Admit it, are these concerns of mine? I will never be cured, never married.” (161) It is again accentuated by Peter Barry in the introduction to “Psychoanalytic Criticism” that, according to Freud, the classic method of investigating elements in the mind is “to get the patient talk freely, in such a way that the repressed fears and conflicts which are causing the problems are brought into the conscious mind and openly faced, rather than remaining buried in the unconscious” (96).

There is corroborative evidence for the theory that there is a nexus between physical sickness and the state of mind. Medical science says that it is the mental stress and strain that causes a headache. There is an incident mentioned in Matthew chapter 17 (The Bible) where a boy who was afflicted with epileptic was fetched to Jesus, and Jesus rebuked the demon which at once came out of him and the boy was restored to health from that very hour. And this incident demonstrates the close connection between illness and the possession of Devil which symbolizes the evil, negative, repressed and restrained feelings of frustration.

Bibi Haldar, on her way to dinner one evening, “collapsed on the third-floor landing, pounding her fists, kicking her feet, sweating buckets, lost to this world. Her moans echoed through the stairwell,...”(161) and then she was admitted to a polyclinic where after performing a series of blood tests, the doctor concluded that a marriage would cure her.

The reasons for her depression and attacks are a few. As to Bibi Haldar, blood is not thicker than water. This can be demonstrated beyond an iota of unsureness when one takes cognizance of the incident that follows: After Haldar's wife's conception, she was convinced that “Bibi's presence would infect the unborn child,” (167) and Mrs. Haldar “began to wrap woolen shawls around her tumid belly. In the bathroom Bibi was given separate soaps and towels. According to the scullery mind, Bibi's plates were not washed with the others.” (167) When Mrs. Haldar's girl child contracted fever Bibi was reprimanded: “She's done it, she's infected our child. We should never have let her back down here. We should never have let her back into this house” (170).

A series of unkind, cruel, and inhuman acts and deeds sends Bibi to a state of indignation and exasperation, and she weeps, wails and wallows, and blurts out: “I am contagious like the pox.... I'll spoil the baby.... Is it not punishment enough that I bear this curse alone? Must I also be blamed for infecting another? ” (167) Psychoanalytic theorists have drawn our attention to an underlying assumption that “when some wish, fear, memory, or desire is difficult to face we may try to cope with it by repressing it, that is, eliminating it from the conscious mind. But this does not make it go away: it remains alive in the unconscious, like

radioactive matter buried beneath the ocean, and constantly seeks a way back into the conscious mind, always succeeding eventually. As Freud famously said, 'there is always a return of the repressed.'" (Peter Barry 100) Bibi's suppressed and repressed, pent up and bottled up feelings, one afternoon, drove her again to fall to the footpath on the banks of the fish pond. She shook, shuddered, and chewed her lips. And after the succour rendered by the kinder spirits such as vendor of sliced cucumber, the seller of jackfruits, the vendor of sugarcane juice, and some other poor noble spirits, she opened her eyes and enounced, "I felt hot then hotter. Smoke passed before my eyes. The world went black. Didn't you see it?" (168). Probably this revelation of Bibi is connotative, that is, metaphorical and figurative. Her feeling of feeling the hotness inside and consequently passing of smoke before her eyes, and the appearance of the world black are symptomatic of the state of her unconscious. They are symbolic representations of her smothered and repressed feelings. And her suppressed sensibilities find expressions in her soliloquies which have already been referred to previously in this paper.

Psychoanalytic critics have identified "a 'psychic' context for the literary work, at the expense of social or historical context, privileging the individual 'psycho-drama' above the social drama?" (Peter Barry 105). And this is very much true with respect to the short story "The Treatment of Bibi Halдар" because all the episodes in the short story revolve around a 'psychic' context. It was discovered by the well-willers in the neighbourhood that after a few months Bibi had retreated into a deep and prolonged silence. And they found one day that somebody vomited by the cistern tap and they chanced on that Bibi was lying on the camp cot and they ferreted out that she was four months pregnant. The neighbors in the apartment helped her deliver a son, rendered all kinds of assistance to raise the baby, and also extended their support in her sales. And the birth of her son and the subsequent acts of the neighbours lent a hand to her to step into a new chapter and this is the concluding line of the story: "She was, to the best of our knowledge, cured" (172).

In the story it was stated that "Bibi wanted a man. She wanted to be spoken for, protected, placed on her path in life. Like the rest of us, she wanted to serve suppers and scold servants, and set aside money in her *almari* to have her eyebrows threaded every three weeks at the Chinese beauty parlor" (160). It is so painful and horrendous to learn from Bibi that she could not remember what happened to her. It is uncertain why she did not want to disclose the identity of the man who was responsible for her conception. It is also unclear what pushed her to the extent of at least getting a baby outside wedlock. Is it because of the abortive attempt, that is, failing to obtain a prospective life partner even after publishing an advertisement in the newspaper seeking for a suitable bridegroom? Of course, though it is stated at the end of the story that she was cured, in a sense, it is objectionable and unacceptable as she was denied the privilege of living under the protection, love and care of a man.

Michael Delahoyde argues that "literary texts, like dreams, express the secret unconscious desires and anxieties of the author, that a literary work is a manifestation of the author's own neuroses. One may psychoanalyze a particular character within a literary work, but it is usually assumed that all such characters are projections of the author's psyche" (public.wsu.edu). And this might be true of Jhumpa Lahiri whose short story "The Treatment of Bibi Halдар" has been examined from various perspectives and at different depths of meaning in this paper in the light of psychoanalytic criticism.

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Perec's *Life: A User's Manual*: 'Textualizing' the Spatiality of Human Lives

Hans van der Laan's *Architectonic Space: Fifteen Lessons on the Disposition of Human Inhabitation* begins with the comparison of sandals with home. The sandals make our contact with the raw ground smoother, for they are neither hard as the ground nor soft as our feet. Similarly, the home or any building, acting as a medium, smoothens our relationship with 'raw' nature. This simple but apt comparison reveals that the constructed Space(s) are no longer material objects, where we dwell or sojourn. They enliven or sometimes decide our relationships with the 'raw' geographical Space 'out there'. The awareness and acknowledgement of this 'role' played by Space is the essence of the 20th century Spatial-turn, which affected various disciplines. Its impact on Literature resulted in the shift in the notion of 'setting' in literary interpretation which led to the emergence of Literary Spatial Studies – an interdisciplinary approach in literary research. The contemporaneous research trends in Literary Spatial Studies necessitate the examination of these Space(s) and the significance of their literary representations.

In this context, this study takes up Georges Perec's *Life: A User's Manual* (1987) and examines the function of its narrative structure which 'resembles' a Parisian apartment. It also illustrates how this 'architext' – a linguistic construction of a building – reveals different levels of relationships between the building's Space and its inhabitants and thus signifying the importance of spatio-human dialogues and their literary representations. Apart from this, this study also explores the theoretical understandings of the 20th century Space and its relevance to Architecture (constructed Spaces). Exploring the theoretical understandings of Space, this paper highlights that Perec's 'Literary Architecture' can be seen as the creative counterpart to these theoretical Spaces.

'Literary Architecture' may seem to be a recent term, with reference to Matteo Percoli's "laboratory of Literary Architecture", where the students, with the help of writers and architects, create the architectural models of the buildings portrayed in literary works. This concretizes the readers' notion of the textual Spaces. Varied individual readings and interpretations influence different models of the same textual Space, which reveals how the readership extends the boundaries of Space beyond the textual descriptions.

Contextualizing 'Literary Architecture' in the realm of the contemporaneous Literary Spatial Studies would project it as another developmental stage in this field. The lens of Literary Spatial Studies scrutinizes the interchangeability of Space and text and also their interconnections with human lives. The recent developments such as 'Literary Cartography' and 'Literary Geography' identify the links between the textual Spaces (real and fictional) and the very acts of writing and reading. Here, Literary Architecture moves closer to the 'lived Space', whereas Literary Cartography or Literary Geography deals more with the 'geographical' Spaces.

However, Literary Architecture has other dimensions apart from the one, which Percoli

chose to work on. Here, one chooses to reproduce the textual Space(s) and concretize a reader's notion whereas in Perec's *Life: A User's Manual*, it is the reverse. He constructs a building 'linguistically', where the otherwise oblivious spatio-human dialogues are visible. Examining the 'architext' closely reveals the unexplored corners of these spatio-human dialogues – the reciprocal relationship between 'constructed' Space(s) and human inhabitation.

This novel is 'constructed' with the description of the rooms in 11 Rue Simon-Crubellier, a fictional Parisian apartment. It is narrated by Serge Valene, whose presence is rarely felt in this novel. He has been living in 11 Rue Simon-Crubellier for sixty years. Valene narrates the story of the present inhabitants of Rue Simon-Crubellier and also reminisces about the ones who lived there in the past. Although there are no protagonists, the lives of Gaspard Winckler, a jig-jaw puzzler and Percival Bartlebooth, an English millionaire are highlighted to be significant.

Bartlebooth spends ten years of his life in taking lessons to paint water colours and spends the next twenty years in travelling to different sea ports and painting them. These paintings are sent to Gaspard Winckler who pastes them onto the wooden boards and cuts them into jig-jaw puzzles with 750 pieces each. Bartlebooth spends the rest of his life in Rue Simon-Crubellier solving these puzzles. Winckler avenges Bartlebooth by making the puzzle more and more difficult. The reason for this vengeance is unknown. Eventually, Bartlebooth goes blind yet, continues solving the puzzles. He dies solving the 439th puzzle of the 500 puzzles.

Only at the end of the novel, one comes to know that the temporal movement has been paused at the moment of Bartlebooth's death. The narrative is a record of the events that take place 'simultaneously' in that particular moment, as described in the closing pages of the novel:

It is the twenty-third of June nineteen seventy-five, and in a moment it will be eight o'clock in the evening; the workers converting Morellet's old room are knocking off; Madame de Beaumont is resting on her bed before dinner; Leon Marcia remembers the lecture Jean Richepin came to give at his sanatorium; in Madame Moreau's drawing room two sated kittens sleep deeply.

It is the twenty-third of June nineteen seventy-five, and in a moment it will be eight o'clock in the evening. Seated at his jigsaw puzzle, Bartlebooth has just died. On the tablecloth, somewhere in the crepuscular sky of the four hundred and thirty-nine puzzle, the black hole of the sole piece not yet filled in has the almost perfect shape of an X. But the ironical thing, which could have been foreseen long ago, is that the piece the dead man holds between his fingers is shaped like a W. (497)

This shows how the narration of the novel moves not along with the temporal, linear order but 'around' the building, catching the glimpse of various lives that take place 'simultaneously'. This pause in the flow of linearity and the simultaneity is important in the narration of Space and the spatiality of lives. Decentering the narrative without any particular (linear) storyline or protagonist highlights the simultaneity of lives, which foregrounds their spatiality.

Besides, the structure of the novel also highlights the spatiality of the building and the lives within. Comprised of a hundred chapters including the epilogue, the novel portrays the rooms and the lives of the individuals who inhabit it. Delving into the unexplored corners of the building's Space, the novel reveals the different levels of the spatio-human dialogues: at the first level, the narration creates the visual image of the physical building; at the second level, it reveals how the Space and the lives are intertwined together and their reciprocal relationship and remarkably at the third level, the narration reveals how the history of the individuals and of Space are inseparably and inevitably linked together. Illuminating these different levels of the Spatio-human dialogues, the text reveals the interconnectedness of Space and human lives: the history of (built) Space is comprised of the inhabitation of the human beings who crisscross and how the history of these human lives are comprised of their crisscrossings between different Spaces.

As mentioned earlier, the Space of Rue Simon-Crubbier is textualized through its physical description. The title page of the novel carries a quote from Jules Verne: "Look with all your eyes, look". The description of the rooms creates a strong visual picture without missing the minor details such as the furniture, the engravings on them, the paintings on the teapot and the photographs on the wall, which makes the readers to 'look' at the rooms. For instance, the following description of Rorschach's room reveals how the narration delves into the rooms and creates its visual image:

The entrance hall of the Rorschach's large duplex. The room is empty. The walls are in white gloss, the floor is laid with grey flagstones. One piece of furniture, in the centre: a huge Empire desk, with a set of drawers fitted in the backpiece, separated by wooden pillars making an arch over the middle, in which a clock is set, with a design carved in it representing a naked woman beside a little waterfall. On the desktop two objects are displayed: a bunch of grapes, each fruit being a delicate sphere of blown glass, and a bronze statuette of a painter, standing in front of a full-size easel, leaning back from the waist, tipping back his head; he has a long drooping moustache, and curly hair down to his shoulders. He wears a full doublet and holds a palette in one hand and a long-handled brush in the other. (42)

Not as an ordinary description, which generally composes a 'setting', this passage shows how the narration moves closer to the room capturing minor details. For example, the narration pays too much attention to the statue of painter on the desktop. The narration reveals the metal it is made of, the painter's posture, moustache and hair. With such a description the narration warrants visualization. Besides, the description rooms and their location in the building, the narrative creates its linguistic cartography, through which one is made to 'read' the rooms. As the novel moves 'around', the chapters become 'synonymous' to rooms and the novel, to a physical building with the description of the minute details. Thus, at the first level, the narrative linguistically 'constructs' the Space of Rue Simon-Crubbier. Such descriptions of the rooms do not always stop with the linguistic construction of Space but also shed light on the nuances of the lives that are entrenched in it. For instance, certain chapters inevitably swerve towards the lives of the people who live in the rooms. The furniture, the arrangement or the book that is left open on the table or the paintings on the wall have something to say about the life and character of the inhabitant. From there on, the narrative deviates a little into the lives from the description of the rooms. For example, the

description of Winckler's room gradually turns towards his life and characteristics. He is known as the one who makes jig-jaw puzzles for Bartlebooth. The engravings on his furniture reveal that he is an versatile artist. The narration also reveals his skills in making rings. These descriptions do not 'sketch' the characters alone yet make one to look at them as the part of the Space they inhabit.

Interestingly, the description of the basement or cellar where one does not inhabit yet deposit their belongings also reveals the characteristics of the individuals who own them. For instance, descriptions of the cellars of the Altamonts and the Gratiolets reveal the difference in the characters of the individuals who occupy them.

Cellars.

The Altamonts' cellar, clean, tidy, and neat: from the floor to ceiling, shelving and pigeonholes labeled in large, legible letters. A place for every thing, everything in its place; nothing has been left out: stock and provisions to withstand a siege, to survive a crisis, to see through a war. (153)

The description extends further to describe the stock of provisions arranged in the place of their own. Such a long, detailed description of the provisions and their place in the cellar may seem nothing to do with the spatio-human dialogue, for none inhabits it. Yet, the very orderliness of this Space gives a glimpse into the lives of those who own it. The juxtaposition of the Altamonts' cellar with that of the Gratiolets makes the trace of the spatio-human dialogue visible.

Cellars.

The Gratiolets' cellar. Here generations have heaped up rubbish unsorted and unordered by anyone. Three fathoms deep it lies, under the watchful eye of a far ginger-striped cat crouching high up on the other side of the skylight, tracking through the wire netting inaccessible but nonetheless just perceptible scuttling of a mouse. (155)

The former cellar is neat and arranged with “every thing in its place”, which reveals that it is properly maintained whereas the Gratiolets' cellar draws just the picture of Space which remains uncared for generations, shrouded in dust and darkness. These contradictory descriptions of the cellars reveal what these Spaces mean to the individuals and also bear the traces of their social positions. One can see that the narration of Rue Simon-Crubbellier's Space does not stop with the description of the material building but sheds light on the human beings who inhabit it. In this way, the narration oscillates between the description of Space and of the lives pinned to them.

Thus, these examples reveal how the linguistic construction of the rooms and the cellars, inhabited or owned by the individuals reveal the traces and characteristics of the spatio-human dialogues. Apart from this, the narration also 'explores' the stairs, which is usually neglected in everyday life. The narration reveals how the stairs too, which are neither inhabited nor owned by any individuals bear the trace of human inhabitation. The history of the stairs is composed of the human criss-crossings at different times for different purposes. It is these criss-crossings which define the Space, as revealed in the following lines:

For all that passes, passes by the stairs, and all that comes, comes by the stairs: letters, announcements of births, marriages, and deaths, furniture

brought in or taken out removers, the doctor called in an emergency, the traveler returning from a long voyage. It's because of that that the staircase remains an anonymous, cold, and almost hostile place. In old buildings there used to be stone steps, wrought-iron handrails, sculptures, lamp-holders, sometimes a bench to allow old folk to rest between floors. In modern buildings there are lifts with walls covered in would-be obscene graffiti, and so-called "emergency" staircases in unrendered concrete, dirty and echoing. In this block of flats, where there is an old lift almost always out of order, the staircase is an old-fashionable place of questionable cleanliness, which declines in terms of middle-class respectability as it rises from floor to floor; two thicknesses of carpet as far as the third floor, thereafter only one, and none at all for the two attic floors. (3-4)

This illuminates how the stairs where one does not 'stay' long yet 'move' from one floor to another, receives the impact of the criss-crossings. It also has a 'history' which is comprised of the various purposes for which it is ascended or descended and their roles keep changing at different times. For example, in the above lines it is revealed that the history of the stairs is composed of the evanescent human criss-crossings.

Similarly, the history of each individual room in the building is composed of the 'histories' of the inhabitation of various individuals. While describing the rooms, the narrative often oscillates between different temporal segments: the inhabitants at present and in the past. Apart from this, this oscillation also refers to the other Spaces, which are closely connected to the individuals. That is, the history of Space is composed of lives whereas the history of individuals is composed of various Spaces.

In this way, the novel's narration, beginning with the cartographic portrayal of the rooms and floors in Rue Simon-Crubellier, reveals different levels of spatiality of lives and the dialogic relationship between human lives and Space(s). Apart from all this, it also reveals the interconnections of built Space (architectural building), human lives and remarkably, the significance of their literary representation. It has to be noticed that the linguistic construction of the building resembles close-reading of a text. Close reading a text reveals its unexplored dimensions. Similarly, close reading Rue Simon-Crubellier reveals the nuances the spatio-human dialogues and the textuality of Space, which otherwise remain invisible.

Thus, Perec consciously demonstrates how a building and a text can actually swap roles: a Space can be written (with the inhabitation and crisscrossings), read and interpreted like a text; a text can be constructed as a building and thus form an 'architext'. This also foregrounds how a close examination of the interrelatedness of Space and human lives reveals the inherent textuality of Space. This is one of the major focuses of the contemporaneous Literary Spatial Studies.

However, the exploration of the relationship between architecture and literary works has a long history. As mentioned earlier, identifying the interchangeability of Space and Literature was possible with different developmental stages in the research trends: focusing on the description of the textual Spaces; identifying their roles within the text; tracing the connections between the real Space referents and literary representations; and identifying the significance of this referentiality. This can be juxtaposed with the developments in Literary Architecture – exploring the significance of constructed Space(s) and the significance of their literary representation.

There were architects who referred to the textuality of Architecture (in a metaphorical sense, though); some other thinkers thought over these built Spaces as the reflection of the function and nature of a particular society; certain other thinkers explored the significance of these built Spaces in literary representation and revealed their relationship with the society. So, it is important to have a glimpse of this multi-faceted history of the Literary architecture to understand Perec's *Life: A User's Manual* as a literary counterpart to its theoretical understanding.

Peta Mitchell's "Constructing the Architext" which explores the significance of the structure of *Life: A User's Manual* sheds light on the shifting notions of architecture in the 20th century. It also highlights how the 19th century French architecture and the changes in it had a great impact on architects and certain important thinkers. This redefined the general conception of the constructed Spaces and also the very notion of Space and thinking.

This was reflected in the works of some of the important pioneers of the Spatial-turn – Michel Foucault, Gaston Bachelard and Henri Lefebvre. At the prima facie level, it may seem that these thinkers' approach towards Space – influenced by the disciplines they belong to – differ from one another. Yet, a close examination of their works reveals that they deal with different levels of Spatio-human dialogues – the dialogues between the human lives and various 'built' Spaces.

For instance, most of Foucault's works excavate the significance of the emergence of various built Spaces, their dynamic functions and the shifts in it according to the social changes. His works deal with the Space(s) which represent the social institutions. The very presence and function of these institutionalized Spaces reshuffle and modify the function of a particular society in a particular period. Apart from this, one of his seminal lectures, "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" – which is seen as a marker of the 20th century's 'turn' towards Space – also reveals how his notion of Space is based on his observations of the functional role of these institutionalized Spaces. The following lines from "Of Other Spaces" which is generally seen as the characteristics of Space, as observed by Foucault, reveal how his notion is inclined towards constructed Space(s):

The Space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the Space that claws and gnaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous Space. In other words, we do not live in a kind of void, inside of which we could place individuals and things. We do not live inside a void that could be colored with diverse shades of light, we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another. (3)

The observations of Foucault and his contemporaries gave the notion of Space a theoretical base, on which the Spatial-turn is constructed. These lines reveal how the Space he is referring to, which serve as a platform for his revolutionary shifts in Spatial thinking is exclusively the 'lived' ones i.e., the constructed Space(s). The rest of "Of Other Spaces" defines the functions of 'Heterotopias' with examples, which focuses on the shifts in the spatio-human dialogues. This also reveals how the function of Space(s) and the social structure influence the human behavioural patterns and vice versa. For example, he focuses on the shifts in the role of the cemeteries which was influenced by the shifts notion of death

and disease. Similarly, he also discusses how certain Space(s) such as the prisons or lunatic asylums demand certain criteria for entry or exit. With these, he emphasizes how these Spaces turn out to be power structures which restrict the individual lives in a society within certain boundaries. Thus, this reveals that Foucault's observations on Space are the result of his examination of the relationship between the 'lived' Spaces which construct the spatio-human dialogues and the shifts in them.

Similarly, Henri Lefebvre in his *The Production of Space* (1974) examines the social production of Space. As a sociologist, his understandings of Space(s) and its social production may reveal Marxist overtones. Yet, his examination of Space is also based on the constructed Space(s) and the spatio-human dialogues they evoke. He states that, “(Social) space is a (social) product” (26). This notion of Space may seem to have nothing to do with the spatio-human dialogues. According to him, Space(s) are 'produced' along with the codes which define certain behavioural patterns to the human beings related to them. These patterns, entrenched in the Space(s) modify themselves and also the human lives related to them. The spatial-triad (Perceived, Conceived and Lived Spaces) that he foregrounds is also based on different behavioural codes which define human lives and their relationship with Space(s) at different levels. This triad refers to different constructed Spaces.

Thus, this reveals that both Foucault and Lefebvre deal with different 'institutionalized' Spaces, in which the former focuses on their function as power structures whereas the latter identifies their function in terms of social 'production'. Both these thinkers examine the function of public Space(s) whereas Gaston Bachelard, explores the function of spatio-human dialogues in private Space – Home.

Bachelard's phenomenological approach towards Space in his *The Poetics of Space* (1958) explores the most intimate corners of the spatio-human dialogue – the dialogue between home and human lives. He also emphasizes how home (a built Space) and human inhabitation are capable of influencing and modifying each other. Apart from this, the chapters on drawers, chests, wardrobes and corners reveal the most intimate level of spatio-human dialogue. Here, he differs from Foucault and Lefebvre, who focus on the 'institutionalized' social Space(s) where the patterns for spatio-human dialogues are already drawn. Bachelard's exploration of the private Space(s) of home reveals its intimacy with human life and thinking.

With the several of references from literary creations, Bachelard highlights the relationship between literary creations and human inhabitation. He states, “If I were asked to name the chief benefit of the house, I should say: the house shelters day dreaming, the house protects dreamer, the house allows one to dream in peace” (6). This reveals how the home, a private Space of inhabitation, is closer to one's psyche. As the chapters move on with examples from literary texts, this “dreaming” becomes synonymous to 'literary creation'.

Thus, this reveals that these pioneers in spatial thinking deal with different levels of spatio-human dialogues, which differ according to the kind of relationship between Space and human lives. The Space they deal with is constructed Space, which is made not only of material but also of the social and cultural values of a particular society in a period. Not as the raw geographical Space(s), the very construction of these Space(s), involves the intervention of human perception.

Thus, these observations reveal that these thinkers who pioneered the Spatial-turn, and

gave a theoretic texture to Space, focused on the 'constructed' Spaces which involve both public and private Spaces and the nature of the spatio-human dialogues. This can be seen as the one of the significant phases in the exploration between the relationship between Architecture and human lives.

Similarly, there are other thinkers such as Umberto Eco and Roland Barthes, who highlight the function of architectural buildings. According to them, the Architectural buildings and style of a particular society reflect its culture and tradition. In this way, they act as a medium of communication. Here, they examine the 'referentiality' of Architecture, apart from the spatio-human dialogue.

Identifying the 'referentiality' of Architecture's literary representation can be seen as one of the important phases in Literary Architecture. Philippe Hamon, in his *Expositions: Literature and Architecture in Nineteenth Century France* (1992) reveals the significance of the literary representation of 19th century French Architecture. He also highlights how the description of Architecture reveals different levels in its referentiality. On exploring the textuality of Architecture, he states that the description of an architectural building is itself like rewriting a text. He foregrounds this textuality and referentiality of architectural buildings thus:

For the literary text to describe a monument is to describe such an object situated in the real, which is therefore already predisposed to becoming a sort of book. But to describe such an object is also a way of rewriting and reactivating the diffuse nebula of latent or absent discourses that surround the building, such as anecdotes, myths, historical narratives, legends, etiological accounts of "foundation," or stories involving the origin of place names. The foundations or atmosphere of a building are first and foremost narrative, textual, and literary, a building merely being a kind of "frozen speech" (Rabelais), or merely the sum total of the discourses (usually official) which are pronounced within it (in its parlors) or about it. Therefore buildings serve as a pretext for the writer to reactualize a textualize and become the occasion for recalling or inventing a body of knowledge, anecdotes, or memories. (46-7)

Here, Philippe Hamon reveals the interchangeability of a text and architecture. This can be seen as one of the results of the close examination of the function of architecture in the real Space and its referentiality in the textual Space(s). This reminds one of Michel de Certeau, for whom the city can be read as a text, a palimpsest – constantly written and rewritten by the human criss-crossings. According to him, the Space as a text is written unconsciously. People criss-cross Space without any awareness of what their walking does to the Space. In his "Walking in the City", Certeau reveals how the Space is turned into a text through walking:

The ordinary practitioners of the city live "down below", below the thresholds at which visibility begins. They walk – an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are walkers; Wandersmanner, whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban "text" they write without being able to read it. These practitioners make use of spaces that cannot be seen; their knowledge of them is as blind as that of lovers in each other's arms. The

paths that correspond in this intertwining, unrecognized poems in which each body is an element signed by many others, elude legibility. It is as though the practices organizing a bustling city were characterized by their blindness. The networks of these moving, intersecting writings compose a manifold story that has neither author nor spectator, shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alternations of spaces: in relation to representations, it remains daily and indefinitely other. (124)

Here, he emphasizes that the textuality of Space is the result of the criss-crossings – spatio-human dialogues. He also implies that this textuality is visible only when there is an objective observer, who watches this 'dialogue', without being a part of it. The Space becomes a text not when it is 'written' but when it is 'read'. Similarly, architecture as a text becomes 'readable' only when one pays attention to its 'functional part' in human inhabitation.

Be it a 'raw' geographical Space or a constructed architectural Space or a 'rewritten' textual Space, it is transformed into a text only when there is an 'intervention' of human inhabitation. Thus, these observations on the theoretical evolution of Space or the interchangeability of (constructed) Space and literary text reveal the significance of human inhabitation and how it operates at different levels, producing different levels of spatio-human dialogues. Seen in this light, Georges Perec's *Life: A User's Manual*, as an architext, demonstrates the reciprocal relationship between a constructed Space and human lives and the interchangeability of an architectural building and literary text. Therefore, it can be seen as the counterpart to the theoretical observations on (architectural) Space(s), spatio-human dialogue(s) and text.

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Dalit Feminism and Modern Indian Theatre: A Critical Response to *Scape Goats*

Scapegoats all the time-women
Everywhere are scapegoats
Sinners in any state-women
are sinners in all levels
Thaaligal our fences-women
In every caste are slaves
Prisoners of family burdens-women
Are unpaid slaves.
In temples, women are made gods
In dustbins, they dump female
Infants.
Whose sorrows are a serial-tale here
This is the state of women everywhere! (Gunasekaran 259-60)

K. A. Gunasekaran's Tamil play *Scape Goats* (1999) takes up the question of interlocking of gender and caste concerns most forcefully. Along with the larger project of the contestation of caste discrimination, an equally potent undercurrent of gender discrimination is also undeniably present in Gunasekaran's *Bali Adugal*. This paper is an attempt to offer a gendered response to the play text whereby the double or triple marginalization of Dalit women would be foregrounded. Along the theoretical line of much debated Black feminism, a concrete and solid foundation of Dalit feminism has to be founded to interrogate the multiple oppression to which Dalit women is exposed. The politics of representation of Dalit women's subjugation by external agents, the manufacture and management of Dalit women's sexuality by the same patriarchal ideology are also explored in this paper. How the micro-identities are subsumed under the overarching, grand narratives of macro-identities like the Dalit is also an area of concern. This concern is rightly raised by *Scape Goats* through the portrayal of the replication of brutal patriarchy in the Dalit domestic space.

The story takes place in a temple ground at the time of an annual festival. A large eyed, tongue-lolling and teeth-revealing statue of Hindu goddess Amman is placed on a chariot. One of the wheels of the chariot broke and it could not run. The ground is crowded with two groups of people. Upper caste people with *poonool* and lower caste *Paraiyans* wearing *kovanam* (loin cloth). To the *Poonool* men, the broken wheel of the chariot shows the deity's wrath towards the village. *Poonool* men argue that they must find out a solution as advocated by the *Shastras* (Hindu scriptures) to redress the situation. One of the lower caste people in the village might have committed a sin. To the village head man, the only way to redress the issue is to perform *Narabali* (human sacrifice). Uduman, a lower caste man was elected as the scape goat. Uduman's wife retorts against this decision. Hearing this, the village Head man replies "Aye woman! Are we going to murder your husband? We are going to make him one with the goddess. You must be proud that one you're your lineage got this

opportunity”(257). Surprisingly, Uduman asks the *poonool* men to sacrifice his wife instead of him. No one except a eunuch questions this atrocity. The eunuch asks, “All you men join together and plan to sacrifice a woman... What sin did the woman commit? Are women worse than the Paraiyar caste? Why do you think that women are 'killukeerai’” (258). Uduman's wife realises the triviality that works behind this. She questions the logic that prevents them from entering the temple but compels to die for God. The elite can touch and exploit dalit women, but others have to stand ten feet away. The moment she starts retorting, the *poonool* group asks, “Has Uduman's wife gone out of senses?”(258) Then she replies,

No, only now I have come to my senses. Are we the only prey to Amman's desire? Will your life taste bitter to Amman? Or do your wife's lives taste bitter to Amman? Is the God asking for sacrifice or are God's men asking for sacrifice? (259).

The moment she realises the power play and starts to speak against it, a priest comes running with a spear like weapon called *sulayutham* and kills her.

The play shows Dalit woman's strength and determination against exploitation in spite of her inferiority with respect to her social, economic, and political status. She proves that she is much stronger than men and her inferiority and vulnerability is only a social construct.

Interrogating Dalitality and Patriarchy

Dalit women are rightly seen as twice subjugated- (a) being Dalit i.e. socioeconomically and culturally marginalised group and (b) being women who suffer the gender based inequalities and subordination. On the one hand she shares with her male counterpart the deprivations and disabilities due to her position at the lowest ladder of Brahminically prejudiced social order. On the other, as a woman, she has to bear the tortures and exploitations which the patriarchal social order imposes on her. Gopal Guru while discussing the conditions which makes Dalit women a special case argues that Dalit women experience “two distinct patriarchal structures/situations: a Brahminical form of patriarchy that deeply stigmatised Dalit women because of their caste status, as well as the more intimate forms of control by Dalit men over the sexual and economic labour of their women”(Guru qtd in Yadav 104).

While Dalit movements brought about hope for better treatment and equality, Dalit women are getting more and more objectified. Her needs are simply obliterated and restrictions are imposed on her by the fundamentalists of her own community. The Dalit movements cannot be absolved of the charges of showing strong patriarchal leanings. The outcome of it has been a Dalit woman left in lurch by both modern feminist and male dominated Dalit movement. The views of Dalit male intellectuals on the negotiations between caste and gender are interesting. According to Ilaiyah, comparing to patriarchy in Dalits with Hindu, the Dalit patriarchy is more democratic. Other Dalit ideologues like Gopal Guru and Katti Padma Rao seem to be less sensitive to the internal patriarchy of Dalit communities.

The Dalit woman are not only victim of upper caste male lust but the males of their own caste too take part in their degradation. They carry on struggle for survival even without a help from their husbands. It is high time to envisage Dalit feminist movements that will

reflect upon the life of Dalit women and also position them free from the shackles of patriarchal culture. Kanchallaiha argues, Dalit women are democratised due to their communitarian background and do not have the gendered lack of other caste women. But, mere shifting from the private to the public domain does not imply that they are liberated from the matrix of patriarchy. This point to the need to explore the status of Dalit woman on account of the socio- economic milieu in which she is placed.

By not allowing a name to the Dalit women characters, by naming them only as Uduman's wife or Chinnandi's wife, the playwright points out that Dalit women are not supposed to have an independent individual identity. The play shows the various ways in which degrading language works to deprive dalit women of her autonomous subjectivity and to disintegrate her sense of self. Psychologically, these terms of verbal abuse against Dalit women have the capacity to induce a state of pain, terror and humiliation. In addition, degrading terms of address attack Dalit women's identity, and their integrity. Integral components of a Dalit women's identity such as her body, her livelihood, and her social status are forcibly exposed and labelled valueless. There are several gendered abusive epithets. The reduction of a Dalit woman to her sexual organs, expressed in the most offensive language available, ie "You stupid cunt". Another pattern of gendered epithets equate Dalit women with prostitutes. Thus Dalit women face a variety of abuses reinforcing her low caste, class and gender status.

Gendered epithets target these women's body and gender; class related epithets their livelihood or occupational identity and caste related epithets target their social status and identity. For eg, by calling a woman a whore (gendered epithet), the speaker asserts his control over the women's sex. Likewise, by calling a woman a slave/ beggar (class related epithet) suggests the speakers control over the woman economically, and calling a woman by her caste name implies (dominant caste) speaker's right to control the women socially. This kind of 'Othering' is central to the brahminical process of dominant caste group identity formation. The play is a protest against these elite ideologies that have positioned them at margins.

Dalit feminists share a sense of identification with many basic articulations raised by these Black American women movements in their experience of oppression and discrimination. These voices are important as they are the voices of a socially suppressed and silenced class. Thus even among women she is perceived as 'other'. Her condition of sexual oppression, economic exploitation and socio-cultural subjugation need to be articulated. The play could be seen as a Dalit feminist discourse through theatre.

It also exemplifies how Gunasekaran has made language an effective tool for protesting against the mainstream feminism and dalit movements for excluding their marginality. Language constructs meaning and thereby a sense of everything. The production and sustenance of identity is therefore integral to the use of language. The play shows how language is a sort of trap which is hegemonic and patriarchal. When we analyse the everyday use of language, we find that we use language without any rigor or thought about its ideological and philosophical implications. This ignorance has resulted in the mechanical use of language which has in turn made society's powerful classes use language as a discursive means of subjugation. The privileged group have maintained control over the under privileged ones not just through violence, political and economic coercion but also through a hegemonic discourse in which values of the master are read as common sense.

The play *ScapeGoats* clearly presents how the site of language serves a key role in the subjugation of these people. This is achieved through several dramatic devices. The play opens with an interview recorded in video cassette being played. Excerpts are taken from a conversation that took place one evening in May 1950, in Cafe Parade, Bombay, between Ambedkar and writer Mulk Raj Anand is being played. The conversation opens with Anand saying “namaskar” to Ambedkar. Then they analyse various implications of the term. Ambedkar says he prefers the Buddhist greeting “Om Mani Padmaye” (250) which means “May the lotuses awake!” (250). ‘Namaskar’ means “I bow before you” (250). This perpetuates submission. ‘May the lotuses awake’ is the prayer for enlightenment. Anand wonders at the thoughtlessness of the people who inherit words without contemplating their meaning. The conversation shows how meanings are produced, packed and distributed by the privileged minority among the powerless majority. They use this language without any thought about its ideological implications. This ignorance has resulted in the mechanical use of language which has in turn made society's powerful classes to use language as a discursive means of subjugation. Social elites maintained their leadership through universalising of their own class based interests. People apprehend them as ‘common sense’. Thus a consensus culture is developed in which people in the lower class identified their own good with the good of their masters and even helped to maintain the status quo rather than revolting against it.

The play clearly shows how language functions a key role in perpetuating submission. Verbal abuse is a powerful weapon imposed by the upper class. By constant use, it becomes normalised. This invisible form of violence resulted in psychological effects like depression, low self-esteem, loss of confidence, anxiety, and withdrawal from society. Caste names may sometimes function as contemptuous terms of abuse. Some caste names have acquired an exceptionally virulent demeaning power. Dalit caste names imply a whole host of negative qualities like impurity, inferiority and immorality. Propagation of these stereotypes can be an upper caste effort to slide into being more brahminic than the Brahmin. It could be perceived as an attempt to assert a more superior identity. In the play text, there is a song sung by the lower caste people.

In the four Varna caste
 We are not human beings
 We became worse than dogs
 There's no life here
 We've become the outcasts
 Of our own village
 We have no rights on this soil
 We aren't shown sympathy
 We became harijans. (252)

The word ‘harijan’ is coined by Mahatma Gandhi and the word suggests people belonging to Lord Hari. But daily practice has turned it to a derogatory term. Likewise, the word liberty in the play text is another example that shows how meaning is a social construct. Liberty here means only the liberty of the landlord to increase rent and to exploit his tenants. To take a real life example, in Wayanadu, a district in Kerala there are two tribes called ‘adiya’ and ‘paniya’. The word adiya literally means slave and paniya means ‘work men’. Centuries of slavery have made them identify themselves as slaves. This might not be what they chose to call

themselves. This must be what their masters chose to call them. Thus the medium of communication that could have become a medium of liberation turned out to be an additional weapon to be feared.

The subjugation reaches its extreme when it becomes spiritual enslavement or cultural taming. The fierce mother goddess image proved to be a convenient weapon to the masters- “a large eyed, tongue tolling, and teeth revealing statue of Ammam” (251). This sounds similar to the *valliyookavufestival* held in Wayanadu. It was held around a temple and the annual festival there. As the business is centred around temple, an aura of social and religious sanction is created around it. It becomes a part of the temple ritual and fear of the wrath of the goddess keeps them dumb. It is evident when Uduman says, “This is not the decision taken by the panchayat folk. This was decided by Amman. Can we find fault with a deity's decision? If you are sacrificed you will be respected by the people of this place” (256). The play text articulates the need for the conceptualization of a new language for development and the representation of Dalits and their culture in the Hindu puranas.

Dalit women's problems have not received adequate attention of the mainstream women's movement. While the early women's movements demanded education, freedom of mobility. But their idea of 'the woman' included only the upper caste woman, and the 'woman's issues' become the issues faced by the upper caste women in their families and communities. The play text discloses and sharply critiques the hollowness of the mainstream feminism by delineating the hitherto devoiced Dalit femininity.

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Transfiguration of “Home”: A Study of Mahmoud Darwish's Poetry with Reference to “Space”

Places and spaces are matters that find substantial room in the scholarly critical circle today. Places very often refer to some specific geographical location, whereas space is, to a larger extent, an abstract entity needed to be understood at various conceptual domains. In the context of discussing space with its multifaceted dimensions in literature, society, media and technology, this paper makes an attempt to read Mahmoud Darwish's poetry by scrutinizing his select poems to show that his earlier nationalist formulations have undergone a substantial shift from a physical form of Palestine to a conception of a metaphorically constructed space as a homeland. Darwish is considered to be the national poet of Palestine. The poet in his real life underwent a lot of exilic experiences starting from his birthplace Galilee, then to Lebanon, Paris, Tunis, Cairo, etc. This displacement and dislocation and the consequent alienation from his familial and cultural roots can, arguably, be the reason why such a shift in conception took place in the poetic project of Mahmoud Darwish in the middle phase of his poetic career. Language and memory become powerful tools to make present what was absented by the occupation and the resultant formation of Israel in 1948. It is through poetry that Darwish creates a community of Palestinians bound by a particular cause in the absentia of a physical and permanent homeland. Hence, the Poetic space becomes an arena of struggle and a viable alternative to the lost homeland.

To understand and appreciate Darwish's poetic creativity and innovation, it is quite necessary to have a glance at three different phases of his poetic career. In the first phase, his poetry was largely nationalistic in every sense. He made use of commonplace language and imageries to represent the refugee issues, identity, and dispossession of Palestinians in their birthplace. Since Darwish himself was a victim of the colonial policy of the British mandate in Palestine and Zionist hegemony which led to the establishment of Israel in 1948, he could communicate the plight of Palestinians more effectively. Political poems in this phase are characterised by a defiant tone and protest. The poems titled “Identity Card” and “Passport” are supreme examples of this mode of writing.

The second phase of Darwish's poetic career was characterised by notable innovations in theme and technique. Darwish had to live in different place as exile due to the occupation of Israel. First, Darwish had to leave his birth place Galilee, then to Lebanon, Paris, Tunis, Cairo, etc. This constant dislocation must have made Darwish think of a novel attempt of approaching language as a viable alternative to the loss of homeland due to Zionist's hegemony and the resultant formation of Israel in 1948. Language becomes a metaphorical home in the absence of a physical home. Apart from foregrounding the quintessential role of language, Darwish made use of history and myth in this phase to produce an alternative discourse to many dominant historiographies and politicised myths. The third phase of Darwish's poetic career is characterised by ruminations of poet's imminent death and contemplation. Here, the poet becomes more introspective and tries to chronicle his long saga of political, social and literary life.

Even as Darwish's poetry distances away from the nationalist formulation of the first phase, many critics have not yet noticed or appreciated this seminal shift in the poetic project of Mahmoud Darwish. This is possibly because of the strength of the label "Poet of Resistance" being conferred on him by the reading public. According to Najat Rahman, the co-editor of "Mahmoud Darwish: Exile's poet", "The reasons for such a shift in Darwish's work are both literary and historical: exile from the physical home, exile from the physical refuge, and exile in poetic condition" (41). So, Darwish had to address the intricacy of this particular scenario in the socio-political and literary spheres.

In the face of this dislocation and dispossession of home and belongings, we can discern that the poet took refuge in poetic language and exploited the possibility of poetic expression to delineate what was absented by the land confiscation of Israel, namely "Home." Poetry becomes a space of survival in the absence of a permanent home. Poetry will never dispossess one who is uprooted from his indigenous culture and parental lineage. It was indeed a powerful tool against disappearance. Asserting the ancestry and lineage of Arabs, Darwish speaks as a representative figure through the following lines from the poem "Identity Card":

Write down!
I am an Arab
I have a name without a title
Patient in a country
Where people are enraged (17-21)

The poet in the afore-mentioned lines asserts his Arab ancestry at a time when the identity of indigenous Arabs in Palestine is at stake in the wake of many British and Zionist's policies. The first line of the poem is repeated in the poem five times as a refrain. It shows that indigenous Arab identity is in a position of being totally undermined, and that the situation must be looked into by the world as a serious issue to be resolved soon. The poetic persona does not have even a name, as the term present-absentees in Darwish's later collection denotes. He lives in a country where everything is in a state of anger, chaos and confusion. The poem also throws light onto the difficult position for Arabs to get a lawful and equal status in Israel in contradistinction to the primary status of Jewish community in the country.

Darwish's "Identity Card" is considered by many as a Palestinian national poem. The language of the poem is so straightforward and simple, but it could dynamise the audience to the inevitability of their identity and uniqueness of their ancestry. The speaker in the poem openly affirms his low socio-economic status in society. Nevertheless he is proud of his being an Arab and member of a farming community. He works hard to make both ends meet. The onus of giving food and education is entrusted upon him. Both identity and land are made associative with each other in the poem, like many other Darwish's poems.

In the poem "Passport" Darwish negotiates the Palestinian social consciousness regarding the issue of identity. The poem has been set up in the backdrop of beautiful imagery which collectively contributes to the essence of the poem the poet wants to emphasise. The poem begins with a metaphorical journey of the speaker to an airport along with the soldiers who capture him. To them, his wounds are nothing but a thing of exhibition for a tourist to collect photographs. All the birds that followed him, the wheat fields, the prisons, the white tombstones, all the eyes and the people with waving handkerchiefs were with him until the doors of a distant airport approached.

In the last stanza of the poem, the poet asks introspectively whether he is stripped of his name and identity. He becomes a little bit nostalgic about the land which he nourished with his own hands. That all the hearts of the people are his identity is stressed at the end of the verse. The poet says: “From my forehead bursts the sword of light/ And from my hand springs the water of the river/ All the hearts of the people are my identity/ So take away my passport!” (Darwish, 28-31).

Even though al-Birwa, where Darwish was born, was erased from the map, the reminiscence of his birthplace such as olive trees, almond blossoms, daily chores of farmers or even having a cup of coffee remained intact in memory. Having denied citizenship in the newly established state, Darwish found an alternative for identity and loss of homeland through linguistic space – a space which cannot be easily dispossessed. Hence, he began restoring and re-establishing identity and homeland through words. Here are some excerpts from “Rhyme for Mu'allaqat” published in the collection “Why Did You Leave the Horse Alone.”:

Who am I? This is a question for others
and has no answer. I am my own language,
I am a mu'allaqa... two mu'allaqas...ten,
This is my language. I am my language. (8-12)

The persona in the poem did not have an answer, when a question regarding his quintessential identity was posed. He appeared to have been silent and had no distinct answer about his specific national identity, since the continuous exilic experiences from Galilee, his birthplace to Lebanon and to many other places of refuge had literally dislocated and alienated Darwish from his national and cultural roots. He had to face imprisonments and heavy restrictions imposed by Israeli government many a time. He joined Israeli communist party, Rakha, which was the only Israeli political party that awarded its membership for Arab citizens. He actively contributed to communist magazines and newspapers to disseminate the issues and concerns of Palestinians. Darwish's major tool was language, especially that of poetry to raise his voice against illegal land confiscation and subjugation of Palestinians by Zionists. This linguistic space produced a metaphorical “Home” in the absentia of a permanent physical homeland. Another poem by Darwish conveys the same sense of finding an alternative through language is “We Travel Like All People” published in the collection “Unfortunately It Was Paradise”:

We travel like everyone else, but we return
to nothing...
Ours is a country of words: Talk. Talk.
Let me see an end to this journey (1-14)

This metaphorical space of language brings out images of country life which Darwish had experienced during his childhood. He refers to the greenery of country life, its peace and serenity of the past and remembers the turbulent present. The poem “Villagers Without Evil...” published in “Why Did You Leave the Horse Alone” gives us a hilarious picture of simplicity and beauty of Palestinian country life in the past. As any other exile who was uprooted from his birthplace for some voluntary reasons such as war and illegal confiscation

of land, the reminiscence of his village with its customs, flora and fauna will be a rewarding experience and brings to mind a metaphorical home. The poet says that when the colonisers came to the land, the greenery and the serenity of the land got ruined.

The place had no rivets stronger than the China trees

When the lorries came from the sea. (33-34)

In the same poem we can see the description of his ancestors' early days and their daily chores and simple customs. The poet appears to have overwhelmed in joy, when he delineates the practices of feeding cows in their barns, planning of daily activities, sitting in their private rooms constructed out of their own toil and sweat. The innocent villagers were caressing the horse and waving their hands to the wandering star:

We were preparing our cows' feed in their stalls, we were arranging

Our days in coffers of our manual work

We were preaching love of the horse, and we were pointing

At the vagrant star. (34-38)

The linguistic space employed by the poet acts as medium to resist the dominant historical discourses. Darwish is of the view that the so-called official histories did not adequately chronicle Palestinian history from the point of view of the dispossessed Arabs. Indicating that Palestinians have not been benefitted by the dominant historical documents, Darwish asks a pertinent question: “Who, then, will write the history of the bottom, the history of the moss? By writing long poems like the “Memory for Forgetfulness” and “State of Siege”, a fitting answer to the afore-mentioned question was given by the poet himself. Darwish wanted a language to fight against confining and suppressive forces in life:

I want to find a language that

transforms language itself into

steel for the spirit – a language to

use against these sparkling silver

insects, these jets. I want to sing. I

want a language that I can lean on

and that can lean on me... (Memory, 52)

Though Darwish is labelled as the Palestinian national poet, his poetry does not show Jingoism or chauvinism. Instead, he stands for larger humanitarian concerns. A close examination of the poems such as “State of Siege” will confirm the aforesaid perspective. This does not mean that Darwish disregarded his concern for Palestine; but finds a way of amicable dialogue coexistence amidst conflicting ideologies and perspectives. He makes use of his poetic space to create such a positive stance, as we can see in his distinguished poem “State of Siege” written during the Israeli attack in Ramallah. Darwish Addresses an Israeli soldier in the following lines: “You, standing at our thresholds, come in/ sip some Arab coffee with us! / You may feel you're as human as we are.” (Darwish, 57-59). This is a kind of humanising the enemy. Both the soldiers on either side of the battlefield are humans outside the battle, tied with common human needs and they are essentially the same in the eyes of their loved ones.

To sum up, Mahmoud Darwish is the national poet of Palestine whose poetry is a metaphorical rendition of “Home” in its abstract form. We can see a seminal transformation in the delineation of the concept of “Home”, provided we make a journey through the trajectory of Darwish's poetry in their different phases. The physical form of “Home” transcends their confining borderlines; “Home” can be conceived to be an abstract one in his later poems, as it was enunciated in the poems like “A Rhyme for the Odes” and “We Travel Like All People”. Language or poetic space becomes a tool for Darwish to make present what was absented by the Hegemony of Zionism and the consequent formation of Israel in 1948, namely “Home”. Constant dislocation and exile that Darwish had undergone can arguably be the reason why he developed a metaphorical home through language. Poetic space becomes an arena of struggle and a viable alternative for the lost homeland.

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Postcolonial Space as Described in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*

The task of global representation falls into the hands of third world writers after years of misrepresentation by the colonisers. This process of decolonisation or retelling of the story embarked upon by many third world writers like Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Gabriel Okara, Mongo Beti, Bessie Head. The writer's task is primarily to rehabilitate the culture which the colonising culture has distorted. Writing is an activity through which the African can define his identity and re-discover his historical roots. *Things Fall Apart* is the most widely read African novel-- the English edition alone has sold millions of copies. It is the first work of Postcolonial literature that almost every student of English is bound to encounter at one time or another. Achebe portrays a civil, ordered society living peacefully in Umuofia. They are basically an agricultural community. They have times of hard work, leisure, dance and music. To this stable, prosperous society come the invaders- white men. Achebe, through the central character, Okonkwo, closely knits the events of the novel.

Okonkwo was well known throughout the nine villages and even beyond. His fame rested on solid personal achievements. As a young man of eighteen he had brought honour to his village by throwing Amalinze the Cat. Amalinze was the great wrestler who for seven years was unbeaten, from Umuofia to Mbaino (1).

Okonkwo's story is set between 1860 and 1890. It shows the picture of a great man of Igbo clan. "Okonkwowas clearly cut for great things". He was "a wealthy farmer, the greatest wrestler in the nine villages"(3).He had taken two titles and won in two inter-tribal wars. Even before the publication of *Things Fall Apart* (1958) there were many other African novels like Casely Hayford's *Ethiopia Unbound* (1911), Sol Plaatje's *Mhudi* (1930) and Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* (1952) which has Africa at its central theme. In Achebe's hands the readers could savour a unique picture of African life. "Traditional Igbo society as represented by Achebe is a community that meets most human needs. It is materially and spiritually self- sufficient. It has all the physical necessities of life and unites everyone into a clan, giving them a sense of purpose and attachment" (Levine 214).

In this paper I have taken the Postcolonial approach to discuss about the space which is crystallised in the novel *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe. Here the space is divided between the traditional Igbo people and the European community. This space and its use bring forth varied images, customs, language to the readers mind. One space seems to be overpowering on the other which results in marginalisation, violence and destruction. *Things fall Apart* provides a deeper understanding of Africa at a significant period of its history and a formative time in European imperial expansion in Africa. Achebe looks into the history of Europe's encounter with Africa.

Things Fall Apart stands out as a novel that has unquestionably opened exceptional possibilities for a fact- based fiction. Chinua Achebe could place the reality of an African

culture as it existed at about the time Africa was being opened to European exploration and occupation. His novel helped the readers to understand the inner life of a fast disappearing world. These cross cultural contacts resulted in violent clashes among the Igbos and Europeans and finally lead to massive changes. The immediate subject of Chinua Achebe's novels is the social and psychological conflicts created by the incursion of the white man and his culture into the hitherto self-contained world of African society. He also traces the responses of men to the pressures of events, their evolution at significant levels of feeling and thought. In the novel Chinua Achebe exposes his characters to a range of human emotions like anger, fear, confusion, anxiety, insecurity, loneliness, violence and defeat.

As Ode Ogede observes :

By placing the cultural history of Igbo people in the context of a struggle between order and disorder during the moment of European imperial invasion, Achebe not only takes readers through the daily life of the people at a transitional period, he also provides insight to how the notion of power and ambition destroys human bonds. He also produces a masterful portrait of the goals and hidden assumptions that underwrote the colonial mission. (10)

A mark of true artist is his capacity for compassion and understanding. Achebe has this and displays it in abundance. Chinua Achebe decided to write in English because he felt English is not just an international language, via which they can communicate with the rest of the world, but a national language as well which helps the diverse ethnic communities within each society to communicate to one another.

In the essay “Named for Victoria, Queen of England”, he speaks about his insight he received as an African. “At the university I read some appalling novels about Africa (including Joyce Cary's much praised *Mister Johnson*) and decided that the story we had to tell could not be told for us by anyone else no matter how gifted or well intentioned.” (193)

Achebe's first novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958), written on the eve of decolonization of Nigeria, is set in the period between 1860 and 1890, which marked the colonial penetration by Western Europeans into the Igbo territories of Western Africa. His other novels include, *No longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964), *A Man of the People* (1966), *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987). All these novels of Achebe taken together weave a narrative of the history of Nigeria from before colonisation till after colonisation.

Achebe, in the essay, “The African Writer and the English Language” comments about national literature as:

A national literature is one that takes the whole nation for its province and has a realized or potential audience throughout its territory. In other words a literature that is written in the national language. An ethnic literature is one which is available only to one ethnic group within the nation. If you take Nigeria as an example, the national literature, as I see it, is the literature written in English; and the ethnic literatures are in Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba, Efik, Edo, Ijaw, etc, etc. (24)

He shows great insight to the complexities of African literature,

Any attempt to define African literature in terms which overlook the

complexities of the African scene at the material time is doomed to failure. After the elimination of white rule shall have been completed, the single most important fact in Africa in the second half of the twentieth century will appear to be the rise of individual nation--states. I believe that African literature will follow the same pattern.(24)

Achebe remarks in his essay titled, "Named for Victoria, Queen of England, they have always "lived at crossroads of cultures"(190). Achebe's parents were Igbo Christians among the earliest in the line of converts of Christianity from Igbo religion. He was baptised Albert Chinualumogu. He dropped this English name when he went to the university. Chinua acknowledges the influence of European education and Christian Catechism on himself. He appreciated the culture of Europe. But at the same time sympathised with his own people in their struggles against European colonialism.

Africa which was regarded as the dark continent became the interest of the European powers (Britain and Belgium, France, Germany, Portugal and Spain) mainly for exclusive commercial control. The natural products like cotton, ivory, honey and coffeeserved for the well being of Africans. But the colonial conquest disturbed the stability of traditional village life of Africans which they enjoyed all over their continent.

The years 1892 to 1904 saw the forcible imposition of colonialism by Britain on virtually all of the areas now known as Nigeria- which Britain ruled until 1960. Colonial conquest was a bloody affair that took the lives of countless Africans in addition to displacing many others from their homes. As Haarichandltwaru describes in the essay titled, "Colonialism and Literature",

It must never be forgotten or ignored that, colonialism is also the colonisation of the mind, the invasion of the psyche in whose conquest, the culture of compliant loyalty, convinced of its own inferiority, is reproduced and maintained in the very institutions which make up colonial society(10).

One of the baffling tragic ironies of colonisation is that the traditional wisdom which seemed to serve Africans well in helping them to negotiate and balance the complexities of social and political relations in their world did not equip them to defend themselves in the context of a European presence. The rulers of Mbanta gave the missionaries a piece of the evil forest. The evil forest was a place where they buried people who died of diseases like, leprosy and smallpox. The clan wanted to teach the missionaries a lesson because, "they boasted about the victory over death"(53). The missionaries accepted the offer with joy and "burst into song." The inhabitants of Mbanta waited for four days for the death of missionaries. Days passed, but nothing happened. "Everyone was puzzled". They believed that the white missionary's God was more powerful and soon three of the natives got converted to Christian faith.

This new settlement and intrusion into the Igbo space later leads to rapid changes and evangelisation. "The white man was also their brother because they were all sons of God. And he told them about this new god, the creator of all the world and all the men and women. He told them that they worshipped false gods, gods of wood and stone"(52). Because of the internal divisions within them, throughout the period of European invasion, the Igbo tribes could not present a monolithic and unified resistance. This made the conversion of marginalised groups like osus, the non-titled and rejected, (mothers of twins) easy. Igbo

community gave space to accommodate the white men. They were highly adaptable to the new circumstances and were good in showing acceptance of other cultures. These qualities which are highly welcomed in the traditional Igbo communities became responsible for the collapse of Igbo people in the situations created by colonialism.

It is necessary at this point to look into the attitudes of missionaries who visited Igbo land. One kind was like liberal Reverend Brown. He was an apostle of peaceable conversion and co-existence. Mr. Brown understood the Igbo people and he earned their respect. He built a school and hospital in Umuofia. He told the Igbo people that their future leaders would have to know how to read and write.

Next is the extremist Evangelist Reverend Smith. He treated the black people with uneasiness and contempt. According to him “black was evil” (65). He preached that kingdom of god is for a few. He was exasperated with the limited knowledge of people of Umuofia regarding Trinity and Sacraments.

Igbo society's rejection of some of their members as equal human beings caused a separation between them. They were confined to the sphere of lesser humans, which made them seek external help. Here the social upliftness came through European missionaries. The new religion, Christianity came as a liberating influence on many including the outcasts and the mothers of the unfortunate twins. Twins were thrown to the forests because they were considered evil. The reception of the new religion is very much evident in the thoughts of Nwoye, Okonkwo's son.

“It was not the mad logic of the Trinity that captivated him. He did not understand it. It was the poetry of the new religion, something felt in the marrow. The hymn about brothers who sat in the darkness and in fear seemed to answer a vague and persistent question that haunted his young soul-- the question of the twins crying in the bush and the question of Ikemefuna who was killed. He felt relief within as the hymn poured into his parched soul” (53).

But the dominant group, the Europeans seek to preserve their advantage by depriving the conquered community (Igbo) to compete effectively as one unit. Colonial rule had a destabilising influence on the native affairs of African people. The great conflict between the clan and the church started after Mr. Brown left the village. He was replaced by Mr. Smith. Among the converts there was an extremist named Enoch. According to the Igbo customs, “a greatest crime a man could commit was to unmask an egwugwu in public” (66).

During the annual worship of earth goddess which fell on a Sunday, the Christian women could not return to their homes because of the Igbo ceremony. The egwugwu procession was going on when Enoch boasted that egwugwu could not touch a Christian. One of the egwugwu struck him with a cane. Enoch reacted violently and removed the mask of the spirit. This event disturbed stability in the clan and resulted in a series of reaction, including the burning of the church by Umuofian's.

Proverbs are used frequently by Achebe in his novels, mostly by elders who he considers to be the custodians of culture. The proverbs are used to give counsel almost always at key narrative moments. “Proverb embodies the wisdom of the ages gleaned from the routine experiences of a people” (Ogede, 27).

These proverbs are so intricately woven into the soul of the Igbo people. They rely on them to instruct and evolve. They pass on these to the next generation. A successful

proverb therefore represents an amazing use of dialect to convey wisdom based on understanding of the observed natural world of the speaker as well as the cultural habits of the group as well.

Some examples of proverbs taken from text :

- a) "A toad does not run in the day time for nothing" (7). This proverb is quoted to explain the puzzling story of Obiako. Obiako is a palm-wine tapper who unexpectedly gives up his trade one day. People of Igbo discuss about this sudden action from him.
- b) "The clan was like a lizard, if it lost its tail, it soon grew another" (60). Okonkwo left his village for exile for seven years. He was sent to Mbanta his mother's village. He lost all his highest titles in Umuofia which he gained through his great deeds. The clan will no longer wait for him. They have undergone tremendous changes. His position was replaced and Okonkwo is very much aware of these changes, because he is an Igbo man.
- c) "The lizard that jumped from the high iroko tree to the ground said he would praise himself if no one else did" (8). The context is when Okonkwo goes to a prosperous yam farmer Nwakibie and asks him to give some yams to start his farming. He assures Nwakibie he isn't like his father. Indeed Okonkwo is very hardworking. Okonkwo uses this proverb because he has taken care of himself and is highly determined.
- d) "A child cannot pay for its mother's milk" (60). "An animal rubs its itching flank against a tree, a man asks his kinsman to scratch him" (60). Okonkwo lived in exile at Mbanta, his mother's village for seven years. Before going back to Umuofia he thanked the elders and mother's kinsmen at Mbanta. He used these proverbs to show his gratitude for the kindness and support he received from his mother's kinsmen. It was a huge feast prepared by his wives and children. The entire clan was surprised by his generosity towards them.

In the glossary of Ibo words, Chinua Achebe introduces readers to various new terms like "chi", personal god which is an Igbo concept for fate. A man's success or failure is closely associated with his "chi." He also brings in the rhythms of "ekwe", "udu", "ogene" (types of musical instruments made from wood and pottery). He gives the readers a glimpse of African life. They also have music and leisure and they appreciated music.

Igbo people have social life and many festivals. "The feast of New Yam was held every year before the harvest began, to honour the earth goddess and the ancestral spirits of the clan... Men and women, young and old, looked forward to the New Yam Festival because it began the season of plenty—the new year". (13)

The white men, the missionaries who came to Igbo land and the Commissioner speak through an interpreter. This shows the impenetrability of Igbo land. Umuofia is a living world. Achebe can recreate the history of his people through the history of words. "Both Achebe and Commissioner seek to reduce the living, oral world of Umuofia to a series of words on the page; and they are English words, for Achebe as well as the Commissioner." (Griffiths 98) So in other words, legacy of colonialism is also the legacy of English language.

John McLeod in *Beginning postcolonialism* aptly explains that, "The teaching of English literature in the colonies must be understood as part of the many ways in which western

colonial powers such as Britain asserted their cultural and moral superiority while at the same time devaluing indigenous cultural products”(140).

Manliness for Okonkwo is violence and fierceness. His own rigidity towards himself is reflected in his impatience with others. He loves his son Nwoye, inwardly. But he is unwilling to express it. “Okonkwo's first son, Nwoye was then twelve year's old. But was already causing his father great anxiety for his incipient laziness.” Okonkwo constantly nagged and beat him and “Nwoye was developing into a sad –faced youth”.(5)

Okonkwo was “a man of action, man of war” (4) and for him “to show affection was a sign of weakness, - the only thing worth demonstrating was strength”(10). He participated in the killing of Ikemefuna, to hide his weakness. “As the man who had cleared his throat drew up and raised his machete, Okonkwo looked away. He heard Ikemefuna cry, “my father, they have killed me!” as he ran towards him. Dazed with fear, Okonkwo drew his machete and cut him down. He was afraid of being thought weak.”(22)

Okonkwo was a man driven by great ambition. He wanted to grow as the strongest man of his clan. He believed he was made for great things. Though he achieved success, it was broken. “He had been cast out of his clan like a fish onto a dry, sandy beach, panting.”(47). This brokenness and rejection can be seen when Okonkwo returned to Umuofia after seven years of exile. He was given a less enthusiastic welcome by people of Umuofia. His clan did not pay much attention to his return. Their lives changed profoundly with the coming of new government and religion. His own people discarded the great warrior's presence among them. He was a man, who brought honour to his clan but now was overthrown by British imperialism. Okonkwo's rise and fall is the rise and fall of his clan.

Chinua Achebe could capture the inner life of African people and shared their anxieties. Through Okonkwo, a strong individual, an Igbo hero, he succeeded in bringing up the two spaces – the supreme power of the colonial rule and the struggling Igbo men. Okonkwo started his life towards heroism by defeating Amalinze the Cat. But he failed to protect his own people. The coming of Europeans derailed the Igbo tribe and paralysed their moral values, institutions and customs. The proud warrior is fallen and forgotten. As a leader he felt he is no longer in control; this thought took over him which slowly leads to depression, gloom and untimely death. He went against the Igbo principle, where self- destruction is a taboo.

The colonial order is bringing up a new space where people like Okonkwo find less welcome. He could not sustain the order and decorum of his tribe. His own individual weakness, along with the disturbing presence of an external force (Europeans) leads to the complete destruction of Igbo community. “Okonkwo's suicide is a gesture that symbolizes at the same time his personal refusal of a new order, as well as the collapse of the old order which he represents” (Irele, 87). The close ties of Igbo people like marriage, family, rituals, customs, language etc were taken away. The core elements of a traditional communal life were destroyed.

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Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*: The Making of a Postcolonial Space through an Alternative Historiography

History is a very modern, western concept which narrates the progressive story of the west. As a result of colonialism, as Pramod K Nayar notes in his *Postcolonial Literature: an Introduction* and many other postcolonial critics point out, “histories of the native cultures were written and authorised by the European power.” With their “authentic” knowledge from literary, archaeological, historiographic evidences and “subjective experience” the West talked about the rest of the world voraciously. The “facticity” and “authenticity” of these works are further questioned and challenged by the postcolonial writings and they are obsessed with rewriting and retrieving the already written histories. Sally Morgan says her quest to write family history in her autobiography *My Place* (1987). To quote “I want to write the history of my own family...there is almost nothing written from a personal point of view about the Aboriginal people of Australia. All our history is about White man. No one knows what it was like for us. A lot of our history has been lost; people have been too frightened to say anything. There is a lot of history we cannot even get at...I just want to tell a little bit of the other side of the history.” This kind of a revision and rewriting are very central to postcolonial writing since it provides a separate space and individual existence for the colonised people and their buried pasts. It also helps in “righting” the history or correcting the already written histories which in a way deconstructs the very western idea of history as modern, linear, progressive, factual, written and authentic into ancient, cyclical, oral, mythical memories of the past. Wole Soyinka, the most famous African postcolonial writer talks about the need for this retelling as “For a people to develop, they must have constant recourse to their own history. To deny them the existence of this therefore has a purpose, for it makes them neutered objects on whose tabula rasa, that clean slate of the mind, the text of the master race-cultural, economic, religious, and so on- can be inscribed.”

Through *Song of Solomon* (1977) Toni Morrison attempts to create a postcolonial space by excavating and rewriting the history of an African American family. Making of an alternative historiography was a trend in many of the African American women writers, especially in the last decades of the twentieth century. Dexter Fisher, the editor of the black women's anthology, *The Third Women* (1980) concludes “authenticating the experience of black women, establishing a context for understanding the traditions of the past, and creating a sense of place and community, giving the community back to itself by elevating the common place to the artistic” as the goals of the women writers of her times. Contemporary black women writers not only started to critique the white culture and slavery for alienating them from the African tribal culture and for destructing the African American life of their own communities, but also for perpetuating the western ideals and western beliefs which has a critical role in the death of an active black life in America. Geta LeSeur talks about the situation of African American life to be exiled from their culture and life in America. She notes: “her motive for writing the bildungsroman is not to rediscover a 'lost domain' or recapture an 'experience', but to expose conditions which robbed me of a memorable and happy childhood.” This paper looks at how the “space between history and the contemporary

*Nayan Mary Tom is Student MA English, Department of English, School of Humanities and Languages,
Central University of Karnataka, Kalaburagi*

moment is erased” and the history and the subjugated voices are resonating in Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*.

The Nobel Laureate, Gabriel Garcia Marquez discusses the reason for the seclusion of African Americans and Latin Americans from a traditional literary genres and literary scenario in his Nobel speech “The Solitude of Latin America” as “for our crucial problem has been a lack of conventional means to render our lives believable. This is the crux of our solitude.” So it is very much necessary for a non western writer to invent a literary genre which can carry their life in its completion. Magical Realism, as a literary genre helped a lot in articulating the experiences and life of the African Americans and Latin Americans since their life and experiences are very different from the life of the scientific, objective west. Some critics argue that magical realism is a natural outcome of post colonialism which incorporates the reality of both the conqueror and the conquered. Toni Morrison's usage of magical elements in a realistic fashion in *Song of Solomon* contributes a lot in creating a literary space for the African American life in the white society and in the predominantly white literature. In addition to that the magical elements in novel helps the protagonist, Milkman to reach at and embrace the rich culture in the Southern parts of America in contrast with his father, Macon Dead, who lives in the Northern states among the whites and tries to be a 'little white'.

Flight is one of the magical elements which are treated as very natural and realistic throughout the novel. Unlike the progressive western novels, *Song of Solomon* begins and ends in a circular manner, with a same incident; the flight of a man. Mr. Robert Smith's flight in the very beginning of the novel is portrayed very realistically. The narrator says that Mr Smith writes “I will take off from Mercy and fly away on my own wings” Later, his flight is described as “When the dead doctor's daughter saw Mr. Smith emerge as promptly as he had promised from behind the cupola, his wide blue silk wings curved forward around his chest...” Toni Morrison does not provide any description of him bleeding or a painful death, but, as a very smooth flight. “Mr. Smith had seen the rose petals, heard the music, and leaped on into the air”. Even in the final description of Milkman's flight, Morrison is very calm and realistic though it is about an unrealistic thing for the readers who are unaware of it. “Without wiping away the tears, taking a deep breath, or even bending his knees—he leaped. As fleet and bright as a lodestar he wheeled toward Guitar and it did not matter which one of them would give up his ghost in the killing arms of his brother. For now he knew what Shalimar knew: If you surrendered to the air, you could ride it.” The readers are left to believe that Milkman could fly like his great grandfather Solomon and he could also join and merge with his culture and people, through this symbolic flight of death, because of it being treated not as a metaphor but as a real thing.

Pilate, Macon Dead's sister is constructed as an 'other' and inferior being throughout her life because of the absence of “navel” in her body. But, it is this non realistic thing which persuades her to be stick to her own culture and people. There are several instances in the novel where the narrator speak about Pilate having contact with her dead father's ghost and he helps her to be strong and constant even in the problems and bring her nephew to the black life in the South. Toni Morrison portrays Pilate as the carrier of the African cultural values and ideologies. This is possible only because she is a representative of the traditions and realities of the African American life and because of the fantastic realities in her body. Though she is an “abnormal being” for all who have found her secret out; it is her knowledge, which helps

Ruth Foster to regain the love of her husband after thirteen years and give birth to Milkman, and this “abnormality” makes her able to live independently unlike Ruth who is not allowed to work or earn money but caged like the white angels in the house.

Magical realism as a literary model contributes in the construction of a separate space for the life and fanciful experiences of Milkman and his family in contrast to the “reasonable” experiences of the west. It historicises the supernatural experiences of Freddie whose parents were killed by the ghosts and spirits, the servant in Macon Dead's house; appreciates the fantastical existence of Circe even after her death in Pennsylvania, the mid wife, who guides Milkman to Shalimar in Virginia; considers Pilate as a “gate way” to the fabulous interiors of the African American life; and records Ryna's crying which still resonates in the winds of Ryna's Gulch.

Toni Morrison tries to inscribe the oral history of the African American life through *Song of Solomon* and it poses a challenge to the “factual narration” of the western history on the colonised. In one of her interviews, Morrison opines “you cannot really blame the conqueror for writing history in his own way, you can certainly debate it.” Morrison's debate with the traditional historiography occurs by standing within the western convention of 'writing history', but, she contests it by engraving the 'oral histories' associated with the memories of African American life on paper. As Madhu Dubey notes in her article ““Even some fiction might be useful”: African American women novelists”, that “African American women's novels would be haunted by the presence of slave ancestors and would persistently turn to oral traditions as the very reliable source of historical memories.” Similarly, Milkman's knowledge about the past and traditions of his community is through alternative modes of historical memory and its recollection. In *Song of Solomon* blues music work as a cultural medium and alternative historiography along with the stories told by his aunt Pilate and the journey to the South, the cultural hub of African American life, and the people whom he met during his journey and the people he found there. Nothing is provided for Milkman to read about his past and regain the lost interest in him after knowing that “only birds and aeroplanes could fly.” It is through the folk songs sung by children in Shalimar that Milkman realizes his past and history which is told by many people.

“Jake the only son of Solomon
Come booba yalle, come booba tambee
Whirled about and touched the sun
.....
Left that baby in a white man's house
.....
Heddy took him to a red man's house
.....
Black lady fell down on the ground
.....
Threw her body all around
Solomon and Ryna Belali Shalut
Yaruba Medina Muhammet too.

Nestor Kalina Saraka cake.
Twenty-one children, the last one Jake!
O Solomon don't leave me here
Cotton balls to choke me O Solomon don't leave me here
Buckra's arms to yoke me
Solomon done fly, Solomon done gone
Solomon cut across the sky, Solomon gone home.”

This song talks about the entire family history of Milkman. His great grandfather, Solomon, who came to America as a slave, got married to Ryna and had twenty one children. Jake is the youngest son, Milkman's grandfather. This particular song says about Solomon flying back to Africa from slavery, leaving his wife and twenty one children alone in America. It also narrates Ryna's pains and sorrows which force her to scream loudly, become mad and die from the Ryna's Gulch. It suggests the childhood of his grandfather Jake who became Macon Dead by mistake when he went to register his name in the list of ex-slaves after the abolition of slavery in America. The later life of his grandfather and grandmother are also revealed to him orally from Circe, the midwife, and Pilate. The blues song is embodied with information related to his African tribal identity, religion, language etc as well. This family history is a fantastic story for the readers because it is very different from the usual authentic histories, since it tells not only about unbelievable things but it says the history of slavery. People in Shalimar treat this as a myth which happened sometime in the past and believe in those and treat it as a historical leap of victory and power. It is very difficult for a reader who is very much used to with the canonical history to read without questioning the factuality of Solomon's flight from Solomon's Leap. It might be a symbolic representation of suicide. But, all characters in the novel believe that this is a true incident and the readers are made to believe the same as other characters. The end of the novel also suggests and embraces the repetitive structure of African life and histories. Solomon's life is repeated in Milkman's life since he flies like his great grandfather to embrace the African culture. But, Solomon's mistakes are also replicable in Milkman because Hagar dies crying for Milkman as Ryna cried from Ryna's Gulch. Through *Song of Solomon* Morrison critiques men for the repetition of the same mistake for four generations in the same family since this novel was written as an attack on the male African American writers for the exclusion of women writers from the Black Arts Movement. Morrison invokes and reminds the significance of women's role in African tribal culture and claims of a space for all their experiences in postcolonial setting.

In most of the African American writings the historical memory is very much spatial. As Michelle Cliff says it is the memory and history 'of' and 'in' a particular space. As similar to many of her novels Southern states are represented as the site of ancestral heritage and cultural history even in *Song of Solomon*. In her most popular essay “Rootedness: The Ancestor as Foundation” Morrison argues that this spatial memory contributes to create a “conscious historical connection” with their past which was totally destructed as a result of colonialism. Though Milkman had listened to the song “sugarman done fly away” earlier from Pilate, Reba and Hagar and he felt “delicious as the day turned out to be for Milkman, it was even more so because it included secrecy and defiance”, he could understand and realise

its meanings and the history behind it only after the journey to Shalimar in Virginia. For Milkman, Shalimar is a cultural spot and every physical feature of this land has specific names and meanings associated with his life. The very name of the place Shalimar itself resonates with the name Solomon as Milkman says “The man pronounced it Shalleemone.” It carries the story of Solomon and his family as if it is the story and life of everyone in the city. Similarly, Solomon's Leap and Ryna's Gulch mean a lot more than it being the name of a feature of the land and it provides Milkman a historical sense to place him in the context and escape from his existential dilemma.

Song of Solomon is very remarkable and different from other works since it is the chronicle of an African American family. Writing family histories is not very common in writing fiction. But Morrison creates a space for the “history” of four generations of a family who are the victims of the brutality of colonialism through this novel. Though their history is not a continuous one, due to the black marks of slavery, Morrison enables the individual recollection of this discontinuous, collective memory through Milkman and provides a space for this memory in the literary scenario which negated and subjugated it till then. Maureen Howard writes in her article “Fiction Chronicles” about the structure of the novel. She remarks, “Toni Morrison has written a chronicle of a black family living in a small industrial city on the shores of Lake Michigan, but the method of the book to enlarge upon the very idea of family history.” Unlike the popular family histories in the white literary arena, this chronicle deals with mythologies and the formation of new myths in a postcolonial world. Toni Morrison says that Milkman's journey to the South helps him to reconstruct a world according to the remaining cultural evidences there. In contrast to most of the family histories, this chronicle ends with the death of all the people who are the part and parcel of the traditions and past of the Dead family and there is no one left to continue the lineage of the family. Morrison suggests the brutality of colonialism and slavery on the African American life and as a result of which they are unable to have a link with their tradition and culture till death. Milkman could merge with his culture only through death.

In one of the reviews Richard K Barksdale comments “Toni Morrison's achievement in *Song of Solomon*, parallels Marx's reputed achievement of inverting the philosophy of cyclical progress by Hegel, because her novel turns upside down many of the established social, moral and cultural beliefs that the western world has inherited from Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman civilizations.” The very title of the fiction is taken from Bible, the love songs of Solomon called “Song of Solomon”, and in a way Morrison alters the conventional, well accepted beliefs and notions through this novel. When the beautiful black beloved is loved by Solomon all the beloveds in *Song of Solomon* are forsaken by their lovers. Ryna is left alone with twenty one children in Virginia by her husband Solomon and finally she dies, Sing Byrd is dead after the childbirth and Jake never allows his children to talk about her anymore, Ruth Foster is never loved by her husband, Macon Dead, but kept inside the home. The same mistake is repeated even in the fourth generation by Milkman. Hagar is denied of Milkman's love and she dies at the end because of love. Toni Morrison claims a space for all the unromantic, imperfect love of this black family in place of the idealised, perfect, romantic love of Solomon for his beloved.

Names of all the characters in *Song of Solomon* also are a part of Morrison's revolt against the conventions and assertion of a space for her people. Solomon is the name of one of the most intelligent and popular kings of Israel where as Solomon is an African slave who was

brought to the plantations in the South America. There are still debates going on regarding the lineage of Solomon whose mother is Bathsheba, the daughter of Sheba from Cushite people, and his desire for women of many lands. Morrison counters the white obsession and claim over the Bible and Biblical names by portraying Solomon as a black man. At the same time other Judeo-Christian names in the novel such as Pilate, Ruth, Magdalena called Lena, First Corinthians, Reba, Hagar etc show what enforced conversions to Christianity as result of colonialism had done to them. Macon Dead (Jake) talks about his daughter Pilate's naming ceremony to Circe "That's where my finger went down at." Circe asks, "Well, your brain ain't got to follow it. You don't want to give this motherless child the name of the man that killed Jesus, do you?" Macon Dead replies "I asked Jesus to save me my wife." Like Pilate, this name does not give any conventional meanings to the life of any characters, other than Hagar who was deserted by Milkman as the Biblical Hagar who was abandoned by Abram in the Old Testament. Even this identification with the Biblical character does not provide anything to Hagar other than a miserable death.

Morrison contests with all these traditional believe and affirm a space for her people through this novel. So, all these "established" names hold a new history with them in contrast to the conventional understanding and provides a room for the people who believe it. For African Americans in Shalimar, Solomon is a victorious, heroic forefather who escaped from the clutches of slavery and people celebrate his memories as if he is a part of their own family. Similarly, Ryna is the foremother for the entire Shalimar who is still crying from the Gulch. Macon Dead (Jake) is a remainder of the cruelties done by the colonisers and slavery on black individual identity. Pilate represents the "exotic other" that holds the cultural values and ideals of the African American life. Milkman's name itself has a long story behind it which tells the attachment between a mother and a son. Hence, this alternative history drawn by Toni Morrison not only creates a space for the African American experience but also challenges its traditional meanings in the popular culture.

The politics of name is very much abundant in the novel and almost all these names tell us about the cruelty of colonialism. As a part of controlling the people and rule over them they have even destroyed their 'name', the very essence of one's identity which had several layers of meanings according to Morrison, and left with some words which do not make much sense to them on their past and ancestral heritage than what it tells about their immediate past which is distinct with the black marks of colonialism. Morrison shares a long list of names like that, "having lived there, it was hers—and his, and his father's, his grandfather's, his grandmother's. Not Doctor Street, Solomon's Leap, Ryna's Gulch, Shalimar, Virginia. He closed his eyes and thought of the black men in Shalimar, Roanoke.... the barbershops.... Names they got from yearnings, gestures, flaws, events, mistakes, weaknesses.... Macon Dead, Sing Byrd, Crowell Byrd, Pilate, Reba, Hagar, Magdalene, First Corinthians, Milkman, Guitar, Railroad Tommy, Hospital Tommy, Empire State (he just stood around and swayed), Juke Boy, Shine, Staggerlee, Jim the Devil, Fuck-Up, and Dat Nigger." Morrison historicises all their lives through this novel and it is positioned as a challenge to the mainstream historiography which forgets the life and experiences of the 'other' people.

As Brenda K Marshall says in her famous book *Teaching the Post Modern: Fiction and Theory* history is not an uncontested, authentic literary arena today. To quote; "History in the postmodern moment becomes histories and questions. It asks: Whose history gets told? In whose name? For what purpose? Postmodernism is about histories not told, retold, untold.

History as it never was. Histories forgotten, hidden, invisible, considered unimportant, changed, eradicated. It is about the refusal to see history as linear.”Toni Morrison also takes part in challenging the traditional history through *Song of Solomon*. This contestation helps her in creating an alternative history and cultural space for the people who are neglected from the linear, progressive story of the oppressor.

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A Pragmatic Analysis Of The English Language Used By Drug Peddlers In Lagos Intra-city Buses

Abstract

The paper examines the linguistic strategies used by drug peddlers to manipulate ignorant and poor commuters to buy drugs inside Lagos intra-city buses. Data were collected through tape recording of the peddlers' advertisement tact. Basic principles of pragmatics like the speech act theory, shared assumptions/background knowledge, etc; are used to unravel the linguistic devices employed by the drug peddlers. The analysis of the data shows that the linguistic and other advertisement devices of the peddlers seem too convincing for the commuters to resist, with little thought to the dangerous side effects of such drugs. The paper concludes that commuters should carefully consider the implications of the hawkers' utterances before buying drugs from them. The paper, therefore, roundly condemns procurement of drugs outside pharmaceutical shops and without physicians' prescription.

Background to the Study

In every bus (“molue”) you board in the present day Lagos in Nigeria, there is a myriad of drug peddlers who move from one bus to another in a bid to sell their drugs. Actually, drug peddling is not only done inside buses but also from street to street, in public markets and bus stations. The buses appear to be an appropriate place for drug peddlers to display their linguistic and advertisement strategies to deceive ignorant and poor Nigerians. The salesmen and women involved in drug hawking most often tend to be semi-literate or stack illiterate people who have no other means of earning a living. They appear to settle for drug hawking rather than doing nothing. Justifiable as this may sound, medicine has to do with human life. Its misapplication or abuse is harmful to man, his society and human existence.

Definition and Classification of Drugs

A drug is defined by Mora (2005:48) as “any substance other than food used for the prevention, diagnosis, alleviation, treatment or curing of diseases”. Mora distinguishes two types of drug when he explains that “medicine is a term used to describe a therapeutic drug in order to distinguish it from narcotics ...”. It means that drugs could be classified into therapeutic drugs and narcotic drugs. Narcotic drugs are psychoactive drugs like morphine, cocaine, etc. Therapeutic drugs are subdivided into prescription and non-prescription drugs. Prescription drugs are “usually written as formula by a physician, a dentist, a veterinarian or some other licensed health practitioners legally entitled to prescribed” (Mora 2005:48). This definition implies that legally, a patient cannot just walk into a pharmacy to purchase such drugs without doctor's prescription.

Drugs are to be sold to patients by registered pharmacists only after prescription papers are tendered. It then means that such drugs should not be found in any patent medicine stores

or hawked by any individuals. Prescription drugs are not to be advertised to the public through any media be it print, electronic, etc. Examples of prescription drugs are antibiotics, anti-hypertensives, sedatives, laxatives (e.g. Bisacodyl), anti pruritis (e.g. pruriton), etc.

The perspective of the law regarding the dispensing or sales of drugs or “poisons” presented by Ovbiagele (1996:16) is that:

- a. The dispensing, sales of drugs or poisons, be carried on under the direct personal control and management of a superintendent who is a selling dispenser, or a chemist and druggist
- b. Every sale of “poison” must be effected on behalf of such body, corporate, company or firm by a person who is a selling dispenser or a chemist and druggist.

According to Ovbiagele (1996:15), pharmacists are the professionals saddled with the responsibility of identifying, evaluating, synthesising, compounding, producing, marketing and distributing medicaments (drugs). The incessant warnings, through the electronic media, by the Director of the National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC), against the act of hawking drugs show that the agency frowns at advertising drugs directly to consumers (see also Egboh 1978). NAFDAC is the agency that controls issues relating to food and drug production, distribution, and consumption in Nigeria. Prohibition of direct-to-consumer advertising of drugs is not peculiar to the Nigerian situation. Other countries, Canada for example, do not subscribe to it too. In the words of Raynold (2005:1)

Direct-to-consumer advertising of drugs wasn't permitted in any form in Canada What many don't realise is that direct to customer advertising is still illegal in Canada as it is in all industrialised countries of the world.... The reason we are bombarded with drug advertising in this country is that Health Canada isn't adequately enforcing the law and companies have rushed to take advantage of this situation.

The assertion made above appears to be the case in Nigeria, where not only do companies advertise drugs that are not supposed to be advertised directly to consumers on television houses, and radio stations, but also people who have little or no knowledge of drugs advertise and sell drugs – prescription and non-prescription – inside public buses.

Meanwhile, a major slogan often heard from medical practitioners like doctors, pharmacists and nurses is that 'all drugs are poisons'. If all drugs are poisons, one can infer that a drug that lacks normal storage control, administration or has expired will be tantamount to taking 'double poison' by the consumers. Observations show that many of the drugs peddled in buses are already removed from their original packs by the peddlers and wrapped in cellophane packs, to be sold to the consumers. You can neither determine the expiry date nor their recommended dosage. You are only told by the hawkers whose use of language as well as advertising tact is to rob you of your sense of judgement.

Language as we all know, is used to inform, persuade, advertise, publicise, proclaim, gain attention, convince, confuse, misinform, establish and maintain interpersonal relationships as well sell a view point to others (Dare 1998 and Lamidi 2000). It is also used to deceive. In the attempt to sell their drugs to commuters, intra-city drug peddlers couch their language in such a way that commuters will buy out of impulse. This is one deceitful use of

language. To employ language to deceive is identified as characteristic of advertisers (Raynold 2005). Dare (1998) opines that the use of language to deceive can be treated as propaganda.

The Advanced Learners Dictionary defines strategy as “a plan that is intended to achieve a particular purpose”. Consequently, a cursory consideration of the language and strategies used by drug peddlers may prove to be interesting and fascinating. This, in fact, is the aim of this study.

Significance of the Study

Understanding the linguistic strategies of the peddlers of drugs and the implications of buying and using such drugs could help the public to change their attitude to illegal advertisers and advertising of drugs. In addition, it could curb the problems of drug abuse and its horrible consequent effects on the consumers and the society. The study also hopes to enrich the study of language in advertising and pragmatics.

Scope of the Study

The study is concerned with therapeutic drugs. The paper analyses the language strategies for advertising purpose and the pragmatic use of language in order to unravel the effects of the language used by the drug peddlers. The focus of our enquiry in this paper is not just in the English structure, but mainly the factors influencing users' choice of language, which include a range of situations that give colouration to meaning. The drug peddlers themselves seem not to bother about the English structure but effective choice of words, sentences and utterances.

Procedure

Data were collected from buses plying various routes in Lagos, e.g. Ikorodu → Ojota, Ojota → Oshodi, Oshodi → Apapa, Oshodi → Abule Egba and Sango, etc. The researcher boarded the buses and sat in a strategic position with a miniature tape recorder. The first passenger's seat (behind the driver) is discovered to be the peddlers' shop for advertising and selling his drugs. The data collected with the aid of tape recorder and personal observations were analysed in this paper.

Theoretical Framework

Pragmatics, described as “the study of meaning of linguistic utterances for their users and interpreters” (Leech and Thomas 1990, quoted in Collinge 1990: 173), is the major framework used in this paper. It means pragmatics does not only study the speaker's intended meaning. This is because an utterance's meaning “is located with the co-participant” rather than the speaker alone, since he is expected to respond to the content of the message (Onadeko 2005:109)

In the current study, interpretation of data largely depends on some of the basic pragmatic principles that guide language use in communicative interactions. The paper is, especially

interested in what drug peddlers do with the utterances or forms used in drug advertising. The major framework of pragmatics that can enrich this aspect is the speech act theory; which Fromkin and Rodman (1978:187) define as “the study of how we do things with sentences”. Austin (1962), the initiator of the theory, observes that many utterances do not give information but are equivalent to actions. The effects of utterances on the behaviour of speaker/hearer could be observed using three types of acts, i.e. locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act (Crystal 1987). Locutionary act refers to the form or structure of the utterance. The illocutionary act concerns the function intended by the speaker's utterance, while the perlocutionary act is the reaction of the hearer to the act enacted by the speaker. Anything someone says has a lexical or syntactic form. What is said must have a purpose, which could be assuring, promising, threatening, warning, etc. The listener too has to react to or respond in one way or another to what is said. However, observations have shown that sometimes the illocutionary force of an utterance may not coincide with the perlocutionary effect, that is, the listener may not always perform the act intended by the speaker. Austin (1962) believes that every utterance is intended to 'do something' rather than merely make a statement. As a result, he made a distinction between 'performative' and 'constative' utterances. Performative utterances are usually identified with performance of actions (Leech and Thomas 1990:175). For example, when a person uses a structure like “I recommend this drug”, the person actually performs the action of recommending. Performative utterances do not focus on whether the utterances are true or false but whether the utterances do something or perform particular actions. In the words of Leech and Thomas (1990: 175)

In addition to their declarative form, performatives generally have well-recognised syntactic characteristics, such as a verb (of a particular kind) in the present tense, a first – person subject and the possibility of adding the adverb “hereby”

However, literature also records Austin's conclusion (based on his investigations) that “not only performatives, but all utterances partake of the nature of actions” (see Leech and Thomas 1990:175). This implies that even when a performative verb is absent, “one could bring out the action-like qualities of a statement, a question, a request, etc. by prefixing to it an implicit performance” (Collinge 1990: 175 – 176).

This assertion can be explained with the following examples:

- ◆ Very effective (i.e. I *assure* you that this drug is very effective – it will solve all your problems)
- ◆ This one in my hand is called Bisacodyn (i.e. I *announce* or *assert* that this drug is called Bisacodyn)

This indicates that whatever is said has an 'implied performative'. This has made Fromkin and Rodman (1978:186) to assert that “every utterance is some kind of speech act”, since “even where there is no implicit performance” like ordering, questioning, etc. one could choose a Performative verb to restructure the utterances, e.g.

- Oga (master), you will sleep like a baby – statement
- Oga, I promise, you will sleep like a baby

Searle (1976) tries to categorise the various performatives into five types, which are:

representatives (assertives), directives, commissives, expressives and declaratives (Leech and Thomas 1990, Crystal 1987)

According to Searle, (1976), as reported by Crystal (1987:121):

1. Representatives usually commit the speaker in various degrees to the truth of the utterance made. Examples of such performative verbs are: inform, assert, announce, declare, claim, etc.
2. Directives attempt to make the hearer 'do something', e.g. implore, solicit, urge, beg, plead, persuade, challenge, etc.
3. Commissives relate to where the speaker is committed to different ways to certain future actions. Examples of such verbs include: promise, vow, bet, guarantee, etc.
4. Expressives express certain psychological attitude about a state of affairs. Some popular verbs under expressives include greet, apologise, congratulate, thank, welcome, etc.
5. Declaratives could be used to declare a verdict, judge, recommend, decide, etc.

For a speech act to be successful, some criteria called felicity condition must be met. The person performing that act must possess the authority to do so. For instance, only registered medical practitioners like pharmacists or licensed patent medicine sellers have the authority to sell or dispense drugs (Mora 2005). Even patent medicine sellers are not authorised to be in possession of or sell prescription drugs. The felicity condition is not met in intra-city bus advertisement of drugs because the peddlers are not qualified to dispense any of the medicines they peddle. In addition, sincerity condition is never met by the peddlers. Other pragmatic principles like shared assumptions, shared knowledge of the world and context will enhance how the hearer interprets the forms used (Fromkin and Rodman 1978). We shall substantiate this presently.

Analysis and Discussion of Data

Relying on Austin's (1962) view of performatives and drawing insights from Searle's (1976) categorisation of performative verbs, (though with a little modification), we analyse below the English language used by drug peddlers in Lagos intra-city buses. The modification to Searle's categorisation is that while he identifies five categories, this paper identifies four (as we shall see shortly). This is because examples of the forms Searle would like to refer to as representatives and declaratives respectively, cannot be so demarcated in our data. The following examples explain this point.

1. The name of this drug is Samba 500 – representative
2. Only Bisacodyn can help you out – declarative

In terms of function, example 1 could be seen as naming, announcing or declaring, while example 2 is declaring a verdict or recommending (implicitly). In essence, both structures above share the same performative features. Thus, both representatives and declaratives could be jointly referred to as assertives.

Instances of speech acts abound in our data, even when some of the forms recorded may not contain explicit performatives. For the sake of convenience, we shall present examples of

speech acts in the data (in tabular form) based on the four categories discussed above: Two phrases or sentences will be cited to explain each performative type, that is, phrase or sentence (a) as example of locutionary act, and (b) as illocutionary act

Table 1: *Performatives in the English Language of Drug Peddlers*

Performative Type	Locutionary Act	Illocutionary Act
Assertives	1a. The name of this drug is Samba 500	1b. I <i>inform</i> (or announce) to you that the name of this drug is Samba 500
	2a. Only Bisacodyn can help you out	2b. I <i>insist</i> that only Bisacodyn can help you out
	3a. Original	3b. I <i>assure</i> you that this drug is original
	4a. If you buy this medicine, you will send one of a curse or prayer to Me	4b. I <i>submit</i> (or assert) that if you buy this drug, you will either curse or pray for me
Directives	1a. Try and use it	1b. I <i>implore</i> you to try and use it
	1b. Let us seize this opportunity of its availability in this bus	2b. I <i>urge</i> you to seize this opportunity of its availability in this bus
Commissives	1a. We don't offer bad drugs	1b. I <i>bet</i> it (or swear) we don't offer bad drug
	1b. Go to the chemist, you'll buy one for ₦50.00, but if you buy from us, one is ₦30.00	2b. I <i>bet</i> it (or guarantee) that at the chemist, you'll buy one for ₦50.00, but if you buy from us, you'll buy for only ₦30.00
Expressives	1a. Thank you and God bless you	1b. I <i>thank</i> you for listening or buying, God bless you
	2a. I say good afternoon to you gentlemen and ladies and of course, you're welcome	2b. I <i>greet</i> you, gentlemen and ladies and of course, you're welcome

The bare sentences (examples 'a' under each performatives type) are the locutionary acts. As could be seen from the table, many of the forms used lack explicit performative verbs. Thus, the force of the actions required is covered. The expressive forms seem to be different in this case as the actions of 'greeting', 'thanking', etc. are explicit in the structures used. The

reason for this exception may not be far to seek. Expressives are designed to express attitude and the drug peddlers have to consciously and courteously use forms that would agree with the social norms of the people. Such polite language use would make the peddlers acceptable to the listeners. The 'b' structures in Table 1 are the illocutionary acts which are the real actions performed or intended by the speakers. The illocutionary acts under 'assertives' have the illocutionary force of informing, announcing, insisting, etc.

Under the directives, the actions of the speakers may intend to make the hearer perform certain actions embedded in the propositions given. The illocutionary acts perceivable in the examples under directives tend to be imploring, urging, pleading, etc. Illocutionary forces of ordering and commanding, which are also characteristics of directives, seem not to be employed by drug peddlers. Acts that tend toward pleading and urging may be preferred to gain the consent and attraction of the buyers to the drug peddlers. Thus, even when almost all the directives in the data start with the verb, the illocutionary forces contained in them do not tend towards issuing commands.

The illocutionary force of the commissives in the data is to establish some unmistakable realities. They are guarantees of not buying a 'bad drug' or buying the drug at a cheaper rate in the buses, etc. The peddlers are part of world of the consumers. The peddlers knew that the listeners were likely to believe them. They also knew that their interlocutors often desire cheap things. So, they play and prey on the listeners' intelligence and weakness.

Table 1 indicates that the various types of performative verbs are represented in our data. However, the bulk of the locutionary collected demonstrated a preponderance of assertives, commissives and directives, but a closer look at the data shows that directives are fewer than the first two. The reason for this is apparent. The speech act analysis has demonstrated that the use of language is geared towards performing the actions informing, declaring, urging, recommending, imploring, persuading and convincing consumers to buy the drugs rather than commanding them. The peddlers appear to be able to cleverly manipulate the resources of the various performatives to achieve their purpose – sell their drugs. Goshgarian (1992) sees advertising language as a specially designed language that combines words in a clever methodical manner with the aim of persuading people to buy the goods they may not want to buy ordinarily. In fact, Lutz (1992) opines that advertisers intentionally manipulate language to 'dupe' their prospective consumers. Generally, advertisers of drugs in Lagos intra-city buses seem to strategically make the linguistic choices that could stir up the urge to buy the drugs in the consumers.

Thus, apart from the various illocutionary forces of the performative verbs, which we have analysed, it seems some of the lexicons and utterances are still intentionally used for certain effects that would enhance saleability of the drugs. For example, some of the locutionary acts appear to have been used as a threat, to stir up fear and sense of insecurity in the target consumers. While promoting his drug, the peddler tries to make the consumer believe that not using the drug will prevent him from enjoying the benefits of the drug. Examples of threat-designed utterances are:

Utterance	Intended Threat
1. <i>Only Bisacodyn can bail you out</i>	<i>other drugs cannot</i>
2. <i>That is why people are childless</i>	<i>those who use the drug do not find it difficult to have children</i>

3. *Seize the opportunity of its you may not see it anywhere*
 availability in this bus again

In addition, some of the assertives and commissives may have been exploited as linguistic devices to guarantee and affirm the superiority of a peddler's drugs to others and emphasise the peddler as the best source from which the consumers could purchase better and cheaper drugs. These drug advertisers even manipulate linguistic forms to down-play other drugs and possible legal places of purchase by embellishing the efficacy of their own drugs. The following examples from our data confirm the point being made here.

Utterance	Intended Threat
4. <i>Any product we market is</i> <i>original</i>	<i>others could be selling</i> <i>fake products</i>
5. <i>We don't offer bad drugs</i>	<i>others sell bad drugs, our</i> <i>drugs are always good</i>
6. <i>Go to the chemist, you will</i> <i>buy one for N50.00, but if</i> <i>you buy from us, one is</i> <i>N30.00</i>	<i>so don't go to the chemist,</i> <i>buy your drugs from us,</i> <i>because ours is cheaper</i>

Such utterances as the ones above could be used to play on the intelligence of the listeners, by robbing them of their ability to critically assess the drugs before taking the decision whether to buy or not.

Some of the utterances also used to arrest consumers' attention tend towards sexual language. Observations reveal that advertisements loaded with sexual language (as in the case of Bisacodyn in our data) are rich and arresting. Commuters seem to be fascinated and attracted by such expressions. Seeing this as a 'hook', the peddlers attempted to create vivid sexual imagery with language. The utterance below is an example:

- 7 *Your wife draws you and you cannot go just once, you*
 are tired and weak, brother get Bisacodyn.

Contextual/Social Meaning of Locutionary Acts

Several examples of utterances in our data can only be interpreted in context. For instance, only common background can aid the listeners' understanding of an utterance like:

8. If Bisacodyn does not work, you must call your family meeting.

Normally, the drug peddler should instruct consumers to “consult your doctor” but the utterance tends to be more interested in convincing the consumers of the authenticity of the drug rather than doubting its efficacy. Alluding to “calling family meeting” signifies the seriousness of any ailment the drug cannot cure. In Yorubaland, a problem that defies quick solution sometimes result in holding family meetings to look into the matter. The illocutionary force is to convince the buyers that they need the drugs.

Usually, kinship terms are used to express politeness in Nigerian English (Alo 2004). However, the use of kinship terms in the data could be viewed from different angles. It could be expressing politeness, good manner or respect. It could be idiosyncratic, resulting from

repeating same utterances from bus to bus on daily basis. It could also be a deliberate tact used to call attention, to show closeness, to announce arrival/presence, etc. From the data, we have examples like the following:

9. Yes! daddy, mummy, my older and younger ones
10. Please mummy, buy this drug

Greetings are also usually used to express politeness. However, the peddlers seem to employ greeting as a strategy to announce their presence in the buses. Once you hear “good afternoon...”, you are bound to look up.

Consumers Responses (Perlocutionary Act)

The choice of language and strategies peddlers use is targeted towards ensuring favourable response from the consumers. Normally, responses to advertisements differ and hinge on how one interprets the message, his level of gullibility, his evaluation or judgemental skill, his level of education, his means, etc. The number of sales made determines the level of success of the advertiser's goal. The commuters who listened to the advertisements can be divided into four

- a) Those who were not positively affected by the advertisement, that is, the sceptical commuters.
- b) Those who were gullible and rich enough to make a purchase.
- c) Those who were gullible but too poor to effect a purchase.
- d) Those who were not gullible but made a purchase because others were doing so

On most of the occasions observed, many commuters usually responded by buying the drugs. In fact, in the course of the data gathering, there was a scenario we witnessed in a bus that plied Ikorodu → Oshodi route. A drug peddler rose to advertise his drug. His pseudo-claims infuriated a pharmacist, who himself was a commuter but knew the harmful effects of buying and using drugs. Rather than being appreciated, some commuters insulted the pharmacist, alleging that he wanted to 'spoil' the peddler's business.

Weasel Words and Phrases

Many of the lexical words and phrases used in our data could be seen as examples of what Lutz (1992) calls weasel words, which to him are meant to exploit and manipulate. Weasel words are used when advertisers are not making genuine claims regarding a product. Such words are vague. Each of the drug advertisement samples is full of such words and phrases as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: *Weasel Words/Phrases in the Advertising Language of Drug Peddlers*

Drug	Weasel words/phrases
Bisacodyn	(a) works for all things (b) original (c) seize this opportunity (d) works like magic (e) very good medicine
Samba 500	(f) new drugs (g) virtually (h) like magic (i) original
Chlorapheniramine	(j) powerful medicine (k) very unique (l) talk of the day (m) does a lot of work (n) very ideal (o) directly from owners (p) very unique product.

Many of the words and phrases above actually mean nothing in relation to the potency of the drugs. They appear to be purposefully used to deceive, attract, arrest and hold the attention of prospective consumers. For example, how can Bisacodyn “work for all things”? How many people are talking about Chlorapheniramine that makes it “the talk of the day”? Nothing makes it “very unique” too, especially when a drug like Phenigan or Prednisolone could substitute it. “Unique” implies 'the only one of its kind'. Some of the words usually look so innocent that most listeners hardly pay attention to their real meanings when used in advertisement. For example, if a drug is said to “work for all things”, consumers should normally become sceptical knowing truly that a drug cannot cure all diseases. They should be seen as hollow words, twisted for commercial advantage by drug peddlers.

Some of the weasel words are mere slogans, which Crystal (1995:180) refers to as “forceful, catchy, mind grabbing utterances” which usually rally people to buy advertisers' products. Examples are:

- (11) very effective (12) original drug (13) directly from owners

Advertisers may have also been using the brand names of drugs instead of their common names in order to bamboozle the consumers. For example, Chlorapheniramine is commonly known as 'Piriton' while Bisacodyn is 'Ducolax'. If common names are used, the consumers may not reckon much with such drugs.

Implications of the Language Use of Drug Peddlers

The only positive implication of drug peddlers' advertising strategy is that it led to quick sales on the part of the hawkers; judging by the positive response that accompanied the advertisements. However, there are various negative implications for the consumers and their value system, society, pharmaceutical profession and the law of the country. Some of the negative implications are listed below.

1. The drug hawkers use language to downplay the intelligence of the consumers.
2. They prey on the weakness and ignorance of the people.
3. They implant in the people groundless fear and sense of insecurity by feeding them with lies.
4. Taking some of the drugs can result in death or other problems on the part of the consumers. For instance, an ulcer patient who ignorantly buys a pain reliever that contains aspirin (as a result of linguistic manipulations) can die or develop terrible complications.
5. Convincing and confusing consumers to buy drugs inside buses is tantamount to drug abuse. Legally, any use of illegal drug or misuse of a legal drug is drug abuse (Mora 2005).
6. Manipulating language to seduce consumers can result in sales of contaminated drugs to the public. Mora (2005:7) stresses that “contamination may arise during production, sampling, packaging or repackaging, storage and transportation”. It will be worst during illegal dispensary of drugs sold in buses. Drugs are expected to enjoy storage facilities under which they should be kept to ensure that their stable form is retained up to the point of use.

7. Drug peddlers never forget to misinform their customers that a particular drug they are marketing is costlier in pharmaceutical shops. They use language to distract consumers' attention from legal outlets. The 'sugar-coated' mouth peddlers could affect the economic base of the pharmaceutical professionals through illegal sales of drugs.
8. Appropriacy conditions are rarely met in the language use of drug peddlers. The peddlers have no legal authority to dispense, prescribe or advertise drugs inside buses, but a peddler would prescribe the dosage of piriton, for example, that "small children from 7 – 14 years take one tablet ... 15 years and above will take two tablets."

In reality, there are many adults that should not take half of piriton because of its side effects.

Speech acts are not performed in sincere manner by drug peddlers. They rarely have sincere intentions. This is in line with O'Neil's (1992:186) claim that "advertisement is not about truth, virtue, love or positive social values; it is about making money".

Conclusion

The paper has been able to present the pragmatic use of language and strategies that drug peddlers use to arrest, sustain and lure consumers to buy their drugs. They use the speech act tools, different linguistic choices and strategies for a clear purpose, that is, to make customers buy the drugs.

The paper concludes by suggesting that consumers should always pay attention to every word in the drug peddlers' advertisement and examine what each word actually means, not what the advertiser want them to think the words mean. They should not be foolish enough to buy the drug that could destroy them. Drug abuse is illegal. Drug abuse is fatal!

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Traversing Gender Boundaries: Discordant Selves in Kaushik Ganguly's *Arekti Premer Golpo*

Abstract:

Gender as it is lived, embodied, experienced, performed and encountered is more complex and varied than can be accounted for by the currently dominant binary sex/ gender ideology. Yet the mainstream society in India is mostly uninterested about the injustice that often attends the perception of gender non-normativity and atypicality. The Bengali movie, Arekti Premer Golpo (Just Another Love Story) directed by Kaushik Ganguly offers an insight into a transgender's concept of self and revolves around the trauma, pressures, heartaches and several other situations tackled by a transgender. The movie focuses on the social and emotional realities in the lives of real-life legendary jatra actor, Chapal Bhaduri, who in his heydays was known as 'Chapal Rani' and transgender documentary filmmaker, Abhiroop Sen through two distinct time-frames. Rituparno Ghosh who plays both the roles of Young Chapal and Abhiroop performs the role with aplomb. The paper brings into focus the ironic similarity in the plight of Roop (who apparently is more in control of his life and sexuality) and Chapal. Even though they are great exponents in their fields they remain the butt of all ridicule and exist in the chasm of vacuum as their mind and body disown their biological sex. The paper tries to understand how gender acts as a system of disgrace and dishonour in the Indian society and emphasizes the ways in which the transgender community is alienated and discriminated. It re-articulates the gap between the subjectively experienced gendered sense of self and the social expectations of gender role performance. The paper also focuses on the various symbols used in the film and how the film had successfully moved away from the current dominant gender ideologies with its sympathetic portrayal of its protagonists.

Area/Perspective: Gender Studies, LGBTQAI, Rituparno Ghosh

The philosophical principle of Cartesian binaries is widely regarded as having a crucial influence on the development of Western theories of knowledge especially since the Age of Enlightenment. This principle understands reality as if it was comprised of sets of 'either/or' pairing. The dichotomous 'wisdom' forces ideas, persons, roles and disciplines into rigid polarities and thereby condenses richness and complexity in the interest of logical order. Through this binary approach, we assume that the dichotomous pair encapsulates, delineates and sums up the range of possibilities.

Based on this astuteness, we tend to deduce that there are only two genders, and each attunes with the anatomical sex. Thus from birth we are encultured into a dual gender system, armoured by all the major institutions in the society. We have internalized it into such an extent that, "When you meet a human being, the first distinction you make is "male or female"? And you are accustomed to make the distinction with unhesitating certainty."(Freud 26) People are expected to conduct, perform and clothe themselves appropriate to their sex or suffer punishment for deviating from the social norm.

Yet gender is one of the most contested of concepts in the contemporary social and political struggles. Today we accept that there are people in the society who experience gender incongruence and have a persistent distress with his or her sex, or sensation of inappropriateness in the gender of their sex. They are often seen to move across their socially constructed gender boundary challenging the customary. They include the gays, lesbians, transgender, intersex etc. The visibility of this multiplicity and complexity leads to the reformation and deformation of the sex/gender binaries. This paper will focus on how gender acts as a system of disgrace and dishonour in the Indian society and emphasizes the representation of the transgenderists in the visual media.

The word 'Transgender' refers to people who move away from the gender they are assigned at birth, people who cross over (trans-) their boundaries constructed by their culture to define and contain their gender. The transgender being a minority group often experience discrimination and prejudice in the present societal structure. As the supreme court of India has rightly stated in its judgement on WRIT PETITION (CIVIL) NO.604 of 2013, National Legal Services Authority versus Union of India and others,

Seldom, our society realizes or cares to realize the trauma, agony and pain which the members of Transgender community undergo, nor appreciates the innate feelings of the members of the Transgender community, especially of those whose mind and body disown their biological sex. Our society often ridicules and abuses the Transgender community and in public places like railway stations, bus stands, schools, workplaces, malls, theatres, hospitals, they are sidelined and treated as untouchables, forgetting the fact that the moral failure lies in the society's unwillingness to contain or embrace different gender identities and expressions, a mindset which we have to change. (1-2)

Nowadays, transgender bodies and lives are increasingly available for consumption in literature, film, television media, and in visual spaces. . As Judith Halberstam rightly opines, “The body in transition indelibly marks late-twentieth- and early-twenty-first-century visual fantasy” (76). These insignias in popular culture function on multiple levels. Their presence in mainstream media both contests and fortifies the bipolar gender propaganda we are continually blitzed with. This depiction, presence and visibility of the transgender and gender non-conformists should have inspired the viewers to appreciate differences. But unfortunately more public visibility has stimulated a backlash.

Ignorance or misinformation of the majority about the less common way of being in the world is a *raison d'être* for maintaining such harmful attitudes. Most people who have never experienced a sense of gender incongruence doubt that transgender people can really experience this, and transgender people who experience it has a very hard time explaining to others what this feels like. (Stryker 13). Therefore it is mostly the media that takes in the role of speaking to the public.

However, most transgender representations usually focus on misguided stereotypes. The jokes and characters are written to appeal to the demographic, and when they are portrayed they regurgitate any existing stereotypes a less knowledgeable viewer might have. The struggles faced by the transgender community are downplayed and they are treated as little more than mirthful props. The popular media disseminate the perception that transgender characters and therefore transgender people are not the norm.

The Bengali movie, *Arekti Premer Golpo (Just Another Love Story)* directed by Kaushik Ganguly offers an insight into a transgender's concept of self and revolves around the trauma, pressures, heartaches and several other situations tackled by a transgender. The movie focuses on the social and emotional realities in the lives of real-life legendary *jatra* actor, Chapal Bhaduri, who in his heydays was known as 'Chapal Rani' and transgender documentary filmmaker, Abhiroop Sen through two distinct time-frames. Even though they are great exponents in their fields they remain the butt of all ridicule and exist in the chasm of vacuum as their mind and body disclaim their biological sex. Roop is in a romantic relationship with the bisexual cinematographer Basu while Chapal Bhaduri is in a tempestuous love affair with his patron, Kumar. The film shows the maturity of the Bengali celluloid in comprehending the social and psychological struggles that can be involved in being transgender in a heteronormative society.

For this depiction of the alternative gender, the director seeks the aid of two major symbols in the movie – The mirror and Cross-dressing. In the movie, *Arekti Premer Golpo*, the Narcissist tendency of looking into the mirror acts as a recurrent motif. Both Chapal and Roop seem to admire themselves more than the original Narcissus. Yet this is not just a libidinal involvement of the self, but rather a desperate human mind striving to amend a body which is strange to it.

According to Elksich, the mirror may either refer to “the possibility of a man's losing his self or soul, and thus become a symbol of death, or it may become a means of retrieving the lost self.”(41) So what we find in Chapal and Roop is an intriguing attempt to rescue the soul and restore the self-identity. When both of them look into the mirror, they are shut off from the stimuli of the external world and are able to view themselves in a more true light. Thus the process of mirroring exists in the movie as a psychotic therapy that abets the subjects in their internal 'sexual-metamorphosis'.

If mirroring is an attempt of internal metamorphosis, cross-dressing is an endeavour to fortify this transmutation. Usually when a gender attribution has been made, expectations follow that the social actor will display the 'correct' blend of such things as dress and demeanour. Yet both the protagonists who traverse the gender boundaries are presented as dressing like a woman, donned in feminine clothes and makeup. Roop with his jeans, flowing kurtas teamed with dupattas, jewellery, lipgloss, kohl-lined eyes and manicured nails while Young Chapal with his soft, measured steps and the poise and fragility of a shy woman deconstructs the very notion of gender role performance.

If we look from outside this intensive tendency to cross-dress would rather appear to be odd. For this is a symbolic fulfilment of a deep seated and more or less intense urge inside the subjects themselves. As Virginia Woolf writes “clothes are but the symbol of something hid beneath” (123) And this conviction about one's gender identity and gender fluidity make the transgender characters poised enough to cross-dress confidently in public domains. Hence even when others are worried about people making fun of Roop's attire, he is least bothered.

- Ashok : Can you come in plain clothes?
 Roop : What?! Am I wearing a uniform or what?
 Ashok : N-n-no
 Basu : Babes, you know what he means.

Roop : And you agree with him!?

Ashok : If you got there, and if they pass stupid remarks...

Roop : Look. I either go exactly the way I am, or I don't go at all. You decide. (APG)

Here the trans body is not fashioned as one that “feels bad”— a dysphoric body in a state of unease or general dissatisfaction. Both the characters in the movie do not appear before us as victims, but rather as personas who are confident enough to accept and carry their gender identities. Therefore the problems of denunciation they face do not rest with themselves, but mostly with people around them, who are unable to accept them the way they are. Thus the movie *Aretki Premier Golpo* is also an effort to bring to light those social agencies which attempts to concretize the subaltern status of the gender- non conformists placing them in the margins of the society, often stigmatized.

The movie begins with Chapal Bhaduri performing the role of Goddess Shitala. Shitala is the incarnation of Goddess Katyayani or Adi Shakti . According to *Devi Mahatyam* , when a demon named Jwarasura gave bacteria of fever to all the children, goddess Katyayani took herself in the form of Shitala to purify children`s blood and to destroy the bacteria of fever in blood. Here in the particular *Jatra* theatre act, which acts as the prologue to the movie, we find Goddess Shitala through Chapal demanding the reverence and acceptance that is her due.

O King, thou art noble, thou art all powerful! Render unto me thy fervent deference. I know the celestial medicine. Men rule here – The Ashwini Kumaras and Dhanawanthary. And the world accepts their medications. No mortal dares question their judgement. But have they any cure for the vile pox? To relieve mankind from this dreaded summer affliction that curses so many? No! Yet these established ones gain men's respect. But one who has no status in society, be she ever so worthy, will always be of ignored. That is the eternal law. Therefore O King! Therefore O King! I demand you establish me! I demand O King! The recognition that is my due. And the world shall hail your noble deed forever. (APG)

The whole movie is a quest for this recognition that is appropriate. Just like Goddess Shitala who is ignored because of her gender, both Chapal and Roop are also disregarded as 'That is the eternal law'. Both of them had proved themselves in their respective fields, and confirmed that they are 'ever so worthy', yet they 'will always be ignored'. We should remember that this movie was produced before the Supreme Court of India had legally 'established' the transgender community as the third gender. Thus historically analysing, the prologue of the movie advocates for the disruption of social hierarchies in the society that denies acceptance for the gender atypical individuals.

However, the mere legal recognition does not guarantee social equality in civic spaces. The mainstream society under the facade of morality still treats the transgenders as untouchables preventing them from social and cultural participation. The fretful concern of the public is rendered in the movie where a reporter asks Roop whether his documentary film is about Chapal's career or his sexuality. Though Roop is visibly annoyed the journalist is resolute on knowing about “THE Chapal Bhaduri's” sexual preference.

Roop is probed hard with suspicion because he is a person with sexual ambiguity and he is making a documentary film on a person with sexual ambiguity. Finally Roop retorts by

saying “Suppose If I were making a film on,say, Amitabh Bachchan would that have been relavant?. . . what makes you such an authority on what's normal and what's not?” (APG). These questions are apparently directed to all the spectators who view gender non-conformity in an overtly cynical and dubious manner and dictate verdicts based on their own ideals.

Later, the people representing the so-called 'respectable' society are seen to object the filming of the documentary which according to them is an attempt to smear Chapal Babu, who is a 'gentleman' and to vilify the honourable actor. Their fretful rejoinders like “Please! We have enough problems handling two sexes, so don't bring a Third sex into this” (APG) and “You're the perverts! Promoting 'homos' and disrupting society” (APG) shows their inability to incorporate the alternate sexual minority. The fear of the 'other' is manifested here in several forms of hatred, outrage, disgust and panic.

Along with these hostile responses, we can also find much naive characters like Prashanto who couldn't understand and imbibe the concept of gender fluidity. Thus he is seen to constantly refer to Roop as 'Madam'. At one instance he wonders aloud, “If I call him Dada, hope he won't mind”. (APG) In fact Roop is amused with Prashantho's bewilderment and often reacts in a light-hearted manner. For Roop to embrace gender fluidity and flaunt his androgyny is much easier.

Even those people who are much intimate to them, at times are seen to be in a rush to maintain their status quo. Often it is the emotional deceit they face from the people whom they trust that shatter them. The following dialogues between Kumar and Chapal demonstrates how even these intimate figures are unable to accept them as they are. “I told so many times, women are joining *jatra* now. Better be careful! No I'm Chapal Rani! But there is a difference between the real and the false.” The response from Chapal is quiet poignant wherein he asks, “Wait! Look at me... So you think, I'm false too?”.(APG)

Yet, the movie does not fall into a false notion of essentialism that seeks to overlook differences among the transgender in order to see them as a unifying political category. The following dialogue from the movie provides an insight into the invariable difference between the two transgenderists cast in different generations, one 'liberated' and other in 'seclusion'.

Chapal : Let men do men's work

Abhiroop : Do you really think of yourself as a woman, Chapal- da?

Chapal : O My! If I thought myself as a man, there would be no problem. Why? Don't you?

Abhiroop : No

Chapal : You don't think that the lord started making you as a woman and then made a mistake?

Abhiroop : No. I don't. I think woman are one category, men are another, and we're a third gender.(APG)

Here Chapal feels that he is trapped in a woman's body, while Roop feels he is different from either 'a man' or 'a woman'. For Chapal, who once reigned on the stage, it's loneliness that reigns and remains. For Roop, it's solitude and there's a uniqueness in this solitude.

A generation has passed between Chapal and Roop and the perspective has changed.

This difference is not just based on their conception of themselves and their gender, but even in their reaction and 'performance'. To exemplar, there is a scene in the movie where Chapal is asked to shave his head after his mother's demise. He is perturbed and questions, "Why am I the only one who has to shave? Just because I am her son? Why doesn't Shejdi need to do it?" (APG) Later we see a parallel when Roop shaves his head on impulse because he feels that he need not prove any point. Here Roop is undisturbed or tranquil cause according to him this is just another hair-style as it is just an effort of his to get over his desperate attempt of 'making a statement'.

Yet, for both Chapal and Roop, it is a journey from femininity to androgyny. As Rituparno Ghosh opines in his interview in *The Telegraph*, both Chapal and Roop go through the same process. "Chapal by compulsion; Roop by choice. For Chapal it begins with performing female characters on stage and ends with being a decrepit, old man. Roop starts with being feminine, maybe because he thinks it is one way to attract Basu's affection. Slowly, he reaches androgyny. He starts feeling comfortable the way he is"

Thus the movie is clearly able to portray how, the concept of labelling is obviously very oppressive, especially when living in a post-gender world. The movie thoroughly expresses a humanistic sense that the uniqueness of any human being cannot be captured by the application of a blanket term and permits a lot of flexibility and fluidity among the members of the transgender community.

The movie becomes more special as the lead roles were played by Rituparno Ghosh, the Bengali film director whose gender is a mystery, a person who has undergone abdominoplasty and breast implants operations for this role and the real-life cross-dressing danseuse and theatre performer, *Chapal Bhaduri*. The subject of *Arekti Premer Golpo* is such that very few actors would believe in it and portray the character of Roop with honesty and sincerity. Both, Ghosh and Chapal believed in the subject and had a sense of belonging to it. If played by any other actor, the gender fluid characters in the movie would have ended up being caricaturish.

Also, the appearance of Chapal Badhurai who is unable to remove his status of a 'draqueen' from real life possibly questions the concept of Judith Butler's 'performativity'. In her work *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* she had suggested that gender is a 'mere' performance and therefore not real. For her, gender can be changed and re-scripted at will in accordance to one's whim.(68) This is against the self-understanding of Chapal and Roop in the movie, who see their gendered sense of self as inescapable and inalienable. Thus the movie challenges the notion of the mainstream society that transgenderism or gender incongruity is something that can be treated.

Thus in many ways, this particular movie like other mainstream movies, does not act as an ideological State Apparatus or as 'straightening device which tries to secure the current dominant gender ideologies. It doesn't even make an immense demonstration of its bold theme. Instead, the transgender protagonist is established in the story in a relaxed and casual manner as any other character. It effectively transmogrifies the political and material specificities of transgender life into a universalized experience that is made available through sympathetic identification with the "journey" of the protagonists. The movie recognizes the sexual minority not with an activist zeal but with an almost matter- of- fact brazenness.

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Voicing the Unheard Anthems: A Probe into the Postcolonial Subaltern Space in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*

In critical theory and postcolonialism, “subaltern” is the social group who are socially, politically, and geographically beyond the hegemonic power structure of the colony and of the colonial homeland. The terms “*subaltern*” and “*subaltern studies*” have crossed the threshold of the postcolonial studies through the works of the Subaltern Studies Group, a collection of South Asian historians. Postcolonial writings uphold the concepts of social justice, resistance, and egalitarianism among the marginalised class, thereby countering the domineering structures of racial inequity, chauvinism, and maltreatment headed by the hegemonic capitalist race. The voice and space of the oppressed have always been the major concerns of the subaltern discourses. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, the famous postcolonial critic has commented on the most revisionist project in the Indian Historiography, Subaltern Studies Collective led by Ranajit Guha. She says in her essay, “Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography,”: “The most significant outcome of this revision or shift in perspective is that the agency of change is located in the insurgent or the “subaltern” (330). The project has tried to focus mainly on the peasant issues and uprisings in colonial and postcolonial India. It urges the marginalized to form one strong unit to make their “voices” heard.

Spivak has given impetus to the subaltern discourse, through the publication of her seminal essay, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (1988). It mainly deals with the manner in which Western cultures explore other cultures. The opening idea is that the Western scholastic thinking is produced in order to support its own economical interests. Spivak holds that knowledge expresses the interests of its manufacturers. According to Spivak, knowledge is like any other commodity that is exported from the west to the third-world for financial and other types of benefit. In reply to the very question she has posed as the title, she has replied, “no” (Spivak 309). Spivak's line of reasoning upholds that in order to be heard and known, the oppressed subaltern must adopt Western ways of “*knowing*” - of ideas, reasoning, and language. The subaltern's desertion of his and her culturally customary ways of thinking and subsequent approval of Western ways of thinking is necessary in many postcolonial situations. Thus, intellectual and cultural sieves of orthodoxy muddle the authentic voice of the subaltern. This paper is an attempt to show that there is, for certain, a strong voice for the “voiceless,” and that even the subaltern can speak, that too louder, thereby challenging Spivak's conception, taking up for analysis Indian – Australian novelist Aravind Adiga's famous novel, *The White Tiger*.

Aravind Adiga is one of the foremost writers who has tried to make his characters raise their voice against the injustice they are subjected to at the hands of the so called superior lot. His debut novel, *The White Tiger*, clearly fits into the framework of subaltern discourse. It deals with characters who question the authoritarian positions of the privileged class, thereby strongly narrating their subaltern status. The novel, which has been awarded the Man Booker Prize in 2008 and built in an epistolary framework, presents the burning issues of contemporary India. *It* is largely a tale of self-fashioning as the hero Balram undergoes a

transformative journey from the murky life of the underprivileged to build his own bright future. *The novel* set in rural Bihar; New Delhi and its suburban city Gurgaon; and metro city Bangalore, is a sound interpretation of postmodern ambiguities. It portrays the yearning of an unheard hero for an enhanced social reputation in a society where one man's wealth is another's scarcity. Balram Halwai's story of his rise, out of the darkness of India's poor, servant class to the light of alluring world of entrepreneurship and wealth is fascinating and stimulating.

The novel presents a stark contrast between India's expanding economy in the era of globalization and the poignant darkness in the lives of the downtrodden class who suffer from extreme rural and urban poverty, through the narrator and protagonist, Balram Halwai. As the title symbolically suggests, it sparks the subversion of the oppressed/dominant position into the oppressor/suppressed category of Balram, the "sidekick," as his name indicates, who journeys from the "dark" village of Lakshmangarh, Bihar to the scintillating city of Bangalore. The status quo of subaltern in a society ruled by money, power and caste, and their battle to gain an identity thereby pulling themselves from the periphery to the centre adds intricacy to the plot line. The miserable situation of the underprivileged and their identities as puppets in the hands of the ruling class find a clear portrayal in the novel. Marxian dimensions of a society which includes the bourgeois and proletariats account for the societal hierarchy depicted in *The White Tiger*. It is a situation in which the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

The novel unfolds through the perception of the first person narrator, Balram Halwai, who is born into a lower caste. He writes a series of letters to the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, when hears on the radio that the latter wants to "know the truth about Bangalore." Balram, in his unique and rather sarcastic voice, seeks to provide the Premier with the truth from his perspective, as he discloses the troubling inconsistencies and dreadful cruelties in India. Balram's voice acts as the author's mouthpiece, revealing the unheard tones of the various subaltern elements who struggle hard against the forces of gender, class, and caste. Right from the very beginning, he condemns the lack of freedom experienced by the people living in the "dark" half of India. He exhibits high regard for those nations who never let themselves to be ruled by others in the letter: "Only three nations have never let themselves be ruled by foreigners: China, Afghanistan, and Abyssinia. These are the only three nations I admire" (4). The usually defined functioning groups of the society - exploiter and the exploited - find a conversion into the men with fat bellies and those with small bellies; basically, the ruler and the ruled, in the novel.

The story of Balram's self-fashioning is actually the story of his resistance to the conforming patterns of the hierarchy existing among the people in all matters, especially in the servant-master relation. He points at the relation existing between him and his master, Ashok Sharma, the son of one of the village landlords. He mocks at the way the downtrodden are trained to be loyal servants from very early stages of life. The poor are kept in an eternal state of subservience and servitude to the rich by a mechanism that Balram dubs "The Rooster Coop." He presents the god *Hanuman* as an excellent paradigm of service and fidelity: "This is Hanuman, everyone's favourite god in the Darkness. Do you know about Hanuman, sir? He was the faithful servant of the god, Rama, and we worship him in our temples because he is a shining example of how to serve your masters with absolute fidelity, love, and devotion" (13). Lakshmangarh, the imaginative town in Adiga's novel, is always

addressed as the “chasm of darkness.” The village people have always been subjected to exploitation, maltreatment, and pain, in one way or the other by the landlords, whom Balram represents by animal names - the buffalo, the stork, the wild boar, and the raven, depending on their “appetite” to fill their “bellies”: “Those who live in this place call it the Darkness. Please understand, Your Excellency, that India is two countries in one: an India of Light and an India of Darkness” (10). *The White Tiger* takes up the task of awakening the consciousness, and tracing the histories of subaltern in India. Life does not seem to be a well celebrated affair for the “dark” residents when looked at the way they celebrate death. His mother's death serves an example for that: “My mother's body had been wrapped from head to toe in a saffron silk cloth, which was covered in rose petals and jasmine garlands. I don't think she had ever had such a fine thing to wear in her life. Her death was so grand that I knew, all at once, that her life must have been miserable” (11).

Disparities and differences that exist in the social structure touch its peak when Balram, out of his desire to escape from the quagmire of his stagnant village, ends up in the city of “good” souls, Delhi. The rift between the urban scenario between the rich and the poor is too wide to be bridged, and Balram befalls a victim to that. The protagonist views identity as fluid and malleable, a fact articulated through the many name changes he employs throughout the story - Munna, Balram, The White Tiger and Ashok Sharma. He begins his life's journey with the nameless identity, “Munna” simply meaning, “a boy” and ends up choosing a new identity for himself in imitation of his master, calling himself “Ashok Sharma”: “Munna? That's not a real name.' He was right: it just means “boy.” 'That's all I've got, sir,' I said. It was true. I'd never been given a name” (9). Being an uneducated man, he decides to get an education in the life's school. He reads only those books that apply to his ethics, especially the poems of the four greatest revolutionary poets- Rumi, Iqbal, Mirza Ghalib, and a fourth writer whose name he has forgotten. He turns out to be a self-taught entrepreneur. According to him, he ought to call his autobiography “The Autobiography of a Half-Baked Indian”:

The story of my upbringing is the story of how a half-baked fellow is produced. But pay attention, Mr. Premier! Fully formed fellows, after twelve years of school and three years of university wear nice suits, join companies, and take orders from other men for the rest of their lives. Entrepreneurs are made from half-baked clay” (8).

Eavesdropping turns out to be one of his successful educational devices: “Many of my best ideas are, in fact, borrowed from my ex-employer or his brother or someone else whom I was driving about. (I confess, Mr. Premier: I am not an original thinker—but I am an original *listener*)” (28).

Resistance, vengeance, and rebellion, etc., lying buried in the unconscious mind, turn out to be the ways for Balram to let go his old subaltern identity shaped by societal disparities, and, thereby build up a new one in the glitz and glam of the bustling Indian economy. Inspired by his childhood hero, Vijay, who also rose from a humble background of Lakshmangarh to achieve success in the upper echelons of Indian society, Balram dedicates himself to self-improvement so much so that he is willing to destroy who he once was. His father a subaltern figure has always encouraged Balram to pursue his education against his mother Kusum's orders. He who died as a victim of the corruption in Indian medical system, attains the position of a cult figure in Balram's life to attempt the subversion strategy: “Rickshaw-puller he may have been - a human beast of burden - but my father was a man with a plan. I was his

plan” (27). He adds: “My whole life, I have been treated like a donkey. All I want is that one son of mine - at least one - should live like a man” (30).

The dream of his father and his own dream of touching the skies fuels up thoughts of resistance. The humiliation, torture, and shame at the hands of the bourgeois instil a strong feel to raise his voice against all the mistreatment suffered by everybody like him, in Balram. He does not limit himself to being tea-shop worker in Dhanbad; instead, he finds a way to become a driver in khaki, the uniform which once inspired him a lot in the figure of Vijay. Eventually, Balram makes it to the position of a loyal driver of Ashok Sharma, an Indian returned American businessman, and one of the sons of “the stork.” The worst kind of exploitation in the master-servant relationship comes when he is made to take up the blame of hitting a person due to rash driving, which actually had been a folly of his master's wife Pinky Madam. To top it, the witness certificate has been tactfully made by taking the thumb impression of Kusum Halwai, Balram's illiterate grandmother. Unlike the other oppressed identities, he doesn't want to be caught up in a terrible and helpless condition of the “Rooster Coop” from which an escape is totally impossible. It is this “Rooster Coop” that shapes every poor in India and it is this same brainwave that shapes the great Indian economy. He mentions this idea in a sarcastic manner:

Every evening on the train out of Surat, where they run the world's biggest diamond-cutting and-polishing business, the servants of diamond merchants are carrying suitcases full of cut diamonds that they have to give to someone in Mumbai. Why doesn't that servant take the suitcase full of diamonds? He's no Gandhi, he's human, he's you and me. But he's in the Rooster Coop (106).

The great conflict between the ruling bourgeois category comprising of the rich, powerful, educated and dictatorial, and the underprivileged, uneducated, poor, peripheral category of the proletariat finds a mirrored portrayal in the novel. The subaltern figures, in spite of their desire to pull themselves to the centre from the margin, remain silent and helpless. They control their anger, frustration, and helplessness by remaining subjugated and pretending to be loyal to their so called masters. Ultimately, the miserable experiences that Balram has had in his life instigate him to murder Ashok, and loot his money.

The White Tiger is a tale about ethics, suggesting that ethics can be viewed as either rigid or flexible. Balram is seen embracing the latter. In order to validate murdering Ashok and risking his family's lives, Balram develops an alternate moral system. He reasons that the money he steals from Ashok is lawfully his, since servants are exploited by the rich. He convinces himself of his exceptional identity in order to rationalize his decisions, as the creature that comes along only once in a generation, “the white tiger,” a name put by the education inspector, on getting impressed with his brilliant performance while in school. He migrates to Bangalore, and starts leading a new life assuming his new identity of Ashok Sharma: “If you like my SUVs, if you want your call-centre boys and girls driven home in style, just click where it says **CONTACT ASHOK SHARMA NOW**. Yes, Ashok! That's what I call myself these days. Ashok Sharma, North Indian entrepreneur, settled in Bangalore” (181). Spivak has opined that the subordinated man and woman can only be heard by the oppressors if he/she speaks the language of the oppressor. Balram takes up the identity of his master and makes himself heard to the whole world.

Stylistically, the major aspect of the novel is the voice of Balram Halwai and how he

portrays India, while also showing himself to be a sympathetic character with disarming elegance. This is no mean feat when we deem the fact that Balram is a self-confessed and unashamed killer. He lays before us the gritty realities of modern-day India with its dazzle on one side and the extreme poverty on the other. The voice of Balram is certainly very captivating as he leads us through his journey from rural poverty towards urban success and the various characters and events he sees along the way. His triumphant journey marks the subversion of his identity from that of an oppressed to oppressor, ruled to ruler, servant to master: “Once I was a driver to a master, but now I am a master of drivers” (182). He makes his voice heard, that too louder and louder, altering his subaltern identity of a voiceless to that of the voiced. He is to the least without any regret and he is excited that he has broken out of the “Rooster Coop”: “I am now one of those who cannot be caught in India. At such moments, I look up at this chandelier, and I just want to throw my hands up and holler, so loudly that my voice would carry over the phones in the call-centre rooms all the way to the people in America: *I’ve made it! I’ve broken out of the coop!*” (193).

The title, *The White Tiger* stands for the unique identity of the protagonist Balram and his immense desire and ambition to be a distinctive sight and a distinctive voice in the world of subaltern elements, just like the rare creature in the jungle, the white tiger. The central metaphor of Balram as the white tiger, serves as a significant animal motif that runs throughout the novel. The hero has been provided with the nickname “the white tiger” by the education inspector of Lakshmangarh when he gets impressed with Balram’s intelligence: “You, young man, are an intelligent, honest, vivacious fellow in this crowd of thugs and idiots. In any jungle, what is the rarest of animals—the creature that comes along only once in a generation?” I thought about it and said: ‘The white tiger.’ ‘That’s what you are, in *this* jungle” (22). He turns out to be a subaltern character with strong voice among the passive subjects.

Adiga has made Balram speak, of course through crime, in a manner of a typical psychopath. Balram’s unethical, yet successful act empowers the marginalized by retrieving their voices, spaces, and identities suppressed by colonial surrogates in the postcolonial environment. His act is a rebellion against the prevalent dominant ideology and the cultural supremacy of the ruling class. Spivak’s idea regarding the subaltern existence that, “In the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow” (Spivak 287) therefore does not hold good anymore. Balram begins his story bearing the badge of shame and humiliation and ends up carving out a path and weaving up a history for the world to see; as he rightly puts it: “Like all good Bangalore stories, mine begins far away from Bangalore. You see, I am in the Light now, but I was born and raised in Darkness.” (10) He ends it by saying loudly that “I am in the Light now” (188). Adiga has voiced the hushed silence of the subaltern elements in the novel through the brilliant portrayal of the journey of a nameless boy Munna, born in the “dark India” to adorn a new identity of Ashok Sharma to the fascinating arena of “bright India.”

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Honor Killing and Female Destiny in Cultural Discourse: An Analysis of Male Power Structures in the Documentary 'A Girl from the River: The Price of Forgiveness'

Abstract

Honor killing is in practice all over the world. It is a domestic violence in which the female is victimized by the patriarchal power structures in the respective social systems. The family, community and the judicial systems denies justice to the female member with the threat of honor crimes. The fear inflicted by the threat of honor killing forces the female to abide by the unjust rules suppressing her freedom to choose her life partner. Honor crimes are characterized by denial of equality to women in countries like Pakistan where patriarchal societies manipulates judicial system to evade punishment to the male criminal who harms his female relatives with the silent support of family system, communal system and judicial system. The documentary, A Girl from the River: The Price of Forgiveness, directed by Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, exposes the unjust victimization of female in the inhuman tradition of honor killing in the predominantly Muslim populated country, Pakistan. This paper focuses on the patriarchal structures of the society in the systems of family, community and judiciary in Pakistan that continue the tradition of murdering the female who even slightly deviates from control of patriarchal framework in the society. In exposing the social systems that function only for the male members of the society, depicted in the documentary, the paper seeks to bring out the collective participation of a social structure in murdering innocent young girls who are treated as perpetual prisoners by the male dominated cultural traditions and the unjust silence of the judicial system that allows the male criminals go unpunished.

Key words: honor, patriarchy, justice, suppression, female, crime, victim

In a civilized society harming or killing another person unjustly is considered as a crime and justice system is entrusted with the duty to punish the offender. Honor killing is an exception to this, especially in Pakistan. BBC reports that “Nearly 1,100 women were killed in Pakistan last year by relatives who believed they had dishonoured their families”¹. In the words of Lubna Nirmy, “Honor crimes are generally acts of violence usually murder, committed by male family members against female family members.”² The Oscar winning documentary, *A Girl from the River: The Price of Forgiveness* (2015) which explores the theme of honor crime in Pakistan, depicts women as second class citizens suppressed under patriarchal power structures, pursuing the story of Saba, an eighteen-year-old girl, who is a victim of honor killing attempt by her own father and uncle. Honor killing is related to the cultural tradition of male domination in social framework, as almost all the victims are women. The motivation for the crime is generally to restore a family's damaged reputation that has been affected by the victim's violation of communal traditions related to marriage and female sexuality. It is to be noted that the societies where honor killing happens usually support such crimes and the victim is blamed for the crime and its consequences. It is a punishment for violating the norms created by patriarchal power structures in the society. It

can be viewed that even the justice system in the respective states more or less tolerates such violation of human justice by creating loopholes in laws related to honor crimes. It is a crime in which a young woman is punished by male relatives in the name of family honor. Since there is less number of cases involving male victims, honor killing has to be viewed as a powerful weapon to suppress the female members and to control their freedom of speech and movement.

Pakistan is one of the Muslim dominated countries where the practice of honor killing is widely accepted by the general society. In the documentary, the victim Saba is strangled by the patriarchal power structures in the state even after she outlives a serious murder attempt by her own father. There are four systems of power depicted in the documentary engulfing the female justice and which decide their destiny. They are: Family System, Communal System, Judicial System and ultimately the religious System. These four male dominated systems of power silence the attempts of Saba when she decides to seek punishment for the criminals of honor killing even as they are her father and uncle. The documentary presents all these four systems of power placing Saba's exercise of personal freedom in relation to her marriage and its consequences. Saba was in a love relationship with a neighborhood boy, Qaiser, approved by her parents. But with the disapproval of her uncle who was not satisfied by the financial status of Qaiser's family, they changed their mind and arranged her marriage with her uncle's brother-in-law. When she informed Qaiser and family this they asked her come to their home and she does accordingly and gets married with Qaiser. Her family considered it as a great dishonor to the family and they brings back her by convincing her and Qaiser's family that they can arrange a proper marriage between Saba and Qaiser. On the way back in the night near a river bank her father shot her with the help of her uncle and puts her into the river to die. She escapes from the river and is hospitalized. She moves to her in-laws- home from the hospital and the police captures the criminals and is kept in police custody. The personal decision of Saba regarding a personal matter related to her future life is considered as a dishonor by the family system and community system. Since the power structures of family system and communal system is controlled by male members, they set about to regain the lost honor through spilling the blood of the girl who according to Maqsood, Saba's father, "took away"³ his honor.

The unquestioning obedience of a female member to the male head of the family is the basis of the family system. In the life of Saba, the Family System consists of her criminal father and uncle, blaming mother and sister, unsupportive brother-in-law, who is the male head of the home of her in-laws, and supportive but helpless husband and mother-in-law (Qaiser and). The way in which Saba's father and uncle attempted to kill her, clearly indicates innate criminal instincts and violation of right to human dignity. Saba describes the criminal act:

"I did not spend that night at my in-laws. My relatives came and got me. They said: "return home to uphold our family's honor, then Qaiser can come and take you back honorably". After that they put their hand on the Quran and promised they wouldn't harm me. They had a Toyota and they put me in the car. Because they had sworn on the Quran, I had no fear in my heart. Soon afterwards my uncle stopped the car and pulled me out. Then he started slapping and beating me. I was conscious during all the beating and hitting they subjected me to and I remember trembling with fear and begging, but they didn't listen to me. A pistol was pointed at my brain near my temple and my uncle was clutching my neck. But, I was just slightly able

to tilt my face which led to the shot missing its target. Then they put me in a bag and threw me in the river.” (*A Girl from the Fiver*).

Together with the male members in the family the “unlawful punishment given to women by their relatives for implicit sexual and marriage transgress”⁴ is also welcomed by the female members. Justifying the honor crime, saba's sister, Aqsa says:

All our family did was to preserve their integrity and honor. Who can tolerate such betrayal from a daughter who runs away and marries without their consent? Our family was never questioned by anyone. We were respected by the entire community. People who feared us now taunt us. We've stopped going anywhere, even to friends and family. We keep to ourselves because of the shame she has brought upon us in front of everyone. (*A Girl from the River*)

Saba's mother, Maqsooda also shares the same opinion. She blames the victim of the honor crime and says that “No woman should disrespect others. No woman should ruin her parent's reputation”⁵. Her words suggest that family reputation is more important than her daughter's right to live. The male members of the family, Maqsood and Muhammad, Saba's father and uncle respectively, are not ready to repent about their crime. For Muhammad “everything is about respect” and he without any doubt says that “What my brother did was absolutely right. Even after the inhuman crime Saba's father considers himself “an honorable man” and he continues: “Why did she leave home? I labored and earned lawfully to feed her. This is unlawful of her. I have my honor and pride.”⁶ His words suggest that food and shelter is the only requirements of a female family member in the family which as a male, he controls. He considers Saba's disobedience as a threat to his power in the household and community and he finds death of the disobedient subject as a solution to the visible threat. He acts as a sovereign power described by Foucault in his History of Sexuality Volume I: “. . . one of the characteristic privileges of sovereign power was the right to decide life and death. In formal sense, it derived no doubt from the ancient *patria potestas* that granted the father of the Roman family the right to “dispose” of the life of his children and his slaves; just as he had given them life, so he could take it away. . .”⁷

The second structure of family system at work in the documentary is represented by Saba's in-laws' household. Qaiser's mother, Rahmatay is supportive to Saba, but it does not change Saba's female destiny constructed by patriarchal power structures operating in and out of all the structures of relationships. Certainly, her affection to Saba is expressed when she says: “She is just like one of my own daughters.” Compared to a daughter a daughter in law is less privileged. It becomes obvious in the absence of other female voice in the household even as Qaiser has two married elder brothers. The cultural context, depicted by the documentary suggests what privileges a daughter gets in the household. More than love it is sympathy. It is revealed when Saba says that “My mother-in-law is good to me. We got along very well. She is kind and loving. May be my own mother and sister have same sympathy for me.” It is to be noted that as a female member in the household Rahmatay is less privileged. Though in the absence of her husband she is the oldest member of the household, it is her oldest son who rules the household.

As the elder of the family, Shafaqat, Qaiser's oldest brother represents the patriarchal power structure in the society. So Saba does not have any other option except to accept when he says about Saba's case against her father and uncle: “A compromise must be reached. There is no other way. We live in the same neighborhood. And one must abide by the laws of

the community. How long can we live in a conflict like this? There is no alternative except compromise. Let's reach an agreement. If this escalates, no one benefits.”⁸ Here, the tragic irony lies in the fact that the female victim is forced to forgive the criminals who purposely attempted to murder her and nobody is concerned about the justice denied to the victim in allowing the criminals acquitted with the forgiveness extracted from the female victim forcefully.

The Judicial System becomes part of the patriarchal power structure with the law related to the honor crimes. The law in Pakistan is very weak in relation to this criminal act. Asad Jamal, Saba's lawyer explains:

“Honor killing, under Pakistan law should be treated as a murder and the case should be prosecuted in the court of law as any murder case. But what happens that, in most cases the near relatives who are allowed under law can forgive the accused. The killers in the honor killing cases are allowed to be acquitted. It shows that the Judicial System is controlled by the patriarchal power structures and the female victim is denied justice. The Communal System along with the family system makes use of the Judicial System in order to ensure that the male accused is allowed to go unpunished and the female victim is denied justice. (A Girl from the River)

The communal system consists of the elders in the community. The elders are a group of influential male members in the community. It does not consider justice to the female victim as important as the freedom of the male accused. When the elders gather to reach a compromise, one of the Elders states justifying the criminal act of Saba's father and uncle: “Our society doesn't respect people whose daughters run away. People with such a tarnished reputation lose all respect in the community. Parents put in so much effort to nurture, support and care for their children. Don't parents have a right to decide their children's future?⁹ Though personally Saba is not ready to forgive the criminals, under the pressure of the patriarchal power structures in the society she is forced to do so. In her opinion the criminals “should be shot in public in an open market. So that such a thing never happens again.”¹⁰ But it remains a very feeble voice in the patriarchal framework of the society.

As the religious system is controlled by the patriarchal power structure, the woman who seeks justice from God does not get it. Saba shows great faith in Quran, but she has to witness the violation of an oath taken by her father and uncle, justice denied to her, and the criminals go unpunished. It is to be noted that the religious system permeates through all other systems in the society. Everyone seeks the help of the God and believes that their acts are justified in front of the all seeing God and it seems to be ironic when it involves the criminals. The investigating officer, Ali Akbar speaks of this irony: “God has given her the right to choose freely. Yet on the simple matter of marrying the person she loved she had to pay such a heavy price. What happened here was totally against religious values.”¹¹ The weak administrative system is noticeable in the documentary. Though the police are able to protect the injured victim and capture the absconding criminals, it cannot move beyond that. According to Amnesty International:

States have a duty to ensure that no one is subjected to torture or ill-treatment, whether inflicted by agents of the state or by private individuals. Yet far from protecting women, states all around the world have allowed beatings, rape and other acts of torture to continue unchecked. When a state fails to take effective measures to protect women from torture, it

shares responsibility for the suffering these women endure. (*Broken Bodies, Shattered Minds: Torture and Ill Treatment of Women*)

The director, Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy tries to highlight the theme of honor killing through symbols. Throughout the documentary, darkness and light are shown again and again to symbolically represent the darkness of human mind related to honor killing and vain hopes of the female victim. The stubborn administrative system is represented by the surveillance camera in the police station, capturing the ongoing injustice forever, without any action to change the usual drama of injustice in relation to the inhuman crime of honor killing. The protagonist, Saba is represented by two symbols.: A crow sitting alone on an electric line in the twilight when she hopes for justice for the inhuman experience of honor crime and a cat, moving down the deserted roof tops slowly is shown when she goes to the court in the black traditional dress, submitting to the patriarchal power structure of the society.

In the cultural context of Pakistan honor plays a major role. Here, it is the patriarchal power structures in the social systems that own honor and it is the male members who restore it by murder when the female allegedly violates the honor by disobeying the male head of the family through her free choice of marriage and sexual expression. According to Amnesty International: “The regime of honor is unforgiving: women on whom suspicion has fallen are not given an opportunity to defend themselves, and family members have no socially acceptable alternative but to remove the stain on their honor by attacking the woman.”¹² The existence of the practice of murder of innocent young women in the 21st century is a shame to humanity that boasts of its gradual development from barbarity to civilization. When the social systems fail to ensure equality, justice and at the least right to live, it is the duty of arts and literature to awaken the international community from the slumber of helplessness at the face of customs and traditional practices. Whatever be the nationality, cultural and ethnic origin of human beings, they should have the right to live with dignity and happiness. When a particular nation or culture fails to insure this, it is the responsibility of humanitarian human beings all over the world to ensure that significant basic need. Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy's documentary is part of such an attempt and the international community has acknowledged her effort with an Oscar. However, the bitter fact of honor killing still happens all over the world and hundreds of young lives are sacrificed to uphold false notions of honor of patriarchal power structures.

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Excavate the Subaltern: Analysing the Dalit Facet in *Celluloid*

Celluloid can be considered as a tribute to Malayalam cinema. The story is based on the making of first Malayalam movie *Vigathakumaran*. Kamal has once again proved his presence in Malayalam film industry through his movie *Celluloid*. *Celluloid* is a talkie about the first silent movie made in Kerala, *Vigathakumaran*. Most often re-telling of a story fails when compared to the original. But in the case of this movie things have changed. It is the story about the first film maker.

The first silent movie in Malayalam *Vigathakumaran* was screened in 1930, when movies abroad had already begun to talk and by 1931 sound films were also made in India. It took 85 years for the first silent movie to come back again on screen. This movie is a tribute to the father of Malayalam film industry, J.C. Daniel. Kamal crafts each moments of J.C. Daniel's life with utmost sincerity. It is a talkie about J.C. Daniel who made the first silent film in Malayalam, which unfortunately remained silent in the page of history. *Celluloid* is a film which takes us to various details of film making. Malayalam film's history starts with J.C. Daniel. His film *Vigathakumaran* is the first silent film in Malayalam film history. *Vigathakumaran* is the story about a lost child. J.C. Daniel who had taken so much pain to make the film also became a lost child like its protagonist in the Malayalam film world. It was Chelanghat Gopalakrishnan, film critic and historian, whose enquiries and hard work which brought the story of J.C. Daniel and his *Vigathakumaran* into the Malayalam film scenario and helped Kamal to make the film *Celluloid*. Kamal through his film *Celluloid* attempts to narrate the tragic tale of Joseph Chellaya Daniel Nadar, the first ever film maker in Kerala who was destined to perish in desolation and obscurity.

We must remember that this was in 1928 when the caste system was still in practice and the Dalits were not allowed to enter the temples and also the women were not allowed to cover the upper part of their body. Very cruel punishments were meted out toward the lower castes. Thurston narrates the case of a Nair killing a Pulaya, who polluted the former in 1904. This was believed to be done for the pleasure of god. When the male members of these communities suffered bitter humiliation, the plight of the women was really shocking. They were not allowed to wear better clothes or ornaments. The women had used stone chains and stone rings. Thus we see that P K Rosie suffered a lot as she played the role of a Nair woman named Sarojini. Though she was covered in gold ornaments and traditional dress her new identity was not accepted by the society. Daniel who resigned to the comfortable life of a dental surgeon at Agastheeshwaram was discovered later by Chelanghat Gopalakrishnan who ran from pillar to post to see that man is honoured.

Celluloid depicts the story of Daniel as well as that of Rosie and their haunting portrayal seizes up even as it goes up in flames. Venu's frame maintained the essential that is required for a biopic, while Suresh Kollam's art direction is excellent. Pattanam Rasheeds make up makes Daniel's transformation complete and M. Jayachandran's melodies add up to the retro feel of the film. Kamal attempts to relocate J.C. Daniel the father of Malayalam cinema and heroine P.K Rosie through his film. It's started rolling from November 2012 and was released on February 2013. The Kerala state film awards awarded the film by giving Best film, Best

music director, Best art director, best costume designer and special jury mention awards. Sneha May Francis, in her review stated. “*Celluloid* is an honest attempt to give an artist who led his life in obscurity, his rightful due. Bluntly ignored by history, an artist finds the most befitting acknowledgment in director Kamal's biopic *Celluloid* as he painstakingly pieces together J.C. Daniel imposing his contribution to the Malayalam cinema.” Kamal got inspiration from Vinu Abraham's *Nashta* Naayika and Chelanghat Gopalakrishnan's biography. Kamal in his *Celluloid* journeys back in time to learn how J.C. Daniel, despite investing his life and savings in creating Malayalam cinema's first ever motion pictures failed to become successful due to social prejudices that were prevalent in 1920s. Daniel's *Vigathakumaran* (The Lost Child) was different from mythological movies that were popular in those times.

Kamal portrays the journey of J.C. Daniel to Mumbai to meet the pioneer of Indian cinema Dada Saheb Phalke with the hope of learning lessons for movie making. J.C. Daniel says: “it's only when you see a thousand dreams a few are realized”. Daniel travelled to Bombay to meet his destiny. He observed everything with great astonishment. He was never ready to give up his passion and desire of directing movie. J.C. Daniel's contributions to Malayalam cinema was ignored during his life time. Each and every scene shown in *Celluloid* is that which happened in J.C. Daniel's life. Kamal is travelling through the history of Malayalam movie in *Celluloid*. He gives importance to Malayalam cinema and the life of J.C. Daniel. He is honouring both Malayalam cinema and J.C. Daniel through his work. In *Celluloid* Kamal shows what passion for cinema really meant before it became a stylish thing to say.

Celluloid is a moving tribute to the Malayalam cinema. Kamal diligently recreates an age and fills it with characters that go on to become iconic figures in the history of Malayalam cinema. He reserves time and space judiciously to capture the poignant moments of a lower caste girl who is suddenly conferred with an honour of a heroin and the atrocious outbursts of the proud men of upper class. Chandini, who played the role of Rosie, the first heroine of Malayalam cinema, seems to be tender, evocative and memorable. Her face is replete with emotions.

In between Kamal creates cherishable moments. A dark, roughened face of a girl looks alluring in broken piece of glass, her face glow with bliss, never felt before. On a breezy night Daniel is gently stroked by Jannet as he imagines the reels of doomed film on reflections of swaying leaves on the wall. Kamal states that his curiosity was portrayed by Vinu Abraham in his *Nashtanayika*, on Rosie, the heroine of *Vigathakumaran*.

Celluliod is a moving tribute to the Malayalam cinema. Kamal diligently recreates an age and fills it with characters that go on to become iconic figures in the history of Malayalam cinema. Even while drawing the tale of the first movie in Malayalam cinema, and its heroine from the novel by Vinu Abraham, Kamal grooms each character carefully. He reserves time and space judiciously to capture the poignant moments of a lower caste girl who is suddenly conferred with an honour of a heroin and the atrocious outbursts of the proud men of upper class. Chandini, who played the role of Rosie, the first heroine of Malayalam cinema, seems to be tender, evocative and memorable. Her face is replete with emotions.

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swaying leaves on the wall. Kamal states that his curiosity portrayed by Vinu Abraham in *Nashtanayika*, who is Rosie, the heroine of Vigathakumaran.

The historians of Wikipedia or any such knowledge providers do not give any idea on the colour of Rosie. Depending on the single 'black and white' photo of Rosie and the description of the caste to which she was born, the director of the film selected black colour as the skin colour of Rosie. How can we decide the colour of one's skin with the help of a single 'black and white' photo? So, the main hint to the director to determine the colour of Rosie was her caste. Hence he selected a wheatish Chandini to enact the role of Rosie on screen and made her black. This is a tendency in film world. They use white people to portray the roles of black people. For it the directors will seek the help of make-up artists. None will select black people to portray the roles of black. Even if we can find black male artists now, there is no place for black women on screen. This, based on the caste to which Rosie was born, the director painted the on-screen Rosie into the colour of night, the colour of darkness to which the people of India will look only with a distaste.

The beauty concept in Indian people still revolves around the colonial past. Even after the sixty eight years of independence, the Indian societies haven't overcome the atrocious practices of the British. They are still after the advertisements for being 'fair and lovely' to look. Women have their own soap to be fair and lovely and men have their own soaps to become fair and handsome. Rosie in 'Celluliod' often uses Kajal to beautify herself, which made her appearance dark. The constant use of kajal can be taken as a means to remember her taunting future. And later when she was told to enact the role of Saroja Devi, a Nair woman, in the film the crew made her to become a fair one by applying some artificial makeup. This deed re-establishes the thought of being white as the trade mark of having high class and high caste existence and also Rosie's state of being a dalit, the marginalized. Rosie has the courage to act in film when no one was ready to take the brave step. But her courage to be different got broken when the crew made her to wear the mask of the elite caste.

“Do I've the beauty of moon”. Rosie's song reverberates the idea of beauty and that too the fair beauty. Rosie doubts herself over the beauty concept set up by the society. According to the social concept of beauty, it has certain standards beauty. A dark one cannot be called beautiful as per the constraints. These rules were constructed by the high class to make the dalits the prisoners of disgrace. Moon is white always- Rosie is black- So Rosie is ugly. The song is for suppressing the rising spirit of Rosie. To our amusement, Rosie is the narrator here, which hints up on the multiple discrimination a dalit faces, when one becomes one's own suppressor.

The toil of dalits often ended in futility. They are living in a society as Nagraj Manjule says, “caste is the foundation of our society, and discrimination is in the air we breathe”. Rosie was an independent thinker. That's why she shows the confidence to do a role in a film. But she was not presented as such in the film. The sense of stigma was comparatively more in the psyche of Rosie. She prefers to be in the outskirts of the house where the shooting of the film took place. This may be because of the fact that she may have faced harsh experiences earlier. Dalits are often a key target of violence and systematical denial of choices and freedoms in all spheres of life.

Rosie prefers to be an outsider. She selects the courtyard of Daniel's house as her space. She doesn't even try to enter the house. To give a heroic quality to Daniel and Janet, they

allowed her to enter the house. Rosie was not the heroine of the biopic. Daniel would not become the J.C. Daniel if Rosie has refused to act in his film. Still she was not the heroine of the biopic. What were the criteria to give the leading role to Janet? She was a strong support to Daniel. If Kamal had given Janet a supporting role in the film, that would be praised as a rebellious and strong decision on his part. No one tried to write an authentic historical record of Rosie. One reason for this was her invisible existence. Dalits are always invisible. Even Rosie's son to tell the story of Rosie as it will reveal his identity as a dalit ("Rosie's story, documentary").

Rosie prayed to Christ and Lord Ayyappan when she stepped in to the world of films. This shows the identity crisis she has faced when her family converted to Christianity from their dalit identity. Daniel changed Rosie's name too. Earlier she was Rosamma. Like white peoples attempt to civilize the blacks, Daniel is adopted some ways to make Rosie cultured.

Besides the fields of literature and art in other fields like the cultural life of the Society, a minority group always tried to dominate. They flourished well and created many poets, wise men and philosophers. At the same time, the majority of the people were in ignorance. There were no attempts to lift them from their plight. The upper castes tried to prevent the progress of the group by imposing laws and restrictions. The classrooms were also centers of caste evils. The untouchable students were punished in different ways. They must stretch their arms to the front and the teacher would throw the cane so that the teacher would not be polluted. Along with the curse of untouchability, the Dalits had no right to have any property. They had to eat the foulest food, including leftovers thrown away by the higher castes. They were not allowed to draw water from the common well; they were prohibited from entering temples; they were barred from the right to education and knowledge; they had to perform menial jobs for the higher castes; they were not allowed to use the common burial ground; they were not allowed to live in the main village inhabited by the upper castes and they were deprived of ownership rights to land and property, leading to the lack of access to all sources of economic mobility. Thus, dalits were subjected to both social exclusion and economic discrimination over the centuries. In one form or the other, this continues even today in most parts of the country. While dalit women share common problems of gender discrimination with their high caste counterparts, they also suffer from problems specific to them. Dalit women are the worst affected and suffer the three forms of oppression -- caste, class and gender. As some of the above figures show, these relate to extremely low literacy and education levels, heavy dependence on wage labour, discrimination in employment and wages, heavy concentration in unskilled, low-paid and hazardous manual jobs, violence and sexual exploitation, being the victims of various forms of superstitions etc.

This way there is a very liberal approach on the question of caste today. Most of the Nairs and Syrian Christians are now against caste, and they think they are beyond caste. They will talk against the casteism of yesteryears or against the casteism that still exists in other states like Bihar, in other north Indian villages or in Tamil Nadu. As if in Kerala there is no caste in the public space now. Especially, for the upper castes, those who talk caste, those who have caste, are now the subalterns, the Dalits and Adivasis. There is such a shift. Thus the discussions on caste in Kerala have become quite complex. It reflects in the films also. There have been extremely stereotyped Dalit characters till recently in films, and now there are some films that claim to criticize casteism, in a certain manner. Even in *Celluloid*, the baggage of caste is on the character of P K Rosy. She appears as a symbol of caste. J C Daniel

has no caste, nobody else has any caste. And in the contemporary times, there are some people who still carry the vestiges of caste. But the 'person of caste' is P K Rosy. This is the status of caste in Malayalam films. Caste appears in art films also. Here also it may appear disguised. In films of people like Adoor Gopalakrishnan, he follows the style similar to what MT did in Malayalam literature. Most of his films are about the crisis of the nair self. That way there is not much difference between art films and commercial films. If at all there is some change, it is in the commercial films. Because it has different kinds of viewers, and there is an interaction happening. Cinema is not always an expression of power from the top. There is an intervention from the audience as well. In art films, usually there is no such interaction allowed. They say we sit and watch the art cinema, some people understand it, some would need a training to understand it etc. But in the popular films there is space for such an intervention. The audience also has a role in the production of a film and in the discourse it creates.

Still not many Dalits are entering Malayalam cinema field. Even in the discussions around cinema, we usually avoid talking about how caste works in the cinema industry. Most of the discussions on caste move around more simple issues like absence of Dalits in Malayalam cinema as camera-persons, as directors on the technical side. That is indeed an issue. At the same time caste works in the entire discourse of cinema, and we need to understand the complex ways in which it operates.

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'Intimate Space' in Orhan Pamuk's *Silent House* and *The Museum of Innocence*: A Reading

... a novel which in its broad lines, is the novel of 'underground maneuvers'. This worn out metaphor is illustrated, in this instance, by countless cellars, a network of passages, and a group of individual cells with frequently padlocked doors. There, secrets are pondered, projects are prepared. And underneath the earth, action gets under way. We are really in the intimate space of underground maneuvers.

(Bachelard 21-22)

Gaston Bachelard, who is also the author of such unorthodox work like *The Psychoanalysis of Fire* and *The Poetics of Reverie*, in his monumental work, *The Poetics of Space*, has concerned himself with some original and unprecedented thoughts on intimate space associated with house and its related imageries. As Ellen Eve Frank in her *Literary Architecture: An Essay Toward a Tradition* has envisaged the architectural reading of literary work which may liberate the literary criticism of its stale tradition of historical analysis, that is temporal, by gliding into the spatial aspect of it. Here architecture or the build environment depicted in literary works form a conspicuous tool for literary analysis. Also a reading of literature architecturally, using architecture as a model in the construction of the fictional world, arises.

Hence architecture can be both the content and method in literary criticism where architecture acts as an 'analogue' (Frank 12) to literature. With this theoretical framework of architecture where its nature of construction is mimed in literary creation and the architectural structures in the works of literature can be subjected to literary reading, evolves a reading that is architectonic in nature.

In *The Poetics of Space* Bachelard explicates his view of 'intimate space' as the space that we live in and cherish in memory with love. "... it was reasonable to say we 'read a house' or 'read a room' since both room and house are psychological diagrams that guide writers and poets in their analysis of intimacy" (Bachelard 38). Bachelard regards house and its related niches and corners representing the intimate space in real life as well as in fiction. He questions our conventional view of space with his novel analysis of intimate spaces like chests, drawers, wardrobes and so on.

Every corner in a house, every angle in a room, every inch of secluded space in which we like to hide, or withdraw into ourselves, is a symbol of solitude for the imagination, that is say it is the germ of a room, or a house.

(Bachelard 136)

Orhan Pamuk, the post modern Turkish writer of international acclaim and the Nobel Prize winner for literature in 2006 has said in his interviews and also in such nonfictional works like *Istanbul: Memories and the city* and *The Naive and the Sentimental Novelist*, how, after a long nocturnal walk in the streets of his city, he returns home to shut himself up in his

room to write. Hence experience and emotions are transformed into words that construct the literary world of his novels in the kiln of his room where he breathes in the most intimate of surroundings. He, who has lived most part of his life in the intimate space of his native city, Istanbul, and has made Istanbul the fictional locus of most of his novels, cannot help but be concerned with intimate space. Hence a reading of his novels in the light of 'intimate space' seems to be quite rewarding.

The two prominent novels of Orhan Pamuk, namely *The Silent House* and *The Museum of Innocence* are selected for a reading that aims at surfacing the spatial intimacy dealt in them. The central characters in these novels seem to be obsessed with the lived space that reveals their intense and intimate emotional life. Of all the novels by Pamuk, it is in these two novels, the architectural structure forming the central image, occupies their position in the titles, frames the entire novelistic space and moulds the characters' thought process and objectifies the subjective and intimate experiences.

Silent House is the second novel by Pamuk but its English translation came out much later. *The Museum of Innocence* is the eighth one but the seventh to be translated into English. *Silent House* is regarded as a modernist novel which makes use of the stream of consciousness technique to reveal the inner emotional predicament of individuals through the perspective of five major characters. Hence it is through the intimate space of their consciousness, the story gets unfolded.

The story takes place in a big house in a seaside resort, Gebze, a coastline district, east of Istanbul. A ninety-year-old grandmother, Fatma, waits for her two grandsons and the only granddaughter who visit her each summer. The eldest grandson, Faruk, is a historian at the University in Istanbul. Nilgun, a university student, dies at the end of the novel after being beaten by a young right-wing militant, once her childhood friend. Metin, the youngest, is a high school student who wants to be wealthy. Fatma lives with her servant Recep, who happens to be her late husband's illegitimate son.

In the chapters where Fatma is the narrator, we find her reliving her past. She remembers her marriage with Selahattin who is a doctor and an ardent advocate of freedom and science but is pretentious. Selahattin appears in the novel only through Fatma's memory.

Fatma, who spends the major part of her life in her lonely bedroom, starts to perceive herself as one among the pieces of furniture inside the room. In fact, the house at which she wields her power, is the central image in the story which remains as the silent witness to the violent turmoil of her inner self. She seldom moves out of the house or even her bedroom. She is found often rummaging in her closet searching the drawer, chests to find her empty jewel boxes intact and secure under lock and keys. She opens these boxes and smells it by which her mind gets flooded in the memory evoked by the good old smell of the past that remains inside them.

I alone, in my memories of another century, can open the deep cupboard that still retains for me alone that unique odor, the odor of raisins drying on a wicker tray. The odor of raisins! It is an odor that is beyond description, one that it takes a lot of imagination to smell.

(Bachelard 13)

These jewel boxes, though empty, hence are the invaluable treasures for Fatma, in which

she has kept secure her past. They stand for those happy days in her life which she spent with her parents who presented her these jewel boxes brimming with precious jewels and stones for her marriage. Time seems to recede and gets frozen to present her childhood which is the only happy memory in her life. She remembers how happy she was with her parents and she cherishes the memory of her weekly visit to Sukru Pasha's house where his three daughters Nilgun, Turkan and Sukran would delight her by reciting poems and reading out from the translations of French novels. She seems to be living in the memory of those happy moments while the best of her life have left haunting memories which have made her sleepless for the rest of her life. Hence childhood seems to be frozen in the memory of Fatma as Bachelard says:

Memories are motionless, the more securely they are fixed in space, the sounder they are... for a knowledge of intimacy, localization in the spaces of our intimacy is more urgent than determination of dates.

(Bachelard 9)

These words of Bachelard can be read along with what Fatma says as "... when I open the second drawer, there it is, I sniff it without opening it and when I open it I sniff the empty box again and I remember my childhood" (SH 146). She treasures her memories inside these boxes and chests that she protects them from the external world as if their exposure to the outside world may loot of their precious memories.

And to fine words correspond fine things, to grave sounding words, an entity of depth. Every poet of furniture – even if he be a poet in a garret, and therefore has no furniture – knows that the inner space is so intimate space, space that is not open to just anybody.

(Bachelard 78)

The house with its objects is a silent witness of her endless waiting in life. After marriage Fatma and Selahattin move to the house in Gebze as he is unable to stay in Istanbul because of some political issues. From then onwards she wants for her husband to finish the encyclopedia so that they can return to Istanbul which never happens. Her silent waiting in disgust for Selahattin to return from the maid's shack in the midnight, her waiting in agony for her son Dogan, later in the old age, her waiting for her grandchildren who visit her every summer and finally her waiting for sleep in every sleepless nights are other instances that make her life a long waiting among the four walls of her house. But her waiting though temporal is depicted spatially through objects and the space of her room.

Then I would go back to my room full of shame, take up the vest I was knitting for Dogan and wait for Selhaddin's return. I'd here him cameout of the shack an hour later, and little after that he would be stumbling up the stairs no longer even bothering to be quiet. I would open the door of my room a crack, and from that little opening I would follow him with devilish curiosity, fear and loathing until he went back to his study.

(SH 224)

The narrative space reflects the claustrophobic nature of her life. It is centred round her room that closes out the world. Inside her room time is frozen to represent the past. Hence the present is close outas she wallows in her own memories of a life that is already lived. The

present is inert as is evident in the objects in her room which remain intact. While the objects like furniture and other things inside her room stand for her present life without change, Fatma in their midst moves often backward in her memories. Often this movement into the past is triggered by any one of the objects in her closet which she preserves as treasures.

I opened the closet and checked by right away. I had gotten all upset for nothing, the box was still there, it was completely empty, but at least it was there still.

(SH 99)

The Museum of Innocence, the English translation of which came up in 2009 blurs the boundaries between literature and architecture as Pamuk built an actual museum in Istanbul based on the novel thereby spatializing the text and textualizing the space. The novel relates the tragic love story of Kemal and Fusun where the emotion of love is arrested in objects that remind him of his lost love.

In the beginning of the novel, Kemal who belongs to the Istanbul's upper class, is engaged to Sibel, the daughter of another wealthy family in the city. Kemal meets the eighteen year old Fusun – a distinct cousin of his – who becomes the obsession of his life. Fusun gives up her virginity to Kemal. Kemal continues to meet her at the Merhamet apartment until the day of his engagement. Fusun too attends the engagement which shatters her. She quits Kemal leaving him totally devastated and he ends up in breaking off his engagement to Sibel.

After many months of despair Kemal finds Fusun in one of Istanbul's suburbs. She is then married to Feridun, a struggling screen writer. Kemal offers to finance one of Feridun's scripts and thereby make Fusun a star which is an excuse for him to stay closer to Fusun. From then onwards he spends his evenings with Fusun's family, the Keskins, for the next eight years with the faintest hope that someday she may be his.

The narrative is made up of a novel device for expressing the protagonist's longing for his lover through a collection of mundane objects that vibrate with resonance. These objects from everyday life have one element in common that they are all associated with Fusun and they bear the memory of the intimate moments Kemal spent with Fusun. Here abstract emotion is given tangibility in the objects which occupy the spatial reality.

The Museum of Innocence is an example of how an architectural form can structure a novel. Pamuk says in his *The Naïve and the Sentimental Novelist* (120) that he bought an old building in Lukurman long before he started writing the novel. While he wrote the novel he collected the objects described in the novel from antique shops, markets and so on which are to be exhibited in the museum. Hence these objects in the realistic space of the museum, fetched from various realistic places, shape the novel.

The love pang that Kemal undergoes after Fusun deserts him soon after his engagement with Sibel is given a graphic description through the visual imagery of objects that echo their intimacy. Even after the engagement, he continues to go to Merhamet Apartments, at the usual hour of their meeting only to be plunged in grief with the realization that Fusun is not coming on that day too. He finds solace to his pain that is growing hard, by fondling the objects that Fusun touched and fiddled with during their rendezvous at the apartment.

Roughly I search in coffers that surround me,
Putting disarray in the darkness

of cases that were deep, deep
As though they had departed this life.

(SuperVielle qtd in Bachelard 33)

When Kemal meets Fusun after one year of despair, she is married which does not discourage him from meeting her in her house in Cukurcuma in the midst of her parents and her husband. It is the domestic, intimate space provided by the house that enables him, who is a distant relative of her, to occupy a space among the family. To relive the time he spent at Fusun's house he pockets some little objects like hair pin, cigarette stub and so on and then take them to Merhamet Apartment where he can fondle these objects.

Feridun's affair with Papatya, a film actress estranges Fusun from him. Kemal finds then Fusun favouring him and finally she gets divorced from Feridun and decides to marry Kemal. Before marriage they make a trip to Paris and from there Fusun gets killed in a car accident. After Fusun's death Kemal decides to turn her house into a museum to exhibit the objects he has collected.

Hence 'The Museum of Innocence' is opened for visitors to look at the objects as mementoes of their love. "When the chance of happiness is torn away, Kemal buys the house to devise a museum with the aim of transforming time into a space (MI 524). He engages Orhan Pamuk, who like the author, is a famous writer living in Nisantasi, to narrate the story which will act as the catalog for the museum. Here, where the real space ends and the fictional space begins is difficult to discern. The novel ends with Kemal's final declaration after experiencing his obsessive love for thirty years, "Let every one know, I lived a very happy life" (MI 128).

The narrative is strewn with objects from Turkish life like Turkey's domestic soda, quince grater, raki glasses and so on which are images that present the life in Istanbul with all its intimate manner and domesticity. A graphic description of late Rehman Effendi's house that Kemal visits present a typical poor household which shows the specificities of the life of the common people.

As I looked around the small, thread bare, but immaculate room (there was a lovely barometer of the type so fashionable the 1950's, and a beautifully executed framed calligraphy saying Bismillah), there was a moment when I thought, I was going to join with Rehman Effendi's wife in crying. On the top of the television was a handsome doily and upon that was displayed a china god.

(MI 135)

Objects in particular space as representing intimacy is evident when Kemal pockets objects from Fusun's house and take them to Merhamet Apartment. The two architectural structures namely, Merhamet apartments and Fusun's house at Cukurcuma, are the spaces that reveal the intimate life of Kemal steeped in obsessive love which gets a form through the various objects from everyday life which acts as mementoes of the time he spent with Fusun. Hence time gets a spatial dimension with the objects which are later exhibited in the museum. "Pamuk adapts Coleridge's speculation to his story of objects which like Coleridge'sflower, becomes both reminders of a paradise forever lost and proof of its erstwhile existence" (Baricz 1).

Objects from the past seems to bring the time past to the present. The memory of an intimate life spent elsewhere in both time and space is revoked through those dislocated and discarded objects. Kemal at the Merhamet Apartment while waiting for Fusun's first visit, looks about the room and finds old objects discarded from his house which reminds him of lost childhood and they revive, his memories.

Sitting in those airless rooms, surrounded by my mother's old vases and dresses and dusty discarded furniture, going one by one through my father's amateur snapshots, I recalled moments from my childhood and youth that I hadn't even realized I'd forgotten and it seemed as if those artifacts had the power to calm my nerves.

(MI 26)

The objects that are exhibited in the museum like ear rings, trinkets, chic blouse, yellow shoes, tricycle, quince grater, doily, china dog and so on have to be valued not on monetary utilitarian basis but purely on emotional basis. Hence these objects from everyday life, which may be passed over in real life as being trivial and obsolete ones, get transformed into sublimity once they get exhibited in the space of museum set up to commemorate the memory of the beloved and the innocence of existence.

... novelistic museums, and museum like novels offer us twin opportunities to reflect on the relations between objects in space and narratives unfolding over time in Pamuk's hands, the novels as a museum becomes a privileged space for contemplating the real value of trivial objects in everyday life.

(Xing 198)

The novel is perceived as the catalogue for the museum and Kemal as the curator of the museum narrates the story as he displays each object from the museum. Kemal addresses the museum visitor through the narrative. While the visitor moves through the space of the museum viewing each object displayed, the story gets unfolded as the objects are described in relation to Kemal's obsession with Fusun "While the museum offers surrogate for obsessive (because unrequited) love, it also evokes the ghostly beloved as an object of desire" (Gök 321).

In the space of the objects displayed in the museum which carry the weight of private domestic life, the two divergent spaces namely the space of intimate personal life and the public space converge. It is the moments of love that get arrested in the space of object. These objects in the museum are under the public gaze, away from their original existence, in the realm of a house. It is the innocent intimate life spent in the domestic space of intimacy that gets an artistic treatment when they transcend their domestic existence to occupy the dignified space of a museum. The space of intimacy is showcased there with pride. "*The Museum of Innocence*" exemplifies how immortal worlds can orient and organize ourselves" (Allmer 169).

Fusun's house which is filled with objects connected to her is transformed into a museum of love. There Kemal gets a private museum where the private emotions are given a space to be viewed with dignity. "Things became art in a space where powerful ideas about art focus on them" (Pamuk 26). Pamuk seems to convey that not only great events, man and objects relating to them can be exhibited and displayed but the museum can be a space where emotions and feelings of ordinary men are objectified and monumented. It is love as an

emotion that can sublimate the mundane to the artistic.

Merhamet Apartment acts as a museum for Kemal before he gets up the museum at Cukurcuma. The room where he makes love to Fusun for the first time and where both spend the happy moments of their life is filled with objects that remind Kemal of Fusun. When the house is turned into a museum it is the space of intimacy that gets transformed into an artistic space. As Kemal observes.

These fleeting dreams would mix with memories when my eyes lit upon this tea cup, from which Fusun drank during our first encounter, or upon this little old vase that she picked up for no reason while impatiently pacing the apartment.

(MI 201-201)

The novels *Silent House* and *The Museum of Innocence* apparently deal with different themes. But it is the obsession of the protagonists of the two novels with intimate spaces that make possible the scope of comparison. While memory is the life breath for Fatma that keeps the intimate spaces live, the memory of Fusun transforms the intimate spaces to a museum that is artistic in nature. If the house that Fatma lives in is the intimate space that stands for her silent waiting in life, Fusun's house is the intimate space for Kemal which he turns to a museum of his obsessive love. Fatma is often found rummaging in her closet and searching her chest and drawers. She touches and sniffs the empty jewel boxes which bring back the memory of her lost but happy childhood. Hence these chests, drawers and jewel boxes form intimate spaces in *Silent House* while the objects displayed in the museum which are associated with Fusun form the intimate spaces in *The Museum of Innocence*. If Fatma is the autocrat who wields her power in her 'Silent House', Kemal is the curator of the museum. While Fatma shuts out the external world out of her intimate space, Kemal exhibits his intimate life through the objects displayed in the museum thereby invites the outside world to have a look at his life. For Fatma the house has turned a tomb for her where she remains sleepless waiting for sleep everynight which maybe symbolic for that final sleep that may end her woes. But Kemal in his old age spends his life in contentment where the museum serves the 'objective correlative' (Eliot 24) for his lost love.

Merhamet Apartment and Fusun's house at Cukurcuma are the two built structures that stand for intimate spaces in *The Museum of Innocence* where as the house at Gebze and Fatma's bedroom with its furniture, closets, chests, drawers and jewel boxes form the intimate spaces in *Silent House*. Both Kemal and Fatma live in the past represented in the various spaces of intimacy which they treasure and cherish to an extent that they are oblivious to the practical aspects of life. For both, life is already lived in the past and they move back in time by clinging on to the spaces that are intimate in their life. Thus they seem to remain as the living relics of their past.

...the recollection of moments of confined, simple, shut-in space are experiences of heartwarming space, of a space that does not seek to become extended, but would like above all still to be possessed.

(Bachelard 10)

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Exploring the Visual Culture: A Study of Richard Ross's *Architecture of Authority and Juvenile in Justice*

“The study of art that does not result in making the strong less willing to oppress the weak means little.”

-Booker T. Washington

Power is elusive. Foucault states in his *Power/Knowledge* that “Power must be analyzed as something which circulates or as something which only functions in the form of a chain” (98). His focus was on multiple power relations which are present everywhere in different forms. They can be in play in family relations or within an institution or administration. Many tools have been in use from time immemorial to unveil the obvious and the hidden play of power in society. Among these tools, visual arts, especially photography plays an important role in exploring the visual field of injustice, catastrophe and suffering in our time. The harrowing photograph of the three year old Syrian boy, Aylan Kurdi, who died trying to reach the Greek island of Kos, the photograph of an Afghan refugee girl Sharbat Gula which appeared on the June 1985 cover of the National Geographic and the image of Phan Thi Kim Phuc, a nine year old girl running naked on a road after being severely burned on her back during the Vietnam war are examples of images that shook the world and sparked an outcry over the degradation of humanity.

In her work, *The Civil Contract of Photography*, Ariella Azoulay states that photography is “increasingly empowering individuals to use camera as a weapon against aggression. The very act of being photographed needs to be viewed as emboldening rather than victimizing” (23). Since the invention of camera in 1826, it has been used to capture everything from the abuse of human rights, war, social injustice and inequality to victory, hope, brotherhood and love. Most of these photographs are moving, urgent and thoughtful works of art that have awakened a sense of social consciousness to shape public opinion on many issues.

The focus of this paper is on the photography of one such socially committed, internationally acclaimed photographers, named Richard Ross. He is a professor of the University of California, Santa Barbara. He has an extensive photography exhibition record in different parts of the world and has received many honours for his works which have been published in major newspapers and magazines. Ross is of the opinion that “Art is a weapon to change the future.” In one of his interviews he spoke about the goals of his photographic endeavors: Firstly, it is to give visual tools to advocate. Next, it is to change current practices and lastly, it is to frame issues for the next generation. Two of his major photography exhibitions titled 'Architecture of Authority' and 'Juvenile in Justice' deal with the effects of space and authority on individuals. As Carol Delaney and Deborah Kaspin opine in *Investigating Culture: An Experimental Introduction to Anthropology*, “Space is, perhaps, our primary means of orientation in this world- physically, socially and cosmologically. The need for spatial orientation is universal among humans, but the meanings of space are not. Space is neither empty nor neutral; it is filled with things and with meanings” (37).

‘Architecture of Authority’ includes images of architectural spaces and design features

that create a feeling of authority in the people involved. 'Juvenile in Justice' on the other hand, is a project to document the confinement and treatment of American juveniles in the militarized climate of detention centres. Both these exhibitions, together with his other works, aim at stimulating social change.

Architecture of Authority

“We shape our buildings and later they shape us”-

Winston Churchill

Our built environment should invigorate our senses and inspire our imagination. It has impact on our emotions, our participation in physical activity, our sense of community and our general well being. Michael Ryan observes in his *Cultural Studies: A Practical Introduction* that “Every time you move through a built human environment, a transformed physical landscape, you are moving through something like a book or text, a collection of signs whose meanings derive from the intentions of those who made the environment what it is and the cultural ideals that lie behind these intentions” (15).

Richard Ross's photography captures the essence of these 'powerful' spaces. He has photographed Montessori pre- schools, churches, confessionals, court rooms, the Iraqi National Assembly Halls and architecture that projects harsher manifestations of power like the interrogation room at Guantanamo, segregation cells at the Abu Gharib, capital punishment death chambers and the like. The juxtaposition of seemingly 'asymmetrical-architectural spaces' encourage us to confront the striking connections among them. For instance, the confessional at the Santa Barbara Catholic Mission was almost of the same proportions as the interrogation room of the Los Angeles Secret Service headquarters. Both were intimate spaces that forced their occupants together and would make them disclose their secrets and confessions in exchange for some form of redemption. Similarly, there is an image of a Montessori classroom where the eighteen month old children are invited to join a circle and socialize. The authorities exert force on the kids and make them follow certain strict directions, a benign form of directed socialization, the malignant forms of which can be seen in the segregation cells of Abu Gharib. Spaces built for communication purposes in Angola prison, Louisiana, Immigration and Customs Enforcement holding rooms in San Francisco and confessionals in Santa Barbara have common architectural features, in spite of the functions they perform. Ross has captured many empty spaces as he thinks that the empty spaces are more intimidating to look at as one might think of what happened there sometime back or what might happen after sometime. The image of a loose blanket left in the cell at Hillington Road jail forces us to wonder if the person who used the blanket earlier, will be back in the cell later, to use the blanket once more. The Detainee Housing unit, Camp Remembrance, new Abu Gharib is remarkably photographed to show how the apparatus of power is used to confine movement and human interaction.

Ross tries to adopt theories of surveillance of the spaces which are filled with tension. In an essay accompanying Richard Ross' images, we learn that the photographer began the project after September 11, 2001. He was exploring the United States' response to terrorism, the increase of surveillance and prisons in Guantanamo bay and Abu Gharib. In the afterword to his book *Architecture of Authority*, Ross provides some motivation for his work,

I grew up in the golden age of America- no metal detectors to get into schools, no warnings on bleach bottles not to drink, no warnings on coffee cups that the contents are hot. It was a simpler time. Now I am going through a mass of images and asking the questions: what is the relationship between words such as power, authority, tyranny, architecture, morality and hierarchy.

Ross's photography explores the ways in which authority goes deep into human psyche. Instead of promoting social interaction and peace, most of the architectural designs are about not caring enough to make a humane environment. They are intentionally filled with a sense of helplessness and fear instead of manipulating space, light and material to promote emotional well being. For Richard Ross, it was obligatory, not optional to explore and investigate this relationship between space and mind.

Juvenile in Justice

Richard Ross's next endeavour was to document the conditions that exist for children in juvenile detention centres in the United States of America. These detention centres are not designed for treatment, and many facilities struggle to provide even mental health services. Ross travelled for around eight years, visited thirty states and three hundred sites, interviewing, photographing (he does not photograph their faces or reveal their identity) and participating in the lives of more than one thousand kids who are emotionally deteriorated and exposed to negative culture in custody. His motivation was his firm belief in the kind of justice which is about being respectful to everybody.

Ross projects the powerful and disturbing images of these kids, many of who have histories of abuse, abandonment and addiction. Children are essentially devalued in the detention centres. Loss of liberty and personal identity is frightening and disorienting for these young people. They are not being paid attention and that damages their spirit. Instead, they are being demonized and violated by the very people who should be creating a safe environment and protecting them. The atmosphere teaches the kids to be accountable to a clear authority. Youth considered to be out of control are held in 'safety rooms' with their hands and ankles cuffed and affixed to bolts. The guards from military and law enforcement background treat these kids as adults. They are confined to 7 X 10 or 8 X 10 dimensional rooms where there is paucity of natural light, stripped of all furnishings except clanging metal doors, scratched metal mirrors, concrete slab beds, mattress too flat, pillow too flat and blanket too thin, and are kept there for days, weeks, months and years, sometimes even without trial. Ross thinks that these institutions are based on "angry architecture"- built around a fear of super-violent kids." But the fact is that nearly three of every four youth in a detention centre are not arrested for a serious crime. Sometimes the punishments are wildly out of proportion to the offense.

According to Ross, the girls in detention facilities are further abused by the system which can lead them to post- traumatic stress. They account for about sixty percent of arrests for running away from homes. During his visit to a detention centre that housed eighty four girls, Ross asked the authorities about the percentage of girls who had been abused and was shocked to know that the answer was hundred percent. Nobody seems to be caring about what happens to these kids after they are arrested and nothing important is being done to improve their condition. They are even forced to discontinue their education. In one of his

lectures on juvenile justice, Ross made it clear that when you stop their education, you are stopping any chance of giving them better future. The following are the words of a few kids from their conversation with Ross:

-I've been here for two weeks, and this is my third time in. I'm in the sixth grade. I was in placement but I ran away. They accused me of assault against my mom, but she scratched herself and said I did it. My dad lives in Atlanta and works in a barbershop.

-E.Y., age 11 Juvenile Detention Center, Houston, Texas.

-This is the first time I am here, ever. They are charging me with armed burglary of a residence.

-K.T., age 16 Turner Guilford Knight (TGK) Correctional Center, Miami, Florida.

- I was forced into prostitution as a child by my mom. My mom's 32, a crack and meth addict. I was in the fourth grade. Once you're in the game, it's hard to get out of it. And I like the money now. I had gonorrhea when I was 12. Nobody wanted to help me. I don't know what they are going to do with me. I would be a mother to my brother and sister. I would do things like pay all the house bills. I really didn't run away, but my mom kicked me out of the house.

-B.N., age 15

Ross's images reveal that this system desperately needs reform. It should be on guard to protect against incarceration that is unnecessary and traumatic. His work was used as supporting evidence in front of the U.S. Senate subcommittee considering federal legislation about housing committed juveniles with pre- adjudicated juveniles. He also shares his images with institutions and non- profit organizations that work for public policy reform of the juvenile system. He contributes to any opportunity for positive intervention so that the juvenile justice system can be reformed. The important thing is to create an environment for the children that can make them recover and experience life. The society should also take care not to penalize them the rest of their life.

Some spaces are about freedom, peace and oneness and some are about confinement, surveillance and disparity. Richard Ross uses his “weapon” to throw light on the problems and needs of today's world. After having done many works filled with aesthetic appeal, Ross has reached a point where he has realized that there is a beauty in doing socially relevant works like 'Architecture of Authority' and 'Juvenile in Justice.' As Ismail Ferdous states in his *Photography as Activism: The Role of Visual Media in Humanitarian Crises*, “Through the power of imagery, we are pushed to question our core beliefs and our responsibilities to each other as international citizens. In this sense, photography has the power to shine an uncompromising light on critical issues” (25).

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Constructing a Dystopian Space: An Analysis of Laszlo Krasznahorkai's *Satantango*

Literature evolves from the social and political milieu of its epoch. It creates a space where the hopes and dreams of the people are projected. Sir Thomas More envisioned “utopia” as the embodiment of all happiness and goodness; it was a perfect world worthy to strive for. But, gradually, this vision of a future paradise gave way to “new maps of hell” which came to be called as “dystopia.” Dystopias portray the fear and apprehensions of man, manipulated and controlled in his actions as well as thoughts. In this context, Lyman Tower Sargent observes: “. . . with World Wars I and II, Korea, Vietnam, the various revolutions both successful and suppressed, the struggles against colonialism . . . racism, sexism, homophobia, etc., the twentieth century has quite correctly been called the dystopian century, and the twenty-first century does not look much better . . .” (2013: 10). The dystopian works are mainly the manifestations of the anti-establishment attitude of the writers, who use their pens as weapons, to rebel against the regimes which encourage conformity rather than criticism.

The acclaimed Hungarian novelist Laszlo Krasznahorkai, the Man-Booker International Prize winner of 2015, gained considerable recognition in 1985 when he published *Satantango*. In 1993, he received the German Bestenliste Prize for the best literary work of the year for *The Melancholy of Resistance* and has since been honoured with numerous literary prizes, including the highest award of the Hungarian state, the Kossuth Prize. *Satantango*, published in 1985 creating a sensation in the country, presents a view of Hungary at the time of transition in politics, economy and culture.

Hungary, like the other nations of East Europe, had been under the Iron Curtain after the Second World War till the beginning of 1990s. Following the Second World War, Soviet troops remained stationed throughout Eastern Europe as a reminder to the Eastern European peoples of Soviet dominance over their countries. These countries were modelled on the USSR in economic, social and administrative matters. The single party system without any democratic elections prevailed in most of these nations and many of the leaders gradually degenerated into dictators. The transition from socialism to totalitarianism also occurred in these nations. Literature was censored mostly; dissident writers were either imprisoned or exiled; only “harmless” literature was permitted to be published, that too under the direct control of the state.

The centralised economy of Hungary confronted a setback by the beginning of 1980s as the national debt skyrocketed and most of the collectivised farms were ruined. The people became dissatisfied and the new values of commodification slowly crept into the nation as the laws were a little relaxed. The present paper is an attempt to analyze how the Hungarian author Laszlo Krasznahorkai constructs a space which is real as well as imaginary, where the dreams of the people are shattered by false prophets and fake intellectuals. It intends to analyze how the power relations in the society have constructed a space where the people are interpellated by the dominant ideology.

The word *satantango* means devil's dance and, in the novel, it refers to a dance performed by the people at the local bar in the late hours of the night. The novel portrays the bleak and dilapidated village referred to as "the estate," reduced almost to nothingness with only a handful of inhabitants left there. All the others have left the estate which is facing a crisis in economy with the mill closed and the collectivised farm ruined. The people who remain in the farm are Futaki - the cripple, the Schmidts, the Horgos family, the Kraners, the Haliceses, the headmaster, Kerekes - the blind farmer and the doctor. The bar in the village is owned by the landlord who does not live there. The villagers, who wait for whom and what they know not, are expecting a divine sign of some sort as is evident from the interest that they show in the ringing of the bell at the beginning of the novel. Their hope that there would be some divine intervention to bring about their salvation is expected to be blossomed when Irimias and Petrina, whom they had thought to be dead, come to the village. The novel portrays how the people are once again cheated of their money, dispersed to the different parts of the town and made part of the secret network system even without their awareness or consent.

All societies function in terms of power relations. Michel Foucault states in the essay "The Subject and Power": "A society without power relations can only be an abstraction" (1994: 343). The power relations in a society play a very decisive role in the dominant culture of the group as there exists a causal relationship between the two. He further explains: "To live in a society is, in any event, to live in such a way that some can act on the actions of others" (1994: 343). The interplay of the power relations results in the dominance of some and the subordination of the others. Irimias in *Satantango* holds unusual and unbelievable power over the members of the farm as a saviour who has come to rescue them from the penury and misery of the ruin of the collectivised farm and industry. He becomes dangerous in being detrimental to the hope of the villagers to lead a life of peace, happiness and pleasure. He seems to know "the truth" and as the villagers are ignorant regarding the reason for the degeneration happening in their lives and the village, they completely believe and entirely depend on him.

The people of the estate are made subjects very easily by Irimias and Petrina. Foucault considers as his objective in studying power to analyse the "different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects" (1994: 326). Power operates through its intricate paths by making people subjects. Irimias could make them his subjects even before his arrival. The news of the arrival of Irimias and Petrina itself has transformed the people into obedient subjects waiting for their order:

... when they heard the outside door open and Schmidt had just enough time to leap to his feet before Mrs. Kraner was announcing: "They're here! Have you heard?!" Futaki stood and nodded and put his hat on ... "My husband," Mrs. Kraner gabbled, "he's already started and just sent me across to tell you, if you didn't know already ... but I've got to go, I don't want to bother you, and as for the money, my husband said, forget it, it's not for the likes of us," ... "Are you coming, buddy?" Futaki inquired after a while and suddenly they were both at the door ... "It'll be cushy for us. Pure gold. A real golden age!" (19-20)

As Louis Althusser points out in relation to the working of dominant ideology, they have subjected themselves before Irimias, their ultimate and absolute Subject. In the essay "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," Althusser suggests that "ideology "acts" or

“functions” in such a way that it “recruits” subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or “transforms” the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all)” (2011: 218). In that process they realise the role and position of themselves in this power circle and act their role as demanded by the ideological power structure of Irímias. Thus, Futaki, Schmidt and Kraner come up and voluntarily donate the money they had earned from selling the cattle, to Irímias for fulfilling the dream plan supposedly meant for their salvation.

Foucault observes on the process of making individuals “subjects”:

This form of power that applies itself to immediate everyday life categorises the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognise in him. It is a form of power that makes that he must recognise and others have to recognise in him. It is a form of power that makes individuals subjects. There are two meanings of the word “subject”: subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power that subjugates and makes subject to. (1994: 331)

The power of Irímias “subjects” the people of the estate as he makes them dependent on him. As Futaki realises in the end they do not even know where they are going to, what they are going to do and how they are going to live. Their state of being outside the realm of knowledge makes them dependent and docile.

In *Satantango* the “pathological forms of power” that Foucault speaks about are manifested in the power exercised by the state as well as its secret agents, Irímias and Petrina. To the question why power is such an important subject Foucault answers that “it is not only a theoretical question but a part of our experience” (1994: 327). He mentions two pathological forms; two “diseases of power” called fascism and Stalinism. This pathological power reduces people to mere sufferers at the hands of the power structure. The situation in the estate becomes extremely puzzling to the readers. The reader becomes perplexed by the easiness with which the people are cheated. The reason may be that “in spite of their own internal madness, they used, to a large extent, the ideas and the devices of our political rationality” as happened in Stalinism and fascism (Foucault 1994: 328). As Irímias and Petrina were able to influence the political rationality of the people of the estate, they could also manipulate their consent for the devious plans they have for them.

Foucault argues that “in order to understand what power relations are about . . . we should investigate the forms of resistance and attempts made to dissociate these relations” (1994: 329). Foucault envisions resistance as an essential outcome of power; that is, how power becomes productive. The people who are subjected to power should react against it normally. The struggles of the people are a refusal of economic and ideological state violence, which ignore who [we] are individually, and also a refusal of a scientific or administrative inquisition that determines who one is (Foucault 1994: 331). Though the people of the estate are subjected to ideological state violence, they are not able to realise it and struggle against it collectively. The doctor considers Irímias and Petrina as frauds, but he has no contact with others and does not share his feelings with them. Moreover, he is admitted in the hospital when they decide to leave the estate. The discontent in the landlord to the whole plan of

leaving the place is because he fears that he would lose his business. Without customers, there is no profit in running the bar with one or two families left in the village. All the rest are caught in the trap set by Irimias. But, there are occasions when they doubt the feasibility of the project and are apprehensive about the secrecy of the plan. The struggle sprouts up and dies down in their minds itself without fruition. Foucault finds the main objective of the struggle as to attack “a technique, a form of power” (1994:331). This struggle against the power that conceals knowledge without revealing their destination even to the parties concerned, comes up in the minds of many of the inmates including Futaki. When he is alone on his way to the Almassy Manor doubts come up in his mind about the feasibility of Irimias's project:

There is something else very strange about all this. I mean take this manor for a start. No doubt back in the count's time, it must have looked pretty good. But now? The last time I saw it the rooms were covered in weeds, the wind had blown the tiles off the tower, there wasn't a window or door intact, and even the floor was missing in places so you could see through to the cellar . . . (197-98)

But he decides not to interfere as Irimias, the boss, might have reasons for picking up the manor as his choice. Yet doubts again creep up: “Who knows whether he is doing this in earnest or just messing around?” (198). He tries to resist at the last moment when Irimias is dispersing the group by declaring that he knows where to go, but has to succumb to the intimidating force of power at last. Irimias subdues the resistance by working on the hope of the people.

The people are victims of the cosmic power around them over which they do not have any control. Even the nature conspires to make their life difficult, bleak and tragic. The mysterious spiders which cover everything in the bar with cobwebs within minutes is an example of the supernatural power exercised over the people. As long as the bar is open and the people move from place to place, the spiders do no harm. But once the bar is locked up, “every corner, every table and chair leg, every window, the stove, the rising rank of nooks and shelves and even the line of ashtrays on the counter would be covered in fine webs” (148). The landlord could not sleep because he would not be spared by the spiders. The most frightening thing is that he has never once seen an actual spider. The unseen presence of power implemented in the life of the people makes them subjected to its control.

It is the supernatural power pervading throughout the estate as well as the novel that overrules the power structure of the entire novel. The all-powerful Irimias is also intimidated by the power of the “vision” they have had of Esti's resurrection to heaven. Petrina and Sanyi are almost shattered to the core by the bizarre experience. Irimias is also shaken to the extent that he discusses with Petrina the possibility of there being a heaven or hell. Though he tries to convince Sanyi that it was a hallucination, his face is “chalk-white” and his voice “so faint” (218).

The power relations existing in Hungarian society have resulted in creating a dystopia there. Krasznahorkai creates a “village” cutting across time and space, which stands for the degenerated ideals and power structures. In short, the idealistic future envisioned for the world has undergone a drastic transformation and has become a nightmarish reality. The egalitarian dreams have met with an abrupt collapse and gradually some people have become

“more powerful.” The powerful who have access to knowledge control the “discursive formations” and always interpret laws and rules to their benefit. The common man always suffers at the hands of the dominant sections of the society. The power structure as evident in *Satantango* reveals how the estate has become a dystopia with the perverted forms of power, the dominance of fake intellectuals, the power/knowledge nexus that works against the common man and so on. All these together bring forth an apocalyptic doom in the lives of the people. Krasznahorkai presents a dystopian space, an apocalyptic world, which is a world of fear, treachery, torment and doom.

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Popular Oppana: A Critical Commentary

The paper "The Popular Oppana: A Critical Commentary" essays to make a close reading of the socio-cultural horizons of the Mappila performing art form of Oppana. The paper tries to interpret the episteme of the catalyst force inherent in the spectrum of Oppana as a performing art prevalent among the Mappilas in Malabar. Attempting to locate the politics of the body in the spectacle, the paper tries to critique the kind of representation channelized through the structure of the art called Oppana. The paper also looks at its being, as a performing art, with respect to the nature of the ideological and political motives ingrained in the text of popular Oppana. It is an attempt to understand the defense and synthesize it tries to construct in the social, cultural and religious locale of Kerala. The study is made not on the traditional form, but on the popular form of the traditional art as it is presented and popularized in and through the mechanical reproduction.

Keywords: Oppana, Mappila, Episteme, Erotic, Gaze, Representation.

Introduction

Mappilas often used as a synonym for Muslims in the Malabar region of Kerala, though embodies multiple socio-cultural 'signifieds', refers to a highly influential religious populace in the polity of Kerala. As a community Mappila Muslims are assumed to have been evolved as a result of the State's unfailing connections with the Islamic Arab civilization. Coming to the Malabar Coast of Kerala as early as seventh century AD, the religious sect, Mappilas, grew to a hefty political and social force with a remarkable socio-political and cultural 'diachrony' that constitutes for them an inseparable space in the modern history of the state. Though having witnessed acculturation, assimilation and linguistic identification by mimicking the parole of Malayalam tongue, the language of the state, the Mappilas in the Malabar Coast could eventually create a remarkably decisive space in the socio-cultural and political milieu of the state. Comprising, today, a large community, Muslims of Kerala, of which Mappilas constitute a majority, has created an indispensable cultural unity that prevails as opposed to the Hindu culture which had been the authoritarian elite culture in the region with the coming of Arians for the Hindus being the majority populace in the state. Identifying with the Arabs as Muslims, the Mappilas of Kerala through profound socio-cultural relations with the Arabs, mimicked and imbibed the life and culture of the Arabs as well. The influence of their imitation of the Islamic ways of socio-cultural life, as imbibed by them from the Quranic interpretations and religious scholars, and the positivist acculturation they could willingly and ideally undergo in the Haindava culture of the state of Kerala, has gained them a significant socio-cultural and political space which is highly reflected and represented in varied modes of artistic production. The typical ways of artistic representation of the Mappilas prevalent among them are stemming in vivid narratives under the titles of Mappila Arts and Mappila Literature which represents and problematizes the Mappila self, culture, tradition and identity. One of such socio-cultural narrative spectacle is Oppana. A highly effervescent, colourful and exhilarating traditional performing art, "Oppana is a song and dance performance popular among the Muslims of Malabar. It is commonly seen at their

various festive occasions like weddings, ceremonies held to herald puberty..., a *Maarkakalyanam*, and a *Naalppathukali*" (www.keralaculture.org).

A Discourse on Popular *Oppana*

A factual reality of the socio-cultural representation through performing art, Oppana, a popular form of social entertainment among the Mappila community of Kerala, is one of the prominent mainstream art forms prevalent in Kerala. It is a vivid, energetic and colourful spectacle generally performed by young women numbering about fifteen. Being a ceremonial performance, it generally represents the ritual of marriage and celebrates the traditional and conventional notions of the rituals of marriage as practiced by Muslims in Kerala. The name oppana is believed to have been originated either from the Arabic word *Afna*, a kind of performance popular among some Muslim societies in the middle east, or from the Tamil word, *Oppanai*, which means make-up or beautification. Though a typical cultural artifact of a religious group called Mappilas, oppana, in its textual structure, shares a number of elements of folk theatre. Indian Folk Theatre is an art which is conspicuous of "a fusion of elements from music, dance, pantomime, versification, epic and ballad recitation, graphic and plastic arts, religion and festival peasantry" (Sheelita Das, 1). The Folk theatre having roots in ethnic culture is embedded in local identity, ethnic and local social values besides providing mass entertainment. It helps the society as indigenous tools of interpersonal, inter-group and inter-village communication. As a communication system, it is "embedded in the culture which existed much before the arrival of mass media, and which still exists as a vital mode of communication in many parts of the world presenting a certain degree of continuity, despite changes" (Dissanayake, qtd. in Das). Folk theatre has been at use in distinct ways in Indian cultural milieu to propagate and discourse vital socio-cultural concerns from time to time. It carries and disseminates moral, social cultural and political ideas among the spectators/ the social group to be followed and imitated by them. As a communicative art form it transcends all kinds of formal barriers of human communication and familiarizes the knowledge. Each folk theatre form has typical media of socio-cultural representation for a particular religion, community, language, locale and way of life.

The identity that the art form of Oppana tries to represent is a unique thing in itself. Oppana essays to impart a cultural self to every Muslims in Kerala on one hand and it ventures to create a space to locate the cultural self in the socio-cultural milieu of Kerala on the other hand. Art is necessary for every human group living with other groups for socio-cultural representation which would help the group free itself from any kind of phobia from other social groups. Kerala has different religious groups living together for centuries. It had societies before the coming of Islam.

Coming of Islam marks a definite cultural shift. Islam as a social group among others, had to create its own social and cultural space on the base of which grew the Mappila politics in the state. Oppana, as a form of art to represent a quintessential cultural identity of the Mappilas, seems to make an unfailing cultural resistance. It operates to represent a Mappila identity so as to create an otherness with all the other groups in the society. The art of Oppana per se is different from the art forms of the dominant social group, the Hindus. On one hand, the Hindus, being the dominant group could have easily rejected the different cultural space for the Mappilas and thus could segregate them as the Other. The cultural resistance that the

art of Oppana makes is twofold. At one level it rejects the art forms of the dominant hegemonic group and it has a method of socialization which is necessary for acceptability for coexistence. When it rejects the dominant art forms, it dismisses the possible cultural assimilation of the Mappilas to the dominant ways through the dominant art forms. As a medium for entertainment, it resists the community against its members seeking space in the Hindu art forms. The Hindu art forms celebrate religious myths and divine figures from the Hindu scriptures which is an extremely challenging idea of monotheism, the quintessential foundation of Islam.

The team of Oppana is divided into three significant parts: the singers, dancers and the bride who is the centre of the performance. A traditional Oppana is performed as a part of wedding ceremonies a day before the wedding day. The bride, dressed in all finery, often jewelled with gold ornaments, is the nucleus of the spectacle of the art. She sits on a *royal* chair, around which the singing and dancing being performed. The dance with typical artistic maneuvers is in tune with a typical song with definite musical elements. The performers do appear in typically made traditional dress in varied colours. While they sing, they clap their hands rhythmically and move around the bride. Two or three girls begin the song and the rest of the performers accompany the song as a chorus: the dancers simultaneously sing and dance.

A typical Oppana song celebrates many a cultural and social element that are often associated with the Mappilas in Malabar. The song begins with an invocation to the divine and a praise of the ways of the prophet. In the beginning part of the song can be, often, though not always, heard as is seeking the consent of the spectators for the performance to start. The song in its typical colloquial language celebrates the virtues of sacred figures such as Beevi Khadija, Fathima and Prophet Mohammed. Through a vivid ritual musical dance performance it tries to recreate the past of the community by referring to the models of perfect life in Islam, Mohamed, Fathima and Khadija etc. The song is simultaneously a ritual and a glorious idolization of the aforementioned sacred figures.

This mode of celebration has a conscious process of identification by the bride and groom with those sacred figures: these sacred figures are the perfect model for them to live their life as Muslims. This process of identification has an inherent tool of creating a socio-cultural identity of which the image of the bride is set as a stereotype, "a widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing" (Judy Pearsall). The prototype, Khadija, and the stereotype, the image of the bride in the performance are unified. This unified stereotype represents women in a socio-cultural milieu that signifies the Mappilas in Malabar. With the art form this cultural milieu tries to locate all the Muslims in Kerala, though they differ themselves with cultural variants in tune with regional differences. The idealization through the spectacle reinforces the religiosity and morale. The colourful ritual performance by a team of young women, Oppana tries to celebrate the lineage and reinvokes memories of the traditional past of the community against any discernible attempt of cultural imperialism the dominant social group tends to drill.

The popular oppana songs really add to the charm of the spectacle. They can be interpreted at multiple levels: linguistic, cultural and thematic. The songs are inseparable parts of the performance. The dancers move and behave in course of the performance in tune with the songs. A group of singers, who may or may not be part of the dance, sing the song. The songs traditionally embody teasing and pleasing comments on the shy bride,

besides seeking marital bliss from the spectators around. The language of the songs is a combination of Arabic, Tamil and Malayalam.

Thematically the songs' inherent motive is to enhance the religious ways of marital life, the mutual unity of the husband and wife and devotion to the way the prototypes modeled for the happiness of life. Apart from the moral, ritualistic and religious republic the popular oppana songs try to create for the spectators, what attracts us most is the way the republic of the erotic is at work in the domain of the song. The 'teasing' nature of the song finds meaning in the literary and emotive language in which the songs are produced. The parole of the song is replete with phrases and idioms that carry connotations of the physical union of the two whose marriage is socially consummated through the ceremony and the ritual of which oppana is a part. The songs try to create an anxiety, especially in the bride, but apparently in the spectators about the erotics associated with the institution of marriage. The physical pleasures the institution of marriage would sanction to the two is forecast in the song. The erotic space of the songs seems to "be able to satisfy their curiosity about sex directly," and to transform the adult spectators "as invisible voyeurs positioned to view the sex"act" itself rather than only hearing about it" (Linda Williams, 2). The institution of marriage is sanctified and mythified through the 'bliss-to-come' narration of the song lies at one level whereas the domestication of sex, especially the female sexuality, as the desired, accepted and the disciplined is conspicuous on the other side: "sex acts can be communicated to viewers only through certain visual and aural conventions of representation" (Linda Williams 122).

Oppana, as an art form, is also a highly patriarchal product in multiple ways. A close reading of the textuality of the spectacle of oppana throws light into its broader limits of politics. The politics of patriarchy and the institutionalization of it are visible in the whole of oppana beyond question. They are *prima facie* functional at two levels: at the outset, oppana as an art form, though performed by the fair sex, seems to be a hefty patriarchal product. But at the deeper level, the ideological terrain with which the art form is impregnated clues us also at patriarchy. The song's conscious attempt to glorify the bride groom as the source of bliss to the bride invites further concerns pertaining to the patriarchal agent, whom the bride in the life to come is described as to treat with undue respect, obedience and loyalty. The song seems to celebrate these qualities- respecting, religious, patience, obedience, loyal and dedicated- of the bride as customary that the physical as well as the personal life of her would prove blissful in the long run. The songs, in their conscious effort to celebrate the strand of desire for the human other, objectifies "the desire not only for pleasure but also for the "knowledge of pleasure," the pleasure of knowing pleasure" (Foucault qtd. in Williams). He is the all knowing and the provider of everything assumes to be inherent, yet unambiguous, in the epistemic space of the cultural existence of the textuality of oppana. It is at his hand, with him, or at least beside him that she experiences the pleasures, the bliss and the euphoria, if she can imagine she can ever attain it: "women are different but did not actively seek detailed knowledge of women's pleasure" (Williams). A highly euphemistic language of the songs of popular oppana, which contains "the metaphor of speech-of discourses of sexuality as ways of talking about sex-has been crucial to this construction" (122). The language seems to reiterate the idea that *his* knowledge about *her* pleasures is more valid and authentic. The way the figure of the bridegroom narrated and portrayed in the Oppana songs indirectly authenticates his knowledge of her lack of knowledge about the production of pleasure in many ways. Thus the whole spectacle of popular oppana and the temporal and spacial ambience and atmosphere it transmits through distinct performative or verbal techniques like "All sound,

whether music, sound effects, or speech, thus function to bolster the diegetic illusion of an imaginary space-time and of the human body's place within it" (122).

One of the most significant patriarchal motives in Oppana lies in the fact of *gaze* that the spectacle invites as is being performed. It is performed by a group of young women. The space of the performance becomes an exhilarating spectacle of gaze. The spectators include both men and women: women are willingly and silently objectified or rather the female body is irresistibly transgressed as unfailing objects of male gaze. The body of the women and especially that of the bride is enormously fetishized and "valued as objects, things;... Subject to the logic of phallographic domination of nature,... her value as a sexual being, appears in their measurement" (Iris Marion Young 78). The social and cultural practice of the performance sanctions the male gaze in this space. This space of oppana, thus legitimizes the male gaze directed to the female body which is firmly rejected on the religious grounds in the community. Hence what is uncultured involved in the spectacle prevails cultured and forms a social defense mechanism against the repression. The base of this male gaze has deep erotic implications. The male spectator derives pleasure which is highly erotic. It gives immense visual pleasure to the patriarchal psyche that male spectator specifically experiences arousal that "may occur, may seem like reflexes, but they are all culturally mediated" especially in "the visual pleasure and spectator sport" intrinsic of the artistic space of Oppana (Williams 5).

The performance portrays a stereotypical image of the bride adorned in jewellery and costumes. The figure of the bride is no way a simple centre of performance but it transmits the economy ingrained in the institution of marriage. The bride is objectified at two levels: an object of erotic gaze and as an economic object. This stereotype, a construct modelled on the prototypes, is an ingenious source that transgresses the legitimization of economy transaction associated with the ritual. The ritual itself becomes a social channel of legitimized economic flow. The bride is jewelled in abundance assuming to celebrate the custom of using jewelry. The jewellery, generally gold, thus used by the bride, is believed to be a "Status Symbol" as it conveys the bride's "family's status and wealth" and a symbol of bride's "luck and happiness throughout the married life" (Divya Bhargavi). The gold ornaments, a normative of the bride's physical appearance in the performance as "a symbol of affluence, authority, health, wealth, femininity and prosperity within Indian culture" (Prabhjot Kaur) is pragmatically wealth or asset in economic terms as "gold is considered an equivalent for liquid cash" (Bhargavi) and "pure surplus capital" (Kevin Murray). The image of the bride is internalized, as stereotype, by the community and the bride's use of the jewel as a social practice prevails over the religious preferences in this regard. A conscious tableau of socialization *economic disciplining* through the cultural artefact is clearly evident in oppana and "the disciplinary practices well have operated more powerfully on the bodies of women than on those of men" (Foucault qtd. in Williams 4). Moreover the ritualistic spectacle of popular Oppana unconsciously shares the antique notion that women "fail to imagine their pleasures outside a dominant male economy" which has "institutionalized pleasures" through its powerful body of ideology (Williams 122).

Conclusion

"A genre and an ideology that is most transparently about sexual difference as viewed from a male perspective", popular oppana is a highly patriarchal artefact that is impregnated

with indomitable campaigns of patriarchal ideologies and politics (Williams). As an art form it disseminates the self and identity with its cultural traits that the social and religious group has imbibed over the years. The socialization of the economic disciplining and the spectrum of irresistible gaze channelized in popular oppana to serve the patriarchal ideology invite further insights into the textuality of popular oppana. At the same time, the conscious efforts to seek and reflect on the religious lineage of the community to construct and define their identity- religious and cultural- can be seldom rejected. Moreover, Oppana is an art form with folk elements that has its own aesthetic qualities which make it unique.

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From space to place: Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada*

Everything arises from space, exists in space, and dissolves into space.

-Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Travel has become an inevitable passion or entertainment for the modern generation. Travel Writing, which is a record of an individual's experience in an unknown space, serves as a kind of guide book for those who are interested in travelling to various places. *Interestingly*, documenting one's experiences in a space also plays a significant role other than recording one's encounter with a new space. In this context, this paper takes up Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada* and foregrounds the unexplored dimensions of this travel narrative. Exploring Traill's 'record of her experiences' in Canada, this paper reveals how this narrative illustrates the transformation of a 'Space into a place' with an identity. This narrative can also be seen as the record of the formation of nation, which serves as a history for the present citizens of 'upper Canada'. Thus, this paper highlights the significance of travel narratives in revealing how a particular space when inhabited, is transformed into a place with an identity and thus finally into a nation.

Key words: Travel, spatiality, identity, history, nation, place.

From space to place: Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada*

Travel has always been one of the most relishing ways of entertainment. Travelling, moving from one place to another – has always involves a curiosity to 'know' what is over 'there'. 'Writing' and thus recording one's travel experiences has been a prominent means of preserving one's encounter with a new place. This led to the evolution of travel writing, whose origins and evolution can be paralleled with travel. These writings even explore the history, life style and culture of the people lived in a particular place. Many travel narratives act as a guide book to those who travel to the same place. This genre establishes its uniqueness with its 'geographicity'. Recording one's encounter in a place begins with the 'description' of its physical description and climate. This reveals that the geographicity of these 'narratives' is equally important as its literariness. In *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, Roy Bridges, comments on the significance of the geographicity of this genre:

Travel writing . . . has a complex relationship with the situations in which it arose. It is taken to mean a discourse designed to describe and interpret for its readers a geographical area together with its natural attributes and its human society and culture. Travel writing may embrace approaches ranging from an exposition of the results of scientific exploration claiming to be objective and value-free to the frankly subjective description of the impact of an area and its people on the writer's sensibilities.(2)

Perception of a place differs from one individual to another. So travelling and

documenting about travel could help in the clearer understanding of humanity. Narrating about a travel experience has become a fashion now a days and indentifying the people, place and describing them goes hand in hand with the writer's own personal 'self'. Similarly, inhabitation plays a significant role in inscribing a 'raw' Space with an identity and thus transforms it into a place. In this context, this paper takes up Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada* and foregrounds the geographicity of this narrative, one of the unexplored dimensions of travel narratives. Apart from this, this study also reveals how this narration becomes a record of the transformation of the Canadian space into a place for the immigrants and finally a nation with an identity. This also highlights how *The Backwoodsof Canada* serves as the historical record for the later immigrants.

Being one of the first voices to write from the wilds of newly-settled Canada, Catharine Parr Traill's narration is considered as important sources of early Canadian history. In particular, *The Backwoods of Canada*, first published in 1836, details about the everyday life of Canada's founding communities is relieved in this narration. Together with her sister, Susannah Moodie, who penned in this historical Bush, Traill's 'records' became an important resource for settlers arriving in Canada during the nineteenth century. Traill's writing is simple, clear and factual. Her narration is written for immigrants, especially women, who stayed in Upper Canada for nearly twenty years which is now known as Canada west. Her narration reveals her experiences of moving into a new land, her encounter with an unfamiliar 'space', her struggles to get accustomed to it and how she finally creates her own 'place'. Her work, the record of her experiences, becomes a guide for those who encounter an unknown space.

Being a naturalist, the details of flora and fauna and the Canadian climate are abundant in her record. This gives a detailed picture of the Canadian landscape in the early nineteenth century. For this 'record', the British Government gifted her with hundred pounds and in 1893, the Canadian Government gifted her an island near the river Otanabee (10). She also brought other Indians from Peterborough district to live in the alien place. Catherine Parr Trill wrote seventeen books, eight of them after coming to Canada (11).

Mrs. Parr migrates from her own land (space) to new land. She departs from Greenock in the Brig Laurel, a regular passenger-ship with the captain Goldfinch and his nephew, a pretty yellow haired lad, about fifteen years of age. Mrs. Parr was much pleased with the scenery around her so she remained on deck till night fall. Then they arrived to Newfoundland after travelling for a month from the day of departure from British Isles. Due to difficulty in navigation on the river they set sail to Quebec where they find the city to be at good environment but saw people suffering from typhoid and cholera. The impression of Quebec city and country is described by Catherine Parr Trail.

The cholera had made awful ravages, and its devastating effects were to be seen in the darkened dwellings and the mourning habiliments of all classes. An expression of dejection and anxiety appeared in the faces of the few persons we encountered in our walk to the hotel, which plainly indicated the state of their minds"(18). So they departed to Quebec and moved to Montreal. At last they settled in a space which was new to them and cleared the land and made it into a 'place for them'. Knowing the space and getting accustomed to it – which challenges the outsiders with its climate – is the only means of survival. Gradually, their survival becomes life and eventually turns out to be a civilization of their own. This is how the

blindfolding wilderness (in the land of Canada) of the space becomes a place to the immigrants. They found this place to be their home. In this broad universe, the space becomes the primary element which accommodates everything. "Every single thing in nature exists in this space and they grow and finally dissolved into this space. The life of human beings balanced only with the balance in space. Everything that exists in this world revolves around into this space".(20)

As mentioned earlier, *The backwoods of Canada* is abundant with geographical details, which reveal the Trail's first-hand experience in a new landscape. For instance the following passage describes about the Ocean voyage to an unknown land, through the majestic and mighty rivers. Then the river which runs up to Montreal. The impression of city and country is described by Catherine Parr Trail.

Our progress was somewhat tedious after we entered the gulf. Ninety miles across is the entrance of this majestic river; it seems an ocean in itself. Half our time is spent poring over the great chart in the cabin, which is constantly being rolled and unrolled by my husband to gratify my desire of learning the names of the distant shores and islands which we pass.(8)

The narration contains chapter after chapter that tells about journey through the woods the narrator and their family migrate from one place to another through miles, at last they reach a forest where they build a log house settling on the land, they clear the land for cultivating many crops and they chop wood for firewood, they plant pumpkins, potatoes etc. They plough and they settle there in that land. They also bring their Indian neighbour. The mannerism of Indian young children and cold temperature of that area is described by the narrator as the following:

The Indians seem most tender parents; it is pleasing to see the affectionate manner in which they treat their young children, fondly and gently caressing them with eyes overflowing and looks of love. During the singing each papouse crept to the feet of its respective father and mother, and those that were too young to join their voices to the little choir, remained quite silent till the hymn was at an end. One little girl, a fat brown roly-poly, of three years old, beat time on her father's knee, and from time to time chimed in her infant voice; she evidently possessed a fine ear and natural taste for music.(86)

In the woods, they see the Canadian wild flowers, which is the 'Queen of the Lakes'.

Among the flowers were flagrant red roses, resembling those we call Scotch burnet-leaved, with smooth shining leaves and few if any thorns; the blue flower called Pulmonaria or Lungwort, which I gathered in the Highlands, a sweet pea, with red blossoms and wreaths of lovely pale green foliage; a white orchis, the smell of which was quite delicious. Besides these were several small white and yellow flowers, with which I was totally unacquainted. The steward furnished me with a china jar and fresh water, so that I shall have the pleasure of a nosegay during the rest of the voyage. The sailors had not forgotten a green bough or two to adorn the ship, and the bird-cage was soon as bowery as leaves could make it.(10)

Trail writes about the Canada, the Land of Hope and the happiness they had throughout the year. Everything is new for them. They develop arts, sciences, agriculture and manufacture. In some chapters we find a small voyage and hospitality of the society.

There is a constant excitement on the minds of emigrants, particularly in the partially settled townships, that greatly assists in keeping them from desponding. The arrival of some enterprising person gives a stimulus to those about him: a profitable speculation is started, and lo, the value of the land in the vicinity rises to double and treble what it was thought worth before; so that, without any design of befriending his neighbours, the schemes of one settler being carried into effect shall benefit a great number.(103)

As they stay longer in the new land, they get accustomed to the land, its geography and climate. Along with the changes in the seasons, there are changes in the way the immigrants look at the new space. This highlights the important phases in the transformation of space into a place. These phases reveal their growing familiarity with the space and also the hardships they undergo during this process. For instance, the following lines reveal the different experiences they undergo while 'getting to know' the land. The summer started and some of the settlers in the land started hunting, building canoe. Some launched there to live. They also faced and troubles like insects diseases like Malaria. The children were also suffering.

My dear husband, my servant, the poor babe, and myself, were all at one time confined to our beds with ague. You know how severe my sufferings always were at home with intermittents, and need not marvel if they were no less great in a country where lake-fevers and all kinds of intermittent fevers abound.

Few persons escape the second year without being afflicted with this weakening complaint; the mode of treatment is repeated doses of calomel, with castor-oil or salts, and is followed up by quinine. I will not dwell on this uncomfortable period, further than to tell you that we considered the complaint to have had its origin in a malaria, arising from a cellar below the kitchen. When the snow melted, this cellar became half full of water, either from the moisture draining through the spongy earth, or from the rising of a spring beneath the house; be it as it may, the heat of the cooking and Franklin stoves in the kitchen and parlour, caused a fermentation to take place in the stagnant fluid before it could be emptied; the effluvia arising from this mass of putrifying water affected us all. The female servant, who was the most exposed to its baneful influence, was the first of our household that fell sick, after which, we each in turn became unable to assist each other.(120)

The following chapters of *The Backwoods of Canada* reveals increase in the number of the immigrants and how they gradually begin to sense the comfort of home in a 'new' land. This shows that the experiences of their inhabitation made them reconciled to the land. The following passage reveals the climate of upper Canada and reveals their experiences during the most challenging of the seasons in Canada.

A root-house is indispensably necessary for the comfort of a settler's family; if well constructed, with double log-walls, and the roof secured from the

soaking in of the rain or melting snows, it preserves vegetables, meat, and milk excellently. You will ask if the use be so great, and the comfort so essential, why does not every settler build one?(121). Labour is so expensive, and the working seasons so short, that many useful and convenient buildings are left to a future time; and a cellar, which one man can excavate in two days, if he work well, is made to answer the purpose, till the season of leisure arrives, or necessity obliges the root-house to be made. We are ourselves proof of this very sort of unwilling procrastination; but the logs are now cut for the root-house, and we shall have one early in the spring. Our winter seems now fairly setting in: the snow has twice fallen, and as often disappeared, since the middle of October; but now the ground is again hardening into stone; the keen north-west wind is abroad; and every outward object looks cold and wintry.(122)

The last chapter of *The Backwoods of Canada* is in the form of letter - written by the narrator to her mother which reveals the climate, life style, lakes Otonabee and the snow fall in Canada.

.....this climate has been; no two seasons have been at all alike, and it is supposed it will be still more variable as the work of clearing the forest goes on from year to year. Near the rivers and great lakes the climate is much milder and more equable; more inland, the snow seldom falls so as to allow of sleighing for weeks after it has become general; this, considering the state of our bush-roads, is rather a point in our favour, as travelling becomes less laborious, though still somewhat rough.(125)

Coming home one night last Christmas from the house of a friend, I was struck by a splendid pillar of pale greenish light in the west: it rose to some height above the dark line of pines that crowned the opposite shores of the Otonabee, and illumined the heavens on either side with a chaste pure light, such as the moon gives in her rise and setting; it was not quite pyramidal, though much broader at the base than at its highest point; it gradually faded, till a faint white glimmering light alone marked where its place had been, and even that disappeared after some half-hour's time. It was so fair and lovely a vision I was grieved when it vanished into thin air, and could have cheated fancy into the belief that it was the robe of some bright visitor from another and a better world;--imagination apart, could it be a phosphoric exhalation from some of our many swamps or inland lakes, or was it at all connected with the aurora that is so frequently seen in our skies? (125)

Thus, *The Backwoods of Canada*, one of the earliest works in Canadian Literature, focuses more on the wilderness of land's geography of the land - revealing its hostility when unknown and the sense of comfort it gives, when it is known. About the hostility and treacherousness of the Canadian land, Catherine Parr Traill states that, "There is no appearance of venerable antiquity in the Canadian woods. There are no ancient spreading oaks that might be called the patriarchs of the forest. A premature decay seems to be their doom." (48). There are other writings which describe the Canadian environment as the site of

authenticity heals, as a land of hope and also teaches human beings the importance of the relationship with nature. Traill reveals how the hostile land can be friendly, when one gets accustomed to it:

The country around Cobourg is well cultivated, a great portion of the woods having been superseded by open fields, pleasant farms, and fine flourishing orchards, with green pastures, where abundance of cattle were grazing....the outline of the country remained me of the hilly part of Gloucestershire; you want, however, the charm with which civilization has so eminently adorned that fine country, with all its romantic villages, flourishing towns, cultivated farms, and extensive downs, so thickly covered with flocks and herds. Here the bold forests of oak, beech, maple, and basswood, with now and then a grove of dark pine, cover the hills, only enlivened by an occasional settlement, with its log-house and zig-zag fences of split timber: these fences are very offensive to my eye. I look in vain for the rich hedgerows of my native country." (33-4).

William Sturtevant says on the written descriptions of Parr's as, "he cannot transform words into forms without some visual preconceptions" ("First Visual Images" 418); even if the engraver has access to sketches, water-colours, or oil paintings of Canada done by persons who have been there, variations, whether "intentional or accidental are inevitable," especially when a "shift in medium is also involved" (Sturtevant 417).

This narration could be considered as, Traill's unique personal experiences with many comments and illustrations on cultural point of view. Finally, *The Backwoods of Canada* is a personal account of a woman's experiences as a pioneer. Many disjunctions between illustration and text are useful for discussion since they graphically point out the difficulties faced by the old space in its attempts to see and to understand the land to be a New Nation and this also presents further challenges in describing the flora and fauna she sees. Therefore, some botanical and zoological illustrations are appropriate. But the work is not merely a scientific study: Traill uses pictorial terms to describe the Canadian landscape so that picturesque landscapes are also suitable for inclusion.

Traill's experiences, does not relate in time, place, or activity to what she describes. First, she represents travel as a leisure pursuit. Next, she describes a winter scene; finally the placement in the text occurs as Traill moves up the Otanabee river in late summer towards her new space. Traill begins to focus on small foreground details rather than on broad landscape. A similar allegory is set up in "Newly Cleared Land" deviates from Traill's present experience but not from her plans for the future. For this she says in her narration that she loves Canada,

I love Canada, and am as happy in my humble log-house as if it were courtly hall or bower; habit reconciles us to many things that at first were distasteful. It has ever been my way to extract the sweet rather than the bitter in the cup of life, and surely it is best and wisest so to do. In a country where constant exertion is called for from all ages and degrees of settlers, it would be foolish to a degree to damp our energies by complaints, and cast a gloom over our homes by sitting dejectedly down to lament for all that was so dear to us in the old country. Since we are here, let us make the best of it, and bear

with cheerfulness the lot we have chosen. I believe that one of the chief ingredients in human happiness is a capacity for enjoying the blessings we possess.(124)

This narrative can also be seen as the record of the formation of nation, which serves as a history for the present citizens of 'upper Canada'. Thus, this paper highlights the significance of travel narratives in revealing how a particular space when inhabited, is transformed into a place with an identity and thus finally into a nation.

Traill's portrayal of the Canada, with minute geographical details, her varied experiences in the land, the changes in it in course of time, if read as a conventional travel narrative, would seem to be a record one's experiences in a new land. Yet, as mentioned earlier, the narrative highlights the impact of an unfamiliar space on human 'being' and how getting accustomed to the space, the human beings inscribe new meanings and identity to the space, and finally transform it into a place - a space organised by human intervention. Thus, this paper highlights one of the unexplored aspect of a travel narrative.

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