

RESEARCH ARTICLE

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## Spatial World Manifestations in Contemporary Algerian Novels: The Case of Confessions of Hamed El-Mansi by Al-Azhar Attia as a Model

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### Abstract:

The current research paper has fundamentally attempted to cast light upon the myriad layers of the aesthetics of spatialization in the novel *Confessions of Hamed El-Mansi* viewing it as one of the most saliently significant semantic dimensions of literary creativity. The chief aim underpinning carrying out this research work has primarily been to unearth the various manifestations of its impact on shaping the different features making up the narrative world by virtue of observing the shifts that these geographical spaces have taken in their formation within the fictional narrative text, which goes far beyond geometric features. It attains this thanks to the language deployed pertinent for expressing the characters' ideas, perceptions, and values, i.e. the reciprocal relationships holding between spaces and the characters who move within them.

**Keywords:** Novelistic space, spatial space, imaginary space, Algerian novel, Al-Azhar Attia.

### Introduction

The setting is considered one of the most crucially important components in the all too demanding task of novel construction. Needless to say, it is an integral constituent in numerous relationships as it binds with other narrative components, such as characters, events, and time. It is usually described as the setting for events, or the space which characters share or reside in. This, accordingly, customarily leads to the establishment of a reciprocal relationship between character and setting, giving the novel its defining and unique properties, thereby empowering the setting to acquire its own characteristics, meaning, and connotations.

The field of philosophy is full of a wide range of theories and opinions which literary and critical studies have extensively benefited from to accurately scrutinise spatial and temporal relations as frameworks for human memories in their day-to-day social life, and as an indispensably necessary repository of human ideas and experiences. Hence, Gaston Bachelard maintains that we can define place in literature a unified set of artistic images that stimulate memory and bring back the past along with childhood memories. He goes on to state that it can alternatively be defined as a set of imagined values stored by the subconscious mind, which eventually become the dominant values' (Bachelard, 1957) after all, place, in all

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its realistic and imagined dimensions, is inextricably intertwined with the temporal and historical aspect of the text and its characters. Accordingly, the temporal-spacial interaction usually results in a narrative system that is organized in the novelistic form which had been previously chosen to present the events and characters that steadily grow and transform through their movement in intersecting circles until their features become clear, and their various psychological and social interactions gain a distinct shape.

### **The Concept of Narrative Space**

Space in a narrative text is an integral component, which combines with the other essential elements to give the narrative text its unique features. We will, therefore, attempt to approach the concept of narrative space with a peculiar focus on the geographical space. The latter includes the physical spaces where, on the one hand, characters move and in which fictional events unfold. On the one hand, it includes a multitude of basic elements and spaces possessing semantic dimensions.

Space has for centuries had an important role in Arabic poetry; this can be largely ascribed to the modern critical discourse, whose foundations were firmly established by different textual approaches. It was prominently visible in the introductions of the ruins, as well as in the description of the inanimate and moving nature. It did not, however, receive the same amount and type of attention in our prose literature. Adequate attention to space started to gradually materialise with the arrival and wholesale endorsement of the modern techniques of the novel. It subsequently began to occupy an increasingly salient place in the narrative «because neither events nor characters can play their role in a void without space». (Azzam, 2005, p. 12)

This clearly demonstrates that space is a self-dependent novelistic element which enjoys precisely the same importance the other elements do.

The Poetics of Space (1957) presented by Gaston Bachelard is rated the most significant study of its kind that, amongst other things, alerted critics and researchers alike to the importance of space in Arab novelistic creativity. His work was later translated by Ghaleb Halasa under the title «The Aesthetics of Place». This book was hugely inspirational as since its publication, numerous studies, of various thematic scopes, have been embarked upon.

The term «space» significantly overlaps with other terms with which it shares seemingly similar meanings. This can be accounted for in terms of the terminological chaos that characterizes Arabic critical discourse. This is fundamentally rooted in differences in translations and schools of literary criticism, along with the divergent translation approaches adopted from the French and English schools, through German to modern American. Another major reason behind the attested chaos is linked to the overt linguistic and semantic affinity of these terms, especially 'place' and 'space'.

In an attempt to demystify the distance between these terms, the literary critic Muhammad Bennis maintains that «space is separate from place, and that it is the reason for the creation of space as such; in other words, space is always in need for place». (Bennis, 1990, p. 112)

This statement makes it abundantly obvious that the separation between space and place is possible only in usage, namely in the nature of the relationship that holds them together.

It is worth pointing out, however, that he believes that in other places «space precedes places, for it has a precedence that makes it exist before there, where it should receive them». (Bennis, p. 44) This statement leads us to infer that space is broader than place, because the

latter can rightly be viewed as an integral part of it. Framed differently, it is like small planets constantly looking for a place for themselves in the vast space.

The term space can be defined as «the spatial terrain limited by certain boundaries within the literary space/literary text, regardless of whether this terrain is real or metaphorical, realistic or artistic». (Mabrouk, 2002, p. 680) Hence, space is the outcome of the details of places that give it artistic qualities.

Abdelmalek Mortad has, likewise, endeavoured to define the term space. He put forward the term «space» as a counterpart to the word «espace», as alternative terms to «space» and «place» respectively. He distinguished between space and espace in that space indicates emptiness and void, and between space and place in that place is restricted to refer solely to the geographical and the limited place, while espace is broader than space because it includes weight, heaviness, size and shape. It is also more comprehensive than place because its meaning does include even the indefinite and imaginary. (Mortad, 1998, pp. 141-145)

The confusion is readily noticeable between these three terms, which although are, at first glance, strikingly similar in meaning, they differ completely in their significance in narrative discourse. However, the attested chaos which abounds in the Arab critical arena, aided by varying translations, is indeed the chief factor that fuels this enormous confusion. It is worthy of mention at this juncture that we will adopt the term "space" throughout this study to nip this confusion, at least in the context of our paper, in the bud. This difference reveals the crucial importance of space, which has received a great deal of attention in narrative discourse through:

- i. It is one of the essential artistic elements embodying narrative discourse;
- ii. It sets the framework within which events unfold and where the various characters move;
- iii. It has the potential of transforming into an all-inclusive space encompassing all narrative elements, including events, characters, as well as all manner of subtle relationships that hold them together. It creates the scene in which they act and express their different points of view; and
- iv. It functions as a helping element in developing the novel's structure, as it can be the main carrier of the chief character's point of view.

I will attempt, by approaching the structure of space in the novel (which constitutes the core subject of the present study), to cast ample light on the study of geographical space (Espace Géographique), which is created by words, and the topographical field. It is worthy of mention that our study has purposefully opted for not addressed any of the following issues:

- a) Textual space (L'espace textuel), which is formed entirely by the fusing together of its lexical items and functions as a reflection of the whole text.
- b) Semantic space (L'espace Sémantique), which is given rise to by virtue of the language ability to transcend its apparent meaning to delve into different connotations through the rich diversity of the available linguistic structures. This serves to offer a wealth of opportunities for reading and interpretation. After all, approaching the study of space from the «metaphorical imagery» vantage point may be far removed from the scope of the novel; its most fertile field is unquestionably poetry per se. (Lahmadani, 1991, p. 60)
- c) Space as viewed as a perspective or a vision that overlaps with the concept of the narrator's point of view, and is one of the many and varied topics prevalent in narrative fiction.

## 2. The Aesthetics of Geographical Space in Hamed El-Mansi's Novel Confessions

It goes without saying that geographical space is deemed the counterpart of «the concept of place, and is generated through the narrative itself. It is the space in which the heroes move, or are assumed to». (Lahmadani, 1991, p. 60) It is a spatial setting that sets up the narrative and makes imaginative realities appear wholly true by virtue of the metaphorical reflection that serves to announce the reality of the adventure by providing the reader with the narrowest range of geographical references. It is, therefore, fairly legitimate to state that it constitutes a hugely important starting point for unleashing their imagination, through which they accomplish myriad systematic discoveries of places. (Al-Afia, 1997, p. 172)

The following are the main features that the novelistic setting owns; their main function is to make it entirely distinct from the real setting: (Bouazza, 2010, p. 99)

- 1) The novelistic setting is merely a verbal space that exists only through language, embodied exclusively through the words printed between the covers of the novel.
- 2) It is a wholly imaginary space with an imaginary narrative aspect that transcends architectural features and takes shape within the fictional world in an imaginary story; it acquires its meaning and symbolism wholly through the semantic relationships that the characters bestow upon it; and
- 3) A cultural space comprising all the ideas, perceptions, values, and feelings capable of being expressed by means of a given linguistic system.

The geographical space in the novel «Confessions of Hamed El-Mansi» written by the Algerian novelist Lazhar Attia constitutes a fundamental dimension of his literary creativity. What is so saliently remarkable about his literary prowess is that he attaches a great deal of attention to the places where his characters move and where the different events of his novel unfold.

This novel depicts, amongst an array of other facts, the conflicts, frustrations, and doubts frequently experienced by the Algerian intellectual. It narrates the daily life of Hamed, a History and Geography teacher, a snooper whose only mission is to merely observe the world around him and record his opinions and observations. He lives all alone and forgotten in his city, which usually engenders a sense of alienation and loneliness within him. Hamed's forgotten journey of alienation is, at its core, «a journey of self and discovery within the ruins of a lethal civilization that has been robbed of all possible elements of life». (Aqaq, 2001, p. 21) This alienation has forced him to turn inward, where his profoundly felt sense of social marginalization has transformed him into a social rebel, eager and determined to drastically alter reality.

Hamed's character expresses «a social stratum out of which reality is formed». (Buwajra, 1986, p. 128) It embodies the manifold manifestations of the forgotten, abandoned, and marginalized character, who, through his differing realities, whether they be intellectual, psychological, and moral, expresses a specific social stratum. He is the son of a destitute, forgotten, fifth-class man in his city, which is forgotten and neglected like him. His mother chose to name him Mansiyan hoping that death, which tore her motherly heart to pieces as it took the lives of all his brothers, would forget him and let him live. Death forgot him, and he was constantly reminded by sorrows, worries, and bouts of acute anxiety that afflict him. Despite everything he suffers from in his life, he appears patient and broad-minded, grateful and content for what was destined for him in his life.

We will address in what follows the most significant places in the novel, which constitute the subject of the study. They were all chosen in complete accordance with the displacements they took, as they had a visibly clear impact on shaping the novel's world.

## **2 The Strangeness of the Place/City**

The city, as an open space, sends out clear and loud messages of absolute freedom from various restrictions, regardless of whether they happen to be religious, ideological, or customary. It also expresses the unleashing of imagination and thought. The clear impact of the city's space is abundantly evident in the novel «Confessions of Hamed El-Mansi» through the diversity of its connotations. It sometimes represents confusion, « (...) I went out, and through the high school door, the city streets swallowed me up like spider webs». (Attia, 2007, p. 21) The city refers here to the meaning of expansion and its significance. It does not swallow the writer as an entity as such; rather, it swallows his thoughts and obsessions; it does so indiscriminately to all people. We read, «(...) Perhaps the city's street s swallowed it up in the same way they swallowed me and swallow all people». (Attia, p. 21)

What is immediately discernible from this quote is that the writer holds a bleak and pessimistic view not only about his own city (Skikda), but about all cities. He wants to take revenge on it and eliminate it; he wrote, «It is a very nice and beautiful city, but it deserves nothing more than to be completely wiped out of the face of the planet». (Attia, p. 26) This pessimistic feeling is, oddly enough, far more positive than negative; he simply and purely seeks change, whether on the material or intellectual level.

Accordingly, for him, the city is associated with purely psychological meanings. It, on some occasions, carries meanings of evil, and it carries meanings of love on other occasions. It is the arena where his divergent psychological states are unleashed, and the stage for many real events. It is the shelter that includes the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated. It remembers the forgotten and the forgotten remembers it, but none recalls them. It is the meeting place of all the forgotten.

The description of the city in the novel «Confessions of Hamed El-Mansi» is generated fundamentally when the novel's language self-activates and celebrates itself. It is noteworthy, by the same token, that the description of the city here primarily aims to create the general meaning of the novel. We ought to draw attention to this: This significance is by no means separable from it, as all novel's events, regardless of their nature and value, take place within it, and all its characters move on its stage in its houses and in its streets. It is the space that they cannot conceivably go without, in precisely the same way that virtually no one can dispense with women, for,

«Cities (...) are exactly like women; some of them are wives, some of them are lovers, companions, and sweethearts. Some of them deserve a day of life, some of them deserve a month, an hour, or a year, and some of them deserve a lifetime». (Attia, p. 121)

Herein the writer's vision of his own city becomes transparently obvious. His description thereof goes far beyond merely comparing it to a woman; instead, he immerses himself in imbuing her with its physical characteristics. This is what makes the city a special space,

«And still, tranquillity reigned over our neighbourhood, which slept peacefully in this valley, between these two heights, as if it had settled between the buttocks of an old woman sleeping on her stomach.

'That's what I thought back then, anyway. Never in my life have I happened to see a bare-buttocked old woman sleeping on her stomach. (...) And I'm doing all this for solely one

reason, namely to compare an old woman with this city that sleeps all her life naked on its stomach, in front of everyone...». (Attia, p. 31)

What is attention-grabbing is that he compared her solely to an old woman, not a young woman or a girl; this is prone to give rise to the emergence of a wide array of different readings and interpretations, taking one single tour in his city, Skikda, but one tour will set strict boundaries to the available readings before us and take away the interpretations. Similarly, it will open our eyes to one strikingly inevitable reading, which is history, i.e. the history of this city proper and its construction; it is the legacy of the Turks and the French, and what has remained of the ruins of the Roman civilisation as well as that of the Phoenicians; it is the rubble of buildings that time has grown on. It does not contain any of the manifestations, or even tiny vestiges, of civilization: it precisely resembles the body of an old man or woman that is eroding day after day, but it remains the only refuge when the beauties of contemporary cities abandon it.

It is worth highlighting that the description of this city had the lion's share of the pages making up the novel in its entirety: the writer deployed it as a framework for practising his hobby of undressing women and enjoying their bodies. We read:

« (...) I have seen women and girls in this position, but I have never seen an old woman. Yet I can imagine her like that, taking her from the crowd to a place where nobody can behold us, then strip her of the items of clothing she is wearing, stretch her out on her stomach, and watch her without touching or getting close her and without her realising it. I will, then, take her back as she had been to where she had been before I picked her (...)». (Attia, p. 26)

What is, therefore, straightforwardly noticeable is that he remoulded the city in an eccentric, creative, and artistic way, by stripping it of virtually all traces of its conventional characteristics bearing on location and topography, and substituting them all with quintessentially human physical trappings. These physical specifications and details of the body (the city/woman) were investigated by virtue of dwelling painstakingly carefully on the relationship they hold with another spatial entity, «the valley». He wrote:

«You find nothing in the south of the city with the sole exception of one of its valleys, calm and extended, precisely as you would after your exhausting fatigue. It dyes her legs and isolates her from the external world surrounding her, as if it were girdling it, after they have expanded or as if it were lifting her clothes (that she drags) in order that they will not get wet.

This city expanded, stretched out its legs, and managed to go past him towards the south, but it fell short of freeing itself from him. He remained glued to it, creating a waist for it to caress her, or to pull her when he was angry. Can you imagine it without him? You cannot conceivably imagine a woman without a waist, and now you are caressing in your memory the waists of all the women you have known in your life». (Attia, pp. 58-59)

The significance here shifts and puts us right in front of a scene hallmarked by extreme degrees of both precision and depiction. It discloses a highly delicate sense, through imagining the city as a woman, and the valley as a man, in an overt confirmation of the duality (woman/man) whose two sides are utterly inseparable. He depicted the valley as the image of a man who always seeks to please her, through caressing her. The suggestive significance (valley/man) did not depart from the realistic significance, nor did the significance (woman/city), but the strangeness has taken shape thanks to this duality, which imparts the city with a brand-new significance.

This is what has left a distinct imprint on the city's space in "Confessions of Hamed El-Mansi" with its exotic and suggestive character, most particularly with the precise physical details he bestowed upon it. The characteristics of the old woman to whom he likened his city



gave it profound connotations, unearthing the deep and close connection between place and body, both on the organic and symbolic levels. Hence, we can infer that the way the space is presented carries a metaphorical connotation, which serves to faithfully echo the situation and concerns of those moving within it. This is accomplished fundamentally by a range of symbolic values linked to their journey of searching for self in the rubble of a society that has lost all the essentials of life.

## **2.2 Space of Remembrance/The Village**

The village or countryside often lingers in the writers' and poets' imagination; it, therefore, usually automatically manifests itself in their creative works. Even if they happen to migrate to the city, nostalgia and longing continue to draw them back to their old days and way of life in the village. Their identity is derived from,

«The space that constitutes an inseparable part of the identity of the rural Bedouin. It is the source of their material and spiritual life; it stands as a living symbol of simultaneously belonging to both the land and the homeland». (Sanqouqa, 2000, p. 219)

Perhaps the most crucial thing that Hamed remembers in the novel «Confessions of the Forgotten Hamed» is his own childhood days. He said, «And it takes me far away into years which were mostly years of childhood, misery and hardship». (Attia, p. 32)

But it is a beautiful misery, which only happens once in a lifetime, and it is much sweeter than the misery of the present. That is essentially what makes Hamid resort to it as a source of solace for him. He wrote, «...then he hides it away in his memory, to provide for himself in times of need. And in our memory, there are wondrous and strange things about the world of childhood that comes back». (Attia, p. 32) It is a past. Notwithstanding all the pain it carries, it gave Hamid his glory and history and significantly contributed to shaping his personality, especially since it was linked to historical events dating back to the French occupation, its countless injustice and despicable acts of tyranny. He wrote:

«Some of the children in our book told me that she cried when her eyes fell on a French officer slapping me one day. The slap was not particularly strong, but it was painful, or perhaps it was fear that made her burst into tears» (Attia, p. 40)

The same pain and happiness were unexceptionally shared by all children of that bleak past. Hamed says, «As for me, I was in a lot of pain, but I did not cry when they beat and brutally tortured one of my friends». (Attia, p. 40) The unhappiness he is currently going through is tasteless. It is unhappiness in its truest sense, because it does not have the faintest contribution in character-building; on the contrary, it demolished everything his childhood built. (Poverty is what made him become a teacher.)

The space of remembrance is also transparently evident in his memories of Zuleikha, who

«would often [...] bring with her a piece of white bread, as soft as her body and as puffy and tender as her body. And she would feed me from it, and I would feel the striking difference between me and her. There is indeed a substantially big difference between what she eats and what I eat». (Attia, p. 39)

This demonstrates the social differences that existed in that village. He was poor and Zuleikha was rich. However, that did not stand in the way of their connection and did not render their friendship an impossibility. This unambiguously depicts the well-established human values the rural person owns, and this is exactly what massively contributed to building his personality. The village represented a refuge to which he constantly sought from the bitter daily reality he was besieged with, irrespective of whether that reality had a social or psychological one.

The village represents in Al-Azhar Attia's works a symbol of purity and cleanliness. With its heart-warmingly enchanting beauty, it is nature's widest and most spacious space, where people live naturally, especially in the spring season, «And when spring comes, and the flowers bloom and reveal their beautiful secrets to all, Zuleikha's body blooms with it, and its hidden treasures are revealed». (Attia, p. 38) Thus, the rural space is transformed into a haven where people take refuge and harmonize with each other, where simplicity and transparency of human relationships prevail. It is the village per se that represents the connection that binds people, nature and land together; it means everything to them.

The village remains in the mind of the writer, as in the minds of many writers, the earth and the sky, the truest and most infinite secret of creation and ecstasy. It is the escape that never shuts its door in the face of its seeker. It is the past, the present, and the future. It is the cradle of holiness, purity, virginity, and clarity. It is simultaneously the beginning and the end.

The rural geographical space consists of, in addition to the village, the mountain space. The concept of the village has become widely attached in popular thinking to the concept of the mountain, and the latter has come to metaphorically refer to the village. The possibilities accounting for this deeply rooted attachment vary between the difficulty of living in the village, like the difficulty of climbing a mountain, or the fact that most villages are bordered by mountains.

The novelist Al-Azhar Attia, like those writers, authors, and poets, has not been remotely immune against this influence: he was incredibly captivated by this salient natural element. That is evident in his writings; he loads it with books of endless meanings. For him, it is a refuge and a haven for escaping the city's world that has lost its innocence. It symbolizes the authentic past, so we read, «I now lean on a part of this city's history». (Attia, p. 26)

It is, by the same token, a tangible symbol of both survival and distinction, as we read, «I am sitting here, waiting for the flood: how it will happen, when it will happen, and what it will do to this city». (Attia, p. 28) The mountain in 'Confessions of Hamed El-Mansi' may be suggestive of the many and varied mountains of endless thoughts constantly crossing his mind, or rather the heaps of ideas crowding his mind fuelled and nourished essentially by what he has been through and he is seeing in the hustle and bustle of the vast city.

The mountain can, therefore, be seen as the refuge where the novelist exercises his freedom, viewing the world through his own unique lenses. The mountain's connotations are fragmented, fragment after fragment, in Al-Azhar Attia's works, fusing with this space, taken whole ownership of it, and even preventing it from going back home. We read, «The forgotten one is absorbed and does not have the faintest desire to return home». (Attia, p. 29) In this novel, the mountain represents not only sanctity and loftiness, but also control, and history; it is the sole refuge for Hamed.

### **3.2 Contemplation Space/the Beach:**

In the novel, the beach manifests itself as an outlet for Hamed's character, free from the city's strains and stresses, which engulfed Hamed with incessant pain. It is an escape from the city, the source of his constant anxiety and boredom. For him, it is a haven for mental relaxation. We read, «From the minute I knew the sea, I have simultaneously loved and dreaded it. That is why you will find me repeatedly going there». (Attia, p. 23)

It is the very space that possesses him, swallows him together with all his thoughts, and hears him without revealing what it told him. It echoes the dialogue between the human soul and the sea breeze. It is what sets renewal in motion and swallows the old because it is the source of life. Let us read, «And when I reached the sea, I found myself filling my lungs



with sea air, then emptying them, inhaling, exhaling, inhaling, exhaling, and my eyes kept looking only in the sea direction». (Attia, p. 24)

What Hamed appears to cherish most about the sea is its turmoil and agitation, because it eloquently expresses his own turmoil and turbulent psyche. He says, «I like the sea when it is turbulent, violently and tirelessly hitting the rocks of the shore». (Attia, p. 24)

Hamed lives in a city where modern civilization (Platzhalter1)n, with all its manifestations, takes over humanity. This makes him experience spiritual alienation that leads him to search for a space for contemplation and discovery. Whenever he is overcome by boredom and anxiety emanating from his overt rebellion and resentment towards the conditions of society, he leaves everything behind and runs towards the seashore; he sees there a horizon without barriers, which quite unlike the city that is filled with barriers that stand in the way of his aspirations and ideas, is an infinite fertile space for intellectual openness.

The most profound and accurate expression written in this regard is the one Shaker Al-Nabulsi tailored in a triumphant attempt to faithfully describe the sea and the inextricable linkage it holds with the various psychological states when he said: «A place depicted through the emotions of the soul and its manifestations and the events and incidents surrounding it, that is, through the psychological state». (Al-Nabulsi, 1994, pp. 99-100)

Al-Azhar Attia remains a sea wrestling against itself, filled with the pain of the city's waves and the saltiness of its suffering that has dwelled in its streets, hoping that this city will change. Why not? The cure for this «old woman» will be in the foam of such waves per se.

Upon the whole, it can be stated that the sea has a deep psychological significance. It is an ideal space for prolonged contemplation and instant relief, and an escape from the city's hustle, bustle, and noise.

### **Conclusion**

Geographical space takes up a huge portion (if not the overwhelming majority) of the novel «Confessions of Hamed El-Mansi». These spaces serve as the setting for the novel's events; they furnish a solid backdrop for them, and thanks to the, they unfold, develop, progress, disappear and end.

The novelist did fabulously well in cherry-picking his geographical locations, selecting them with great care. What hallmarks these locations is that civilization and urbanity there mingled harmoniously with the countryside and barbarism. The sea and mountains represented an outlet and escape from the city's hustle and bustle. Most importantly of all, their presence was simple, spontaneous, and automatic, expressing the novelist's vision with utmost honesty.

The geographical space manifested itself in a number of places that significantly contributed to shaping the narrative structure, and weaving communication bonds with the recipient who found himself/herself before places known in reality but scattered imaginatively and visually. This enabled the writer to clarify his own intellectual vision; as the city in the novel went beyond its known meaning on accounts of a multiplicity of displacements woven by the creative experience. Its rules were likewise strengthened and solidified by the writer's artistic vision, as it represented confusion and pessimism, and was a truthfully fertile arena for different psychological states. Moreover, it contributed through merging with the rest of the spaces (the village/the mountain/the beach) in creating the general meaning of the novel as it is the stage on which the characters of the novel move.

It is readily inferable from what has been mentioned previously that the novelist was remarkably creative in his wise selection of places; he was patently able, with a unique creative

prowess, to combine these places not as they are in reality, but rather as he imagined them and the new connotations he so skillfully attached to every one of them. What is pivotally important in the novelistic discourse, which imparts outstanding value to his work, is indubitably the significant role played by the geographical space within the narrative text as a verbal and imaginary space that holds cultural, social as well as psychological dimensions, not what it merely refers to in terms of places that have a physical existence in tangible reality.

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