

Plurality of Places and the Politics of Spaces: Lieu – Espace  
Representations in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*



*Dissertation submitted to St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) in partial fulfillment of the  
requirement for the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY in  
English Language and Literature*

By  
SHAJINA. T. C  
Register No. SMP18EN008

Supervisor  
Dr. Jisha John  
Assistant Professor  
Department of English  
St. Teresa's College (Autonomous)  
Ernakulam  
Kerala

JULY 2019



## Urkund Analysis Result

Analysed Document: Shajina-Plurality of Places and the Politics of Spaces:  
Lieu - Espace Representations in The Ministry of Utmost  
Happiness.docx (D54590606)

Submitted: 7/27/2019 1:06:00 PM

Submitted By: library@mgu.ac.in

Significance: 3 %

### Sources included in the report:

<https://www.news18.com/news/books/read-an-excerpt-from-arundhati-roys-the-ministry-of-utmost-happiness-1423707.html>

[http://6booksy.com/books/The-Ministry-of-Utmost-Happiness/page\\_17.html](http://6booksy.com/books/The-Ministry-of-Utmost-Happiness/page_17.html)

<http://www.jayabhattacharjirose.com/arundhati-roys-the-ministry-of-utmost-happiness/>

<http://lareviewofbooks.org/article/outside-language-and-power-the-mastery-of-arundhati-roys-the-ministry-of-utmost-happiness/#!>

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/arts/books/2017/06/01/novel-examines-how-sectarian-hatred-violence-shapes-characters-india/0TePVfEFJOXeMzw1wARGdP/story.html.3571ed33-cd9d-4dfa-ac2c-85eb0ab87afd>

### Instances where selected sources appear:

14

V-11  
27/7/2019

*Annu George*  
27-07-2019  
ANNU GEORGE  
Deputy Librarian in-charge  
University Library  
Mahatma Gandhi University  
Kottayam - 686 560







## MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY

### CERTIFICATE ON PLAGIARISM CHECK

1. Name of the M. Phil Research Scholar	Shajina T.C
2. Title of the Thesis/Dissertation	Plurality of Places and the Politics of Spanish Lima - Spanish Representations in The Ministry of Utmost Happiness
3. Name of the Supervisor	Dr. Jisha John
4. Department/Institution/ Research Centre	Department of English St. Teresa's College
5. Similar Content (%) Identified	3% (Three)
6. Acceptable Maximum Limit	25%
7. Software Used	Utkord
8. Date of Verification	27-07-2019

\* Report on plagiarism check, items with % of similarity is attached

Checked by (with Name, Designation & Signature):

*[Handwritten signature]*  
27-7-2019

*[Handwritten signature]*  
**AMTU GEORGE**  
Deputy Librarian in-charge  
University Library  
Mahatma Gandhi University  
Kottayam - 686 561



Name & Signature of the Researcher : Shajina T.C

Name & Signature of the Supervisors : Dr. Jisha John

Name & Signature of the HOD/Head/Chairperson of the Doctoral Committee:



# St. Xavier's College for Women, Aluva

(Established in 1964)

Ernakulam Dist., Kerala 683101  
 (Affiliated to M.G. University, Kottayam & Re Accredited by NAAC with 'A' Grade)

## INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

**The Dynamics of Histrionics: Themes, Motifs and Emerging Trends  
 in Contemporary Theatre**

### Certificate

This is to certify that Mr./Ms./Dr. SHAJINA T.C MPhil Scholar  
Department of English St. Teresa's College Ernakulam has participated /served  
 as a resource person/played a session/ served in the organising committee and presented a paper titled  
ESPALE - LI EU REPRESENTATIONS IN PYGMALION [In absentia]

In the International Seminar organised by the Postgraduate Department of English and Research Centre,  
 the Department of Communicative English and the Theatre Club on 25th and 26th June 2019.

*Sr Francis*  
 Ms. Sruthy Francis. M  
 Co ordinator

*Dr. Lima Antony*  
 Dr. Lima Antony  
 (H.O.D)



*Dr. Sr. Geege Joanamma Xavier*  
 Dr. Sr. Geege Joanamma Xavier  
 Principal  
 PRINCIPAL  
 St. Xavier's College for Women  
 Aluva-681 101, Kerala

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled “Plurality of Places and the politics of Spaces: Lieu- Espace Representations in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*”, is a record of bona fide work done by me under the supervision of Dr. Jisha John, Assistant Professor, Department of English for the degree of M.Phil in English language and Literature, and that no part of the dissertation has been presented earlier for the award of any degree, diploma or any other similar title of recognition.

Ernakulam  
28 July 2019

Shajina. T.C  
Reg. No. SMP18EN008  
M.Phil English  
St. Teresa’s College (Autonomous)  
Ernakulam

## CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this dissertation entitled “Plurality of Places and the Politics of Spaces: Lieu-Espace Representations in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*”, submitted to St. Teresa’s College (Autonomous), affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam in partial fulfillment of the award of M.Phil degree in English Language and Literature is a bona fide work carried out by Shajina. T. C under my supervision and guidance.

Dr. Beena Job

Head of the Department

Dr. Jisha John

Assistant professor

Department of English

St. Teresa’s College

(Autonomous)

Ernakulam

28 July 2019



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to convey my earnest appreciation to those who have contributed to this thesis and supported me in one way or the other during this remarkable journey. Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor Dr. Jisha John, Assistant Professor, Department of English, St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), for the continuous support of my research, for her patience, motivation, and immense knowledge. Her deep insights helped me at various stages of my research. Without her help this dissertation wouldn't have been possible.

I am sincerely grateful to the Coordinator in charge of M.Phil programme, Dr. Priya K. Nair, Department of English, St. Teresa's College, whose inspiration, and timely support, has paved the way for the successful completion of this dissertation. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Ms. Lakshmi Priya B., M.Phil class teacher for her support and cooperation. They have played a commendable role in making me understand my capabilities. My gratitude for their invaluable insights and suggestions can hardly be expressed in words.

I express my heartfelt appreciation to Rev. Dr. Sr. Vinitha CSST (Celine E), Director, St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Dr. Sajimol Augustine, Principal, St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Dr. Beena Job, the Head of the Department of English for the facilities they have provided for the successful completion of this work. And I also thank all the faculty members of the English department who have guided me with utmost sincerity all the way through my project. I would like to thank my family, parents, husband, twins and Ms. Sreelakshmi M, Ms. Arsha Kurian, Ms. Sandhya George and all my other classmates for their love and support.

Shajina. T. C



## CONTENTS

	Introduction	1-10
Chapter 1	<i>The Ministry of Utmost Happiness: A Rigmarole of Spaces</i>	11-35
Chapter 2	Aftab to Anjum: Identification of Places and the Actualization of Spaces	36-57
Chapter 3	Practiced Places: A Quest for Upswing	58-75
	Conclusion	76-80
	Works Consulted	81-89

## INTRODUCTION

When Arundhati Roy won the prestigious Man Booker prize in 1997 she was celebrated for an amazing and extra ordinary piece of art and her magical and exceptional writing skills. After twenty years and the second novel available to the public, her growth as a writer would give an account of the transformation of an author who talks about the ‘little things’ in a small state like Kerala to someone who deals with a large canvas depicting the socio cultural and political issues of her home country. A significant writer, activist and spokeswoman for different social outcasts, Roy shows tremendous integrity living a life which reflects her political stance. She is constant in the manifestations of ‘small things’ in her writings as her debut novel *The God of Small Things* portrays a pair of twins with their marooned and estranged afflictions while the second novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* concentrates on a motley group of pariahs who find peace and serenity in an extremely strange place like a graveyard. Her social criticism is vigilant that she has a keen observation on the Indian reality of the caste system, religious conflicts, transgender issues and Kashmir and Maoist insurgent groups.

Born on November 24, 1961 in Shillong, Meghalaya to a Hindu tea planter and Syrian Christian teacher, Roy’s parents had separated when she was two. She had her primary education in a very informal school run by her mother and as a result developed a form of thinking entirely different from others who got a formal education. Roy learned to think in different ways and demonstrated her independence at an early age of sixteen leaving her family to live alone in Delhi. She sold empty beer bottles for money and slept under a tin roof. She observed the changing cultural, political and economic situations in India. Eventually she got an admission in the Delhi School of Architecture and from there met her first husband Gerard Da Cunha. Even after marriage they left to Goa and started a cake business. Roy became unenthusiastic and ended

her married life in four years. She managed to get a job in the National Institute of Urban Affairs where she met her future second husband, director Pradeep Krishen. He offered her a role in his award winning movie *Massey Sahib*. Soon after the marriage she received a scholarship to study in Italy. Coming back, with her husband she started to write screenplays for television series which resulted in a number of successful films like *In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones* and *Electric Moon*. Pradeep and Roy separated. She grabbed public attention with the controversial critique of the film *Bandit Queen*. She questioned the right to restage the rape of a living woman without her consent as the movie was based on the life of Phoolan Devi. She began to concentrate more on her writing eventually producing the first and highly successful novel *The God of Small Things*. She was the first Indian writer to receive the Man Booker Prize for Fiction. The novel was translated into sixteen languages and she was compared to Charles Dickens and William Faulkner for the way in which she deals with the social issues of class, race and gender. Soon after the success of her debut novel she started writing political pamphlets. She criticized whatever she felt wrong even if it was against the social norm. She also wrote a television serial *The Banyan Tree* and the documentary *DAM/AGE: A Film with Arundhati Roy*. As a social activist Roy focused more on writing political pamphlets. She has marked her opinions regarding many socio-political issues like the Narmada Dam Project, India's nuclear weapons and American power giant Enron's activities, neo-imperialism, anti-globalization movements and Kashmir and Maoist issues as it is observed in *The New Yorker*:

Most frequently, she criticizes India's fondness for big dams, and its cruelty to the people displaced by them. She lambasts the American imperium and its souped-up capitalism, multinational institutions like the World Bank, and corporate greed. She flays the Hindu supremacists in India, who have sparked pogroms, divided

communities, and tightened their hold on power, and she writes with sympathy about Maoists, the militant insurgents in central India who are fighting a state that is plundering the earth of ore and coal. Roy's preoccupation with these topics has been so absolute that her second novel, when she finally produced it was stocked with characters personifying her causes. (Subramanian)

The essays entitled *The Greater Common Good* and *The End of Imagination* discuss the issues of dams and condemnation on India's nuclear testing. Among her other politically oriented non fictions are *Power Politics*(2001), *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* (2002), *War Talk* ( 2003), *Public Power in the Age of Empire* (2004), *Field Notes on Democracy: Listening to Grasshoppers* (2009), *Broken Republic: Three Essays* (2011), and *Capitalism: A Ghost Story* (2014). Her support of the Maoist and Naxalite insurgency groups are declared in her *Walking with the Comrades* (2011). She also raised her voice for the Kashmir people and cosigned an open letter for Afghan women to be involved in peace talks between the United States and Taliban. In recognition of her outspoken advocacy of human rights she was awarded the Lannan Cultural Freedom Award in 2002, the Sydney Peace Prize in 2004, and the Sahitya Akademi Award from the Indian Academy of Letters in 2006.

Arundhati Roy's most anticipated novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* discusses the shattered yet recuperated lives of different social outcasts of the Indian subcontinent. It discloses the reality of the present day socio-political conditions of India. The novel was published in the year 2017 and was long listed for the Man Booker Prize. With the publication, Roy has surprised the readers with its diverse characters of different walks of life. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is not a linear narrative instead a concoction of a number of parallel woven stories of different social outcasts like transgender, women, Dalits, Maoists and Militants. It focuses on

two female protagonists named Anjum and Tilottama whose happiness, sorrows, struggles, hopes and dreams are vividly portrayed. The novel unfolds the social, political and cultural changes of the Indian subcontinent over forty years while the interweaved plot talks about different people from the lower class of the society. Roy, a keen observer of the social and political issues like the 2002 Gujarat Massacre, Bhopal Gas Tragedy, Kashmir Insurgency, Maoist, Dalit and other minority issues picturizes the plight of the different social outcasts and also gives an account of their resistance. It is through the resistance of love and hope the characters survive by gathering in a very strange and abandoned place like a graveyard. Beautiful language, profound creativity, blending of both imagination and reality and the presence of Urdu language to expose myth and religion mark an innovative writing technique of the Indian fiction as it is observed in *The Boston Globe*:

Throughout Roy displays a fine understanding of the absurdities that communicate menace and how these absurdities are used to inflict power by rewriting the rules of logic. . . . For, as beautifully local and specific as this novel is – many a reader will turn its pages with a dictionary in hands, looking up everything from plants to Hindustani musicians – the story it tells, of the abuse of power and the communities that rise in the ashes of that abuse, is eternal. (Freeman)

Bringing all the castaways of the nation under one roof, the novel evidently reflects Roy's personal political stand. On the present day scenario of fascism and intolerance, Roy unmasks the underlying political and social fault lines and shows how people from different walks of life can adhere to form a shelter under one roof of utmost happiness.

The concept of spatial form has undoubtedly become central to modern criticism of literature as well as fine arts and Cultural Studies. In histories, the concept of space has got little prominence. It was considered as an empty and lifeless idea reducible to stages which pay attention only to events unfolding in time. The concept of time was fecund as writers and critics went over praising it with rich descriptions. This trend was interrupted by Henry James in the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by celebrating in his novels a complex psychological aspect of the characters. But when the characters were presented as temporal constructs that unfold in a space, the space has got prominence second only to the characters. Philosopher Edward Soja, in his ground breaking study *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* marked his observations about the subordination of spatiality in social theories in 1989. With that, the question of space started to emerge in the interdisciplinary fields of space, place, and Cultural Studies. There was a tendency to return to the writers in the history to address the unfashionable spatial questions of their time like the discussion of embodiment, world and enframing in Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*, Exploration of the relationship between northern and southern Italy in the social and cultural modernization of Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*, the lyrical spatial phenomenology of Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* and the analysis of the novelistic chronotopes of Mikhail M. Bakhtin. These thinkers together were a challenge to Kantian and Enlightenment notion of space as an empty container in which human activities are found. They treated space as a force which influence and direct human beings. As according to Soja, spatiality is both real and imagined, a continuous reorganization of the environments including our bodies.

The concept of space entered into the field of literary studies through different ways; with Marxism, as the colonial and post colonial studies focused on the European domination



over space and the migrations and interactions of people and cultures. Feminism and Gender Studies also paved the way, as the focus of study lies on body and sexuality. With the wide area of focus and the overlapping disciplines of popular culture, the spatial concepts entered into the field of literary studies. Henri Lefebvre and Michel Foucault are the two French philosophers who significantly contributed to this emergence. Lefebvre's major work entitled *The Production of Space* which ranges from urbanism, architecture, social theory and cultural studies had a drastic influence. In his work he talks about the social space produced by capitalist modernity. While Lefebvre's work offers a powerful mechanism of the spatial dimensions, Foucault in his significant work entitled *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* gives an account of genealogical history of the spatial transformations that give rise to our modern world. He believes that if social and cultural spaces including the body are the product of human actions there is a possibility of reconstituting human spaces. In recent years, many writers investigate the production of spaces in literary forms, cultural theories and daily life practices like Meaghan Morris' innovative spatial project of the Australian documentary *A Spire*, Judith Butler's examination of communal spaces in the film *Paris is Burning* and Michel de Certeau's notion of the urban spaces in *Walking in the City* etc.

One of the significant French Jesuit scholars, Michel de Certeau's works combining Philosophy, Psychoanalysis, Social Sciences, History, Sociology and his concept on everyday life practices were highly influential in the development of the field of Cultural Studies. de Certeau was greatly influenced by the famous Psychoanalyst and Philosopher Sigmund Freud, and along with Jacques Lacan had worked as a founding member of *Ecole Freudienne de Paris*, an informal group for the French scholars who are interested in Psychoanalysis and Freudian theories. He earned his Doctorate from the Sorbonne (University of Paris) and soon after started

his celebrated study of Jean Joseph Suren, a French Jesuit mystic, preacher, devotional writer and exorcist. de Certeau bagged public attention after publishing an article about the civil unrest of France in 1968. He was a visiting professor at universities like Geneva, San Diego and Paris where he talked about Mysticism, Phenomenology, and Psychoanalysis. de Certeau explored the fields of theories of everyday life practices which are repetitive, unconscious and according to him, a force which unify people into groups and separate them. de Certeau identifies himself in the first place as an historian of spirituality as his works on early modern mysticism open up a grand-breaking research in religious studies and theology. de Certeau is considered as a celebrated philosopher for his critique of historiography and the analysis of the spatial dimensions of daily life practices as it is observed in the book *Michel de Certeau: Interpretation and its Other*: “Certeau conceives his historiography as a treatment for absence. He analyses it as an activity which is irredeemably separated from the presence of its object. This thwarted relation to its object constitutes for Certeau both the starting point and vanishing point of historical interpretation” (Ahearne 9). One of the well-received and influential works of Michel de Certeau entitled *The Practice of Everyday Life* talks about a theory inextricably connected to the activities of day to day life which are habitual, repetitive and unconscious. The book is considered as a significant account of the study of everyday life in which de Certeau analyzes different ways people individualize mass culture and practices from utilitarian objects to street plans to rituals, laws and language by changing patterns and shapes to make them their own.

de Certeau’s concept of space as a major category in the history and analysis of cultural practices has influenced the later spatial turn in art history. In his theories there is an inherent politics of space and the space which is intrinsically political changes the social realities of place. For example, in his book he differentiates experiencing a city high above the ground and walking

through it. Both the processes are entirely different. For him the top-down view of public officials and city planners to see spaces as frozen and static entity, neglects small dynamics that brings life to the city. He omits standing on top of a building to look down at the objective totality of the city with a totalizing eye, instead prefers walking through the city with its own rhetoric and a scope of writing a subjective course of the urban space. The pedestrian walk with his own style and would take part in the creation of meanings. Those meanings which are subjective would be entirely different from the previous meanings assigned to it by the city planners. They become liberated spaces that can be occupied.

Certeau's distinction between space and place are significant in the discussion of the spatiality of the places. A place is supposed to function in a certain way, take for example a building -it has got a particular landscape, interior structure, fences, gates and parking lots. A viewer from the outside may identify it as a properly functioning structure. They may also understand the building even from a photograph or statistical account of it (like the graduation rate of a schools or college, products selling ratios of markets, number of vehicles pass through an area of the city etc.). They may reach in conclusions about the working of a building without even visiting the place. Such reductive understanding of places by people leads de Certeau to distinguish 'spaces' (espaces) from 'places' (lieu) in his *The Practice of Everyday Life*. According to him, "a place (lieu) is the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence. It thus excludes the possibility of two things being in the same location. . . . A place is thus an instantaneous configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability" (Rendall 117). An out stander identifies a place as a stable, concretely distinguishable 'place'. A collection of elements which assist the proper functioning of it. For example, market is a place where the process of buying and selling takes place. A physical

structure containing streets or shops made up of durable materials, different shops with variable products, vehicles parked on both sides, shopkeepers with variety of products arranged in the racks etc. Contrary to place, “A space exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile element. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it”

(Rendall 117). On any given day a particular 'place' is a 'space'. For example a market is composed of people wandering around the shops, looking, searching and bargaining for products, delivery men and vehicles moving around, people purchasing different stuffs, shop owners arranging and rearranging their products calling for the attention of the people and ladies doing their happy shopping amid kids running and crying for toys and chocolates. Although the market is made to sell and buy products that is not the only thing happening there. Or sometimes it is exactly what is happening.

The dissertation entitled “Plurality of Places and the Politics of Spaces: Lieu – Espace Representations in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*” deals with the lieu-espace aspects of the novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. It focuses on the places described in the novel and analyzes how the places are converted to spaces with vectors of directions, velocities and time variables. It also traces the inherent politics of elements which constitute those places into spaces. To walk is to lack a place. The dissertation analyses the role played by the spaces in converting the female characters like Anjum and S. Tilottama to happy, bold and courageous women. The spaces they traverse through mould and shape them. The first chapter entitled “*The Ministry of Utmost happiness: A Rigmarole of Spaces*” discusses the socio-political aspects of the novel as well as the space-place (espace-lieu) theory of Michel de Certeau. The second chapter entitled “Aftab to Anjum: Identification of Places and the Actualization of Spaces”

focuses on the places Anjum goes through in her life. It discusses the identification of certain places like Shahjahanabad, Khwabgah, the Jannat Guest House, Gujarat and Jantar Mantar and chases the elements which convert the places into spaces with vectors of directions, velocities and time variables. The chapter also tries to focus on the places (spaces) contribute converting Aftab into Anjum, to ‘a mother’ whom Aftab always dreamt of becoming. The ways spaces mold and shape Aftab for this transformation are also taken into consideration. Third chapter entitled “Practiced Places: A Quest for Upswing” chases S. Tilottama’s journey and transformation. The places she covers in an arduous journey which finally ends up in the Jannat Guest House are brought under discussion. How the places are being turned to spaces and how the spaces contribute in transfiguring Tilo into a bold and courageous woman are also discussed. Tilo’s journey through the Kashmir Valleys which begins from HB Shaheen and ends up in the Jannat Guest House is traced and the spaces identified.

## Chapter 1

### *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness: A Rigmarole of Spaces*

Arundhati Roy's most anticipated novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* hovers around the Indian subcontinent over a landscape of old and new Delhi streets, fringe tranquil yet the war ridden valleys of Kashmir, and the abandoned forests of South India, culling and cooing shattered stories. Beautifully narrating the fragmented stories of the discrete Indian lives, the novel focuses on how they finally come together and find peace and content in an extremely strange place like a graveyard. The novel traces how a “genderless, casteless and religionless” place which is so mysterious and abandoned can turn to be jannat for them. A novel which fosters and unfolds from the archaic beauty of the old Delhi streets, the conflicts of Jantar Mantar, and the restlessly war ridden Kashmir valleys to the serene and peaceful Jannat Guest House, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* represents the stories of unconsolated. Deep inside every character in the novel are unconsolated and the author dedicates it to the same.

The novel interweaves the stories of social pariahs such as dalits, minorities, trans people, militants and deviants. Their life is entirely different from the lives of other people in ‘duniya’, where they are kept alone to face the harsh realities of the society and the realization of how even though all of them are tagged as outcasts, their lives are all interconnected in the agony and atrocities they face. The focus of the novel gradually shifts to the anguish of Kashmir people-especially the youth- where their life is alarmingly placed on the back drop of terrorism and military boots. Mariyam Ilyas Siddiqui in her article entitled “The Ministry of Utmost Happiness: Roy’s Attempt to Represent India’s Struggle with Social Issues” says:

She (Roy) always had a cry for the suppressed and marginalized and hence in her latest novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* she makes an attempt to bring all the castaways of the subcontinent under one roof. The novel clearly highlights her personal political stands based on the very idea of 'personal is political'. She has tried to cover every possible theme from queer politics to Gujarat's 2002 pogrom, from violent casteism to neo-liberalism, from Emergency to Narmada Bachao Andolan and what not.

(22)

The novel explores the lives of different personae non gratae. Most of the characters in the novel are unpersons. Anjum, a female trapped in a male body is a trans woman who struggles hard to live a life that she always wanted to live. Her pursuance of being a complete woman amidst all the tribulations constitutes the lacerated life of thousands of trans persons across the Indian subcontinent. Another character Saddam is a Hindu turned Muslim who falls in love with the former president of Iraq Saddam Hussein and his feeling of disdain during the time of execution, is an ill-fated man who witnessed his father getting slaughtered by the so called 'cow protectors' in a cow vigilante violence. He is a representative of hundreds of innocent Muslims (yet Hindus misunderstood as Muslims and are accused of illegal cow smuggling) in the northern parts of India. Tilottama, a divergent soul who is not ready to adhere to the normal life of an Indian woman, like getting married off in adolescence and living the rest of the life amid daily chores, is a lady who don't believe in traditions and is against all modes of shibboleths. She lives a solitary life (until she meets Musa in HB Shaheen) and even don't want to reveal the real identity among her friends in the college. Tilottama is a woman who dares to love a militant like Musa, to get conceived from him, to marry a media person like Naga to save her first love and not to reveal anything about Musa on the verge of losing her life, is also a secret partner in

Musa's journeys. Musa is a zealot, a militant who represents thousands of Kashmiri youth who are in constant struggle for Azadi. He has the ability to fight for his state and people irrespective of the promise of his life. Musa has got more prominence in the novel that through the character Roy tries to portray the real condition of thousands of Kashmiri youths. The heart-rending and excruciating death of both Arifa Yeswi and Miss Jebeen First picturise the distressing situation of war ridden Kashmir valleys. Biplab Das Gupta who is in a state of dismissal from the service due to his uncontrollable addiction to alcohol represents people who are rebellious to their state and its affairs. It is through him the play politics in the novel get divulged. Indeed the novel explores the loss and recuperation of self, love, life and future of these characters on the socio, cultural, and political context of the Indian subcontinent.

The plot is not a linear narrative, instead a concoction of a number of parallel woven stories. Jantar Mantar can be considered as the nerve center from where a number of stories spread like small nerves. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is not merely a story of Anjum or Musa, the major protagonists of first and later part of the novel respectively; instead it unveils a number of other plots too. It reflects on the story lines of the anguished yet revengeful Saddam, the lost yet recouped love story of Tilottama, the harrowing massacres in the valleys of Kashmir including the killings of Arifa Yeswi and Miss Jebeen First, the narration of the life of Biplab Das Gupta on the backdrop of India's social and political context. All these narratives together form the urge to tell a shattered story by "slowly becoming everything"; as it is said in *Politico-Literary Response to Terrorism: A Study of Arundhati Roy's The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*: "The novel is fragmented unwieldy and is short on cohesiveness and conciseness. It is not one novel, rather it is a mix of two novels; one dealing with the *hijra* community and the depressed



class, and the second with the issue of terrorism in Kashmir. Even the third short narrative focusing on a woman Naxalite is sought to be linked loosely towards the end” (Batra 431).

Chasing the social, cultural, historical and political aspects of the Indian subcontinent for a period of forty years, the novel explores the lives of people who are demolished by the world they live in. They all are triumphant in the end as they are rescued and mended by nothing but love and hope. They are as strong as how fragile they are. As successful as how defeated they are and are not ready to give up at any cost. Their life is not normal and is entirely different from the outer world which Hijras call duniya as, “Ordinary people in duniya- what did they know about what it takes to live the life of a Hijra? What did they know about the rules, the discipline and the sacrifices? (Roy 53). *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* tells the story of people who are from different walks of life. There are trans people, straight ones, men and women, dalits, militants, Naxalites, Maoists, deviants and other different groups of minorities. The novel is a story of losses. Arundhati Roy explores the stories of the plight of a Hijra who lost her identity by getting trapped in a male body, a Muslim turned Hindu dalit who lost his father in the cow vigilante violence, a reticent who lost his wife and daughter in the war for independence, a beautiful yet rebellious architect who lost her still unborn child for (of) loving a militant, a drunkard supervisor in the intelligence service who temporary lost his job and indulges in chasing the affairs of his ex-love, a Maoist woman from East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, who is forced to leave her infant in Jantar Mantar, a military officer in charge of counter- insurgency operations in Kashmir who happen to leave his country to US seeking asylum, a mother who lost his intersex son(Aftab) away from home, but still loves and looks after him sending delicious meals every day . Roy also talks about the lost kids, how Zainab and Miss Jebeen two, the abandoned kids fortuitously fulfill Anjum’s dream of being a complete woman. Even though the

novel focuses greatly on the vast, violent and thriving individual losses and mishaps, it also shows how pure love and hope can bring the 'lost people' together and form a land of peace and repose. All the losers are gainers in the end, gathered in a strange place like a graveyard to fill the gaps between them to reconcile and to harmonize as, “He (Guih Kyom) was wide awake and on duty, lying on his back with his legs in the air to save the world in case the heavens fell. But even he knew that things would turn out all right in the end. They would, because they had to” (Roy 438).

Anjum is delighted in the end because with Zainab and Miss Jebeen Two, her dream of being a complete woman is fulfilled. Saddam keeping aside his plan for avenge against Sehrawat, gets a soul mate Zainab. Musa and Tilo rejoin where Miss Jebeen Two, as comrade Revathy's wish is rescued and saved. Biplab Das Gupta is still jobless but happy and content with his private life in the apartment reading books. Everything is set and hassle free.

Arundhati Roy has always been conscientious while talking about the stories of Hijras, Kashmiri militants and other minority groups of the Indian subcontinent. She spent much of the last two decades in politics as a vocal supporter of the Kashmiri separatist movement, spokeswoman for the intersex and other sexual minorities and a sharp-eyed critic of Hindu nationalism as it is said in *The New Republic*, “Today, Roy is known as much for her politics as for her fiction. She has been imprisoned and charged with sedition, joined Maoists in India's jungle, and thrown her weight behind political movements across the globe” (Earle). Roy evidently talks about the dreadful and fragmented stories of the social pariahs, and many other countless social, political, cultural and religious conflicts running below the surface of the everyday life of these people. The intensity of the predicament people like Anjum undergo in everyday life is picturized rigorously in the novel as:

When she first moved in, she endured months of casual cruelty like a tree would- without flinching. She didn't turn to see which small boy had thrown a stone at her, didn't crane her neck to read the insults scratched into her bark. When people called her names-clown without a circus, queen without a palace-she let the hurt blow through her branches like a breeze and used the music of her rustling leaves as balm to ease the pain. (Roy 3)

The novel is not only a treatise on the aspects of political, cultural, social and historical contexts of India but is also a total account of the human nature. Roy focuses on the potential of human beings to live up against the extreme worst conditions they face in everyday life and how they are capable of overcoming atrocities trying to manage trials and tribulations and balancing emotional sentiments. In *The Ministry of Utmost happiness* there are a number of volte-faces or reversal of situations which are commonly accredited social practices. Homes turn to be graveyards and graveyards being home are a major aspect of this focus. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* treats home for the accumulation of dead bodies while graveyard is seen as a place to inhabit. Anjum, annoyed and fed up with living people around her migrates to a place where dead people are 'alive' and renovates it into jannat and gradually attracts people of her favor, while so called 'heaven on earth' - Kashmir is portrayed as 'the valley of death', a disintegrated and war-ridden land. Hundreds of dead bodies are found in each day buried in mass graves and people are getting annihilated and obliterated without any reason. The irony of 'homes becoming dead lands and graveyards becoming shelters' point to the horrible status of the present day situation of northern India.

Roy's description of living people as 'dead' and dead as 'living' can be considered as another example of volte- face .The dilemmas social outcasts like Anjum encounters in life are

pathetic that she is frantic with her experience of 2002 Gujarat riots, which later on haunts her like a nightmare and causes continuous shift in her place of living. It is this frustration which forces her to leave Khwabgah. Even in jannat Guest House those memories disturb her like, “She tried to dismiss the cortege of saffron men with saffron smiles who pursued her with infants impaled on their saffron tridents, but they would not be dismissed” (Roy 61). Saddam is torn apart at the sight of seeing his father attacked and killed by the so called cow protectors in his native place of Dulina. “He also knew that the average human body contains between four and five litres of blood. He has watched it spill and spread slowly across the road outside the Dulina police post, just off the Delhi-Gurgaon highway” (Roy 84-85). Tilottama is devastated to go through the process of foeticide, a gift (baby) which she carries in memory of her true love. Even after killing the baby in her womb, she goes to the abandoned graveyard to sit near to the grave of Begum Renata Mumtaz Madam, the belly dancer from Romania who had died of ‘a broken heart’ which symbolizes the broken state of Tilo. The life of a fanatic who has lost his wife and daughter is frightful that Musa lives a life distressed yet determined as, “Tilo looked at the photograph (of Arifa Yeswi and Miss Jebeen Two) for a long time before she gave it back. She saw Musa suddenly look drawn and haggard. But he recovered his poise in a while” (Roy 368). The characters are almost lifeless while the dead are 'living' amid the occupants of Jannat Guest House. Anjum involves in serious conversations with them and there are occasions of burying the reminiscent of people who are of Anjum’s favor. They are buried again with proper rites and rituals. Saddam’s father, Tilo’s mother and Comrade Revathy are symbolically buried for a second time in the Jannat Guest House as, “it’s the whole world’s mazar” (Roy 412).

*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* tells the story of minimal borders. There is no fixed gender, caste, religion, sect or class borders exist. There is no frontier of men and women as men

are always women and women are always men. Khwabgah consist of people with thin gender borders and there is no specific gender for people who reside in it. Saddam represents the delicate border between religions. He converts to Islam where peripherally there exist no cast systems as a reaction against his ill experience from the cow protectors. Indeed there is no border between casts as Tilottama is a product of mixed cast. Her mother is a Syrian Catholic and father a low class (dalit) man. Apparently there is no border between rights and wrongs. Tilo's execution of spoiling the baby in her womb and fetching away Miss Jebeen Two from Jantar Mantar are seen quite normal and expected while the alert lies on the socially significant yet neglected and forsaken issues. In the novel, even though Roy talks about the borderless world of existence, she evidently explains the danger of living in a world with strict borders and clear cut differentiations. She focuses on the dangers of living in a world where men are clearly men and women are 'mere' women, where caste, religion, sects have existence. She points out the inherent danger in a society which treats people with strict borders. She explains the hurdles of duniya, while keeping 'her special people' devoid of such dangers. The only danger 'her people' face is from the people outside, from the people of duniya.

Kashmir has always been 'a promised land' for India. Many poets and singers gone far to chant over the mesmerizing charm of it. The beauty of the landscape of 'the heaven on earth' is alluring and it is also considered as the most beautiful tourist destination in India. Since 1980s things has changed and Kashmir has become the most menacing state of India. Kashmir insurgency or Kashmir intifada, a conflict between Kashmiri separatists and the government of India has started to set off in the valleys since then. Some of the separatist's argument focuses on Azadi, complete independence for the state of Kashmir while some other want a coalition with the state of Pakistan. After the independence, India and Pakistan fought over the princely state of

Kashmir for years and India controlled most of the populations of it. Since the independence of India, democratic developments were limited in Kashmir and many non-violent channels expressing discontent towards the governmental authority over the state of Kashmir were banned which caused a gradual increase in the number of people who started to protest the governmental policies. The 1987 state election which led to the formation of armed insurgent groups by the state's legislative assembly members also alarmingly accelerated the group of insurgents advocating violence. In July 1988 a series of demonstrations, attacks and strikes aroused in Kashmir streets against Indian government hence Kashmir Insurgency, which till date is regarded as the most violent internal conflict in India. This conflict in Jammu and Kashmir has an Islamist root element in it, identified as Jihadist movement or terrorist movement. Thousands of people murdered and millions of people injured in this conflict between army and insurgents while hundreds of civilians also died in army's targeted attack on the militants. India accused Pakistan in training Mujahideen to fight in Kashmir and as of July 2009 there are 3,400 disappearance cases registered, 47,000 people died among which 7,000 are police personnel. After the insurgency started to spread its wings Indian troops entered in Kashmir to control it. Above six lakhs of troops entered in the Kashmir valleys even though the official account is still unknown. They have got the responsibility to look after the issues in Jammu and Kashmir and to sustain a peaceful environment, but there were reports of mass killings, mutilations, tortures, rapes and sexual abuses by army. Indian army was accused of the responsibility of thousands of missing people in Kashmir valleys. They have committed mass killings, tortures and rapes and there was large protest against these mistreatments. Various Human right associations came out with speculations of merely 80,000 people missing among which a large number of people's dead bodies were found in mass graves. State Human rights commission came up with

the shocking information of thousands of bullet ridden bodies were buried in unmarked graves across Kashmir. Military forces in Jammu and Kashmir operated under impunity and emergency power granted to them while the insurgents indulged in a process of exterminating Kashmiri pandits for ethnic cleansing .The inability of Indian government to save the lives of both insurgents and troops caused much havoc. The insecurity and vexation has psychologically effected Kashmiri youths. They were easily got recruited to the Islamic fundamental groups to carry out war against the nation. Severe unemployment and lack of economic sources worsened the issue. From 2008 onwards the situation has been deepened with youngsters of Kashmir started to rebel by pelting stones on security forces expressing their protest and aggression. They claimed Azadi. In return they have got attacked even worse by the armed personnel with pellets, rubber bullets, sling shots and tear gas shells. Most of the protestors were school or college going students. Islamic separatist militants were also accused of committing crimes such as killing murdering torturing and kidnapping. They have kidnapped many civil servants and suspected informers. Thousands of Civilian Kashmiri Hindus were killed by militants and Muslim mobs and thousands of pandits were forced to emigrate from Kashmir to other parts of India.

The novel reveals the stories of hidden play politics and explores the invisible power structures of the society. The novel is a strong critique on the society's double stance, power politics and it traces how the underlying power structures in government, politics, military and police forces can control the lives of millions of people in India. The novel gives a detailed description of the intensity of military power as:

At notorious check posts soldiers sometimes put their ears to young men's chests and listened to their heartbeats. There were rumours that some soldiers even carried stethoscopes. 'This one's heart is beating for freedom', they'd say, and that would be

reason enough for the body that hosted the too-quick or too-slow heart to make a trip to Cargo, or Papa or the Shiraz Cinema- the most dreaded interrogation centres in the Valley. (Roy 325)

Amrik Singh can be considered as a perfect example for the brutality of military power. Roy portrays Amrik Singh as the cruelest character in the novel who kills, abandons, kidnaps and tortures the people of Kashmir without any proper reason. “Major Amrik Singh was a gambler, a daredevil officer, a deadly interrogator and a cheery cold blooded killer. He greatly enjoyed his work and was constantly on the lookout for the ways to up the entertainment” (Roy 336).

Roy dedicates the novel to the unconsolated. Indeed the characters in the novel are unconsolated in one way or other. Anjum is an unconsolated Hijra who is cheated by her body itself. She is a weeping soul; a female body trapped in a male, a bad omen and the butchers’ Luck. Saddam is shocked and depressed in the memory of his killed father. Tilo, the wandering soul is deeply wounded by many personal issues, primarily because of the inability to openly love a militant like Musa. She is shattered with the loss of her still unborn baby, which makes her to fetch away Miss Jebeen Two. Musa is a destructed soul with the loss of his wife and daughter and in distress indulges in war against the Indian government. Biplab Das Gupta is still haunted by the loss of his love while Naga is daunted by his broken family life. Amrik Singh is haunted and destructed by the Karma while Comrade Revathy is forced to leave her baby in Jantar Mantar. Javed Ahmad Raina observes:

The book has a remarkable narrative plot, with complex set of characters mostly drawn from the lower strata of the society. . . . Roy’s rich and knowing narration wings across the landscape, traversing caste, religion and gender divides. . . . It is a story about our



contemporary world delivered through the microcosm of individuals living through the never ending harrowing conflicts of Kashmir and the marginal communities of outsiders in Delhi. (45-46)

*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* deals with the many socio-cultural and historical aspects of the Indian subcontinent which are unfurled with the unfolding of incidents. Recently the famous Bollywood actor Paresh Rawal turned against Arundhati Roy's support to the Kashmiri's demand for independence from India. He claimed that she should be tied to the bonnet of an Army jeep as a human shield to protect the armed forces in Kashmir. This argument went viral that many so called nationalist supporters celebrated it through social medias. Even though his charge was the result of a misunderstanding, Roy often did contempt many of the Indian policies. Since the publication of her first novel she seriously indulged in political activism, writing nonfiction and human rights and environmental causes. She is a spoke woman for the anti-globalization or alter-globalization movement and often criticized neo-imperialism and U.S military invasion of Afghanistan. She talks against nuclear weapons, industrialization and with social activist Medha Patkar has worked against the Narmada Dam Project. The novel is indeed a treatment on Roy's discontent with the existing social and political situations of India. She tries to expose the dark side of a multi-culture country like India, and criticizes all the laws and philosophies of it which excludes the social pariahs like Marginalized, Trans, Dalits, Militants and other social minorities. Even after the publication of her first novel Roy turned writing Political pamphlets as she never wanted to be a part of the emerging trend of Hindu nationalism. In the novel, Roy keeps a neutral stance on gender, caste, religion and sect. She places the novel in the context of a society which has got more than nine recognized religions and even more non-recognized ones, 4,000 plus casts among which less than 5% marry out of

their cast and differently oriented genders. She talks about a mixed community where people are half men and half women, half Hindu and half Muslim, half Christian and half Dalit, half nationalist and half militant. She doesn't prefer any particular religion as in the novel she portrays both the agony of Kashmir pandits who are forced to flee from the Kashmir valleys after the Hindu massacres and the predicament of thousands of Muslims in Gujarat during the 2002 riot.

The most awaited novel by the curly haired and smoky eyed author, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is a story of places. It is filled with a number of descriptions of places, its melancholies, noises, hub bubs, charms, beauties, additions and extensions. Even the title of the novel indicates a place, Jannat Guest House which is a graveyard, where everyone is set in utmost happiness with a system of neutral gender, caste, religion, and sect. There are descriptions of places which explores the beauty of Indian streets and valleys, marking the novel a story of places. The descriptions of Old and New Delhi streets, khwabgah, Jannat Guest House, Jantar Mantar, Tilo's room, Kashmir Valleys, Mazar-e-shohadda and Shiraz Cinema bring the readers into the same emotional state of the characters allowing navigation through each of the place. The beauty of Delhi streets are at its best in Roy's novel. Every nook and corner of Shahjahanabad is described in detail. The beauty of Delhi is mesmerizing as both the rural and urban parts of Old and New Delhi streets and its people are described in detail as:

As Aftab kept strict vigil. . . Guddu Bhai, the acrimonious early morning- fishmonger who parked his cart of gleaming fresh fish in the centre of the chowk, would, as surely as the sun rose in the east and set in the west, elongate into Wasim, the tall, affable afternoon naan khatai-seller who would then shrink into Yunus, the small, lean, evening fruit seller, who late at night , would broaden and balloon into Hassan Mian, the stout

vendor of the best mutton biriyani in Matia Mahal, which he dished out of a huge copper pot. (Roy 18)

They glided through dense forests of apartment buildings, past gigantic concrete amusement parks, bizarrely designed wedding halls and towering cement statues as high as skyscrapers, of Shiva in a cement leopard-skin loincloth with a cement cobra around his neck and a colossal Hanuman looming over a metro track. They drove over an impossible-to-pee-on flyover as wide as a wheat field, with twenty lanes of cars whizzing over it and towers of steel and glass growing on either side of it. But when they took an exit road off it, they saw that the world underneath the flyover was an entirely different one – an unpaved, unlaned, unlit, unregulated, wild and dangerous one, in which buses, trucks, bullocks, rickshaws, cycles, handcarts and pedestrians jostled for survival. One kind of world flew over another kind of world without troubling to stop and ask the time of the day. (Roy 409)

The emotional state of the people of Khwabgah is explained with the description of the place. Khwabgah is filled with an air of melancholy that it echoes the frustration, sigh and hope of the Trans people which Roy explores in connection with the description of the interiors.

There were two rooms set behind a deep verandah with fluted columns. The roof of one of the rooms had caved in and its walls had crumbled into a heap of rubble in which a family of cats had made its home. . . . In another corner there was a beaten-up old dressing table. A chipped and broken chandelier with only one working bulb and a long stemmed, dark brown fan hung from the high ceiling. (Roy 20)

Jannat Guest house represents a genderless, casteless and religionless place which constitutes people from different walks of life. Anjum renovates the abandoned graveyard into a place for living and makes it her own territory. She is the queen of her land. “Over time, Anjum began to enclose the graves of her relatives and build rooms around them. Each room had a grave (or two) and a bed. Or two. She built a separate bathhouse and a toilet with its own septic tank. . . .

Gradually Jannat Guest House became a hub for Hijras . . .” (Roy 67-68). Tilo's room is another place which Roy describes meticulously. It's the central part of the novel from which the story of Musa gets flattened. The room plays an important role that it is from here the hidden life and secret love story of both Musa and Tilo get unfolded. “Even a casual glance around the room- at the photographs (numbered, captioned) pinned up on the noticeboards, the little towers of documents stacked neatly on the floor and in labeled cartoons and box files, the yellow Post-its stuck on bookshelves, cupboards, doors- tells me that there's something unsafe here. . .”

(Roy 189). The Mazar e shohadda gives the readers a horrifying experience with an elaborate description of mass graves and bullet shot dead bodies. The detailed account of tiny tombstones and baby dead bodies are frightening.

In the Mazar-e-Shohadda, the Martyr's Graveyard, where she was first buried, the cast-iron signboard that arched over the main gate said (in two languages): *We Gave Our Todays for Your Tomorrows*. . . . At the time of their funeral the Mazar-e-Shohadda was still fairly new, but was already getting crowded. . . . It planned the layout of the graves carefully, making ordered, efficient use of the available spaces. (Roy 310)

The places which minutely and intricately described are not only just geographical sites instead it has got an appealing function of keeping and sustaining the serious tone of the novel. The exhaustive and all-encompassing piece of art, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* has two

divisions of storytelling of two women protagonists named Anjum and Tilottama. Both their plots are rich in description of places. They keep on navigating through different places while the narration takes the reader in a journey across the Indian subcontinent. It elaborates the description from the ancient yet crumpled neighborhood of Old Delhi streets to the multi storey buildings and malls of the New Delhi streets, from the mountain and valleys of Kashmir to the abandoned forests in southern India. Anjum's story progresses with a shift in place and she keeps on changing her shelters finally to find solace in a graveyard. Apparently Tilottama, a wandering soul moves through different places to experience everything new. The story is not only about their place of birth and the place they have grown up but is also about the places where they live and from they leave. While talking about the description of places and its different dimensions in the novel, Michele de Certeau's contribution of the aspects of place-space theory must be taken into consideration.

One of the significant French Jesuit scholars Michel de Certeau's works combining Philosophy, Psychoanalysis, Social Sciences, History, Sociology and his concept on everyday life practices were highly influential in the development of the field of Cultural Studies. Born on May 17, 1925, in Chambéry, Savoie Michel Jean Emmanuel de La Barge de Certeau had obtained degrees in Classics and Philosophy at The University of Grenoble, Lyon. He was an active member of Lacan's psychoanalytic movement. At the college he indulged in the study of the works of Pierre Favre with Jean Orcibal, a famous French historian. In 1950 he undergone religious trainings and entered the Jesuit order. He was ordained in 1956. During the time he worked as one of the significant founders of the journal *Christus* and was actively involved with it for long years. He earned his Doctorate at the Sorbonne (University of Paris) in Pierre Favre and started his celebrated study of Jean Joseph Suren, a French Jesuit mystic, preacher,

devotional writer and exorcist. de Certeau was greatly influenced by the famous Psychoanalyst and Philosopher Sigmund Freud, and along with Jacques Lacan worked as a founding member of Ecole Freudienne de Paris, an informal group for the French scholars who are interested in Psychoanalysis and Freudian theories. de Certeau bagged public attention after publishing an article about the civil unrest of France in 1968. He continued teaching in several universities like Geneva, San Diego, and Paris. Mysticism, Phenomenology, and Psychoanalysis were his favorite fields of focus. de Certeau explored the field of theories of everyday practices which are repetitive and unconscious and according to him, a force which unify people into groups and separate them.

At the secondary level de Certeau studied Greek, Latin, German and Philosophy as his main subjects in a well-structured curriculum of a French school and after that he chose to study in different universities following the French tradition of peregrinatio academica (the practice of students travelling from town to town in search of knowledge and great masters). It was reported that in his childhood during summers, the whole family of him visited their country-house near Saint Pierre. The beautiful house possesses an attached farm to it which had a farmer and his family living nearby. Both families' kids were in good tie that they often engaged in common outdoor activities of which de Certeau always kept a special interest. He always maintained a deep feeling for this mountainous countryside family house which has got a seventeenth-century model building. The happy yet adventurous childhood memories later on influenced Certeau's philosophical insights into the daily life practices. When the Second World War caused havoc on the land and generation, during the dark years, de Certeau felt like breathing some fresh air and he set off a solitary ride on his bicycle covering almost all the areas of France, dwelling in city streets, eating and drinking from the public places, reading and meditating enormously,

sleeping on the pathways and listening street music in some remote village squares. He relished those days of pensive retreat and observed people's daily lives adjacent. The two 'close to life' events such as the countryside house memories of his childhood and the solo trip experience reflected in his theories of everyday life practices as his biographer writes in *Jesuites*:

From that time on, he taught himself a way of training his mind and body, to make the most of the time and energy given to him. He was aware of the general fragility of the human condition, even if he was and would be in a very good physical condition until the sudden diagnosis of a cancer in a late July 1985, from which he would die on January 9, 1986, in his Paris apartment. (Giard)

From 1944-50 he studied at The University of Grenoble, Paris to receive a degree in Classics and Philosophy. During the formative years he studied at the Catholic Seminaries answering the call for service to God, but always kept looking for a rule of life and community model able to fulfill his desires. He moved to Lyons to accept the Catholic University's offer of a program in Biblical Studies and Scholastic Philosophy from where he encountered a number of theologians and Jesuit Fathers at the Jesuit residence and was heavily drawn into the discussions and debates of current political and social transformations. He fell in love with their open mindedness towards modernity, mobility between tradition and new cultural era and he gradually joined The Society of Jesuits. Once again he went back to school to qualify the Bachelor Degree in Philosophy and Theology. He was neither arrogant nor aggressively competitive. From there he started to read Hegelian Philosophy under the guidance of Father Joseph Gauvin. Later on, he was permitted to prepare his research dissertation about Saint Augustine which he had started before joining the Jesuits, but his superiors asked him to invest his mind and time into another field of study, a research on the first spiritual authors of the Order. With his Jesuit vow of

obedience he accepted the change of topic for his research and under Orcibal's supervision he received a Doctorate in religious history with a dissertation on Pierre Favre's spiritual diary in 1960. This thesis gave him the matter of his first book entitled *Memorial de Pierre Favre* which was published in the same year. Then de Certeau moved to a more controversial figure Jean-Joseph Surin, a writer of French prose on devotional literature. Certeau provided significant editions of Surin's *Guide Spirituel* (1963) and of his *Letters* (1966). His ability to better understand and expand Surin's life brought him to the active Psychoanalytical milieu in Paris. He was among the sixty people who took part in a meeting summoned by Lacan to found Ecole Freudienne. He gradually fell in love with Freud's works and remained as an active member of the Lacanian milieu. During these years he started to work for different Jesuit magazines and journals like *Etudes*, *Christus* and two other scholarly journals on religious history and theology. At the same time some family and self-tragedies affected him as it was said in *Jesuites*: "His brother Jean died in his twenties, his sister Marie-Amelie in her early thirties, he lost one eye in a car crash in which his mother died" (Giard).

The turning point of his career was a response to the social events of May 1968 in France. He was extremely moved by the civil unrest and started responding in installments which appeared in *Etudes* from June to October and were collected in a short book in the same year. Apparently he was invited to different universities for talks on various subjects and became immensely popular that Medias started to wait for his responses concerning different social issues. de Certeau started to write in abundance, entered in the networks of intellectual scholars, expressed profound scholarships in talks and writings and was often interviewed in newspapers and radios. Some of his junior scholars were historians such as Roger Chartier, Dominique Julia and Jacques Revel and sociologists like Daniele Hervieu-Leger. He published a number of books



from the year 1970 entitled *On Demons and Possession* (1970), *On Historiography* (1973,1975) , *On Linguistic Policy and Social Hierarchy* (1975), *On Mass media ,Consumption and Daily Life* (1980), *On Mystics* (1982). In spite of an extensive cancer surgery he continued visiting numerous universities in 1985 that his biographer on recollecting his sudden demise in *Jesuites* says, “In spite of extensive cancer surgery in summer 1985, he taught again in Fall 1985 and died at the end of the Christmas break. One week after his death, a former student of his sent me a magnificent bunch of white flowers with those words, ‘According to Saint Irenaeus of Lyons, Man is the glory of God. Michel is the proof’” (Giard).

de Certeau’s scholarship can be seen as one integrated, intellectual enterprise. When asked about his erudition, this French Jesuit used to answer that he identifies himself in the first place as an historian of spirituality. Indeed de Certeau’s works on early modern mysticism open up a grand-breaking research in religious studies and theology. He accepted the most complex cultural patterns and practices of his time to represent the meaning of Christian mysticism. de Certeau is considered as a celebrated philosopher for his critique of historiography and the analysis of the daily life practices- particularly its spatial dimension- which he undertook in the middle part of his career. One of the well-received and influential works of Michel de Certeau entitled *The Practice of Everyday Life* which often cites in the fields of rhetoric, performance studies, law and cultural studies was published in French in the year 1980. In the work he talks about a theory inextricably connected to the activities of day to day life which are habitual, repetitive and unconscious. The work was originally published as *L’invention du quotidien. Vol.1, Arts de faire* (1980) and Steven Rendall translated it in to English as *The Practice of Everyday Life* in 1984. The book is considered as a significant account of the study of everyday life. It analyzes different ways in which people individualize mass culture and practices from

utilitarian objects to street plans to rituals, laws and language by changing patterns and shapes to make them their own as according to him:

This essay is a part of a continuing investigation of the ways in which users-commonly assumed to be passive and guided established rules-operate. The point is not so much to discuss this elusive yet fundamental subject as to make such a discussion possible; that is, by means of inquiries and hypothesis, to indicate pathways for further research. This goal will be achieved if every day practices, 'ways of operating' or doing things, no longer appear as merely the obscure background of social activity, and if a body of theoretical questions, methods, categories, and perspectives, by penetrating this obscurity, make it possible to articulate them. (Rendall 11)

One of the significant ideas de Certeau brings in the work is a distinction between the concepts of strategy and tactics. According to him:

A distinction between strategies and tactics appears to provide a more adequate initial schema. I call a strategy the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships that becomes possible as soon as a subject with will and power (a business, an army, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated. It postulates a place that can be delimited as its own and serve as the base from which relations with an exteriority composed of targets or threats (customers or competitors, enemies, the country surrounding the city, objectives of research etc.) can be managed. (Rendall 35-36)

Certeau links the concepts of strategies with the structures of power like producers while individuals are consumers or poachers acting in accordance with or against environments defined by strategies. He defines tactics as:

By contrast with a strategy, a tactics is a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus. No delimitation of an exteriority, then, provides it with the condition necessary for autonomy. The space of a tactic is the space of the other. Thus it must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power. . . . in short, a tactic is an art of the weak. (Rendall 36-37)

Hence his works can be considered as an investigation on the general practices of human life which is inherently passive and guided by established rules. His theories operate on ordinary things which are no longer merely a part of social activity and at the same time not a return to individuality as, “the examination of the (such) practices does not imply a return to individuality” (Rendall 11).

De Certeau’s concept of space as a major category in the history and analysis of cultural practices has influenced the later spatial turn in art history. His works deal with the spatiality of urban life which is drawn from a set of binary oppositions between strategy and tactics. A strategy is related to an already constructed, given place or structure whereas tactics are the practices of daily life which engage with this structure. In his theories there is an inherent politics of space and the space which is intrinsically political changes the social realities of place. The concept of space as a static entity is exactly what de Certeau wants to discuss in his work *The Practice of Everyday Life*. He differentiates experiencing a city high above the ground and walking through it. Both the processes are entirely different. For him the top-down view of public officials and city planners to see spaces as frozen and static entity, neglects small dynamics that brings life to the city. He omits standing on top of a building to look down at the objective totality of the city with a totalizing eye instead prefers walking through the city with its own rhetoric and a scope of writing a subjective course of the urban space. For Certeau the

pedestrians of a city create it through their walking escaping the regulated scheme of the city. The pedestrian walk in the city with his own style and would take part in the creation of meanings. Those meanings which are subjective would be entirely different from the previous meanings assigned to it by the city planners. For de Certeau, the pedestrians create meaning of the urban spaces through imagination: linking arts and footsteps, opening meanings and directions, these words operate in the name of an emptying-out and wearing away of their primary role. They become liberated spaces that can be occupied. Certeau's distinction between space and place are significant in the discussion of the spatiality of the urban places.

A place is supposed to function in a certain way, take for example a building -it has got a particular landscape, interior structure, fences, gates and parking lots. A viewer from the outside may identify it as a properly functioning structure. They may also understand the building even from a photograph or statistical account of it (like graduation rate of a schools or college, products-selling ratios of the markets, number of vehicles pass through an area of the city etc.). They may reach in conclusions about the working of the building without even visiting the place. Such reductive understanding of places by people leads de Certeau to distinguish 'spaces' (espaces) from 'places' (lieu). According to him, "a place (lieu) is the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence. It thus excludes the possibility of two things being in the same location. . . . A place is thus an instantaneous configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability" (Rendall 117).

An out stander identifies a place as a stable, concretely distinguishable 'place'. A collection of elements which assist the proper functioning of it. For example, market is a place where the process of buying and selling takes place. A physical structure containing streets or shops made up of durable materials, different shops with variable products, vehicles parked on

both sides, shopkeepers with variety of products arranged in the racks etc. Contrary to place, “A space exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile element. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it” (Rendall 117). On any given day a particular ‘place’ is a ‘space’. For example a market is composed of people wandering around the shops, looking, searching and bargaining for products, delivery men and vehicles moving around, people purchasing different stuffs, shop owners arranging and rearranging their products calling for the attention of the people and ladies doing their happy shopping amid kids running and crying for toys and chocolates. Although the market is made to sell and buy products that is not the only thing happening there. Or sometimes it is exactly what is happening. Hence according to Certeau:

Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities. On this view in relation to place, space is like the word when it is spoken . . . . In contradistinction to the place, it has thus none of the univocity or stability of a ‘proper’. In short, space is a practiced place. (Rendall 117)

de Certeau offers an example of pedestrians walking in the streets converting it to spaces. "Thus the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed in to a space by walkers" (Rendall 117). A particular street is a place with basic elements such as sidewalks, straight or curvy paths, parking areas, asphalt or dirt. A pedestrian walking on and off the pathways, turning right or left, drawing on the sidewalks with chalks convert it in to a space. In the same way for Certeau, "an act of reading is the space produced by the practice of a particular place: a written text, i.e., a place constituted by a system of signs" (Rendall 117).

Here, the focus of study lies in the lieu-espace aspect of the novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* with the identification of the description of places and explaining how these places are converted to spaces by taking into consideration multitudes of directions and time variables. The elements contributing to the transformation are also taken into consideration.

## CHAPTER 2

### Aftab to Anjum: Identification of Places and the Actualization of Spaces

*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is not a linear narrative instead a concoction of a number of parallel woven stories of different social outcasts. It is deemed as a collection of very many social issues of the Indian subcontinent like the Hijra community, past and present, the Bhopal gas tragedy, the rise of the saffron brigade, Ayodhya and Godra political and religious conflicts, Indian prime ministers, the Anna Hazare movement, the north-east issues, the cow vigilante violence, Dalit politics, Kashmiri youths, women's issues and the Maoist conflicts. The novel explores the beautiful yet riveting stories of two women protagonists named Anjum and S.Tilottama whose lives are imbued with love, losses, procurements, afflictions and frustrations. It investigates the lost yet recuperated life of these two female characters and traverse through the experiences of how they see, feel, live and enjoy their little asset called 'life'. The novel brings them together in the end only to cherish their grapples and struggles. In the beginning of the novel both of them are portrayed as two extremely different female characters who share nothing in common. One is an abandoned and frustrated Hijra who always strives to live a life that she always wanted to live, while the second one is a dusky Malayali beauty, an architect who struggles hard to conceal her true love to a reluctant fundamentalist. They are inseparably linked in the extremity of their sufferings. Anjum is fed up with the society, its rules, regulations and the violence where Tilottama is broken with her lost love and still unborn baby. Roy unites the two entirely different persons in the end in an extremely strange place like graveyard, happy and content. Anjum is satisfied that she fulfills her biggest dream of becoming 'a mother' to Zainab and Miss Jebeen Two while Tilo is relaxed with her recuperated love. Sushree Raj in her article

entitled “A Study on Arundhati Roy’s *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*” comments that “She (Roy) sculpted the setting, gave life to the character and gave soul to the story. The story speaks about gender discrimination, religious differences and the political domination that encouraged assassinations of innocent people. The victims are named as accused and they are murdered on the name of law” (4).

Anjum-a female trapped in a male body, the Butchers’ Luck, a Hijra-who was born on a cold January night during a power cut in Shahjahanabad, the walled city of Delhi was immediately misunderstood as a boy. Ahlam Baji, the midwife didn’t recognize the underneath female genital organ of the baby in the lamp light. Roy elaborately describes the horrifying and appalling reaction of Anjum’s mother, Jahanara Begum realizing that her baby is not ‘a true boy’.

It is possible for a mother to be terrified of her own baby? Jahanara Begum was. Her first reaction was to feel her heart constrict and her bones turn to ash. Her second reaction was to take another look to make sure she was not mistaken. Her third reaction was to recoil from what she had created while her bowels convulsed and a thin stream of shit ran down her legs. Her fourth reaction was to contemplate killing herself and her child. Her fifth reaction was to pick her Baby up and hold him close while she fell through a crack between the world she knew and worlds she did not know existed. . . .Her sixth reaction was to clean herself up and resolve to tell nobody for the moment. Not even her husband. Her seventh reaction was to lie down next to Aftab and rest. Like the God of the Christians did, after he had made Heaven and Earth. (Roy 7-8)



Aftab's far-fetched journey searching his true identity and the urge to fulfill his biggest dream of becoming 'a mother' begin from the very moment. He lives a dilapidated life in Shahjahanabad amid all the derisions and ridicules as, "He could sing Chaiti and Thumri with the accomplishment and poise of a Lucknow courtesan. At first people were amused and even encouraging, but soon the snickering and teasing from other children began: *He's a She. He's not a He or a She. He's a He and a She. She-He, He-She Hee! Hee! Hee!* (Roy 14). When his father Mulaqat Ali took Aftab to Dr Ghulam Nabi, a sexologist and when he denied schooling and started to spend hours on the tiny balcony of his home just looking down at Chitli Qabar, a tall, slim-hipped woman wearing bright lipstick, gold high heels and a shiny, green satin salwar kameez, he decides to leave his home and follow the woman to enter her place called Khwabgah. At Khwabgah, Aftab meets different Hijras and Trans persons like Bombay Silk, Bulbul, Razia, Heera, Baby, Nimmo, Mary and Gudiya and identifies himself as not the only one. Aftab becomes Anjum, disciple of Ustad Kulsoom Bi of the Delhi Gharana, one of the seven regional Hijra Gharanas in the country. Over the years Anjum becomes Delhi's most famous Hijra and as a permanent resident of Khwabgah, she was able to dress in the clothes she longed to wear. She owns a foundling named Zainab whom she calls Bandicoot and after admitting her into KGB in Tender Buds Nursery School Daryagani, Anjum and Zakir Mian, the Proprietor and Managing Director of A-1 Flower decide to set off to Ajmer and Ahmedabad in Gujarat where the latter runs some business with his wife's family. That journey changes her destiny.

Anjum comes back alone from Gujarat as a broken and collapsed Butchers' Luck. Zakir Mian was brutally killed in the Gujarat Muslim massacre which haunts and exasperates Anjum making her a frustrated resident of Khwabgah. With some unknown reasons she tremendously changes,

As the days passed, her quietness gave way to something else, something restless and edgy. . . .She added Dr Bhagat's prescription to the things she had piled up in the courtyard, things she had once treasured, and lit a match. Among the incinerated items were:

Three documentary films (about her)

Two glossy coffee-table books of photographs (of her)

Seven photo features in foreign magazines (about her)

An album of press clippings from foreign newspapers in more than thirteen languages including the *New York Times*, the *London Times*, the *Guardian*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Globe and Mail*, *Le Monde*, *Corriere della Sera*, *La Stampa* and *Die Zeit*(about her).

(Roy 56-57)

Anjum leaves Khwabgah without Zainab to another world, to an unprepossessed, small and occasionally used graveyard. Amid the haunting memories of Gujarat incidents and the poignant evocations of Zainab, she continues to live there. Anjum tries to incorporate herself into a strange and unnerving place like an abandoned graveyard and embraces some paramount physical changes.

FOR MONTHS ANJUM LIVED IN the graveyard, a ravaged, feral spectre, out-haunting every resident djinn and spirit, ambushing bereaved families who came to bury their with a grief so wild, so untethered, that it clean outstripped theirs. She stopped grooming herself, stopped dyeing her hair. It grew dead white from the roots, and

suddenly, halfway down her head, turned jet black, making her look, well . . . *striped*.

(Roy 63)

Anjum gradually inherits the place and becomes the 'Man of the House'. She attracts people of her favor and initiates accumulating souls to live with; like Mr. D.D. Gupta, Ustad Hameed and Imam Ziauddin who daily visit her. She names the graveyard Jannat Guest House which later on becomes a hub for Hijras who had fallen out of their gharanas. Among them she finds Nimmo Gorakhpuri. The second permanent guest Saddam arrives with his dearest horse Payal. It also had temporary guests like Saeeda who visited Anjum with Zainab, Saquib-Anjum's brother, Ustad Kulsoom Bi who visited with her friend Haji Mian and Bismillah. The Jannat Guest House gradually starts to function as a funeral parlor. With the renovations and different companions Anjum lives in her kingdom like a queen ending up finding another foundling, Miss Jebeen Two in Jantar Mantar. This moment marks Tilo's appearance in the novel. Jantar Mantar is a place where Roy conjoins both the female characters. Tilo fetches away the baby while Anjum with Saddam plan to follow and bring them under her custody.

Aftab, in his journey to become a complete woman goes through different places which Roy meticulously describes in the novel. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is rich in description of places. It contains an elaborate account of different places of Indian subcontinent which extensively contribute to the progress of the novel. Aftab, who starts his life in an old and crumpled Delhi street called Shajahanabad, shifts to different places like Khwabgah and an abandoned graveyard named The Jannat Guest House, while the description of some other places like dargahs, conflict ridden Jantar Mantar and Gujarat bring out the discrete phases of Indian lives. All the Places are Spaces with vectors of dimensions and time variables, the functioning elements such as streets, people, their interactions, buildings, houses and the resident's

interactions with it and among themselves, renovation of places to incorporate more dimensions, interactions between permanent residents and guests, with animals and humans, dead and alive etc. The Places described are not merely an urban or rural physical structure, instead a conglomeration of activities of variable elements which constitute it into a Space. All these Spaces with vectors of dimensions and time variables contribute to the progress of the characters in the novel. Anjum is molded and shaped by the places (spaces) she goes through. The arduous and demanding journey to find a true identity and to follow her dream ultimately changes her. She is Anjum, not Aftab in the end as it is observed in the blog *Confessions of an avid bibliophile*,

Creating a transgender person as a character is also an effective literary tool. Despite being acknowledged in Hinduism and Islam by their existence in the religious stories eunuchs remain on the margins of society while having the ability to flit in and out of different socio-economic classes. Eunuchs like Anjum by being at the crossroads of socio-political activity are able to participate and/or witness significant contemporary events. Though there has always been a social stigma attached to that of being a hijra in South Asian cultures and they have been ostracized yet they are expected to attend major social events like births and weddings to bless the family. It is a curious space the eunuchs inhabit in society . . . . (Bhattacharji Rose)

Aftab, who was born in lamplight and was immediately misunderstood as a boy grows until the age of fifteen under his parents. Being a Hermaphrodite he lives amid all the kinds of mistreats and tortures. The first part of the novel is enriched with the archaic beauty of his home place, the walled city of Delhi, Shahjahanabad. The Old Delhi Street is not merely a physical structure or Place instead a total account of the elements which constitute it into a Space. There

are certain occasions in the first part of the novel where Roy goes on describing the archaic beauty of Shahjahanabad as, “She was the fourth of five children, born on a cold January night, by lamplight (power cut), in Shahjahanabad, the walled city of Delhi” (Roy 7).

“When Aftab was five he began to attend the Urdu-Hindi madrassa for boys in Chooriwali Gali (the bangle-seller’s lane)” (Roy 11).

Aftab spent hours on the tiny balcony of his home looking down at Chitli Qabar- the tiny shrine of the spotted goat who was said to have had supernatural powers-and the bust street than ran past it and joined the Matia Mahahl Chowl. He quickly learned the cadence and rhythm of the neighbourhood, which was essentially a stream of Urdu invective - I’ll fuck your mother, go fuck your sister, I swear by your mother’s cock – that was interrupted five times a day by the call to prayer from the Jama Masjid as well as the several other smaller mosques in the old city. As Aftab kept strict vigil, day after day, over nothing in particular, Guddu Bhai, the acrimonious early-morning fishmonger who parked his cart of gleaming fresh fish in the centre of the Chowk, would, as surely as the sun rose in the east and set in the west, elongate into Wasim, the tall, affable afternoon naan khatai-seller who would then shrink into Yunus, the small, lean, evening fruit-seller, who, late at night, would broaden and balloon into Hassan Mian, the stout vendor of the best mutton biriyani in Matia Mahal, which he dished out of a huge copper pot. (Roy 17-18)

The Place described is not just a physical structure, a building, a plan, or a street instead space with vectors of directions and time variables. It contains elements which constitute it into a

Space as Steven Rendall in his translation of Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* says:

A space exist when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities. (Rendall 117)

Shajahanabad street is a Space with elements such as different types of people, mingling each other, shops and shop keepers selling their products, hurry burry of rickshaw walas, street dwellers walk, pose and search for their goods and stuffs, locals indulging in talking and - observing the new faces, lepers lying unnoticed, beggars singing and walking begging money, ladies walking through while the kids they carry cry for toys and chocolates, abandoned cows and goats roaming around etc. These elements convert the particular place by the street planners into a space of different dimensions. While walking and roaming each individual create his/her own space which the street planners excluded in their project. They write their own course of subjective use of the place. The practitioners of the street are those who walk through where visibility begins. While they walk, their body experiences the thick and thins of the street life, making use of the spaces which is not visible for them. A network of these movements creates spaces with neither origin nor end, shaped out of fragments of trajectories of alterations of spaces.

These Spaces have a significant role in shaping and molding Aftab. Aftab, an always ridiculed and neglected Hijra has no voice in his home. His father takes him to Dr Ghulam Nabi

without his consent. He was mocked and teased by his friends at Ustad Hameed Khan's music classes and Mulaqat Ali tries to inculcate manliness in him by telling stories about their warrior ancestors. Aftab is an unperson in Shahjahanabad whose presence is not at all marked. He sits solely and observes the cadence and rhythm of the Delhi Street only to learn how to resist. He resists with his silence. It is the music of the Old Delhi street like *'i will fuck your mother, go fuck your sister, I swear by your mother's cock'* which teaches him how to rebel. From the very young age itself he learns such words which later on mold and shape him to throw back the stones pelted against him. Aftab is a callow person in Shahjahanabad, he is neither male nor female. He does not have a constant identity. He lives a life that he never wants to live and is defined in a world others created for him. Aftab is a naïve, an immature and inexperienced fellow in his home place.

Aftab's identity is as complex as the Old Delhi Street, Shahjahanabad which contains spaces that has not been explored. It is as stranded as the crumpled streets of Old Delhi. Roy portrays a number of dargahs in the novel which can be compared to the state of mind of Aftab. All the dargahs are extremely teeming like Aftab's mind which is brimming with different level of thoughts. Dargahs constitute the description of another place in the novel which actually is a space with vectors of directions and time variables.

The first time she made her way past the crowd – the sellers of ittars and amulets, the custodians of pilgrim' shoes, the cripples, the beggars, the homeless, the goats being fattened for slaughter on Eid and the knot of quiet, elderly eunuchs who had taken up residence under a tarpaulin outside the shrine – and entered the tiny red chamber, Jahanara Begum became calm. . . .Watching people, Muslim as well as Hindu, come in

ones and twos, and tie red threads, red bangles and chits of paper to the grille around the tomb, beseeching Saemad to bless them. (Roy 11)

Dargah is not only a shrine built over the grave of a revered religious figure, instead an accumulation of multitudes of elements which transform it into a space. There are different types of people like sellers of perfumes, amulets, threads, and bangles, beggars, lepers homeless and Hijras. There are people with agonies seeking the deity's blessings and protection and people with worries and strives like Jahanara Bheegum. There are animals like goats and buffalos to be slaughtered during Eid and people with their subjective cause of prayers and chants. Their interactions turn the Place into space. People brimming with their personal issues and frustrations, while interacting with each other and with the particular place form, spaces of varying degrees of dimensions. This place with variable Spaces can be compared to the state of mind of Aftab which deep inside is enigmatic and complex.

Aftab's far-fetched journey to explore his real identity and to fulfill his biggest dream of becoming 'a mother' constitutes the remaining part of the novel. His self exploration begins with a change in place from his home to a well known Hijra gharana named Khwabgah, the House of Dreams. It is indeed a house of dream which fulfills one of his long desires of becoming a woman. It is a place Aftab always dreamt of living in and people of her favor resides. He follows the slim-hipped woman with an intense wish of becoming like her and gradually grabs an opportunity to enter into the world behind the blue doorway she disappears into, a place where so called 'normal people' hesitates to enter. Roy describes Khwabgah and the structure of the interior of the place meticulously. Aftab, as an outsider views Khwabgah as,



He began to divide his time between his music classes and hanging around outside the blue doorway of the house in Gali Daotan where the tall woman lived. He learned that her name was Bombay Silk, and that there were seven others like her, Bulbul, Razia, Heera, Baby, Nimmo, Mary and Gudiya, who lived together in the haveli with the blue doorway, and that they had an Ustad, a guru, called Kulsoom Bi, older than the rest of them, who was the head of the household. (Roy 19)

An outsider's view of the place Khwabgah is entirely different from the inside subjective world of the dwellers of the place. Khwabgah is brimming with the issues, frustrations, agonies, sighs and hopes of the transpeople who resides in it. It contains a fast-paced environment of their feelings, emotions and actions. They are always under the pressure of Ustad Kulsoom Bi's orders, spurting and squirting of their sounds, the unpleasant tone of voices dangling and swinging with songs at night and all the curses they jabber and gabble during the day time. All such elements convert the particular place into subjective spaces. The inside specifications of the place is described as:

The blue door opened on to paved, high-walled courtyard with a hand pump in one corner and a Pomegranate tree in the other. There were two rooms set behind a deep verandah with fluted columns. The roof of one of the rooms had caved in and its walls had crumbled into a heap of rubble in which a family of cats had made its home. The room that hadn't crumbled was a large one, and in fairly good condition. Its peeling, pale green walls were lined with four wooden and two Godrej almirahs covered with pictures of film stars – Madhubala, Waheeda Rehman, Nargis, Dilip Kumar (whose name was really Muhammad Yusuf Khan), Guru Dutt and the local boy Johnny Walker (Badruddin Jamaluddin Kazi), the comedian who could make the saddest person in the world smile.

One of the cupboards had a dim, full-length mirror mounted on the door. In another corner there was a beaten-up old dressing table A chipped and broken chandelier with only one working bulb and a long stemmed, dark brown fan hung from the high ceiling. . .Ustad Kulsoom Bi slept on the only bed in the haveli with her parakeet, Birbal, in his cage above her bed. Birbal would screech as though he was being slaughtered if Kulsoom Bi was not near him at night. During Birbal's waking hours he was capable of some weapon-grade invective that was always preceded by the half-snide, half-flirtatious *Ai-Hai!* That he had picked up from his housemates. (Roy 20)

Khwabgah functions as the most important place in Aftab's life as it transforms Aftab into Anjum. At Khwabgah he encounters people like him advancing the conviction that he is not the only one which finally transfigures him into Anjum. Anjum has her own stance in Khwabgah which denotes the progress in the self. When she became a permanent resident of Khwabgah, she was able to wear dresses of her favor. At Khwabgah, Anjum gradually becomes a famous Hijra and starts to live a life that she always dreamt of living. Aftab progresses to become Anjum with a shift in habitation, a dignified process which transpires and reflects throughout his life. She lives a peaceful life with 'a patched-together' body and partially realized dreams in Khwbgah until she and Zaakir Mian set off to Gujarat.

Gujarat plays an important role in converting Anjum to a more mature yet quiet and silent woman. With all the ill experiences from the Gujarat Muslim Massacre, she becomes a secluded and sequestered soul, rebellious enough to leave Khwabgah. In Gujarat she is a Butchers' Luck. The mob hesitates to attack her because they thought attacking a Hijra would bring them bad luck. Anjum already trying to live 'a woman's life' was hell shocked with this experience, which deeply wounds her and causes ultimate changes in her. She is frustrated and spends time alone

reading books. As a secluded and retarded soul she plans to leave Khwabgah without taking Zainab. The ill experiences from Gujarat turns Anjum to a more bold, daring, courageous and intrepid Hijra who then on lives a secluded life in an abandoned graveyard.

The abandoned graveyard- Jannat Guest House- plays an important role in Anjum's life. Anjum, the distressed and frustrated Hijra leaves Khwabgah to an abandoned graveyard only to convert it into a beautiful place to live. Even though at first, the memory of the terrifying experiences in Gujarat haunts her, by constantly interacting with the surroundings and getting shaped and molded by different people and experiences, she recovers from a panic state of existence. Anjum shifts to a lost and unprepossessed graveyard which is also ruined, damaged and abandoned. It implies the broken state of Anjum while she enters into it. Gradually she renovates it into a beautiful and spacious place to live, which can be considered as the symbol of Anjum becoming a bold, brave and courageous woman. She converts the Place into a Space. At first Anjum is the only one resident of the graveyard which minimizes the possible subjective existence and spatial dimensions of the Place. Over time, when a number of permanent and temporary guests come and leave the Place, it becomes Spaces with vectors of directions and time variables. They together create spaces with different dimensions. A group of people like Mr D.D. Gupta, Ustad Hameed, Imam Ziauddin, Saddam, Nimmo Gorakhpuri with different pasts and a subjective existence live their lives inside the graveyard creating a subjective world of their own. They define and redefine the Place they dwell. The graveyard is a place with the people's physical existence while The Jannat Guest House is a space with the different histories and a subjective presence of the people. Basic elements like the subjective existence of different people and animals, their interactions and variable histories, the renovations, rearrangements and refurbishments of the areas inside it transform the graveyard into the Jannat Guest House.

When Anjum reached in the graveyard for the first time it was just a small, abandoned and wrecked place described as:

It was an unprepossessing graveyard, run-down, not very big and used only occasionally. Its northern boundary abutted a government hospital and mortuary where the bodies of the city's vagrants and unclaimed dead were warehouse until the police decided how to dispose them. . . .The formally constructed graves numbered less than two hundred. The older graves were more elaborate, with carved marble tombstones, the more recent ones, more rudimentary. (Roy 58)

It is the description of the physical structure of the place or plan with no elements constituting it into a space. Anjum gradually renovates the place into spaces with elements and there are different processes under which the graveyard is converted to the Jannat Guest House. The first thing Anjum did is: "On the first night in the graveyard, after a quick reconnaissance, Anjum placed her Godrej cupboard and her few belongings near Mulaqat Ali's grave and unrolled her carpet and bedding between Ahlam Baji's and Begum Renata Mumtaz Madam's graves" (Roy 61). Anjum marks a subjective presence in the graveyard by trying to adapt herself with the place. With her presence she erases the place to create spaces and different spatial dimensions. Over time the abandoned graveyard is converted to a beautiful place to live, which Anjum names as the Jannat Guest House and she becomes 'The Man of the House'. The process of the transformation of the graveyard into the Jannat Guest House is variably described as:

For months Anjum lived in the graveyard, a ravaged, feral spectre, out-haunting every resident djinn and spirit . . .He (Mr D.D Gupta) diverted a small consignment of bricks and a few asbestos sheets from the building site of a wealthy client and helped Anjum

construct a small, temporary shack - nothing elaborate, just a storeroom in which she could lock her things if she needed to. (Roy 63-64)

As the Fort of Desolation scaled down, Anjum's tin shack scaled up. It grew first into a hut that could accommodate a bed, and then into a small house with a little kitchen. So as not to attract undue attention, she left the exterior walls rough and unfinished. The inside she plastered and painted an unusual shade of fuchsia. She put in a sandstone roof supported on iron girders, which gave her a terrace on which, in the winter, she would put out a plastic chair and dry her hair and sun her chapped, scaly shins while she surveyed the dominion of the dead. For her doors and windows she chose a pale pistachio green. (Roy 66-67)

“Over time Anjum began to enclose the graves of her relatives and build rooms around them. Each room had a grave (or two) and a bed. Or two. She built a separate bathhouse and a toilet with its own septic tank. . . .Anjum called her guest house Jannat. Paradise” (Roy 67-68). The graveyard then starts to function as a funeral parlour which brings the place another spatial dimension as, “Within a week Jannat Guest House began to function as a funeral parlour. It had a proper bathhouse with an asbestos roof and a cement platform for bodies to be laid out on. There was a steady supply of gravestones, shrouds, perfumed Multani clay(which most people preferred to soap) and bucket-water. There was a resident imam on call night and day” (Roy 79). With all the renovations the graveyard becomes spaces with vectors of directions, a beautiful space called Jannat Guest House. The dwellers of the graveyard, with their varying histories, subjective presence and interactions turn the Place into a Space. People like Mr D.D Gupata, an old client of Anjum tracks her down and visits her in the graveyard. She also receives some other visitors like Saeeda, Zainab, her brother Saquib, Ustad Kulsoom Bi, Haji Mian and Bismillah.

The most regular visitors were Ustad Hameed and Imam Ziauddin whose pretty and profound quarrels and the latter's request to Anjum to read the news papers to him every morning helped draw her back into the Duniya. Nimmo Gorakhpuri, her friend from the past reappears and the Jannat Guest House gets a second permanent guest named Saddam. All the dwellers share different histories and with their subjective presence, interact each other in the abandoned graveyard. They renovate it into a beautiful place to live-The Jannat Guest House-creating Spaces. It consists of a number of elements like the renovated areas, different people with their subjective presence and interactions, and animals with an existence as important as that of men's. The interactions between these subjective elements constitute a conversion of the place into spaces of multitudes of dimensions as "The connections between visuals and statistics lead to important insights about the power dynamics of a particular place, but also may lend to reductive assumptions about the people who are there and the daily interactions that create each space" (Space and Place).

The Jannat Guest House plays a significant role in Anjum's transformation. Anjum leaves Khwabgah with the devastating and haunting memories of the Gujarat experiences and Zakir Mian which continuously haunt and daunt her in the graveyard. She is shocked and dejected to be tagged as the Butchers' Luck which makes her a frustrated woman in the first night at the graveyard.

In that setting, Anjum would ordinarily have been in some danger. But her desolation protected her. Unleashed at last from social protocol, it rose up around her in all its majesty – a fort, with ramparts, turrets, hidden dungeons and walls that hummed like an approaching mob. She rattled through its gilded chambers like a fugitive absconding from herself. She tried to dismiss the cortege of saffron men with saffron smiles who

pursued her with impaled on their saffron tridents, but they would not be dismissed. She tried to shut the door in Zakir Mian, lying neatly folded in the middle of the street, like one of his crisp cash-birds. But he followed her, folded, through closed doors on his flying carpet. She tried to forget the way he had looked at her just before the light went out of his eyes. But he wouldn't let her. (Roy 61)

But Anjum is courageous enough to bring back the lost life. With the plausible renovations and choosing her favorite people to love all again, she reweaves the lost threads of her life. It is the time she spent with her favorite people in the Jannat Guest House, Ustad Hameed's daily *riaz* played with her harmonium, Imam Ziauddin's daily visits and the silly quarrels with her, the reunion with her always favorite friend Nimmo, a busy schedule at her own kingdom with the funeral service made her to move forward with hopes and dreams. She gradually turns to become the old Anjum. The renovated places, hence spaces, the friendship with the people of her favor and their interactions turn Anjum to a more passionate, zealous and ambitious soul. She still carries the dream of becoming a mother which is evident in her conversation with Saddam.

I was born to be a mother, she sobbed

'Just watch. One day Allah Mian will give me my own child. That much I know.'

'How is that possible?' Saddam said, entirely unaware that he was entering treacherous territory. 'Haqeeqat bhi koi cheez hoti bhai.' There is, after all, such a thing as Reality.

'Why not? Why the hell not?' Anjum sat up and looked him in the eye.

'I'm just saying . . . I meant realistically . . .'

'If you can be Saddam Hussain, I can be a mother'. (Roy 83-84)

An intense wish to become a mother is explicit in Anjum that she keeps in herself as a fire until she finds the abandoned Miss Jabeen Two in Jantar Mantar.

Jantar Mantar serves as the nerve centre of the novel from where a number of other stories emerge like small nerves. It is a place where the two woman protagonists come in link with each other. Jantar Mantar in Delhi is a place where a number of protest movements converge and people demand for justice. People from different parts of India gather in this street to express their anger, frustration and despair. There are farmers, merchants, minority groups like Dalits, Muslims and other social pariahs, women's rights activists, LGBT people, protesters who want Hindi to be declared as India's national language, anti-corruption movements and protesters of the Delhi Kabaadi-wallahs' Association and Sewage Workers' Union etc who declare their aversion against the anti people policies of the Indian government. Even though, in most of the cases the Indian Government is deaf towards their demands, they continue going ahead with the resistance for many long years. The Anna Hazare movement, protesters of the 1984 Union Carbide gas leak in Bhopal, the Manipuri Nationalists asking for the revocation of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, Tibetan refugees calling for a free Tibet, Association of Mothers of the Disappeared etc has got special prominence that many intellectuals publically announced their support and demanded justice for them.

The place Jantar Mantar which is filled with different protests, protesters and people with multitudes of purposes constitute a space. Apart from the physical structure of the place which is basically located in the modern city of New Delhi and consists thirteen architectural astronomy instruments, an old observatory which functioned to compile astronomical tables and to predict the movements of the sun, moon and planets, the elements like different people with varying backgrounds interacting each other, media persons running through the pavement to catch news,



polices and military roaming around to prevent problems and issues, people running around for and minding their group's matters, leaders addressing their groups and talking to the medias discussing and deciding things, the tired old protesters, fresh and determined new ones, different medias interviewing people, people doing fast to the death, the crowded pavements with sellers of mangoes, fruit juices, magazines, newspapers and other most necessary things, the hurly-burly of people, vehicles like bikes, jeep, buses and ambulances parked near the pavement, sad and frustrated people losing their consciousness etc constitute the Jantar Mantar a Space with multitudes of vectors and time variables. Roy describes the space Jantar Mantar in the novel as:

Down below, on the pavement, on the edge of Jantar Mantar, the old observatory where our baby made her appearance, it was fairly busy even at that time of the morning. Communists, seditionists, secessionists, revolutionaries, dreamers, idlers, crackheads, crackpots, all manner of freelancers, and wise men who couldn't afford gifts for newborns, milled out. Over the last ten days they had all been sidelined and driven off what had once been *their* territory - the only place in the city where they were allowed to gather – by the newest show in town. More than twenty TV crews, their cameras mounted on yellow cranes, kept a round-the-clock vigil over their bright new star: a tubby old Gandhian, former-soldier-turned-village-social worker, who had announced a fast to the death to realize his dream of a corruption-free India. . . . Right next to the anti-corruption canopy, in a clearly demarcated space under the spreading branches of an old Tamarind tree, another well-known Gandhian activist had committed herself to a fast to death on behalf of thousands of farmers and indigenous tribes people whose land had been appropriated by the government to be given to a petrochemical corporation for a captive coal mine and thermal power plant in Bengal. (Roy 101-05)

“ A dozen hefty men in civil clothes but with uncivil haircuts (short back and sides) and uncivil socks and shoes (khaki socks, brown boots) had distributed themselves among the crowd, blatantly eavesdropping on conversations” (Roy 106).

“Some distance away a bare-torsoed man, with yellow limes stuck all over his body with superglue, sucked noisily on a thick mango drink from a small carton” (Roy 107).

“Next to the Bhopalis was the Delhi Kabaadi-Wallahs’ (Waste recyclers’) Association and the Sewage Workers’ Union, protesting against the privatization and corporatization of the city’s garbage and the city’s sewage” (Roy 111).

“Right next to the waste-recyclers and the sewage workers was the plushiest part of the pavement, a glittering public toilet with float glass mirrors and a shiny granite floor. The toilet lights stayed on, night and day” (Roy 112).

The Space Jantar Mantar constitutes a great part in Anjum’s life. Anjum, an already bold, and determined woman visits Jantar Mantar with Saddam, his horse Payal and a new member of the Jannat Guest House Ishrath. They happened to encounter different protests in the pavement and observe it closely. All of a sudden they hear the wailing sound of a baby in the pavement who later on named as Miss Jebeen Two. She was abandoned by her Maoist mother Comrade Revathy. Anjum indulges in a quarrel with Mr Agarwal while with no one’s attention S. Tilottama fetches away the baby. Saaddam and Ishrath follow her and plots to bring Tilo and Baby under Anjum’s custody. This is a turning point in Anjum’s life. The very first step towards her dream. The biggest dream of her life is to become a mother. Anjum’s journey to become a mother starts here. She treats Mis Jebeen Two like her daughter. She is successful and has fulfilled her dream.

Even though Anjum is bold and courageous before she visits Jantar Mantar she becomes more tender, caring and motherly nurturing after this. She is soft and generous. The motherly qualities which are inherent in her finally take its shape and form. She weeps when Miss Jebeen Two's story is disclosed which makes her to consider both Zainab and Miiss Jebeen Two as her daughters. She is kind, soft hearted and generous when the plot ends. Jantar Mantar gifts Anjum feminine qualities which she ever dreamt of possessing.

The chapter entitled *The Slow-Goose Chase* is crammed with the spatial explanations of the city structure of the Delhi street. It talks about both Saddam and Ishrath having a night ride through the New Delhi city street with their horse Payal chasing S. Tilottama who had fetched away Miss Jabeen Two from the Jantar Mantar pavement. The city street as a place is described as: "No signs said so, because everything was a sign that any fool could read: the silence, the width of the roads, the height of the trees, the unpeopled pavements, the clipped hedges, the low white bungalows in which the Rulers lived. Even the yellow light that poured from the tall street lights looked encashable – columns of liquid gold" (Roy 135). The elements which constitute the place city street into different subjective spaces described as:

Beyond the flyover the city grew less sure of itself. The slow chase threaded past two hospitals so full of sickness that patients and their families had spilled out and were camped on the roads. Some were on makeshift beds and in wheelchairs. Some wore hospital gowns and had bandages and IV drips. Children, bald from chemotherapy, wore hospital masks and clung to their empty-eyed parents. People crowded the counters of the all-night chemists, playing Indian Roulette. (There was 60:40 chance that the drugs they bought were genuine and not spurious.) Families cooked on the street, cutting onions, boiling potatoes gone gritty with dust on small kerosene stoves.

They hung their washing on tree guards and railings. (Saddam Hussain took note of all this – for professional reasons.) A bunch of emaciated twig-thighed villagers in dhotis squatted on their haunches in a circle. In the centre, perched like a wounded bird, was a wizened old lady in a printed sari and enormous dark glasses that were sealed along the edges with cotton wool. A thermometer angled out of her mouth like a cigarette.

(Roy 136-137)

“This time the goose-chase party went under it (flyover). It was packed tight with sleeping people. A bare-bodied bald man with a purple crust of congealed talcum powder on his head and a long, grey, bushy beard beat out a rhythm on an imaginary drum, flinging his head around like Ustad Zakir Hussain” (Roy 137). The places Aftab goes through in his journey to become Anjum transform her into a bold, independent and courageous woman; to a mother, whom she always dreamt of becoming. The places are actually spaces with vectors of directions, velocities and time variables which mold and shape Anjum to become a better person.

## Chapter 3

### Practiced Places: A Quest for Upswing

The second part of the novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* deals with the story of S. Tilottama, Musa Yeswi, Nagaraj Hariharan and Biplab Dasgupta, the students of Architecture and History at the Delhi University. S. Tilottama is a dusky Malayali beauty, a student of Architecture who is alleged to have an ancestry of a Syrian Christian mother and an ‘untouchable’ father. Tilo was abandoned in an orphanage during her childhood and was later adopted by her mother, never admitting her as a daughter. Frustrated and agitated she leaves home to join Architecture at the Delhi University. At college, while working on the sets of the play *Norman* directed by David Quartermaine, Tilo becomes friends with three men named Musa Yeswi, who acts as Commander Gulrez in the play and who later on becomes an underground militant in Kashmir, Biplab Dasgupta who acts as Garson Hobart and who later on becomes a Deputy Station Head for Intelligence Bureau and Nagaraj Hariharan who later becomes a top-notch journalist in Kashmir. The latter two develops an infatuation towards Tilo but she falls in love with Musa. During the time of her college days, Tilo was completely estranged from her mother. She seems quite lone and silent as Jerry Pinto of *Live Mint* in the article entitled “Arundhati Roy’s *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is a hideous, beautiful story” observes:

S. Tilottama is the kind of beauty only words can relate. All the men she meets fall in love with this dusky Malayali beauty who dresses badly in cast-off clothes and smokes beedis. She resembles a Billie Holiday song, we are told. ‘Her eyes were broken glass,’ we are told. She is an addiction, we are told; and she can never get it wrong because she does not care to get it right. Her mother is a teacher and feminist.

In Delhi (at college) she lived a rebellious life which is described as, “The complete absence of a desire to please, or to put someone at their ease, could, in a less vulnerable person, have been constructed as arrogance. In her it case across has a kind of reckless aloneless. She gave the impression that she had somehow slipped off her leash” (Roy 114).

From the three men who had loved her, she selects Musa, a Kashmiri who later becomes a militant in Kashmir’s attempt at succession from India. Being a forward thinker who hates the custom of marriage Tilo never wishes to marry him. After the graduation, both of them separate and Musa returns to Kashmir to marry Arifa Yeswi and they together have a daughter. Soon after, both his wife and daughter get killed in the crossfire watching a funeral. Musa, who has already become a strong militant finds his name in the most wanted list and goes underground. Through a letter both Musa and Tilo are reconnected and he invites her to visit him in HB Shaheen, Kashmir. Just because their relationship was so, she immediately leaves for Kashmir. She meets Musa and they together spent a night as, “They had always fitted together like pieces of an unsolved (and perhaps unsolvable) puzzle – the smoke of her into the solidness of him, the solitariness of her into the gathering of him, the strangeness of her into the straightforwardness of him, the insouciance of her into the restraint of him. The quietness of her into the quietness of him” (Roy 362). Musa wants her to travel through the Kashmir valleys to understand the real situations. That journey entirely changes Tilo. She travels through Kashmir Valleys handed off from person to person who are rigorously connected to Musa and finally reaches back to HB Shaheen but gets unfortunately caught by the ruthless police officer Amrik Singh. Knowing Biplaab Dasgupta who was then working as the Deputy Station Head for Intelligence Bureau, she sends him a message which reads like G-A-R-S-O-N H-O-B-A-R-T. Biplab sends Naga to find her and he reaches at Shiraz Cinema not before Tilo’s head is shaved by Assistant

Commandant Pinky Sodhi. She finally comes out of Shiraz Cinema with Naga and finds a chance to meet Musa in the next morning. Musa insists her to return to Delhi and if possible to get married for her own safety. She marries Naga and both of them start living on the upper floor of his parents' home in the Diplomatic Enclave in Delhi. Soon she finds out that she is carrying Musa's child. With an abortion and a long 14 years of marriage with Naga, Tilo is still unhappy. She leaves Naga renting a room from Biplab Tilo keeps contacts with Musa and he sends her notes and information in the false bottoms of fruit boxes from Kashmir. She finds time to spend her days amid the conflicts in Jantar Mantar. With an intense wish to become a mother, she fetches away the baby who was abandoned in the pavement of Jantar Mantar and when the police focus on this abduction escapes to the Jannat Guest House. She was warmly welcomed by the residents of the cemetery. Tilo begins a tuition centre for poor neighborhood children while Musa keep on visiting her. Everything is set and the story ends in peace. Jobin M. Kanjirakkat in his article entitled "Arundhati Roy, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*" observes:

Tilo's deep friendship with Musa takes her into the depths of the political crisis of Kashmir. Her description of the problem in Kashmir is sharp 'Martyrdom stole into the Kashmir Valley from across the Line of Control, through moonlit mountain passes manned by soldiers.' The story ends with the picture of a rapidly urbanizing India, which pushes the motley group of dispossessed individuals to their happy shelters in a graveyard. (1-2)

The second part of the novel contains a rich description of different places which mark the journey of a quiet yet defiant woman S. Tilottama. Tilo, a silent yet nonconformist woman traverses through different places to get shaped and molded by the elements which constitute those places into spaces. She is finally transformed into a woman with motherly affections and

care. Even though Tilo hates the custom of marriage and responsibilities like having kids, Roy brings her to a point where she marries Naga and bears Musa's kid in her womb. She becomes friendly in nature and adjusts everything when she reaches in the Jannat Guest House. The places she traverses through contribute much to this progress. The second part of the novel begins with Biplab Dasgupta recollecting the memories of Tilo during their college days at Delhi University. She travels through different places like HB Shaheen, Kashmir valleys, Shiraz Cinema, Diplomatic Enclave, Biplab's apartment and finally the Jannat Guest House. All these places are spaces with vectors of directions and time variables, the functioning elements such as lakes, floating markets, houseboats, valleys, houses, different people, their interactions, buildings and the interiors etc. The places described are not merely an urban or rural geographical cite, instead a conglomeration of activities of variable elements which constitute it into a space. All these spaces with vectors of directions and time variables contribute to the progress of the character Tilo in the novel. She is molded and shaped by the places (spaces) she goes through. Even though Tilo is described as someone who don't believe in rules and regulations, towards the end she marries, becomes pregnant, aborts and even fetches away an abandoned baby from Jantar Mantar. The wish to become a mother, which is inherent in every woman, ultimately changes her as it is observed in the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, "Moving backward and forward, the remainder of the novel concerns how Tilo and Musa's love story intersects with that of Anjum, and the kidnapped baby. The love story is one of opposites attracting. Tilo has no background, no belonging, no home, and she adopts insouciance about this, whereas Musa is a Kashmiri activist who would die for his home" (Felicelli).

Tilo's life expedition begins from her college days, that even after graduation she joins as a junior architect in an architectural firm and with the meager salary rents a ramshackle room



near the dargah of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya. She lives there alone. The place where Tilo live in is described in the novel as;

After the last song was sung, and the musicians packed away their battered instruments, we walked down the dark road that ran behind the colony, along the banks of storm-water drain that smelled like a sewer, and climbed the steep, narrow stairs to her room. Her dusty terrace was stacked with someone's - probably her landlord's – discarded furniture, the wood bleached white by the sun. . . . The room was tiny, more like a storeroom than a room. It was bare except for a string cot, a terracotta *matka* for water and a cardboard carton with clothes and some books. An electric ring on an old jeep windscreen propped up on bricks functioned as the kitchen. A skilful, larger-than-life crayon drawing of an iridescent, purple-blue rooster took up one whole wall and regarded us with a stern yellow eye. (Roy 158-59).

The place Tilo lives in Delhi becomes a space with elements like the subjective existence, the noises of devotees chanting prayers in Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya dargah, the heavy sounds of Thursday-night qawwali, the endless hashish's smoke in the air, the countless mosquitoes and different animals roaming around her room which is described in the novel as, “A ginger tomcat yowled in sexual desperation for the female who had barricaded herself inside a nest of loose wicker that had come undone from the seat of a broken chair” (Roy 158). During the college days, Tilo was so turbulent and chaotic that she lived her life in her own ways, made her rules and didn't allow anyone to intervene in her life.

The complete absence of a desire to please, or to put someone at their ease, could, in a less vulnerable person, have been constructed as arrogance. In her it came across as a

kind of reckless aloneness. Behind her plain, unfashionable spectacles her slightly slanting cat-eyes had the insouciant secretiveness of a pyromaniac. She gave the impression that she had somehow slipped off her leash. As though she was taking herself for a walk while the rest of us were being alked – like pets. As though she was watching considerately, somewhat absent-mindedly, from a distance, while we minced along, grateful to our owners, happy to perpetuate our bondage. (Roy 154).

Tilo was a free spirit that she never wants to get married which is evident in her talk with Biplab Dasgupta as, “She said, ‘I’m not marrying anybody.’ When I asked her why she felt that way, she said she wanted to be free to die irresponsibly, without notice and for no reason” (Roy 159). This attitude of Tilo changes when she travels through different places.

With Musa’s invitation Tilo sets off to Ghat Number 33, HB Shaheen, Dal Lake in Kashmir where he appears and leaves without notice. Tilo’s journey to Kashmir is meticulously described in the novel which explores the beauty of the valleys. Her journey from Jammu to Srinagar in a bus is picturized as: “It was late afternoon when the bus emerged from the long tunnel that bored through the mountains, the only link between India and Kashmir. Autumn in the Valley was the season of immodest abundance. The sun slanted down on the lavender haze of zaffran crocuses in bloom. Orchards were heavy with fruits, the Chinar trees were on fire” (Roy 346-47). There are elements which constitute the Kashmir Valley into a space. Tilo’s co-passengers who are Kashmiris, with a subjective existence could disaggregate the breeze of apples from pears and both from the ripe paddies and can also detect whose apples, pears and paddies were that. The elements which constitute the place Kashmir Valley into spaces in Tilo’s journey is described as:

As the noisy, rattling bus with its still, silent passengers drove deeper into the Valley the tension grew more tangible. Every fifty metres, on either side of the road, there was a heavily armed soldier, alert and dangerously tense. There were soldiers in the fields, deep inside orchards, on bridges and culverts, in shops and marketplaces, on rooftops, each covering the other, in a grid that stretched all the way up into the mountains. . . . At every checkpoint the road was blocked with movable horizontal barriers mounted with iron spikes that could shared a tyre to ribbons. At each checkpost the bus had to stop, all the passengers had to disembark and line up with their bags to be searched. Soldiers riffled through the luggage on the bus roof. The passengers kept their eyes lowered.

(Roy 347-48)

These are the elements which constitute the place Kashmir Valley into spaces. Spaces are formed when the dwellers navigate through the place. It is spatialization, putting into action while place is stable and static. Spaces are formed when the dwellers perform on a pre-existing place. While one is travelling and is a part of a crowd, he is creating his own space. Description of the beautiful Kashmir Valley as menacing and terrifying in the novel also constitute it into a space. Musa wants Tilo to travel through the Valleys of Kashmir to watch everything. She sets off, each day accompanied by different sets of companions and the journey is described as, “She travelled by bus, in shared taxis, and sometimes by car. She visited the tourist spots made famous by the Hindi cinema . . . The hotels where film stars used to stay were empty, the honeymoon cottages (where, her travelling companions joked, their oppressors had been conceived) were abandoned” (Roy 372). The journey creates spaces when Tilo interacts with different people during the course of the journey, the crowded valleys where police and army roam around 24hrs, the calm yet turbulent lives of Kashmiri people, countless dead bodies and mass graves found in Valleys

and limitless attacks and bomb explosions. The spatial dimensions of Kashmir Valleys in Tilo's journey are described in the novel as:

She travelled to the Lolab Valley, considering the most beautiful and dangerous place in all of Kashmir, its forest teeming with militants, soldiers and rogue Ikhwanis. She walked on little-known forest paths near Rafiabad that ran close to the Line of Control, along the grassy banks of mountain streams from which she would drop down on all fours and drink the clear water like a thirsty animal, her lips turning blue with cold. She visited villages ringed by orchards and graveyards; she stayed in villagers' homes. Musa would appear and leave without notice. They sat around a fire in an empty stone hut high up in the mountains that was used by Gujjar shepherds in the summer when they brought their sheep up from the plains. (Roy 373)

HB Shaheen, Dal Lake is a secret place for Tilo-Musa meeting and from where their love reveals and body merges. They openly talk and declare their love and passion towards each other. Musa talks about the conflicts of his life and home country while Tilo tries to confess her love. She reaches at HB Shaheen with Musa's invitation following an arduous journey through the Kashmir Valleys. Tilo's travel from Jammu to HB Shaheen is described as:

At the bus stop a man sidled up to Tilo and asked her her name. From then on, she was passed from hand to hand. An autorickshaw took her from the bus stand to the Boulevard. She crossed the lake in a shikara on which there was no sitting option, only a lounging one. So she lounged on the bright, floral cushions, a honeymooner without a husband. . . . The lake was deadly quiet. The rhythmic sound of oars in the water might well have been the uneasy heartbeat of the Valley.

Pliff

Pliff

Pliff

The houseboats anchored next to each other cheek by jowl on the opposite shore – HB Shaheen, HB Jannat, HB Queen Victoria, HB Derbyshire, HB Snow View, HB Desert Breeze, HB Zam-Zam, HB Gulshan, HB New Gulshan, HB Gulshan Palace, HB Mandalay, HB Clifton, HB New Clifton – were dark and empty. . . . HB Shaheen was the smallest and shabbiest of them all. (Roy 348)

The place HB Shaheen contain elements which constitute it into spaces like the subjective existence of the people who resides in it, their interactions, the mesmerizing ambience of the lake surrounding it, the hubbubs of doongas, floating houses-gardens-markets, and the existence of small pets inside the houseboat. These elements convert the particular place houseboat into spaces with different dimensions. While walking and roaming through the houseboat, the individuals create their own spaces which the manufacturers of the houseboat excluded in their making. They write their own course of subjective use of the place as the space HB Shaheen is described:

The cramped room was only slightly larger than the double bed covered with an embroidered counterpane. On the bedside table there was a flowered plastic tray with a filigreed bell-metal water jug, two coloured glasses and a small CD player. The threadbare carpet on the floor was patterned, the cupboard doors were crudely carved, the wooden ceiling was honeycombed, the waste-paper bin was intricately patterned papier mache. . . . She opened the wooden windows but they looked directly on to the

closed wooden windows of the next houseboat a few feet away. Empty cigarette packets and cigarette stubs floated in the few feet of water that separated them. (Roy 349)

Gulrez's activities and his collection of little things also constitute the spatial dimensions of the place HB Shaheen. His activities like cooking and serving the food, cleaning kitchen, bedroom and the furniture and simply talking to the purple brinjals and big-leaved haakh in his vegetable garden just behind the boat ( he was all alone before Tilo came) constitute a subjective existence of him which produce spaces. He shows Tilo the collection of his little things in a big yellow airport duty-free shopping bag. The presence of the little things like an empty bottle of after shave lotion, a pair of binoculars, a guidebook, a toilet bag, a bottle of lotion etc produce subjective spaces of existence which constitute the place houseboat into spaces.

*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* contains an elaborate account of the description of a place called Shiraz Cinema which resembles Nazi concentration camps. It was a cinema theatre in Kashmir which was forced to close by a fundamentalist group named Allah Tigers. Later on army took its control turning it to be a centre where hundreds of Kashmiri young Muslim men were tortured and tormented. Shiraz Cinema which is controlled by so called 'criminals' in police like Amrik Singh and Pinky Sodhi is a nightmare for the Kashmiri youths. People under suspicion of terrorism were highly tormented inside it, they never came out but as dead bodies. It reminds the readers of Hitler's concentration camps with the torturing equipments, police and army roaming around and the screams of people in pain. It presents before the readers a real picture of the condition of hundreds of Kashmiri people who are under suspicion of terrorist activities. Musa, devastated and secluded with the death of his wife and daughter is critically watched by Amrik Singh, who visits his father at his home. With a developing suspicion, he orders to bring Musa to Shiraz Cinema. Amrik Singh insults Musa by rising prompting questions

and offering liquor to his father which enhance aversions in him. The place Shiraz Cinema plays a significant role in the novel which reveals the pathetic situation of Kashmiri youths. The structure of the place Shiraz Cinema is described in the novel as:

The Shiraz Cinema was the centerpiece of an enclave of barracks and officers' quarters, cordoned off by the elaborate trappings of paranoia – two concentric rings of barbed wire sandwiching a shallow, sandy moat; the fourth and innermost ring was a high -boundary wall topped with jagged shards of broken glass. The corrugated-metal gates had watchtowers on either side, manned by soldiers with machine guns. (Roy 330)

Shiraz Cinema contains elements which constitute it into spaces with vectors of directions and time variables. It consist of different people like police, soldiers, torturers and the victims who interact in different ways, police bringing new people under suspicion and taking away the dead bodies of the previous ones, the victim's screams, the intense smell of blood and gun in the air , different rooms set for different levels of tortures, store rooms filled with equipments used for torturing, the renovated balcony for senior officers to directly watch the torments while soldiers and police roam around etc. The spatial dimensions of the place Shiraz Cinema is described in the novel as:

The red carpet was frayed and worn, the cement floor showing through in patches. The stale, recirculated air smelled of guns and diesel and old clothes. What had once been the cinema snack bar now functioned as a reception-come-registration counter for tortures and tortures. It continued to advertise things it no longer stocked \_ Cadbury's Fruit & Nut chocolate and several flavours of Kwality ice cream, Choco Bar, Orange Bar Mango Bar. Faded posters of old films . . . some of them spattered with red betel

juice. Rows of young men, bound and handcuffed, squatted on the floor like chickens, some so badly beaten that they had keeled over, barely alive, still in squatting position, their wrists secured to their ankles. Soldiers milled around, bringing prisoners in taking others away for interrogation. (Roy 331)

During the course of her journey from Delhi to Srinagar through the Kashmir Valleys, Tilo changes enormously. In her college days she is described as a dissenter, a girl with her own views and concepts and who don't believe in any customs, rules and regulations. Tilo lived a secluded life in a shack of a nearby slum. She was an abandoned kid. Her mother, who was a Syrian Christian, left her in an orphanage, later adopting and never admitting her as a daughter. This odd history haunts her which reflects in the strange and rough behavior of Tilo. She doesn't believe in the tradition of getting married and lives a secluded life in Delhi. She reveals her wish to remain single to Biplab Dsgupta, that she doesn't want to take any responsibilities and to die in peace. Tilo, who don't want to start a family life, never reveals her love to Musa and couldn't even consider Naga and Biplab who keep an infatuation towards her. Both Tilo and Musa part even after the graduation. Musa to Kashmir and Tilo to join an architectural firm in Delhi. When Musa invites her to Kashmir after long years, she leaves Delhi. The journeys from Delhi to HB Shaheen and then to Shiraz Cinema bring ultimate changes in her. Tilo, a messy and unromantic lady transforms to a beautiful, romantic and caring woman when she reaches at HB Shaheen. The arduous journey through the Kashmir Valleys facing different ill experiences and the exasperating moments at Shiraz Cinema makes her bold.

Tilo becomes romantic and affectionate when she meets Musa in HB Shaheen. Even though he admits the fact that he got married, has a daughter and both the wife and daughter are killed, she don't move back from confessing her love. Both of them admit their love



to each other and enjoy sex. Tilo gets conceived. Her claim to stay single and have no babies in the entire life is hence changed. Her audacious and adventurous journey through the Valleys of Kashmir, where she encounters different types of people and experiences extremely changes her. Tilo, simple yet deviant changes to a bold and courageous woman who joins in Musa's expedition. She starts to love Musa intensely and supports him by following all the instructions. During the journey through the Kashmir Valleys she follows his people courageously and when brought to Shiraz Cinema is not at all frightened. She is clever enough not to reveal anything about Musa as she keeps silence to all the questions asked by Amrik Singh and Pinky Sodhi. She wisely sends a message code to Biplab Dasgupta. Even though she is deeply wounded due to Gulrez's death, she does not show any sign of it. She doesn't utter a single word to Naga instead shares an empty glance. Tilo, with all the courage follows Khadija next morning to meet Musa. She accepts Musa's advice to get married because he wants her to be safe. Keeping aside her wish to stay single in her entire life she marries Naga for Musa's sake. She shows the courage to abort Musa's baby to make herself as well as the baby safe. The journey causes extreme changes in Tilo. The spaces she visits embark and transform her into an entirely different person. The enlightening experiences from the journey convert Tilo into another person that she is no longer the previous version of herself. The spaces she traverses through mold and shape her into a better person.

Tilo's room in Biplas Dasgupta's apartment plays a major role in the progress of the story. After a long fourteen years of married life with Naga and still being unhappy Tilo leaves Diplomatic Enclave to start a new life. She rents a room from Biplab Dasgupta and starts to live a secluded life. She secretly keeps contact with Musa and starts visiting the conflict ridden Jantar Mantar. The guilt of aborting her baby and the innate wish to be a mother haunt Tilo which

tempt her to fetch away an abandoned baby whom she names Miss Jebeen Two. Tilo's room acts as a window through which the readers get an insight into Tilo's life. Biplab, who goes to visit his tenant, finds the room locked and breaks it. He finds the room crowded with so many things and examines it. The physical structure of Tilo's room is explained as: "The back gate was open, as I expected it to be. (The ground-floor tenants have painted it lavender.) I went straight up the stairs to the second floor. The door was locked. The extent of my disappointment unsettled me. The landing looked deserted. There was mail and old newspapers piled up against the door. I noticed a dog's paw-prints in the dust" (Roy 147). The inside view of Tilo's room is described elaborately which denotes the spatial aspect of the place. It is crowded with things like photographs, noticeboards, documents, cardboards, cartons, box files and a number of other personal belongings.

Even a casual glance around the room – at the photographs (numbered, captioned) pinned up on the noticeboards, the little towers of documents stacked neatly on the floor and in labeled cartons and box files, the yellow Post-its stuck on bookshelves, cupboards, doors . . . At the far end of the room there's a long, thick plank of wood supported on two metal stands that serves as a table. It's piled with papers, old videotapes, a stack of DVDs. Pinned to the noticeboards, together with the photographs, are notes and sketches. Next to an old desktop computer is a tray full of labels, visiting cards, brochures and letterheads . . . There are printouts of what appears to be several versions of a shampoo label, in various typefaces . . . (Roy 189)

Presences of such elements in a place constitute it into spaces of different dimensions. The room envelops many secrets of Tilo which gets unfolded with the progress of the plot. Tilo escapes to this room with the abandoned kid from Jantar Mantar and finally shifts to Anjum's Jannat Guest

House. Tilo is secretive while she inhabits in this place. Her room is a space which mold her into a more courageous and bold woman who could keep an illicit relationship and can even fetch away the abandoned baby from the Jantar Mantar.

Roy elaborately describes the changes Biplab Dasgupta notices in his way to the apartment to meet Tilo. He walks through the service lane, a road which is filled with very many elements which constitute the place into spaces. Biplab Dasgupta observes the changes that happened in the service lane which runs behind the row of townhouses. The changes make him frustrated as he observes the once quiet, pretty lane which has now become a construction site with building materials like steel rods, slabs of stones and heaps of sands. He finds some other things like the number of cars which has been increased since his last visit, the apartments on the second and third floors which has been renovated with glass shields, the older houses which has been converted to new flats etc. He also watches two young women in winter coats and high heels smoking cigarettes passes him, the servants of different homes taking care of their employers' dogs and a white and an Indian men walking by holding hands etc The elements which provide spatial dimension to the place hence described as:

A posse of dusty children, some carrying infants on their hips, amuse themselves by ringing doorbells and skittering away hiccupping with delight. Their emaciated parents, hauling cement and bricks around in the deep pits dug for new basements, would not look out of place on a construction site in ancient Egypt, heaving stones for a pharaoh's pyramid. A small donkey with kind eyes walks past me carrying bricks in its saddlebags. (Roy 145)

The space Tilo's room portrays Tilo as a bold and courageous woman who even dare to leave Diplomatic Enclave where she could not find happiness. She dare to keep a secret contact with her love, a militant and visits her favorite place Jantar Mantar, where she could find solace dealing with different protestors. She courageously fetches away the abandoned baby, and names her Miss Jebeen Two, to fill the gap of the aborted baby in her life. Tilo in the apartment is entirely different from the first appearance of herself in the novel. She has become bold, courageous, brave, fearless and valorous. She forgets her lifelong wish not to have a baby and adopts one. She even wears a headscarf when she sets off to meet Musa and chants some prayers before sleep that night. The spaces she goes through, like the Kashmir Valleys, HB Shaheen, Shiraz Cinema and the secluded room of the apartment convert her into the heroin of the novel.

Description of some other places like the Diplomatic Enclave, where Naga's parents live, Mazar-e-Shoddha, the mass grave in Kashmir and the Jannat Guest House constitute different spatial dimensions to the novel. The places are not merely geographical cites; instead contain elements which convert it into spaces with vector of directions and time variables. Diplomatic Enclave is a place in the upstairs of which both Tilo and Naga live after their marriage. She lives with him there for fourteen years finally leaving him to lead a secluded life. There is a detailed description of the decoration of the Diplomatic Enclave during the Naga-Tilo marriage. The big white Art Deco house of Naga's parents in Diplomatic Enclave was decorated with lilies, roses and cascading strings of jasmines. The driveway and the flower beds were lined with lamps and lanterns hung from the trees. The bearers in their uniform costume roam around with food and drink while a posse off dogs smelled perfumes and smokes, lied and walked through the crowd. Musicians from Barmer performed on a raised platform who sung the songs of monsoon. Biplab's memory of Tilo-Naga wedding has always been linked to that song. He observed Tilo

wearing a gossamer sari in a colour of sunset with a bald head with no make-up, kajal, bindi or henna. He saw Musa's ghost standing in between Tilo and Naga. There was Naga's mother surrounded by a clot of elegant ladies. Biplab could smell their perfume across the lawn. There were other guests like Naga's old college friends and acolytes drinking and dancing. He also saw Naga's father, Ambassador Shivashankar Hariharan, aged, gaunt and who stood too small for his suit. These are the elements which constitute the place Diplomatic Enclave into spaces of different dimension.

Mazar-e-Shohadda, the mass grave in Kashmir has got a poignant description in the novel. It evokes desolation and melancholy in readers with a moving account of the small graves. People who are killed in limitless bomb explosions, fundamentalist and army attacks in Kashmir got a mass burial. Men, women and kids of all religions 'slept' under the same shelter. Mazar-e-Shohadda was called the Martyrs' Graveyard where the cast-iron signboard of it has inscribed '*We Gave Our Todays for Your Tomorrow*' which is corroded, the paint faded and the delicate calligraphy flecked with pinholes of light. Mazar-e-Shohadda, during the time of Miss Jebeen and her mother Arifa Yeswi's burial was described as, "At the time of their funeral the Mazar-e-Shohadda was still fairly new, but was already getting crowded. . . . It planned the layout of the graves carefully, making ordered, efficient use of the available space" (Roy 310-11). Tilo and Khadija visit Mazar-e-Shohadda, after the former's meeting with Musa and the place's spatial dimensions are described as: "The sun had not yet set when Khadija and Tilo went to the Mazar-e-Shohadda. Commander Gulrez's grave stood out from the others. A small bamboo framework had been erected over it. It was decorated with strings of silver and gold tinsel and a green flag. . . . They scattered rose petals on Gul-kak's and lit a candle" (Roy 389-90).

Tilo, in Jannat Guest House becomes a successful tuition teacher who teaches her students arithmetic, drawing, science, English and computer graphics. Her people call her Ustaniji or Tilo Madam. Finally she finds peace and can sleep through the night which was her lifelong dream. A peaceful space changes her. Tilo finds solace amid humans, plants, gardens and animals that also start to live their life in the graveyard. Tilo and Musa rejoin and on their last night together, sleep with their arms wrapped around each other. The 'happy' space in the Jannat Guest House causes changes in Tilo that she feels safety and serenity in a way she has never felt before.

## CONCLUSION

In an essay entitled *Des Espaces Autres* which was published in the year 1984 Michel Foucault predicted the emergence of spatial outlook in philosophy and literature as a leading trend of late twentieth century. The prophecy gone true that the end of 20th century witnessed a spatial turn in liberal arts as well as in humanities. Until then in literature, time has prime importance. Critics and philosophers focused on the factor of time because they considered literature as a temporal art in opposition to painting or sculpture which are spatial arts. Space or spaces in literary works especially in fiction viewed as something which has no duty other than to supply a background against which the actions take place. Space was something which wasn't a consideration for writers and critics. From the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, the concepts of space has become a hot topic in literary studies and numerous monographs emerged focusing on a specific genre, author or period such as the spatial concepts in modern Arabic, Russian, Australian literatures, notion of space in the works of certain authors and the spatial aspects persistent in particular centuries. Writers in histories were visited and revisited and the concepts of space were traced in classical works. The study of spaces in modern fiction started benefitting from the classical works. Many researches are still focusing on the spatial aspects of liberal arts and philosophy with different university's collaboration across the world.

The spatial turn in humanities and the social sciences is an innovative and multidisciplinary scholarship. Spatiality is considered as a discipline of geography which unites the practices of economic, social and geographical to the physical and natural environments. It has helped to widen the area of contemporary criticism by extending on the study of the dynamic relations among space, place and literature. Spatial critics try to orient literary criticism and theory with a study on the spatial aspects of real and imagined universes. While exploring

the spatial dimensions or the representation of spaces in literature, the relationship between literature and geography, the transformation of literary and spatial practices, and the role of spaces in critical theory are taken into consideration. Spatial studies have a strong interconnection with the field of architecture, art history, politics and social theory and geography. It is not limited to the spaces of the real world, instead gives a detailed attention to the distinction between real and imaginary places. The spatial studies focuses on the description of certain identifiable places in literary works as well as the other worldly space of literature, to be found in myths, science fictions, cyberspaces and the daily life practices (Napolitano).

The profundity of Michel de Certeau who focused on the spatial aspects of everyday life practices cannot be limited into words as the nature of his analysis evades neat categorization. His works have been visited and revisited in numerous disciplines. His concepts are primarily anthropological in nature with its discussion of the issues of representation and resistance, marginality and minorities and power and plurality. His studies focus on the early modern mysticism, travel narratives and everyday life practices which are repetitive and unconscious. De Certeau's works are noted for its diversity and the interdisciplinary of his subjects. (Napolitano) His works share a legacy of religious studies, history, anthropology, and psychoanalysis. His theory of space is something which connects places and people. Spatial links are created through walking, as when a city stroller explores time and place. The spatial story can possibly include public, private affairs, as well as past and future events and imaginings. A spatial story about a walk through the city might explore the city and may create new subjective, unrealistic and private spaces. Hence, for de Certeau every travel story is the creation of subjective, unrealistic and imaginative spaces.



*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is a story of places. The novel talks about the unbearable realities of the society such as the miserable condition of different minority groups, wretched life of transgenders, play politics of the government and different political parties, agonized lives of Maoists and naxalites and the unhappy lives of Kashmiri youths. The multi layered and multi dimensional story centers around a number of places from the old crumbled city of Delhi to the beautiful yet ruined valleys of Kashmir. When the story unfolds, the novel unveils a lengthy description of different places. In the first part of the novel where Roy portrays the life of a hijra named Anjum, she elaborately describes certain places like the crumbled old Delhi street, a hijra gharana of Delhi called Khwabgah and the unnerving yet peaceful abandoned graveyard The Jannat Guest House. She also portrays the war ridden landscapes of Kashmir , distressing scenes at Mazar-e-shohadda and Shiraz Cinema, the heartwarming love scenes in HB Shaheen. All these places are explored through the stories of the so called ‘others’ like hijras, women, poor, foundlings, political rebels, Dalits, militants, naxalites and untouchables. The narrative explores how these social pariahs mark their presence in the places they traverse through trying out possible lives; and creating new rules for themselves.

The novel starts with an attempt of a hijra for self discovery, progressing through a shift in her place of residence finally adding the story of a Malayali dusky beauty and her love affair with a militant of Kashmir. Both the female characters named Anjum and Tilo, during the course of their journey go through different places which Roy meticulously describes in the novel. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is indeed a novel of places. The places uncover itself when a hijra indulges in search of her identity, a man from Dalit community plan to take a revenge, a government officer who is in suspension visits his tenant, a militant in Kashmir tries to meet his

love, a maoist woman abandons her baby and a rebellious dusky beauty kidnaps an abandoned baby. Birds and beetles also have an existence as important as man's.

The dissertation entitled "Plurality of Places and the Politics of Spaces: Lieu- Espace Representations in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*" focuses on the espace-lieu representations in the novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. The characters in the novel have a strong interconnection with the place they live. The study focuses on the spatial aspects of the novel with reference to the life of two female characters, the protagonists of the first and later parts of the novel named Anjum and Tilottama. Anjum, born as a hijra lives in the walled city of Shajahanabad amid all the ridicule and mockeries. She gradually shifts to Khwabgah, the Hijra gharana and then to the Jannata Guest House, the abandoned grave yard to find peace and solace. During the course of her journey, she also traverses through the places like Gujarath and Jantar Mantar. These are not just geographical sites instead places change with vectors of directions, velocities and time variables. Places constitute an order in which the elements are distributed in relationship to each other and are defined by them. The places contain elements like the subjective existence of individuals and different material and non material things, interactions between them and the interactions between the real and imagined universes which transform the place into spaces. The places Anjum traverses contain an instantaneous configuration of positions which indicate stability. Those stable places are converted to spaces with vectors of directions velocities and time variables. The spaces are composed of intersections of mobile elements and are indeed practiced places. Shajahanabad is a street which consists of different elements which constitute it into a space. Khwabgah is another place which consists of a subjective existence of different individuals and their interactions. With renovations the Jannat Guest House is converted into a space where everyone is set in serenity and peace. The spaces

have a function of converting or marking the individual as triumphant as it ultimately changes Anjum. It transforms her to be a bold and courageous woman. Her biggest dream of becoming a mother is fulfilled in the end and Anjum is strong and independent than she appears in the beginning.

S. Tilottama, the protagonist of the second part of the novel travels through a number of places which mold and shape her. Fate makes Tilo to travel throughout the valleys of Kashmir to recuperate her love. From New Delhi she travels to HB Shaheen to meet Musa and with him indulges in an expedition through the conflict ridden Kashmir Valleys. Fate brings her to Shiraz Cinema from where she finally escapes to marry Naga, living with him in Diplomatic Enclave and finally shifting to Biplab's apartment. All the places she goes through are spaces with vectors of directions, velocities and time variables. The spaces convert Tilo to someone who could courageously support her love, a militant. Tilo travels to HB Shaheen, where she meets her love Musa, to Kashmir Valleys where she joins in his' expedition, to Shiraz Cinema which makes her a bold woman, to Diplomatic Enclave where she acquires the courage to leave an unhappy married life, and Biplab's apartment where she keeps an illicit contact with Musa. de Certeau's spatial theory offers a background in which the innate politics of the places described in the novel *The Ministry o Utmost Happiness* can be explored.

## Works Consulted

### Works Cited

Ahearne, Jeremy. *Michel de Certeau Interpretation and its Other*. Polity Press, 1995, p. 9.

Ahmad, Javeed Raina. “*The Ministry of Utmost happiness*, Book Review- A Chronicle of Death and Resurrection.” *New Man International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, vol. 4, no. 11, Nov. 2017, pp. 44-47.

Batra, Jagdish. “Politico-Literary Response to Terrorism: A Study of Arundhati Roy’s *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*.” *Humanities and Social Sciences Review*, vol. 7, no. 2, 31 Dec. 2017, pp. 429-37.

Bhattacharji Rose, Jaya. “Arundhati Roy’s *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*.” *Confessions of an Avid Bibliophile*, 22 July 2017, [www.jayabhattacharjirose.com/arundhati-roys-the-ministry-of-utmost-happiness/](http://www.jayabhattacharjirose.com/arundhati-roys-the-ministry-of-utmost-happiness/).

Earle, Samuel. “Arundhati Roy on India’s Elections: A Mockery of What Democracy Is Supposed to be.” *The New Republic*, 28 May 2019, [newrepublic.com/article/154011/arundhati-roy-indias-elections-a-mockery-democracy-supposed-be](http://newrepublic.com/article/154011/arundhati-roy-indias-elections-a-mockery-democracy-supposed-be).

Felicelli, Anita. “Outside Language and Power: The Mastery of Arundhati Roy’s *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*.” *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 21 June 2017, [lareviewofbooks.org/article/outside-language-and-power-the-mastery-of-arundhati-roys-the-ministry-of-utmost-happiness/#!](http://lareviewofbooks.org/article/outside-language-and-power-the-mastery-of-arundhati-roys-the-ministry-of-utmost-happiness/#!).

Freeman, John. "Novel Examines How Sectarian Hatred, Violence Shapes Characters in India."

*The Boston Globe*, 1 June 2017, [www.bostonglobe.com/arts/books/2017/06/01/novel-examines-how-sectarian-hatred-violence-shapes-characters-india/0TePVfEFjOXeMzw1wARGdP/story.html](http://www.bostonglobe.com/arts/books/2017/06/01/novel-examines-how-sectarian-hatred-violence-shapes-characters-india/0TePVfEFjOXeMzw1wARGdP/story.html).

Giard, Luce. "Michel de Certeau's Biography." *Jesuites Province de France*, 5 Feb. 2006,

[web.archive.org/web/20110910002903/http://www.jesuites.com/histoire/certeau.htm](http://web.archive.org/web/20110910002903/http://www.jesuites.com/histoire/certeau.htm).

Kanjirakkat, Jobin M. "Arundhati Roy, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*." *Transnational*

*Literature*, vol. 10, no. 1, Nov. 2017, pp. 1-2.

Mambrol, Nasrullah. "Spatial Criticism: Critical Geography, Space, Place and Textuality."

*Literary Theory and Criticism*, 4 July 2017, [literariness.org/2017/07/04/spatial-criticism-critical-geography-space-place-and-textuality/](http://literariness.org/2017/07/04/spatial-criticism-critical-geography-space-place-and-textuality/).

Napolitano, Valentina and David Pratten." Michel de Certeau: Ethnography and the Challenge of Plurality." *Social Anthropology*, 12 May 2007, pp. 1-11.

Pinto, Jerry. "Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is a Hideous, Beautiful Story."

*Live Mint*, 1 June 2017, [www.livemint.com/Leisure/SDeVFKYyKsJuDwDaCH8eIj/The-Ministry-of-Utmost-Happiness-Arundhati-Roys-hideous.html](http://www.livemint.com/Leisure/SDeVFKYyKsJuDwDaCH8eIj/The-Ministry-of-Utmost-Happiness-Arundhati-Roys-hideous.html).

Rendall, Steven, translator. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. By Michel de Certeau, U of California P, 1988, pp. 1-229.

Roy, Arundhati. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. Penguin Books, 2017, pp. 1-445.

Siddiqui, Mariyam Ilyas. “*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness: Roy’s Attempt to Represent India’s Struggle with Social Issues.*” *Quest Journals Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, vol. 6, no. 6, 2018, pp. 21-24.

Smita Raj, Sushree. “A Study on Arundhati Roy’s *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness.*” *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Translation Studies*, vol.5, no. 2, Apr.-June 2018, pp. 3-6.

“Space and Place.” *Spatial Shock: Place, Space, and the Politics of Representation*, Arizona Department of Education, 2008, [www.u.arizona.edu/~jennav/myspaceandplace.html](http://www.u.arizona.edu/~jennav/myspaceandplace.html).

Subramanian, Samanth. “The Prescient Anger of Arundhati Roy.” *The New Yorker*, 12 June 2019, [www.newyorker.com/books/under-review/the-prescient-anger-of-arundhati-roy](http://www.newyorker.com/books/under-review/the-prescient-anger-of-arundhati-roy).

## Works Consulted

Ackroyd, Peter. *Queer City: Gay London from the Romans to the Present Day*. Chatto & Windus, 2017.

Ali, Halimah Mohamed. *Orientalism from Within: Arundhati Roy and Her Contemporaries*. Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia, 2010.

Ali, Tariq, et al. *Kashmir: The Case for Freedom*. Verso, 2011, pp. 1-139.

“Arundhati Roy on the Jailing of Dr. G. N. Saibaba and Others.” *YouTube*, uploaded by WGBH Forum, 22 June 2017, [youtube.com/watch?v=8NF1U6dCMcA&t=32s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NF1U6dCMcA&t=32s).

“Arundhati Roy: *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Chicago Humanities Festival, 19 July 2017, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTXC0HYLPrs&t=685s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTXC0HYLPrs&t=685s).

Bavidge, Jenny. *Theorists of the City*. Routledge, 2011, pp. 1-224.

Bennet, Andrew. *Readers & Reading*. Routledge, 2013, pp. 1-257.

Berger, Arthur Asa. *Perspectives on Everyday Life: A Cross Disciplinary Cultural Analysis*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, pp. 1-171.

Buchanan, Ian. *Michel de Certeau: Cultural Theorist*. Sage Publications, 2000, pp. 1-140.

Clark, Alex. “*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* by Arundhati Roy Review – A Patchwork of Narratives.” *The Guardian*, 11 June 2017, [www.theguardian.com/books/2017/jun/11/ministry-utmost-happiness-arundhati-roy-review](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/jun/11/ministry-utmost-happiness-arundhati-roy-review).

Conley, Tom, translator. *Culture in Plural*. By Michel de Certeau, edited by Luce Giard, U of Minnesota P, 1997, pp. 1-177.

Conley, Tom, translator. *The Capture of Speech and Other Political Writings*. By Michel de Certeau, edited by Luce Giard, U of Minnesota P, 1997, pp. 1-213.

Conley, Tom, translator. *The Writing of History*. By Michel de Certeau, Columbia UP, 1988, pp. 1-368.

Conley, Verena Andermatt. *Spacial Ecologies: Urban Sites, Stat and World-Space in French Cultural Theory*. Liverpool UP, 2012, pp. 1-166.

Crang, M. “Relics, Places and Unwritten Geographies in the Work of Michel de Certeau(1925-86).” *Thinking Space*, Routledge, pp. 136-153.

Davis, Rebecca. “Arundhati Roy: It’s Safer to be a Cow than a Woman or Muslim in India.” *Maverick Life*, 14 Aug. 2018, [www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2018-08-14-arundhati-roy-its-safer-to-be-a-cow-than-a-woman-or-muslim-in-india/](http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2018-08-14-arundhati-roy-its-safer-to-be-a-cow-than-a-woman-or-muslim-in-india/).

“Failing to understand de Certeau... | Day in the life of a PhD Student: Wednesday | PhD Vlog.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Tom Nicholas, 25 Aug. 2017, [youtube.com/watch?v=jYqOI4GpKUs](https://youtube.com/watch?v=jYqOI4GpKUs).

Ghosh, Ranjan, and Antonia Navarro-Tejero, editors. *Globalizing Dissent: Essays on Arundhati Roy*. Routledge, 2009, pp. 3-211.

Goff, Stan. “Theory: The Tactics of Everyday Life.” *Beautiful Trouble*, [beautifultrouble.org/theory/the-tactics-of-everyday-life/](http://beautifultrouble.org/theory/the-tactics-of-everyday-life/).

Helle, Merete Pryds. “Arundhati Roy Interview: The Characters Visited Me.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Louisiana Channel, 14 June 2018, [youtube.com/watch?v=kBXj4iUiytQ&t=214s](https://youtube.com/watch?v=kBXj4iUiytQ&t=214s).

Highmore, Ben. *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory*. Routledge, 2002, pp. 1-194.

Highmore, Ben. *Michel de Certeau: Analysing Culture*. Continuum, 2006, pp. 1-183.



Khair, Tabish. "What Magic Reveals, What Magic Hides." *The Hindu*, 11 June 2017,

[www.thehindu.com/books/arundhati-roy-the-ministry-of-ttmost-happiness-review/article18910916.ece](http://www.thehindu.com/books/arundhati-roy-the-ministry-of-ttmost-happiness-review/article18910916.ece).

Massumi, Brian, translator. *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*. Vol. 17, Manchester UP, 1986, pp. 3-265.

Mitchell, Jon P. "A Fourth Critic of the Enlightenment: Michel de Certeau and the Ethnography of Subjectivity." *European Association of Social Anthropologists*, 2007, pp. 89-106.

M. L., Johny, translator. *Athyanandathinte Daivavruthi*. By Arundhati Roy, D C Books, 2018, pp. 1-486.

Napolitano, Valentina, and David Pratten. "Michel de Certeau: Ethnography and the Challenge of Plurality." *Social Anthropology*, Research Gate, 2007, pp. 1-10.

"New Media 190F - Lecture, Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*." *YouTube*, uploaded by Sweetfancymoses, 17 Mar. 2010, [youtube.com/watch?v=lalXPznxxz8&t=27s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lalXPznxxz8&t=27s).

Pohl, Michelle. *Exoticizing the Soul Mate: Arundhati Roy's Deconstruction of the Twin Relationship in The God of Small Things*. Nebraska Wesleyan University, 2005, pp. 1-24.

Prasad, Amar Nath. *Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things: A Critical Appraisal*. Sarup & Sons, 2004, pp. 1-278.

Reynolds, Bryan, and Joseph Fitzpatrick. "The Transversality of Michel de Certeau: Foucault's Panoptic Discourse and the Cartographic Impulse." *Diacritics*, vol.29, no. 3, 1999, pp. 63-80.

- Roy, Arundhati, and John Cusack. *Things That Can And Cannot Be Said: Essays and Conversations*. Penguin Books, 2016, pp. 7-118.
- Roy, Arundhati. *Broken Republic: Three Essays*. Penguin Books, 2012, pp. 1-220.
- Roy, Arundhati. *Listening to Grasshoppers: Field Notes on Democracy*. Penguin Books, 2009.
- Roy, Arundhati. *The Doctor and the Saint: The Ambedkar-Gandhi Debate Caste, Race and Annihilation of Caste*. Penguin Books, Apr. 2019.
- Roy, Arundhati. *The End of Imagination*. Haymarket Books, 2016, pp. 1-387.
- Roy, Arundhati. *War Talk*. South End Press, 2013, pp. 1-31.
- Roy, Nilanjana S. “Arundhati Roy: Always Try to Negotiate Freedom. The Royalties are Peripheral.” *Financial Time*, 6 Dec. 2017, [www.ft.com/content/04d1cf6a-da13-11e7-a039-c64b1c09b482](http://www.ft.com/content/04d1cf6a-da13-11e7-a039-c64b1c09b482).
- Seidlinger, Michal J. “*In The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, Globalization is Built on Bodies.” *Electric Lit*, 25 Sep. 2017, [electricliterature.com/in-the-ministry-of-utmost-happiness-globalization-is-built-on-bodies/](http://electricliterature.com/in-the-ministry-of-utmost-happiness-globalization-is-built-on-bodies/).
- Silva, Chantal Da. “*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* by Arundhati Roy, Book Review: A mesmerizing Labyrinth Worth the Wait.” *Independent*, 21 June 2017, [www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/the-ministry-of-utmost-happiness-by-arundhati-roy-book-review-a7791941.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/the-ministry-of-utmost-happiness-by-arundhati-roy-book-review-a7791941.html).
- Simonson, Rick. “Arundhati Roy – *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*.” *Youtube*, uploaded by KODX Seattle, 28 June 2017, [youtube.com/watch?v=8pPCBF4YMCI&t=925s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pPCBF4YMCI&t=925s).

Smith, Michael B. "Michel de Certeau's Microsubversions." *Social Semiotics*, vol.6, no. 1, 1996, pp. 17-26.

Smith, Michael B., translator. *The Mystic Fable: The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. By Michel de Certeau, The U of Chicago P, 1992, pp. 3-369.

Sullivan, Rob. *The Geography of the Everyday Toward an Understanding of the Given*. The U of Georgia P, 2017, pp. 1-193.

"Tarot & de Certeau (Strategies and Tactics)." *YouTube*, uploaded by OneEyedMerchant, 16 Mar. 2012, [youtube.com/watch?v=RBcTHMjGna8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBcTHMjGna8).

Tomasik, Timothy J., translator. *The Practice of Everyday Life: Living and Cooking*. By Michel de Certeau, edited by Luce Giard and Pierre Mayol, vol. 2, U of Minnesota P, 1998, pp. 1-287.

"Utmost Happiness \$ Utmost Sadness: The Diary of Indian Nowadays." *YouTube*, uploaded by SOAS University of London, 7 Nov. 2018, [youtube.com/watch?v=0sGYyTxPP-s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0sGYyTxPP-s).

Ward, Graham, editor. *The Certeau Reader*. Blackwell Publishers, 2000, pp. 1-259.

Ward, Graham. "Michel de Certeau's *Spiritual Spaces*." *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, vol. 100, no. 2, 2001, pp. 501-517.

Wild, Helga. "Practice and the Theory of Practice. Reading Certeau's *The Practice of everyday Life*." *Journal of Business Anthropology*, 2012, pp. 1-19.

Wolfteich, Claire E. "Practices of *Unsayings*: Michel de Certeau, Spirituality Studies, and Practical Theology." The Johns Hopkins UP, 2012, pp. 161-171.

