

**The Present Absence: A Hauntological Analysis of Temporality in Jhumpa Lahiri's
Whereabouts and *The Lowland***

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Abstract

The primary aim of this study is to explore temporal dispositions enacted upon spaces in Jhumpa Lahiri's novels *Whereabouts* and *The Lowland*. To unpack the revenant and subjunctive spectres of time, the paradigm of Hauntology is employed also to examine how fragmented temporality gives rise to spectral spaces within the narratives of these novels. In *The Lowland*, the analysis engages with the spaces that embody spectrality and spectres that are harboured within them. To do so, the palimpsestic feature of space is to be investigated. In *Whereabouts*, the plan is to evaluate how the act of 'wandering' defies chronology of time by incessantly arriving at space and leaving it without adherence to linear sequence. Jhumpa Lahiri's exploration of distorted time and space has been overlooked in the wake of prevailing research paradigms centered on postcolonialism, diaspora studies, and feminist critique. The purpose of this dissertation is to address the oversight by revealing the complex interplay of memory, desire, and human subjectivity in her novels.

Keywords: Subjunctive Specters, Hauntology, Palimpsest, Wandering.

Introduction

Discerning the logic of hauntology by drawing from the following theorists, the intent of this paper is to analyze the disproportionate temporality and spatiality in the novels of Jhumpa Lahiri, *Whereabouts* and *The Lowland*. It is not incidental that Derrida recognizes in his book *Spectres of the Marx* that the origins of hauntology are inextricably linked with the works of Freud, especially his essay *The Uncanny* (1918). In the essay, Freud describes the word uncanny as the English equivalent of the German word *unheimlich*, which is the opposite of

heimlich, meaning “home”. Consequently, unheimlich means something that is not home. The word does not negate the presence of home but rather asserts the absence of it. Hence, the word uncanny brings together opposing forces that are structurally demarcated; the presence in the absence, the familiar in the strange. The concurrence of supposed rivalry gives rise to the concept of hauntology.

Derrida laid the inception of the term hauntology in his book *Spectres of Marx*. He conjectured that the spectre of Marxism continues to haunt the world despite the Fall of Communism in 1989. The spectre continuously disrupts the present, reminding one of the possibilities of the future that failed due to the destruction of the past. Derrida’s connotation of spectre also disturbs the clear distinction between past and present, alive and dead. A spectre neither belongs to the past nor the present, so its manifestation breaks the supposed structure of the temporal chain. Time appears to be fractured and disoriented rather than moving in a continuous stream of flow. In other words, ghosts are not specific to a period of time and movement but seemingly haunt different domains of experience. Mark Fisher brought the concept of hauntology into the context of popular culture. He argued that the music industry became so overwhelmed with nostalgia that artists persisted in recombining old tunes.

Eventually, the delirium did not die down; still, the crushing realization regarding the finitude of combinatorial pursuits dawned upon artists. The failure of potential haunted them; it felt like the future had slowly been canceled. Sadeq Rahimi builds on these ideas to establish that hauntological analysis is not the process of exorcising or banishing the ghosts of the past. Instead, the theory becomes instrumental for acknowledging the ghosts that are “hidden in the silent depths of the text/psyche” (Rahimi 4).

The study addresses the following research questions:

1. How do the fissures in temporality impact the autonomy of space?
2. Can understanding of human experience be emancipated from the binary model that entraps time in self-contained and isolated units?
3. Could the paradigm of Hauntology be an effective framework that engages with the spectral notions of time and space in the selected novels of Jhumpa Lahiri?

Literature Review

This paper aims to address the overlooked gap in research work around Lahiri's novels by acknowledging the flawed dynamic of individuals with the time they have featured in, in spectral notions. To situate the gap, the pre-existing body of work around these two novels has been briefly reviewed as follows. In *The Lowland* and *Whereabouts*, a fair amount of academic research and scholarly attention engages with the interplay of personal and political by employing theoretical perspectives such as Foucault's Genealogy of Knowledge, Historiographic Metafiction, and Post-colonial framework. Esha Shah, while reviewing *The Lowland*, predominantly employs the lens of hyper-individualism to assess how Gauri's individual self is embedded within the social and political spheres. Shah also compares and analyzes the moral standing of Udayan, Subhash, and Gauri to observe how their "affective/psychological self relates to the intellectual and political" (Shah 32) in the emerging post-ideological era.

Additionally, Moussa Pourya Assl in her article on "Oblivion of Naxalite Woman" draws on Foucault's notion of "subjugated knowledge" to contest the representation of the uprising Communist Naxalbari movement in the novel. She argues that the engagement and contribution of women in the movement is spatiotemporally effaced from the novel. Similarly, a paper by Ms. S Kavitha and A. Hariharasudan also deals with the incorporation of history in *The Lowland*. However, the depiction of historical events in the novel has not been questioned in the novel. The paper rather distinguishes the literary from historical by tracing the postmodern narrative technique called Historiographic Metafiction. The researchers uphold the view that historical truth and falsity cannot be determined by the works of fiction. Another research paper by Nasih Ul Wadod Alam engages with a similar theme. He reiterates the events regarding the Naxalbari movement in the novel to bring into light how political affairs took the Mitra family asunder. In particular, the researcher examines the events that led to Udayan's alienation from his family and society at large.

The entwining of personal and political life has been unfolded by multiple literary scholars with the utilization of post-colonial and immigrant theories upon both novels, *The Lowland* and *Whereabouts*. Seyedah Zahra Ghoreshi and Zahra Bordbari, in the paper titled "Post-Colonial Hybrids in *The Lowland* " approach the diaspora experience of Indian-born characters within Homi K. Bhaba's Postcolonial framework. The paper endeavors to situate the characters in a liminal space as they are caught in the rupture between two contrasting

cultures. In another article titled “A Post-Colonial Reading of Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Lowland*”, the identity crisis stemming from cultural hybridity is emphasized as well.

To discuss Lahiri’s peculiar treatment of political identity in *Whereabouts*, a researcher Nicoletta Pireddu, in her review essay, applauds the decision to blur the binary of home and non-home evident in diasporic and immigrant literature. In *Whereabouts*, Jhumpa Lahiri constitutes a character also undergoing through an identity crisis, except she refrains from providing any socio-cultural context of the anonymous narrator. Instead, Lahiri “embraces the third culture, an Italian one, going as far as selecting its language for her own literary creation” (Pireddu 892). In *Whereabouts*, Lahiri re-codifies the rules of how immigrant literature can appear by complicating the notion of belonging.

There has been a significant amount of research work published that employs the apparatus of post-colonial, post-modern and emerging strands of feminist theories to magnify the “curious interrelationships of culture, race [and] geography” (Habib 5) evident in *The Lowland* and *Whereabouts*. The notion of “identity and diasporic belonging” has been explored within *Whereabouts* too to grapple with the multifaceted identity of the anonymous narrator that is central to the story. Sunil Kumar Dwivedi elucidates the nuanced ensemble of diasporic experiences arranged in *Whereabouts*. In conclusion of her paper, she quotes Vijay Mishra who writes,

all diasporas are happy but every diaspora is unhappy in its own way...lodged within the episteme of real and imagined displacements, self-imposed sense of exile; they are haunted by specters, ghosts arising from within that encourage irredentist or separatist movements (Mishra 1).

Mishra does not expand much on this quote, but indicates the possibility of engaging with the spectres that arise as a consequence of contested identity. In a research article about “Reimagining of South-Asian Spaces”, spatiality in *The Lowland* is discussed but only through the diasporic and post-colonial lens. The central focus in the paper by Zhang Qiuchen is to highlight the gendered spatial injustice by “reflecting upon male dominance and societal norms that suppress the female subjectivity” (Qiuchen). Additionally, Shunshuke Shiva in his journal

article discusses the imaginary space of Indians affirmed by the English language. He is drawing upon the post-colonial tenet that enlarges the hierarchies between languages of colonizer and colonized.

Therefore, in this paper, the spectres that interrupt the assumed coherence of space and time shall be unpacked, but not particularly through the passage of diasporic and post-colonial theories. Rather, the plan is to contribute to the research corpus that engages with assessment of spectrality and space conducted on the selected works of Jhumpa Lahiri.

There is a limited extent of scholarly articles or research papers that examine the spatiotemporal hauntological aspect of both novels. Pallavi Sanyal, in her article about Violence and Spectrality in *The Lowland*, teases out the strands between nostalgia and violence that lead to fragmentation of spaces. She claims that the nostalgic mode can be an effective alternate paradigm that can serve as a basis to examine Calcutta city more holistically in the novel (Sanyal).

Despite Jhumpa Lahiri's evocative portrayal of spectrality in *Whereabouts*, there is no notable academic research that corresponds to this particular aspect. A Panoptic Foucauldian study of *Whereabouts* remains the only exception that touches upon the absence of harmony in the spaces experienced by the anonymous narrator due to her alienation from the existing culture. In this paper, the discordance of space in *Whereabouts*, by unpacking the impact of shattered temporality that casts spectres on the space, shall be traced. In *Whereabouts* particularly, the aim is to analyze the space in motion and how the act of 'wandering' incessantly turns present into past. In the case of *The Lowland* too, the plan is to acknowledge the spectres that haunt the space and space as a spectre in its own accord. To do so, the paradigm of hauntology shall be employed that will hopefully aid in acknowledging the spectral interplay of time and space that belies the conventional spatiotemporal notions.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework uses a qualitative method of analysis that shall aid in acknowledging the spatiotemporal dislodgment and provide a lens to address the spectres that are created by the interplay of desire and formation of meaning. The method of textual reading shall assist in reimagining the narrative to discern the multi-temporality of spaces. In *Spectres of Marx*,

Derrida consolidates a framework for approaching spectres. He viewed them as revenants who undermine the clear distinctions of past and present. Mark Fisher furthered this conceptualization by introducing the subjunctive ghost; the spectre that results from a “failed mourning” of a future that never happened. Sadeq Rahimi, in his book “The Hauntology of Everyday Life,” coheres multiple approaches towards the concept of spectrality to introduce a process of making visible the spectres that rise from humans’ subjective experience of time and space. This collage-like paradigm constructed by the aforementioned theorists shall be borrowed to analyze the spectrality of time and space in Jhumpa Lahiri’s novels, *The Lowland* and *Whereabouts*.

Analysis and Findings

Specters of Spaces in the Lowland

In this section, the spectrality of spatiality and temporality through multiple hauntological approaches shall be assessed. First, the aim is to analyse the spectrality of Tollygunge house by considering the temporal fractures that disturb the rootedness of space. Secondly, the spectres of past and unrealized future that haunt the spaces mentioned in *The Lowland* shall be unearthed. The intent to seek the indeterminacy of Calcutta city’s space as well, as it is represented during the onset of the Marxist movement in India.

A museum, for instance, is a space made up of agreement between two opposing temporalities. The spectacle consisting of the objects of the past is displayed for the spectator of the present. The varied temporalities are not warring against one another but are reconciled. A negotiating space accommodates the remnants of the past by positioning them in the present.

There are other spaces that lie against the backdrop of inter-categorical temporality too, such as abandoned houses, derelicts, and demolished sites under the rubble. They are surviving pieces from the past (mis)placed in the present. Such spaces threaten the categorical grid that demarcates past and present. The spectral nature of Tollygunge House is even more complex. It is at once a ghost of the past and of the future.

The house presented itself as a site of architectural uncanny; a derelict of unfulfilled desire. The newly erected story of the house became the spectre of the future, as the space remained unoccupied, never meeting the inhabitants it was built for. The renovation of the house was mentioned in the letter of Udayan by Subhash, after the latter went to America. He explained

that their parents believe in the necessity of expanding the house as they foresee their sons raising their families there. Uninhabited empty space in the house discomforted the parents after Udayan's death as it was the "mockery of the future they assumed would unfold" (Lahiri 216). The renovated part of the house appeared as the ghost of a failed future. For instance, the newness of the house was deeply distressing to Subhash when he entered the house for the first time after Udayan's death. Usually, the aesthetics of haunted spaces are perceived to consist of eerie and revolting objects. Lahiri subverted the aesthetics of a haunting space. It was the newness of the furnished house that unsettled Subhash. The upper portion of the house, airy corridors, and extended terrace exacerbated his grief so much that he strongly desired to go someplace else.

The structure of the house resembles a Derridean revenant that "haunts its own places more than inhabiting them" (Derrida 44). The lower-story part of the house illustrates the spectrality of space in the context of haunting memory. The Tollygunge house was eroded by such terrible unhomeliness; "it [was] in the grip of formal nostalgia" (Fisher 19). The house accumulated so much material memory signifying the childhood of the Mitra brothers. The instance of Udayan's feet being impressed upon wet cement is a prominent instance mentioned in the text. The memories of his childhood were all encased in the house.

Tollygunge house was the signifier of the past for Bijoli, Udayan's mother, as the house symbolically represented for her the 'lost object' that was once associated with it. Her conception of the house as a metaphor is a tragic pursuit as the house doesn't enable her to bridge the great chasms between past and present. With that being established, the Tollygunge house is simultaneously a ghost of the future. It is a haunting reminder of "the future that hailed the past but then disappeared from the horizon" (Rahimi 7).

The house is the metaphor for the irrecoverable past. It is a symptom of spectrality for being "a synonym for the symbolic displacement brought in play" (Lacan 422). Metaphor exists in the tedium between two signifiers. Metaphor also shares resemblance with a ghost in terms of belonging in a liminal space, as it simultaneously incorporates both the symbolic and the imaginary realm of human subjectivity.

Even the realm of Udayan and Subhash's childhood was not whole; it is perforated by the past too. The space of the Lowland surrounding their house can be read as a palimpsest, as it "goes

back centuries ago, when the Bay of Bengal was a swamp dense with mangroves. The swamps and the paddy fields, the lowland were remnants of this (Lahiri 15). The Lowland was a space dominated by nature, before the English came and laid down streets there. These details invite scope for exploring the intersections between ecological studies and hauntology. Nature was pushed into the past by colonial bearings upon the land. Additionally, when the English began shifting back to Calcutta from Tollygunge, it became a predominantly Muslim town.

After partition, the status of Muslim shrunk into a minority again. Still, the names of the streets were dedicated to the Muslim leaders of the past. For instance, Sultan Alam Road, Prince Bakhtiar Road, Prince Mohammad Shah Road, etc (Lahiri 15). These spaces were also spectral as they were massively spread over time, undermining the self-sufficiency of the present. Tollygunge House and the space surrounding it are a spectre for resting upon multiple realms of temporality, but the spectres of the dead within also act as the components of the haunted house. Udayan's absence being one of them.

Spectres Within Spaces in the Lowland

Ghosts are inter-categorical as they neither belong to the past nor present. Udayan was a spectral entity because his presence had not been packed away by the departure of the past. In other words, he was the palpable "presence of an absence" (Rahimi 27). After the death of Udayan, both of his parents lost interest in life. They would sit on the terrace most of the time silently drinking their tea, refusing to speak with each other regarding what happened. They procured silence as a source of expressing their grief, adapting a "phantom-like fashion for withdrawing from communication" (Shaw 110).

Silence is the spectral alternative to words. The term hauntology was constituted by Derrida as a word play on 'ontology,' which means the study of being. Inversely, hauntology is the study of a being that flickers between being and nonbeing. To express what is absent, silence substitutes language "to evoke [specters] in the logic of hauntology" (Wrethed 19).

The bereavement of parents who have lost their child is of a complicated kind as their space-time continuum gets distorted. Children represent the future of parents. The death of the child, the cancellation of the future, left Udayan's parents suspended in time. They no longer anticipated the forward orientation of time, so their future was disbanded and the past

overshadowed the present time. In short, “the carefully policed boundaries [of time] are at first threatened, then overrun” (Coverley 9).

Udayan’s father also passed away after some time. Bijoli, being left alone in the house, would spend most of her time speaking to the ghost of Udayan, as his “ghost would lurk inside the house” (Lahiri 215). It is crucial to understand that hauntology does not address the ghosts of the supernatural kind, as those fall under the domain of the gothic framework. The case of supernatural ghosts “has been laid to rest so we can confront the Real ghost, or the Ghosts of the Real” (Fisher 123).

Bijoli would spend the rest of her time around a memorial tablet, erected in memory of her dead son. She would clean the place around it, sprinkle water on the flowers, and pick out the garbage items that were cluttering the space. All material that was a component of space became the signifier of Udayan’s absence. It is because these haunted objects “call into question any opposition between past and present” (Shaw 8). Bijoli was not only haunted by the ghost of Udayan but has become a ghost herself, adding to the spectrality of Tollygunge house. Lahiri directs the reader to look towards Bijoli from the perspective of children playing in the street outside Tollygunge House. From their viewpoint, she is kind of a ghostly presence “watching over them from the terrace, always emerging at the same time every day” (Lahiri 216).

To sum up, this section discusses that ghosts “trespass the border that separates living from the dead” (Peterson 89) so frequently and incessantly that they create cracks in the wholeness of time and space. Therefore, a need arises to reconfigure the approach towards how space and time are disarranged in the cosmos. The assessment of spectres, in particular in *The Lowland*, was explored from a phenomenological point of view to magnify the spectres of and within spaces.

Spectral Geographies in Whereabouts

In *Whereabouts*, the anonymous narrator always finds herself at the margins. Jhumpa Lahiri is not interested in seeking the reasons that make up the marginality of the central character. That’s why the terms of marginality are left opaque, as we in fact are not informed about the “Whereabouts”. The author is rather keen on exploring the experiential nature of marginality.

That is perhaps why she decided to keep her narrator anonymous, so that the condition of her spectrality “transcends the socio-historically determined human condition” (Velissariou 48). Wandering is a crucial feature of spectrality. Ghosts linger upon spaces and watch over people without being witnessed. It is seeing of the unseen as the spectre betrays sight and is only encountered in glimpses. They are nowhere and everywhere as they move incessantly, never steady upon one autonomous space.

Fittingly, the anonymous narrator in *Whereabouts* was always on the go, packing and unpacking suitcases, resisting stillness upon any space. In the chapter “On the Street”, the narrator bumped into a person she once used to share a romantic bond with. Her dynamic with him was not set upon a fixed place, as her meeting with him could only be afforded by the act of wandering. They would share a coffee, stroll briefly in one direction, or he would accompany her to the shop. She appears to be a spectre because, unlike other people, her pursuit of establishing a connection with someone was not built upon firm markers of time and space. She met him coincidentally, and there was no mutual commitment regarding when they would meet again. Nevertheless, her “fleeting bond” was haunted by what it once used to be and what it can transition into. Despite all probabilities, her ephemeral romantic encounter was spread upon a non-place, a mere passage that doesn’t emanate certainty or closure.

Later in the same chapter, she stood in the middle of the bridge to observe the shadow of pedestrians cast upon the wall against the river. They appeared to her as “skittish ghosts advancing in a row”. After a while, she became aware that she too had merged in those shadows. She is at once outside and part of the spectacle. She possessed the paradoxical phenomenality of being somewhere between the observer and the observed. People appear to be ghosts because they are walking continuously, appearing and disappearing. They were subverting the notions of time and space as distinct axes. The space becomes spectral as it is engaged with the act of haunting, not dwelling.

The narrator always resonated more with spaces in motion. For instance, once she was invited to a place by the sea to attend the baptism of her colleague’s daughter. In the church, she interacted with fellow guests for a while but started feeling claustrophobic there, so she started seeking reasons to leave the space. After escaping the premises, she was greeted by the “restless sea” (Lahiri 92) that consoled her. The sea is always in flux, steadily withdrawing space. She felt inclined towards the rhythm of the sea as spectrality is “constantly being performed”

(Creswell 37) by it. The sea is determined by “openness and change rather than boundedness and permanence” (Creswell 39), that is why she was intrinsically drawn towards it. The perpetual motion of the sea reassured her.

The narrator felt peripheral in the spaces designated to her. “In the office”, she complained of not being able to settle anywhere “given that she [was] always coming and going” (Lahiri 9). The narrator signified herself in transitional spaces as they mirror her spectral manner of being. In other words, the space and the individual inform the spectrality of each other. The spaces in motion are rootless and liminal, unlike the stationary places that are “relational and concerned with identity” (Auge 78). The narrator is a ghostly presence as she is always passing through the spaces, “constituting an incessance that belies origins and ends” (Wylie 171).

Stillness in all forms disorients the narrator. She could only fall asleep while listening to the sound of cars that were passing below her apartment. The objects in motion confronted the grasp of loneliness upon her. Sound signifies movement. Thus, she waited for the sound of a passing car so that it would interrupt the silence that weighed upon her. She affirmed that she has always been moving and feels best described by terms such as “disoriented, lost, astray, adrift, bewildered, confused, uprooted, turned around” (Lahiri 155).

All these terms mirror an indeterminate state of being. She was somewhere between seeking to signify herself while also resisting signification, oscillating between belonging and not belonging, place and displacement. Her predicament resembles the state of exile as it is a condition of liminality. The wanderer, in fact, “is an exile, condemned by the revenant of memory to compulsively pace out a closed stage” (Wylie 178).

Moving spaces are the abode of exiles. She felt envious of people who nurture harmony with their surroundings, as unlike them, she felt sequestered in the spaces at rest. She writes that she has always felt under someone’s, some place or time’s shadow. She compares herself to her siblings whom she ranked to be more intelligent or prettier than her. She was unable to position herself amongst people, so she embraced motion, voyaging through places. To her, “places are never finished but always the result of process and practices” (Creswell 37).

The narrator is also an exile of time. She carried the memory of the past within herself. She was continuously haunted by the ghosts that return from the past and unleash upon the present.

For instance, even though the narrator was financially independent, she feared buying anything besides necessities. She had not been able to escape her “parents’ strict tutelage that prompt[ed] [her] to choose the least expensive dress, greeting card or dish on the menu” (Lahiri 73). Her awareness about the hold of memory didn’t aid her in getting rid of them. She broke up with her first boyfriend because he didn’t understand her habit of collecting a lot of coins. Ridding herself of a compulsive habit structured by the past is more difficult than putting an end to the relationship for her.

Speaking of memory, her unhappy childhood followed her everywhere. While on vacation, she wondered “why her parents [were] still nipping at her toes” (Lahiri 85). She remembered her father not being really fond of vacations and a mother who was held back because of him. Therefore, she never went on vacations as a child. What has-never-been haunts the “being and the thereness of the place” (Wylie 72).

The spaces are inherently palimpsest as what occurs upon them remains forever inscribed; it is only partly effaced by time. The narrator visited the museum, a place constituted upon “oblique and moving [lacings] of time and space” (Wylie 181), as houses of antiquity were displayed in it. They were excavated from their original place and relocated in the museum. The houses belonged to the past but interacted with the present as well as the shadow of the tree fell upon the house and the breeze flowed through it, making the artifact appear “paradoxically alive” (Lahiri 30). The house was anchored upon two distinct categories of time, emitting the quality of palimpsest space.

The plank the narrator came across “on the sidewalk” is another instance of space that is a riposte to a distinct arrangement of time. The plank was erected in the memory of someone who died in that place due to an accident. The space was warped with memory of something that had happened, hosting the presence of someone who was no longer alive. Such space was doubly displaced. First, the practice of wandering was causing space to incessantly become past. Secondly, it was wavered by a tragic memory. As a result, the self was assailed by multiple rifts in time and space, making the narrator feel “slightly less alive” (Lahiri 4).

The water in the pool is a palimpsestial space too, though the individual was constantly swimming in it, betraying the permanence of time and space. Before that realization, the narrator confessed that she felt a connection with people more in the water body. She mentioned

the restoring power of water and its protective embrace upon herself. The pool allowed her to share space with people without them encroaching upon it. Additionally, water appeared to be steering clear of the weight of the past. However, after hearing of the misfortunes and grievances of the fellow swimmers in the locker room, she realized that grief permeates in the water, contaminating its lucidity. The water seemed “saturated by the vague sense of dread” (Lahiri 42) as spectres alter the anatomy of the space they inhabit. The water didn’t rinse the grievances away but was blemished by them. More so, seasons also carry the bearings of the past within themselves. In spring, the narrator complained of the sorrow the season inflicts upon her. The objects that conventionally signify joy and hope were subverted as they perversely remind her of loss and disappointment she experienced in the past.

One recurrent spectral feature adopted by the narrator is called ‘watching’. Derrida conjectured that one technique of identifying a ghostly place is to make oneself seen by ghosts. This technique of identifying ghostly spaces is termed “vertiginous asymmetry” (Derrida 134). The narrator was constantly watching people wherever she went and was also the one who was being watched. Oftentimes, the narrator indulged herself with people solely by the act of watching. In chapter “At the trattoria”, she ate alone, often watching two frequent visitors, father and daughter, from a distance. She sensed the tension between them, tried tracing their past, and hypothesized the reason behind their broken dynamic.

It can be said that space is not independent of the witnessing that takes place upon it. The act of witnessing unleashes the ghosts that were otherwise dormant. The narrator activated the spectrality of space by acknowledging the ghostly presences that were concealed behind the false composure of the present moment. Therefore, the space became relative to the phenomenological position the individual was glued to.

Derrida writes that “we feel ourselves being seen, sometimes under surveillance by it before any apparition” (101). “In the waiting room” of the hospital, the narrator described the unnerving feeling when she felt a gaze of some woman upon her: “The woman keeps looking at me as if there was a screen between us, as if I were a person on television” (Lahiri 20). It can be an instance of “social mode of haunting” (Derrida 126) where the act of watching casts the sense of being excluded. The gaze banished her that is why the narrator feels a screen between herself and the one who is watching.

To sum up, Jhumpa Lahiri fuses diverse connotations of exile that her unnamed narrator experiences in *Whereabouts*. To do so, she fleshed out the complicated dynamic of time, space, and self. The absence of determiners of locality makes the spectrality of space urgent, as Lahiri mentioned in an interview that she wanted to create an abstract sense of space in the novel.

Conclusion

The research within this paper has intended to explore the disruptions of time and space in selected works of Jhumpa Lahiri utilizing the paradigm of hauntology. In the introduction, the framework of hauntology has been synthesized by tracing its origins from Freud and the development of ideas by Derrida. The resurrection of the framework by Mark Fisher, who applied the ideas of Derrida and made the application of hauntology possible in music and 21st-century culture, has been mentioned as well. Thereafter, Sadeq Rahimi has been introduced, who built upon the ideas of theorists and philosophers to acknowledge the presence of ghosts in the sphere of daily existence.

In the first section of analysis, discussion has been focused on temporal dislodgement in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Lowland*. Drawing from the paradigm of hauntology, the disproportionality between time and space has been made visible to analyze how the spectrality of time after the death of Udayan brought about disproportion in the spatiotemporal realms of the characters. In the second section dedicated to the same novel, the spectres that invade spaces have been magnified. In the third section of the analysis, the question of how the practice of 'wandering' engenders spectrality upon time and space has been countered. Moreover, the dynamic of the anonymous narrator in *Whereabouts* and her association with moving spaces has been probed. To illustrate the spectral nature of space, some features are deduced from the paradigm, such as vertiginous asymmetry and the concept of palimpsestic spatiality.

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