ISSN 2071 - 1964

**Revue interafricaine de littérature,
linguistique et philosophie**

Particip'Action

Revue semestrielle. Volume 14, N°1 – Janvier 2022
Lomé – Togo

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ISSN 2071 – 1964

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Titre,
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Résumé en français. Mots-clés, Abstract, Keywords,
Introduction, Méthodologie, Résultats et Discussion, Conclusion, Bibliographie.
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Police Times new roman, taille 12 et interligne 1,5 (maximum 30 000 mots). La revue Particip'Action permet l'usage de notes de bas de page pour ajouter des précisions au texte. Mais afin de ne pas alourdir la lecture et d'aller à l'essentiel, il est recommandé de **faire le moins possible usage des notes (10 notes de bas de page au maximum par article).**

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Les passages cités sont présentés en romain et entre guillemets. Lorsque la phrase citant et la citation dépassent trois lignes, il faut aller à la ligne, pour présenter la citation (interligne 1) en romain et en retrait, en diminuant la taille de police d'un point. Insérer la pagination et ne pas insérer d'information autre que le numéro de page dans l'en-tête et éviter les pieds de page.

Les figures et les tableaux doivent être intégrés au texte et présentés avec des marges d'au moins six centimètres à droite et à gauche. Les caractères dans ces figures et tableaux doivent aussi être en Times 12. Figures et tableaux doivent avoir chacun(e) un titre.

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Les références de citations sont intégrées au texte citant, selon les cas, de la façon suivante :

- (Initiale (s) du Prénom ou des Prénoms de l'auteur. Nom de l'Auteur, année de publication, pages citées) ; - Initiale (s) du Prénom ou des Prénoms de l'auteur. Nom de l'Auteur (année de publication, pages citées). Exemples :

- En effet, le but poursuivi par **M. Ascher (1998, p. 223),** est « d'élargir l'histoire des mathématiques de telle sorte qu'elle acquière une perspective multiculturelle et globale (…), d'accroitre le domaine des mathématiques : alors qu'elle s'est pour l'essentiel occupée du groupe professionnel occidental que l'on appelle les mathématiciens (…) ».

- Pour dire plus amplement ce qu'est cette capacité de la société civile, qui dans son déploiement effectif, atteste qu'elle peut porter le développement et l'histoire, S. B. Diagne (1991, p. 2) écrit :

Qu'on ne s'y trompe pas : de toute manière, les populations ont toujours su opposer à la philosophie de l'encadrement et à son volontarisme leurs propres stratégies de contournements. Celles-là, par exemple, sont lisibles dans le dynamisme, ou à tout le moins, dans la créativité dont sait preuve ce que l'on désigne sous le nom de secteur informel et à qui il faudra donner l'appellation positive d'économie populaire.

- Le philosophe ivoirien a raison, dans une certaine mesure, de lire, dans ce choc déstabilisateur, le processus du sous-développement. Ainsi qu'il le dit :

le processus du sous-développement résultant de ce choc est vécu concrètement par les populations concernées comme une crise globale : crise socio-économique (exploitation brutale, chômage permanent, exode accéléré et douloureux), mais aussi crise socio-culturelle et de civilisation traduisant une impréparation sociohistorique et une inadaptation des cultures et des comportements humains aux formes de vie imposées par les technologies étrangères. (S. Diakité, 1985, p. 105).

Pour les articles de deux ou trois auteurs, noter les initiales des prénoms, les noms et suivis de l'année (J. Batee et D. Maate, 2004 ou K. Moote, A. Pooul et E. Polim, 2000). Pour les articles ou ouvrages collectifs de plus de trois auteurs noter les initiales des prénoms, le nom du premier auteur et la mention ''et al'' (F. Loom et al, 2003). Lorsque plusieurs références sont utilisées pour la même information, celles-ci doivent être mises en ordre chronologique (R. Gool, 1998 et M. Goti, 2006).

Les sources historiques, les références d'informations orales et les notes explicatives sont numérotées en série continue et présentées en bas de page.

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Dans la zone titre, le titre d'un article est présenté en romain et entre guillemets, celui d'un ouvrage, d'un mémoire ou d'une thèse, d'un rapport, d'une revue ou d'un journal est présenté en italique. Dans la zone Editeur, on indique la Maison d'édition (pour un ouvrage), le Nom et le numéro/volume de la revue (pour un article). Au cas où un ouvrage est une traduction et/ou une réédition, il faut préciser après le titre le nom du traducteur et/ou l'édition (ex : 2nde éd.).

Ne sont présentées dans les références bibliographiques que les références des documents cités. Les références bibliographiques sont présentées par ordre alphabétique des noms d'auteur. Il convient de prêter une attention particulière à la qualité de l'expression. Le Comité scientifique de la revue se réserve le droit de réviser les textes, de demander des modifications (mineures ou majeures) ou de rejeter l'article de manière définitive ou provisoire (si des corrections majeures doivent préalablement y être apportées). L'auteur est consulté préalablement à la diffusion de son article lorsque le Comité scientifique apporte des modifications. Si les corrections ne sont pas prises en compte par l'auteur, la direction de la revue Particip'Action se donne le droit de ne pas publier l'article.

AMIN Samir, 1996, Les défis de la mondialisation, Paris, Le Harmattan.

AUDARD Cathérine, 2009, Qu'est-ce que le libéralisme ? Ethique, politique, société, Paris, Gallimard.

BERGER Gaston, 1967, L'homme moderne et son éducation, Paris, PUF.

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DIAKITE Sidiki, 1985, Violence technologique et développement. La question africaine du développement, Paris, L'Harmattan.

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NB2 : La quête philosophique centrale de la revue **Particip'Action** reste: **Fluidité identitaire et construction du changement: approches pluri-et/ou transdisciplinaires**.

Les auteurs qui souhaitent se faire publier dans nos colonnes sont priés d'avoir cette philosophie comme fil directeur de leur réflexion.

La Rédaction

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SPACES IN NADINE GORDIMER'S *THE PICKUP*: SITES OF IDENTITY REDEFINITION

Khadidiatou DIALLO[♣]

Abstract

This study analyses the symbolic dimension of spaces, in the multi-focalized narrative of The Pickup. It demonstrates that the private spaces, and physical surroundings framing the story, are sites of cultural frictions leading to identity deconstruction and redefinition. By demonstrating the metaphorical dimension of the spaces in the story, the study argues that the characters' feelings of homelessness and subsequent quest for belonging are delineated in the meticulous images of the various places inhabited by them. While exploring the images encoded in spaces, the analysis leans on Edouard Glissant's postulates in The Poetics of Relation (1997) and Julia Kristeva's developments on the displacement, and loss of migrants in Strangers to Ourselves (1991), to conclude that relocation into new cultural spaces, and the search for the Other in postcolonial multicultural societies, bring characters into convergent and divergent ways in their quest for belonging, self-realization, and social recognition

Keywords: spaces, homelessness, identity, belonging, Gordimer.

Résumé

Cette étude analyse la dimension symbolique des espaces dans l'histoire multi focalisée de The Pickup. Elle explique que les espaces privés et publics qui encadrent l'histoire sont des lieux de frictions culturelles, engendrant une déconstruction et une reconstruction identitaire. En examinant la portée métaphorique des espaces, l'étude démontre que le sentiment de désenchantement qui affecte les personnages ainsi que leur besoin vital d'appartenance, sont contenus dans les images éloquentes des endroits qu'ils habitent. En se fondant sur les théories d'Edouard Glissant développées dans The Poetics of Relation (1997) et celles de Julia Kristeva sur le déplacement et le malaise de l'immigré, dans Strangers to Ourselves (1991), l'étude conclue que l'immigration vers de nouvelles sphères culturelles et la quête de l'Autre dans les sociétés postcoloniales, amènent les personnages à adopter des positions à la fois convergentes et

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divergentes, dans leur désir d'appartenance, de réalisation de soi et de reconnaissance sociale.

Mots-clés : espaces, désenchantement, identité, appartenance, Gordimer

Introduction

The narrative in The Pickup (Gordimer, 2001) explores the distressing lives of individuals and communities in the postcolonial world, tossed between local cultures and global realities. The novel is part of "…what Gordimer has called a post-apartheid 'literature of transition', taking as its subject-matter the issues of displacement, economic exile, and migration." (S. Kossow, 2005). It sheds light on issues of exile, quest, and migration, and the events start in a 'postmodern' South African society, still in the throes of past violence, and are displaced to a new setting, an anonymous Arabian country. The Pickup depicts wandering individuals, striving to pick up other territories and cultures, for personal development.

Gordimer's piece of fiction "focuses on exile, in terms of class, gender, and identity. Likewise, Gordimer's characters find themselves struggling with societal expectations as well as their own identity" (M. Goins-Reed, 2019, p. 51). This aspect of the writer's fiction is lent credence by Hélène Godderis-Toudic's explication of the main object of The Pickup. She argues that events describe a converging movement at first when the two characters coming from opposed societies become a couple, and then a diverging movement when they grow apart, discovering the extent of their differences (2007, p. 189). The motive of quest through displacement and relocation is then the main thematic development of the narrative in The Pickup, as it is in No Time Like the Present (2012). The experiences of the two protagonists, Abdu/Ibrahim Ibn Musa and Julie Summers bring to light the hackneyed question of identity and belonging, in a global context as South Africa after apartheid. The question of identity is a cross-cutting issue in the narrative works of Gordimer, as she has "… grown up in postcolonial

South Africa and [has been] one of the staunchest critics of the apartheid system that deprived people of their identity, the essence of being- …" (Cloete, 2005, p. 51)

The author draws a realistic image of the imperative cultural negotiations through the restless life of Julie and Abdu, both in South Africa and back into Abdu's home country. The events spin around cultural frictions that mostly breed tensed interpersonal relationships. They also suggest the characters' enormous efforts to culturally adjust to each other, in their journeys to self-discovery (for Julie) and social recognition (for Abdu). Julie, as part of the maverick youth in cosmopolitan South Africa, pains to cope with the realities and material wealth underpinning life in The Suburb. Julie's social privileges are, ironically, the object of the lust of Abdu, her illegal immigrant lover.

The intimate relationship between Julie and Abdu is branded 'unnatural', by the family of the young woman, in post-apartheid South Africa, a world of hybrid identities, and where multiculturalism has not yet managed to topple down racist and nationalist "frontiers".

The Pickup canvasses the author's ingrained belief in mutual enrichment between "us" and "them". The narrative unfolds divergences and cultural clashes between Julie and Abdu, clashes made more acute by their relocation to Abdu's country. The shift in setting brings out cultural dissonances between the couple and it induces a transformation of the identity of both characters. The new cultural context is a gendered and materially deprived space, which arouses a feeling of repulsion in Abdu. However, that "deprivation" motivates Julie to settle in and espouse the cultural values prevailing in Abdu's community.

In The Pickup, Gordimer suggests that relocation can be motivated by reasons other than ambition, privilege, or fear. They may be bred by the

wish to discover and take over possession of themselves. The paper then explains that the different spaces inhabited by the couple are sites for the deconstruction and reconstruction of the Self in their relationships with the Other. It argues that spaces connote the quest for home and belonging of the postcolonial subject. The shift in setting concurs with the displacement and relocation of Julie and Abdu, movements that bring to center stage the Self in some stereotypes-laden relationships with the Other, first in a cosmopolitan context and then in a "backward" patriarchy-ruled space. Abdu is the epitome of illegal immigrants in the postcolonial era, browbeaten by stereotypes and prejudices, in the host country, but who strive to get immersed into the new cultural context, and assuage their need for self-fulfillment. The new environment where Julie emigrates, and her nest of relationships spark an introspective search that leads to a reconsideration of her self. Her new home is a zone of psychological growth.

"Every novel takes place somewhere – yet what happens when space in the novel is not just setting for a narrative but takes precedence over both characters and plot?" (M. Marcussen, 2016, p. 9). This question pinpoints the multidimensional aspect of space in narrative, especially in The Pickup, where the reader experiences, with characters, a shift in space, combined with multiple deviations in narrative time and perspective. Maurice Blanchot's comment on the functions of space is apropos; he sustains that literary space binding the author, the reader, and the work, is a close universe where the world dissolves itself[1] (1995, p. 46). Space, in literature, then, is a semantic bearing that adds to the unity and movement of the plot. This is the gist of Algiras Greimas' idea when he explains that space in the novel is a signifier to suggest characters, who are the signified of all languages; beings and spaces are interrelated. They interconnect and are

[1]. [l'espace littéraire se déployant entre l'auteur, le lecteur et l'œuvre – constitue un univers clos et intime où « le monde se dissout »]

interdependent (1999, p. 6). More than a narrative device, space is a metaphor, an encoded way for the narrator to express and account for the experiences undergone by characters in the story. This is the bottom line of Youri Lotman's postulates in La Sémiosphère (1999), where he proceeds to a narratological analysis of space in literature, to spotlight the non-spatial and metaphorical dimension of the literary text. This position of Lotman is lent credence by the image of space as a determining and functional strategy in The Pickup. In the story, events that influence the fate and condition of characters are determined by the places they locate and relocate.

The determinism of space is explored in Jean Weisberger's insightful study, L'Espace Romanesque (1978), with his concept of "space-fictions". "Space-fictions" are private and physical surroundings in the text, strewn with obstacles, riddled with cracks, defined by indications, and which are an eloquent allusion to the narrative life of characters[2]. For Weisberger, space is as central as characters because its analysis gives access to the significance of the narrative works. Thus, the analysis of spaces in Gordimer's opus goes beyond a topographical study of the setting; it focuses on a topological exploration, to better demonstrate the symbolic and ideological values motivating the quest for belonging of the two protagonists. In other words, the errantry of characters in the pursuit of happiness implies a continuous development of their identity.

Identity is a multileveled concept and is the object of various analyses. This is explained by the era of globalization and its promotion of the oneness of cultural expression, notwithstanding differences which should be less a source of divergence than an element of unification. Edouard Glissant argues that identity is nothing other than the search for freedom within surroundings (1997, p. 20). The question is of great concern

[2] [un espace « jonché d'obstacles, criblé de fissures, défini par des directions et des lieux de privilégiés, bourré de sons, de couleurs, de parfums]

to Gordimer. She upholds the idea that addressing the question of identity in her post-apartheid texts constitutes an accurate means to stifle the upsurge of xenophobia in her country, especially after the recent violence against immigrants.

If analyzed in the light of Gordimer's work (No One to Accompany Me, The Pickup, No Time Like the Present,), it comes out that identity does not only ensure security or stability, but as Magoboy states it, it can "under particular circumstances, become fractured and decentred, leading to a sense of doubt and insecurity" (in Cloete, 2005, p. 52). The historical circumstances in South Africa, with racial and cultural plurality, have stirred a disintegration of personal identities, due to the particularly tensed interpersonal relationships.

The study examines the consequences of cultural frictions on interpersonal relationships. It explicates as well that the displacement and relocation of characters to conflicting spaces stirs in them a feeling of loss, rejection, and the need to seek a sense of belonging and self-fulfillment.

1. Postapartheid South Africa as a Multicultural World

In The Pickup, the narrative is replete with images of the cosmopolitanism of the South African nation, with the influx of immigrants, mostly of African origin. Immigration is at the core of the country's history. Nadine Gordimer has fully grasped the reality of the evolution of her country, when she avers, after the xenophobic attacks against immigrants, that "apart from South African Africans themselves… we are all immigrants here" (in S. Kosseuw, 2005). The rationale behind these words by a white African, as she calls herself, is that there should be no wonder if others, for diverse reasons, immigrate to democratic South Africa. Thus, driven by an unwavering commitment to look at the evolution of the nation from the inside, Gordimer puts on stage, in The Pickup, characters in the pursuit of

happiness, epitomizing the vital need for cross-cultural interactions in the postcolonial world.

The novel depicts two immigrant figures. First, Abdu, who is known, in the second movement of the plot, as Ibrahim Ibn Musa, an Arab Muslim, holding a university degree and for whom personal development and social blossoming lie in immigration to other materially rich spaces like South Africa. And next, we have Julie Summers. She is the friend of the illegal immigrant, whose encounter, interactions, and subsequent love relationship with the latter sets off her journey towards self-discovery. The reasons that set each of them onto the road to other spaces are utterly dissonant, although both experience a feeling of homelessness. Their earnest wish is to live out of angst, by leaving a comfortable yet spiritually poor space for Julie and a poverty-stricken country for Abdu.

The emotional dearth and feeling of homelessness of the two protagonists are determined by the spaces where intimate and social interactions are enacted. Julie, as the daughter of a rich white family in the Suburb of post-apartheid South Africa, 'belongs' to the well-offs of new South Africa, the white upper class, who used to be past masters of identity negation and oppression under the apartheid regime. She 'possesses' and can profit from all the privileges granted by family, society, and history. However, Julie, as part of the new postmodern youth of South Africa, is driven by a staunch will to break up with the old way. She shuns the materially rich but spiritually poor space of her society. She leads a confined life in her own family home, which is, in fact, all but home to her. She feels extreme loneliness, a state of homeliness alluded to in this part of the story:

> Suddenly she has left, through the living room, through the shadowy indoors, and up the staircase.

> But it is another house she is running away to hide in; she has never lived in this one. (…) It is not the house she is wandering, pausing, listening to herself. The shame of being ashamed of them; the shame of him seeing what she was, is; (…) She blunders to one of the bathrooms; but she cannot succeed in retching to humiliate herself. (The Pickup, 2001, p. 51)

The dejection felt by Julie in this socio-cultural space waft from these lines. The protagonist feels shame toward the extravagance of her father and his guests because they did not hang back to stamp on one another's heads to make a success. She undergoes an emotional agitation caused by the impossibility to identify with and accept 'her' people's values. This is suggested by the shift in time and perspective, a blending of the characters' thoughts expressed in the present tense, and the intervention of the omniscient narrator relayed through the past regime. The intermingling of perspectives reflects the feeling of loss of the young woman, now that she is inside the family house. The house itself is a microcosm of multicultural South Africa, with its injustices, inequalities, lingering divisions, and binary oppositions, despite the grand declarations of equality and social justice from political authorities. Nadine Gordimer, like her main character Julie, seems dubitative as for the real implications of the demise of the age of iron which was apartheid. She zooms in on the incoherences, contradictions, and frustrations at the heart of the nation, which causes melancholy and angst in individuals, especially the youth who forge ahead in their deconstruction of the turgid principles underlying racial and social identity. The house of Nigel Ackroyd Summers is a space where Julie can't construct her self and where her ideas and ideals of relation and reciprocity cannot be fulfilled. The passage above "undeniably serves as proof of the willed denial of her real cultural identity as a privileged white South African girl" (Cloete, 2005, p. 56).

However, the house of the father is the very place Abdu, the illegal immigrant, dreams of, and craves to possess. Ironically enough, while Julie

can hardly bear the insolent profligacy of her "family" who live on the lap of luxury and their debasing attitude towards her friend who is pegged "Someone", Abdu is marveled by the economic success and material wealth of Julie's people. He shows a keen interest in the guests' business and finances discussion. Abdu, the foreigner, is not conscious that he has become an invisible element, the sound of his name creating a shock in the father - "there was across his face a fleeting moment of incomprehension of the name, quickly dismissed by good manners and a handshake" (The Pickup, 2001, p.46). Taken for "an Indian", his identity is flouted and even denied by Julie's father and the guests, whose ethnonationalism mind prevents them from understanding that the other is and should be accepted as an image of the self and consequently, he should be treated with consideration (J. Kristeva, 1991, p. 193n). The house is a metaphorical image of the biased relation between colonizer and colonized, with the father and his friends at the center, and Abdu the demoted foreigner, at the periphery. This also brings to light the question of dualism between the Self and the Other, relevantly explored by Edouard Glissant, in his discussion of the possibilities of Relation between individuals and communities. This is his point:

> Most of the nations that gained freedom from colonization have ended to form around an idea of power – the totalitarian drive of a single, unique root, rather than around a fundamental relationship with the Other culture's self-conception was dualistic, putting citizen against "barbarian" (1997, p. 14)

The presence of Julie's "Someone", the "barbarian" is like a shade in the house: he symbolizes the foreigner in the receiving country; "the emanation of his presence, bodily warmth, and breath, was merely a haze which hid him from them, their reality did not know of his presence" (J. Kristeva, 1991, p. 11).

Thus, the divergence between Julie and Abdu becomes more acute in the house, which is a space of marginalization and invisibility for Abdu the "Someone", the illegal figure who does not "belong" to the post-apartheid South Africa. He is ignored and his presence is distilled in the blurred exchanges between the guests, through which the author denounces the abusive behavior of the privileged group of her society who scorn immigrants like Abdu, whereas they are all descendants from immigrants into the land that belongs to the forefathers of the lawyer and guest in the house, Motsamai.

Julie experiences a malaise both inside the family residence and the society. The two places are sites of identity deconstruction for the young woman, as she can neither accept nor abide by the principles underpinning the new forms of discrimination in post-apartheid South Africa. She is more than conscious that she needs to detach herself from her socio-cultural background, to experience other cultural horizons, through emigration and relations. In this wise, the meeting of Abdu and Julie's family does not balance the foreigner's wandering. Though the meeting is a "crossroads of two othernesses" (Kristeva, 1991, p. 11), it does all but welcome Abdu. In the dialectical relationships between oppressor and oppressed, colonizer and colonized, Abdu is tied down in the space of meeting, dominated, ignored and he thus finds himself in a zone of silence. Cloete's analysis is a pronounced image of the unflinching commitment of Nadine Gordimer to warn people against the new maladies swarming in the nation:

> Although otherness has been one of the most important themes in apartheid literature, Nadine Gordimer widens her scope to reveal otherness among exponents of the East and West thereby extending her examination to veer in the direction of globalization, an important theme in current literature. (2005, p. 52)

Apart from the family space, the L. A. Café and The Table are other sites, where otherness is more elaborated and breeds more implications in the

definitions of personal identity. The Café, like the house of Duncan and his bedfellows in The House Gun (1999), is an image of the bubbling social context in the democratic nation, culturally hybrid, with changing identities. The rebellious habitués of the Café and The Table are unbound by the mainstream culture and ideas; they are frustrated and disillusioned by the ongoing discrimination and violence in life after apartheid. The youth refuse to kowtow to society's belittling attitude towards foreigners. This is how the place is presented to the reader:

> She was on her way to where she would habitually meet, without arrangement, friends, and friends of friends, whoever turned up. The L.A. Café. Maybe most people in the street throngs didn't know the capitals stood for Los Angeles; saw them as some short version of the name of a proprietor, (…) El. AY. Whoever owned the café thought the chosen name offered the inspiration of an imagined lifestyle to habitués, matching it with their own; probably he confused Los Angeles with San Francisco. The name of the café was a statement. A place for the young; but also one where survivors of the quarter's past, ageing Hippies and Leftist Jews, grandfathers and grandmothers of the 1920s immigration who had not become prosperous bourgeois, could sit over a single coffee. (The Pickup, 2001, p. 11)

This multi-focalized description of the place (alternation of the omniscient narrator and the thoughts of Julie, delineated in the shift in verbal regimes and the expressive lexical elements of the passage), enhances its symbolic dimension. Indeed, the Café reflects the racial diversity, cultural variousness, with the influx of immigrants, of South African society. The rebellious youth eschew society and parents, the custodians of the old way, in their quest for belonging and self-realization. The Café is a space of identity deconstruction for Julie and her friends, anti-racial, anti-nationalist, insubordinate youth digging their heels in their avowed opposition to social divisions. The friends coalesce and link with whoever may breeze into or out of the place. They are sentient about the hectic evolution of the nation, and about identity negation, the bane of the lives of immigrants. The Café and The Table are a "mix-race bunch" (A. Skea in Cloete, 2005, p. 55), where the friends, adamant in their commitment to fighting against

discrimination and intolerance, denounce incoherences and contradictions in society. Julie relishes joining the friends at The Table. The space is the youth's wall of lamentations and is the obverse of the larger social context. They take full liberty to canvass their vision of a postmodern world. They chide the sham political freedom in the country. The place is, as well, the locus where otherness, defined in an intricate relationship with the self, is expressed.

No wonder then Julie takes her pickup, Abdu, to the Café, a place of meeting of people from all walks of life. Abdu, the reject of the system, feels somehow at ease with the friends at the mythic place. Yet, stigmatization and a biased attitude persist, as they underlie the first exchange between him and the group, who consider him "an Oriental Prince". The motif of meeting showcases a certain derogatory image of the foreigner, in the mind of the progressive youth, wrapped up in courteous words. As Julia Kristeva well explores in her groundbreaking study, the glum foreigner mostly takes refuge in silence, as he suffers to contain the prying eyes of those who belong to the receiving culture; he can hardly bear up with ungrounded ideas about him and his original culture. Abdu is no exception. Again, through the techniques of blurred dialogues, jotted down in the narrative, the reader hardly feels the omniscient voice, shrouded in the many voices of those around the Table, relating the questions of Julie's friends to Abdu. The passage below unfolds the unavoidable questioning that every foreigner must pass through, surreptitiously inserted in the friends' exchanges:

> Hi Julie; a rearrangement of chairs. – This is Abdu, he's going to find new wheels for me. –
>
> Hi Abdu. (Sounds to them like an abbreviation of Abdurahmane, familiar among names of Malays in Cape Town). The friends have no delicacy about asking who you are, where you come from-that's just the reverse side of bourgeois xenophobia. No, not the Cape. They have his story out of him in no time at all, they interject, play

> upon it with examples they know of, advice they have to offer, interest that is innocently generous or unwelcome, depend which way the man might take it-but at once, he's not a 'garage man' he's a friend, one of them, their horizon is broadening all the time.
>
> So that's where he's from, one; one of them knows all about that benighted country. The 'garage man' has a university degree in economics there (the university is one nobody's heard of) (The Pickup, 2001, p. 20)

Abdu, the university degree holder, is part of those immigrants who, because of the constrictions of poverty or policies in their home country, have no other choice but to renounce to dream of social development, and choose to "relocate", "the current euphemism for putting up anchor and anchor and going somewhere else…" (The Pickup, 2001, p. 54). Immigrants like Abdu try other horizons, mostly hostile new social contexts, where the only way to make a living is as a manual labourer or Mafia" (The Pickup, 2001, p. 21). Though he burns with the hope of being integrated into the hybrid circle of the friends in the Café, or in their usual camping days, Abdu's otherness remains stark, as he experiences invisibility, permanent isolation, silence, and thoughts, which are his sole sanctuaries. Such marginalization is an expression of the character's malaise in such an unwelcoming society. Therefore, the same sensation of homelessness afflicting Abdu, also affects Julie and her friends, who are dejected, uncertain about their future in a context of violence. The only spaces where they can assuage their angst are private or intimate places as the EL. AY Café or the cottage.

The cottage, the narrator reports, is "her 'place' [and is] sufficiently removed from of The Suburbs' ostentation" (The Pickup, 2001, p. 24); it is "her place-their place-she stood a moment giddily and looked at him, an assertion of her reality, before her." (The Pickup, 2001, p. 25). The simplicity of Julie's private space reflects a wish to affirm herself and to engage into personal reconstitution. Such an identity redefinition is further enhanced by the connections with her pickup, Abdu the 'garage man',

whose presence makes her more conscious of her essence. Indeed, it is through alterity, Paul Ricoeur highlights, that we have a full consciousness of the self. Julie gets to realize that the "Other is within us and affects how we evolve as well as the bulk of our conceptions and the development of our sensibility" (E. Glissant, 1997, p. 26). The cottage, thus, is a place of reciprocity, of experimentation of the Other by the Self, through the intimate relations and the vivid exchanges between the young woman and her friend. She is aware, for the first time, of the anonymity and isolation of all errant migrants in the world who, like her lover, live through terrible, inhuman, and disgraceful situations:

> …no record of him on any pay-roll, no address but c/o a garage, and under a name that was not his. Another name? She was bewildered: but there he was, a live presence in her room, an atmosphere of skin, systole and diastole of breath blending with that which pervaded from her habits of living, the food, the clothes lying about, the cushions at their back. (The Pickup, 2001, p. 24)

The breathing presence of the foreigner and his determination to withstand policies of effacement, are pinpointed in the narration of the thoughts of Julie. Abdu's dramatic condition has illuminated her vision of the global world, she takes as a space of oppression and injustices. For the young woman, the privileged of the world, like members of her social class, are free to move about the world, welcome everywhere, as they please, while the demoted like 'illegal' immigrants must live, without a name. This is the meaning of the sad verity: "[T]he idea of the world as a global village is still extremely one-sided: only those from privileged countries are really free to 'pick up' other cultures and to drop them, too, when they wish to" (S. Kosseuw, 2005). Therefore, South Africa, representing the cosmopolitan world, is a space where the reified immigrants are like underdogs. They undergo an unremitting threat of banishment and forced removal.

Indeed, notification of immediate deportation causes dismay to the lovers. They are distressed and feel overnight powerless, in the context of

the threatening tone of the injunction stipulating that "…he must depart within 14 days or face charges of and deportation to his country of origin," (The Pickup, 2001, p. 59). If Abdu, the outcast, was expecting that dreaded moment, Julie, on the contrary, feels terribly shocked. She realizes the tribulations undergone by the immigrant, and she takes full knowledge that losing Abdu would forcibly imply losing her lover, whose presence has given a sense in her hitherto humdrum life. Disappointed yet determined, Julie, helped by the friends explores all possible avenues to avoid deportation. The negotiations and the despair of the couple in a stalemate, which cover a considerable part of the story (from chapter 9 to 16), are suggested in the deceleration of the narrative time, materialized by longer chapters. This signifies that life has reached an impasse because of the drama that befalls them. But these are fruitless efforts, face to the cold will of the State to take the undesirable immigrant back to his cultural space. The latter has no other choice but to leave the country he hoped to integrate, and which has been to him a space of marginalization, exploitation, and disgrace. The only sparkle in the gloomy space of the cosmopolitan society, which has never been home to him, has been his rewarding encounter and relation with Julie. That enriching meeting triggers the latter's decision to break with family, friends, and culture and follow Abdu to an alien cultural space, a decision Abdu takes as madness and stupidity. Her father is taken aback, helpless because of the determination of his daughter. This is the quintessence of the man's words, an echo of the turgid and hackneyed discourse of the center on the periphery:

> you're nearly thirty. And now you come here without any warning and simply tell us you are leaving in a week's time for one of the worst, poorest, and most backward of Third World countries, following a man who's been living here illegally, getting yourself deported – yes- from your own country. (…) the place is dangerous, a country of gangster political rivals, abominable lack of heath standards, -and as for women: you, you to whom independence, freedom, mean so much,

> eh, there women are treated like slaves. It's the culture, religion. You are out of your mind. (The Pickup, 2001, p. 104)

The topographical aspect of the words (in italics) of the father, related from the perspective of Julie, stands out of the overall structure of the text. This is a way for the narrative voice to bring to the forefront the father's dismay. The structural design of the passage, reporting his words, is an encoded way to show the decided difference between the discourse of the father and the principles that prompt the girl to forge ahead emigration. Julie's father cannot fathom his daughter's 'irrational' decision to leave 'civilization', 'enlightenment' and try 'backwardness'. Indeed, Nigel Akroyed Summers deals out generalizing lessons; he is the mouthpiece of intolerance, and nationalist seclusion, he is the repository of the collective consciousness (Glissant, 1997, p. 62). Notwithstanding her father's emotional drive, Julie's maturity, fed by her relationship with Abdu the intruder, and her belief in the possibility of a global cultural identity, underpins the willed denial of her real cultural identity and privileged white South African girl (Cloete, 2005, p. 56).

2. Picking up Another Country: Diverging Ways in the Quest for Belonging and Self-realization

The second part of the story in The Pickup opens with this inscription: "Ibrahim Ibn Musa" (The Pickup, 2001, p. 115). This is the real name of Abdu, the illegal immigrant. The mention indicates a change in setting, with the movement of the couple from South Africa to Ibrahim's homeland. The shortcut introduction directly tells that Abdu, the formerly invisible and marginalized figure in Julie's country, has a history and culture now that he is back to where he belongs. This is how the narrator expresses it:

> He stands at the foot of the stair where the aircraft has brought its human load down from the skies. Lumbered and slung about with hand-luggage and carrier bags, he turns to wait for her to descend

> from behind him. He is home. He is someone she sees for the first time. … (The Pickup, 2001, p. 115)

Dislocated, rejected by the South African society, he was cautious enough to warn his people, and debunk the myth of the 'been-to' (A. Armah, 1975) that, "he was coming back and it was not as a successful son who had made a better life, the Western life of television version, bringing them a share of it in his pockets and in his person, but as a reject, with nothing but a wife-a foreign wife" (The Pickup, 2001, p. 120). The author "presents the reader with the impact of liminality and exile on one's sense of identity and belonging, on one's relationships." (Dimitri, 2003, p. 162)

The couple's challenging life is narrated in two different settings. With the decision to follow her husband to an unknown land, Julie is conscious that she has become the deportee, the intruder, although she is considered "legal", as she belongs to the world of the privileged, who can enjoy freedom of movement.

However, with her emigration the reader is informed that there may be motivations for relocation other than economic poverty. Indeed, she is driven by the belief that exile in the Arabian country can be an opportunity to search for the Other, what Glissant infers through circular nomadism (1997, p. 18). Julie acts out of frustration, regarding her deteriorated social space. Her decision to migrate is motivated by her conviction that by taking up the problems of others, it is possible to find her self (Glissant, 1997, p. 18).

However, as a foreigner, Julie undergoes marginalization, and isolation from her husband's family. The new socio-cultural context makes Julie aware that she is even alien to herself, as she is to Ibrahim's locus. She is the personal self, meeting the cultural other, in a new space. Therefore, Julie begins a journey of self-discovery, an identity reconstruction, stirred by the rules in Ibrahim's home and reflected in her determination to be fully

integrated into the new space. Julie and Ibrahim are both citizens of the postmodern world, trotting spaces, in a desperate quest for personal development and social recognition. There is an ambivalence underlying the two individuals' quest for happiness: while Ibrahim shuns his home country, while he scrambles to go to Canada or America,

> Julie wants to connect with her new 'family' and their language. However, she is initially "not invited" or even permitted to participate in the women's activities. Her inability to penetrate the "women's sphere illustrates the intersectionality of gender, race, nationality, and geography; Julie is kept on the boundary until the other women learn more about hers, she will negotiate these differences." (D. C. Mount, 2014, p. 116)

Julie experiences a new conception of family life inside the gendered space she tries to make her own home. The family is "a graph of responsibilities to be traced, a tree not of ancestry but the complexity of present circumstances" (The Pickup, 2001, p. 140), an environment where, despite material dearth, the character discovers solidarity and love. She gets immersed into her new cultural zone, where she is first denied access to the close sphere of women. Julie accepts to be placed at the periphery of the family space. She takes refuge in her lean-to, a situation that makes her more conscious of the hardships undergone by immigrants like Abdu, with scorched happiness (J. Kristeva, 1991, p. 3), isolated, and yet whose faces burn with hope.

Julie burns with hope in the family house where she tries to become a happy "foreigner", through an introspective dialogue with herself, through acquaintances with the mother and sisters-in-law, but mainly through her wish to master the language of the country. While her melancholic husband is entrapped by a desperate need to move away from home, while he is disheartened by repetitive visa refusals, Julie strives to take root, day after day, into the family house, her "corner of the world" (G. Bachelard, 1994, p. 4). Her cultural symbiosis with the Arabian one is given shape by her

community service for the benefit of local women – whom she teaches English –, by her friendship with Ibrahim's sister, Maryam, (The Pickup, 2001, p. 148), but also through her willingness to abide by the rituals determining the life of women.

The new space is a site for Julie to renew with herself, to redefine her own identity, by interacting with the others, whom she takes as an image of her own self. As she experiences psychological growth and spiritual renaissance, her husband Ibrahim falls into a zone of emotional disintegration, tweaking his brains to fathom the attachment of his wife to such a space of deprivation. This is where lies the germ of division and separation between the couple, their sweet love story progressively turning into a cold and distant relationship. Julie's emotional growth is made more pronounced through her mystical attachment to the desert, the very space Ibrahim shuns so much, as he takes it as a symbol of destitution.

The desert is the place where Julie can fully reconsider herself, her past and future condition. The infinity of the desert is a mystical and mysterious attraction to the young woman:

> The desert. No seasons of bloom and decay. Just the endless turn of night and day. Out of time: and she is gazing-not over it, taken into it, for it has no measure of space, features that mark distance from here to there. In a film of haze there is no horizon, the pallor of sand, pink-traced, lilac-luminous with its own colour of faint light, has no demarcation from land to air. Sky-haze is indistinguishable from sand-haze. All drift together, and there is no onlooker; the desert is eternity.
>
> What could/would thrust this back into time? Water (The Pickup, 2001, p. 178)

Ibrahim's pickup can appreciate the beauty of the desert which denotes life, eternity, the spiritual ideal that Julie has been hankering, for so long. Alternating the omniscient voice and the narration of the thoughts of the character, indicated by the nuances in lexical structures ("and she is

gazing…; what could/would…"), the passage unfolds the sensation of tranquility raised in the woman by the infinity of the desert. Convinced that life is infinity, "an endless turn of night and day", Julie's mystical connection with "the pallor of sand" stimulates a sense of belonging and constitutes the driving force behind her decision to take the desert as "home". Indeed, the desert is no space of desertedness and barrenness for Julie, as Ibrahim considers it. The desertic space is the symbolism of her journey from independence (a feeling of unbelonging, in her original society) to dependence, totally in spiritual communion with "[the desert's] unparalleled beauty (…) its fantastic shapes, its breathtaking vastness (…) and its solemn silence." (D. Goergen, 1985).

Gordimer highlights Julie's efforts to find her place in the new cultural context, through the recurrent use of the image of the desert, which becomes the site in which Julie can abandon herself and where she can reflect (M. Groins-Reed, 2019, p. 57). The desert is then the protagonist's own niche; she enters in communion with it, "its emptiness leading her to an introspective search. Julie feels liberated, at peace with herself, because the desert is "outside any social space" (E. Dimitri, 2003, p. 171) and constraints. Like L. Byron (1953, p. 18), Julie feels the desert as a dwelling place, forgetting not humans, but the material privileges of the world, for her reconstruction.

However, "the desert becomes the physical embodiment of an increasingly sterile communication between the couple" (E. Dimitri, 2003, p. 32). Ibrahim takes the desert as a metaphor for infertility, death, a primitive past, or a desolate future. Ibrahim neither understands nor appreciates Julie's psychological maturation which spurs her decision to stay on in the village and brush away the idea of moving to America, as he wishes. This is her reply, after being accused of lying by her infuriated husband:

> I thought, I really thought you saw how I was beginning-you make it so hard to explain-to live here. Oh my god. How I was different-not the same as I was back there when you met me. I thought we were close enough for you to understand, even if it was something you didn't expect (The Pickup, 2001, p. 268).

Unfortunately, "despite all the intimacy, Julie and Ibrahim remain strangers to each other, each on a personal, but parallel journey. Instead of trying to grasp the truth about each other, they are ultimately unable to see beyond themselves" (A. York in Cloete, 2005, p. 64).

Despite the detachment and anger of her husband who considers madness Julie's decision, the latter stands her ground, unwavering in her position, induced by Ibrahim's mother, who cannot figure out her son's irrational need to trot the Western world, for the search of imagined happiness. Julie is unflinching in her refusal to move to America and live through the impedimenta non grata of that space. Indeed, as the narrator underscores it, "[t]here is a terrible strength that comes to a dread decision aghastly opposed by other people: their words, supplication, silent condemnation, are hammer blows driving that decision deeper and deeper into certainty" (The Pickup, 2001, p. 266). Nothing, not even Ibrahim's scorn, and silence can divert her from her tenacious will to live in that space of solidarity and joy where she can find herself, thanks to the caring contact of others, like Maryam and The Mother. Their lean-to, which was a space of intimacy and mutual respect turns, overnight, into a place of antagonism, materializing the binary opposition between the psychologically matured wife and the anxious husband. About the latter's tribulations at home, Dimitri makes this insightful comment: "Abdu, the illegal immigrant to South Africa, proves to be the eternal nomad, the eternal other, but no longer manifests his earlier dignity. Tragically, he is a phenomenon of the 1990s – a global mercenary condemned by history to be ever seeking opportunities elsewhere." (2003; p. 32). Sullivan's words buttress the existential drama of Ibrahim: "The constant anxiety that eats away at

Ibrahim, his homelessness and his ambition, his being a nonperson and a person at the same time, captured by his two names, is a sad achievement of Gordimer's narrative empathy" (in Cloete, 2005, p. 56).

His rejection of his home country, fraught with political rivalries, economic difficulties for the youth, and social and cultural constraints nourishes his will to escape the opposite of privilege, poverty, hopelessness, a sense of entrapment (Kosseuw, 2005). Ibrahim and Julie realize how far-fetched their motivations and visions of happiness and social recognition are.

Julie's nest of relations within family and community spaces can be read through the lens of Glissant's image of the rhizome, articulated in his analysis of the idea of circular nomadism and the errantry of people, who understand that a definition of identity concurs with interactions and interpersonal relationship with others. Truly, the image of the rhizome prompts "the knowledge that identity is no longer completely within the root but also in Relation." (1997, p. 18). Julie's identity redefinition in the desert expresses Gordimer's earlier ideas about the ethics of mutual enrichment of cultural globalization. The South African writer has insisted in her literary output that stability and peace lie in the mutual valorization of cultures. Like Glissant, she strongly believes that "the cultures of the world have always maintained relations among themselves that were close or active to varying degrees, but it is only in modern times that some of the right conditions came together to speed up the nature of these connections." (1997, p. 26). The story in The Pickup encapsulates her vision of the oneness of cultural expression and her belief in the enriching power of differences in a global context. The dramatic events are an accurate image of the writer's conviction that the spiritual growth of the Self, the redefinition of identity, through errantry, is concurrent with meeting and interacting with the cultural or national Other. Julie, in her errantry in the new social context and the infinite beauty of the desert, has somehow

succeeded in being an other, through her attempts to transcend cultural barriers and work for a fusion between the realities of her world and the values inherent in Ibrahim's culture. Putting herself in the shoes of the local communities, she has managed to redefine her self through the enriching differences she experienced inside her home and in communal spaces.

Conclusion

The analysis of spaces, in The Pickup, envisioned to demonstrate that, more than a décor framing events of the story, the spaces where characters move, have a metaphorical weight. They are sites for the deconstruction and redefinition of personal identities, in relation to the other individuals and communities they got in touch with.

Julie Summers, a privileged South African young woman, lived in a cosmopolitan space that she can hardly bear up with, because, like her friends at The Table in the L. A. Café, she abjures the material lust at the heart of her society. They are in quest of spiritual regeneration. The Café and The Table are symbolical terrains. They are the places where the embittered and frustrated youth in post-apartheid South Africa vent their anger born from the country's lingering injustices and political violence. Such violence is more pronounced in the society's treatment of the immigrant figure, whose identity is denied, he who must face up with stereotypes and cultural prejudices, battling to integrate the South African society. Abdu/Ibrahim is the embodiment of the foreigner, as analyzed by Julia Kristeva, in errantry, who tries the South Africa country, in a desperate quest for an imagined home and happiness.

Through the tribulations of Abdu, and the compassion of Julie and the young at The Table, Gordimer has illuminated the female character about the new insidious forms of violence in the post-apartheid/postmodern world, more prone to deny identity than it was in the time of racism. The representation of characters in immigration and emigration informs the

writer's commitment to representing the multifarious reasons that induce individuals to opt for relocation and highlights the divergences underpinning the quest for home and belonging. Through The Pickup, she has expressed her staunch opposition to xenophobia but also her unwavering belief that interconnections through relationships between the Self and the Other, is one momentous avenue for the establishment of more humane interpersonal relationships. The developments in the lives of her characters in the spatial backgrounds framing the story, illustrate the vision of Edouard Glissant that identity is no longer defined in terms of cultural or national roots but should be reconsidered in the light of the Relations that individuals and communities can weave, in a free globetrotting. The Pickup canvasses Gordimer's conviction about the ambivalent nature of power, and identity, through the shifts that punctuate the displacement of characters from their patterned lives (L. Caraivan, 2016, p. 51). As in her earlier productions, in this novel, she endorses Salman's Rushdie's and Toni Morrison's positions concerning the writer's inescapable mission to ask difficult questions, to say the unsayable, in her representation of the question of identity, which has become unfixed, differed, unstable in the era of globalization.

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