

HOSPITALITY, MULTICULTURALISM AND NARRATIVE  
AGENCY IN ABDULRAZAK GURNAH'S *BY THE SEA*, *THE LAST  
GIFT* AND *GRAVEL HEART*

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ABDULRAZAK GURNAH'S *BY THE SEA*, *THE LAST GIFT* AND *GRAVEL  
HEART***

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## ABSTRACT

### HOSPITALITY, MULTICULTURALISM AND NARRATIVE AGENCY IN ABDULRAZAK GURNAH'S *BY THE SEA*, *THE LAST GIFT* AND *GRAVEL HEART*

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This thesis analyzes Abdulrazak Gurnah's three novels, *By the Sea*, *The Last Gift*, and *Gravel Heart* with respect to hospitality and multiculturalism which permeate negotiations of identity and narrative agency through asymmetric power relations of multicultural home/hostlands settings. It shows how the novels explore negotiations of identity, narrative agency, and hospitality in physical and relational (human relationships) spaces in their multicultural settings of home- and hostland. In Gurnah's fictional world, the representations of these settings and of characters at the intersections of class, race, gender and sexuality, and nationality, illustrate (in)hospitality to processes of identity negotiation, and the texts show this (in)hospitality through their use of political and social references and literary intertextualities, familial and societal relationships, and the inclusion/exclusion of certain narratives (female narrative agency in particular). The first analytic perspective of this thesis addresses how the novels present hospitality in multicultural home/hostland settings through sociopolitical allusions and references and literary

intertextualities, to probe into their impact on negotiations of identity and agency. Secondly, with a focus on positionality with regard to the formation of identity and agency, the thesis highlights the significance of hospitality for story sharing within familial and societal relationships in (in)hospitable multicultural spaces and settings and its contribution to the power/knowledge system in resistance to dominant discourses of knowledge in the novels. Based on these interrelated perspectives, the thesis argues that the novels present inhospitality and inhospitable spaces and relationships as hindering characters' negotiations of identity and narrative agency, and thence as blocking their resistance to dominant and powerful discourses that define them through stereotypical perceptions and representations, undermining any multiculturalism practiced in home- and hostland settings. It is suggested that, although partially empowered through their stories narrated in hospitable relationships and spaces, inhospitality is shown, ultimately, to disallow the subversion of subalternity and negotiation of power.

**Keywords:** Abdulrazak Gurnah, hospitality, identity, multiculturalism, narrative agency.

## ÖZ

### ABDULRAZAK GURNAH'NIN *DENİZ KENARINDA*, *SON HEDİYE* VE *ÇAKIL YÜREK* ROMANLARINDAKİ KONUKSEVERLİK, ÇOK KÜLTÜRLÜLÜK VE ANLATI EYLEMLİLİĞİ

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Bu tezde Abdulrazak Gurnah'nın üç romanı *Deniz Kenarında*, *Son Hediye* ve *Çakıl Yürek* çok kültürlü vatan/ev sahibi ülke ortamlarının asimetrik güç ilişkilerinde, konukseverlik ve çok kültürlülük üzerinden, kimlik ve anlatı eylemliliği tartışmaları incelenmiştir. Bu tez romanların, çok kültürlü vatan/ev sahibi ülke ortamlarında ve fiziksel ve ilişkisel (insan ilişkileri) alanlarda, kimlik, anlatısal eylemlilik ve konukseverlik tartışmalarını nasıl keşfettiğini göstermektedir. Gurnah'nın kurgusal evreninde, bu ortam ve karakterlerin sınıf, ırk, toplumsal cinsiyet, cinsellik ve milliyet kavramlarının kesişme alanındaki temsili, siyasal ve sosyal referansların kullanımı, metinler arası ilişkiler, ailevi ve toplumsal münasebetler ve başta kadın anlatı eyleyliciliği olmak üzere kimi anlatıların failliklerinin dahil edilmesi ya da hariç tutulması yoluyla, kimlik uzlaşmalarına karşı konukseverlik/sevmezlik tasvir edilerek gösterilmektedir. Bu tezin ilk önermesi, bu romanlardaki çok kültürlü vatan/ev sahibi ülke ortamlarındaki konukseverliği, sosyo-politik ve edebi metinler arası aracılığıyla ele almaktadır. İkinci olarak, kimlik ve eylemlilik oluşumuna ilişkin konumsallığa gelince, bu tez konukseverliği, konuksever/ konuksever olmayan çok kültürlü ortamda ve ailevi ve toplumsal ilişkilerde, öykü anlatımının önemini ve romanlardaki güç/bilgi

sistemine katkısını ve egemen bilgi söylemlerine karşı direnişini öne sürmektedir. Birbiriyle ilişkili bu öncüllere dayanarak, bu tez, bu romanların, karakterlerin kimlik ve anlatsal eylemlilik tartışmalarını engelleyen nedeni, konukseverliğin olmaması ve konuksever olmayan ortamlar ve ilişkiler olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Bu tür ortamlar ve ilişkiler, vatan/ev sahibi ülke ortamlarında, karakterlerin kendilerini basmakalıp algılar ve temsiller yoluyla tanımlayan baskın ve güçlü söylemlere direncini, ve herhangi bir çok kültürlülük uygulamasını engellemektedir. Konuksever ilişkilerde ve ortamlarda öyküleriyle benliklerini anlatmak için kısmen güçlendirilmiş olsa da, konukseverliğin olmaması, nihayetinde, maduniyetini alt üst etme ve iktidarı müzakere etmesine izin vermediğinin gösterildiği ileri sürülmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Abdullarsak Gurnah, konukseverlik, kimlik, çok kültürlülük, anlatı eylemliliği.

To My Dear Mother and Father  
And  
The Hospitable Listeners of Silenced Voices

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM .....	iii
ABSTRACT .....	iv
ÖZ .....	vi
DEDICATION .....	viii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	xi
CHAPTERS	
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
2. HOSPITALITY AND MULTICULTURALISM: IDENTITY AND NARRATIVE AGENCY .....	23
2.1 Introduction .....	23
2.2 Hospitality .....	26
2.3 Multiculturalism .....	32
2.4 Power/Knowledge and Negotiations of Narrative Agency .....	44
2.5 Subalternity, Identity, Subjectivity, and Agency .....	52
3. NEGOTIATIONS OF HOSPITALITY AND NARRATIVE AGENCY IN <i>BY THE SEA</i> .....	60
3.1 Introduction .....	60
3.2 Sociopolitical References, Literary Intertextualities, and Narrative Objects ..	62
3.3 Familial and Societal Relationships and Poetics of Space .....	84
3.4 (In)hospitality and Women .....	95
3.5 Findings .....	99
4. NEGOTIATIONS OF HOSPITALITY AND NARRATIVE AGENCY IN <i>THE LAST GIFT</i> .....	100
4.1 Introduction .....	100
4.2 (In)hospitality in Macro-Spaces .....	104

4.3 (In)hospitality in Micro-Spaces .....	121
4.4 (In)hospitality and Women .....	133
4.5 Findings .....	139
5. NEGOTIATIONS OF HOSPITALITY AND NARRATIVE AGENCY IN <i>GRAVEL HEART</i> .....	141
5.1 Introduction.....	141
5.2 Sociopolitical References and Literary Intertextualities.....	143
5.3 Familial and Societal Relationships.....	158
5.4 (In)hospitality and Women .....	166
5.5 Findings .....	171
6. CONCLUSION.....	172
REFERENCES .....	182
APPENDICES	
A. CURRICULUM VITAE .....	194
B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET .....	196
C. TEZ İZİN FORMU / THESIS PERMISSION FORM .....	214

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

The stakes of “immigration” do not in all rigour coincide with those of hospitality which reach beyond the civic or properly political space.

Jacques Derrida  
Interview with Dominique Dhombres for *Le Monde* 1997

An original theoretical finding of this thesis is the codependency and interrelationship between the philosophical premise of hospitality and the theory of multiculturalism, the former as the prerequisite for the latter, and the latter nurturing the former. The research reported in this thesis started with the hypothesis that Gurnah’s immigrant characters, and his novels themselves, negotiate their immigrant identities with and through narrative, and the additional hypothesis that hospitality would be a significant parameter in analyzing the novels’ presentation of narrative agency in multicultural settings. As will be seen in the following chapters, the three novels of Abdulrazak Gurnah studied in this thesis indicate the possibility of negotiations of hospitality, identity, and narrative agency through sharing narratives in hospitable spaces and relationships between characters, rendering these negotiations as instances of subaltern resistance to dominant and powerful discourses of knowledge. This thesis studies *By the Sea* (2001), *The Last Gift* (2011), and *Gravel Heart* (2017), which have similarities of settings and concern similar aspects as regards immigrant lives and narration of their experiences through flashbacks of the past and the situation of their present lives. The thesis focuses on and analyzes negotiations of identity and narrative agency through the concepts of hospitality and multiculturalism as practiced in the relationships between the characters, and characters and states, in physical and relational spaces within the multicultural contexts of the novels. Extending hospitality in these spaces provides for negotiations of narrative agency and identity, allowing the (subaltern) characters to negotiate their subjectivity through sharing their stories –

either written or oral, or both – within asymmetric power relations, and thus to resist powerful discourses that summarize them through stereotypical perceptions and more usually disregard their discourses and narratives. On the other hand, inhospitable relationships and spaces hinder these negotiations, marginalize these subjectivities, and buttress powerful discourses, which continue to ostracize and suppress other sources of knowledge and its production. In this sense, the multiculturalism(s) practiced in those multicultural spaces is undermined as some cultures/cultural beliefs and practices and narratives become unvoiced and unheard, rendered subaltern.

In an interview with Susheila Nasta, Gurnah reveals his interest in writing about “people negotiating their ‘identities’.” He remarks:

I suppose at one point I thought this [negotiating identities] was intensified for people dislocated from their place of origin. I’ve always been interested in exploring the idea that people remake themselves, reshape themselves. [...] That people come from so far away, to a place like Europe, and have to change or transform. [...] It [identity] becomes an interior landscape where it doesn’t matter quite as much where you are for the negotiations go on inside. The outside world is not irrelevant, but it is not quite so central. So it’s that sense of people carrying their worlds within them that I became interested in. (Gurnah, Interview with Nasta 356-7)

As a self-conscious author, Gurnah “is not conclusively or coherently assimilated into a ‘postcolonial exotic’” (Murray 152). He unsettles set and organized modes of writing and identity embedded in national affiliations, and he “tussle[s] creatively with incongruous positions in genre and geography, a form of ‘diasporic pluralisms’ (Appadurai 346) that exposes the fiction of singularity and separateness” (Murray 152). Furthermore, Gurnah’s characters’ – especially the first-generation immigrants’ – stories and lives in diaspora can be read through James Clifford’s distinction and relation of “here” and “there”:

In diaspora experience, the copresence of ‘here’ and ‘there’ is articulated with an antiteleological (sometimes messianic) temporality. Linear history is broken, the present constantly shadowed by a past that is also a desired, but obstructed, future: a renewed, painful yearning. (Clifford, “Diasporas” 318)

In the three novels studied in this thesis, the protagonists Saleh, Latif, Abbas, and Salim, all go through similar experiences in positioning and identifying themselves in relation to specificities of time and space. Their spatiotemporal movements determine their positionality and their negotiations within (in)hospitable environments and relationships. Furthermore, these characters' sense of belonging to specific national communities in diaspora is also nonlinear due to their discrepant and sometimes conflictual relations with the homeland or homeland community in diaspora. In this sense, Gurnah's narratives can be said to be dealing with the universal experience of migration and diaspora, and thus with Appadurai's "diasporic pluralisms" mentioned above rather than with historically and culturally specific groups of people creating diasporas in the hostland. It also reverberates with Stuart Hall's idea of diasporic peoples' "vertical integration into their traditions of origin [which] exist side by side with their lateral linkages to other 'communities' of interest, practice and aspiration, real and symbolic" ("The Multicultural Question" 120). Furthermore, as Clifford asserts:

Peoples whose sense of identity is centrally defined by collective histories of displacement and violent loss cannot be 'cured' by merging into a new national community. This is especially true when they are victims of ongoing, structural prejudice. Positive articulations of diaspora identity reach outside the normative territory and temporality (myth/history) of the nation-state. (Clifford, "Diasporas" 307)

In addition to populating his fiction with characters searching for their identities, and who are dislocated from their places of origin, Gurnah, has written "about the experience of living on arrival in Europe," focusing on "belonging, rupture, dislocation [...] and within those three, there are already many other issues to do with loss and pain and recovery". He writes about "the resourcefulness with which people engage with these experiences [..., and] about complicated journeys as a way of demonstrating the complex interconnectedness of experience, biographies and cultures" (Gurnah, Interview with Mohan & Datta 4).

As such, Gurnah's narratives deal with his characters' negotiations of their various experiences as immigrants or people leaving their homelands, entangled between different locations, and trying to (re)construct their identities and negotiate their

shifting and (sometimes) ambivalent positionings within power relations. In this regard, the Nigerian poet Tanure Ojaide's point (made in 2008) seems apt:

African writers have become part of the worldwide phenomena of migration and globalization with the attendant physical, sociocultural, psychic, and other forms of dislocation, which permeate their individual writings. Migration, globalization and the related phenomena of exile, transnationality, and multilocality have their bearing on the cultural identity, aesthetics, content, and form of the literary production of Africans abroad. (Ojaide 43, qtd. in Ladele & Omotayo 54)

These points refer to and identify characteristic features of Gurnah's fiction. Nevertheless, Gurnah's narratives, while embedded in a transnational and global context, undermine and resist the universality of globalization's homogenizing sweep through his characters' heterogeneous negotiations of identity and space – as especially seen for those characters put in subaltern positions. Although Gurnah's narratives often eradicate the border between the public and private by focusing on human relationships in micro- and macro-spaces of family and society respectively, they do not function as allegories in the sense of Frederic Jameson, who claimed (of the literature produced in and from the third world) that “all third world texts are necessarily allegorical [...] because they reject the radical split [...] between the private and the public” (“Third-World Literature” 69). The illustration of relationships between people populating Gurnah's novels in both micro- and macro-spaces avers the necessity of looking into the heterogeneity of experiences from diverse walks of life. Gurnah's fiction, in its aesthetic features, and through characterization, anti-linear and polyphonic narrative style, and implementation of sociopolitical context and references and literary intertextualities from various places and cultural origins, undermines Jameson's assertion, which homogenizes the significantly different individual positionings and the specificities of the experiences of the characters in such literature. In a way, Gurnah's narratives pinpoint and emphasize the novelty of each individual character's negotiations and, through that, the significance of approaching those individual experiences within either private or public spheres, in micro- and macro-spaces, in a distinct manner.

For the specific purposes of this study, as explicated fully in Chapter Two, notions of hospitality and multiculturalism, as defined and studied by Jacques Derrida and Stuart Hall, respectively, will be read within the power/knowledge structure suggested by Michel Foucault, to analyze Gurnah's texts and his characters' negotiations of hospitality, subalternity, identity, and narrative agency. These philosophical concepts and notions are the most relevant for the objectives of this thesis, as they directly involve the argument this thesis puts forward. In reading Gurnah's selected novels for this thesis and the definitions of these concepts, they (may) go beyond the scope of the philosophical contexts they have originated from and thus may encompass broader ranges of application in the analyses of Gurnah's novels. As such, the notion of hospitality, the focal core of this study, not only involves the hospitable relationships between the host and the guest, as suggested by Derrida, but also refers to hospitable physical spaces and their metaphorical connotations, and these spaces' relations with hospitable human relationships. Moreover, the notion of hospitality is also applied to authorial decisions regarding the inclusion of certain narratives and ways of characterization within these narratives. In other words, following Derridean hospitality, this thesis also analyzes Gurnah's hospitality to include/exclude certain discourses, and his own cultural production as resisting dominant (patriarchal) discourses. In this sense, this analysis also foregrounds the texts as examples of multicultural and multidimensional discourses, encompassing characters and narratives from diverse backgrounds and at different intersections. The analyses will also, therefore, examine the inclusion/exclusion of female characters and their voices and narratives in the novels, which can be seen as an antithesis to the implied author's and the texts' promoting of hospitality. The implied author's and the characters' hospitality toward female characters and their stories, which can perform as challenges to powerful male discourses, will be part of this examination.

As explained in full detail in Chapter Two and at the beginning of this chapter, and as the theoretical finding of this thesis, the concept of multiculturalism is found to be interrelated with that of hospitality. As such, positive hospitality and inclusion prepare the context for the practice of multiculturalism in social and familial "contact zone[s]" (Pratt 1991), and lack thereof undermines the multiculturalism claimed to be practiced

in so-called multicultural spaces. In other words, multiculturalism cannot exist without hospitality, for without it, it cannot incorporate pluriversality<sup>1</sup> (i.e., dealing with multiple and relative perspectives as opposed to and undermining “the universal”), which is a prerequisite for multiculturalism. Multiculturalism entails negotiations of discourses and narratives from different positions of enunciation to challenge and (even sometimes) subvert dominant narratives because the term both denotes and connotes multiplicity and pluriversality. Therefore, if spaces that are, at least nominally, multicultural (claiming to practice multiculturalism) are not hospitable to the narration of stories (narrative agency) and to negotiations of identity, then the multiculturalism of such spaces is undermined and interrogated, as is shown in some of the contact zones in Gurnah’s fiction.

This thesis goes through a progression of theorized perspectives in each analytic chapter. Each novel is thus subjected to a sequence of analyses that investigate hospitality as a part of the multicultural world in Gurnah’s novels from different perspectives because each different theorized angle sheds a different light and shows us a different aspect of Gurnah’s practice with respect to hospitality and multiculturalism. In this way, the pluriverse of ideas represented in the novels goes through a pluri-perspectival approach, with a focus on hospitality (discussed below). In doing so, all three sections of the analytic chapters follow the novels’ poetics in the sense discussed by Elleke Boehmer in her *Postcolonial Poetics* (2018), that defines the eponymous subject as the “structural, linguistic, and rhetorical procedures” of postcolonial artefacts (28), where these (aesthetic) features of the postcolonial literary text call for a dialogue between the reader and the author, i.e., “interpretative practices, on a reader interacting with the poetics of a text” (*ibid* 5). As the “verbal energy” (*ibid* 3) of the artistic text, these aesthetic features may function in a way different than the expectations, designations, and political representations of postcolonial literary works, i.e., not necessarily addressing a certain political “agenda” (*ibid* 22) or pinpointing the “ideological stance and position” (*ibid* 23) of postcolonial artefacts. According to Boehmer, though, through these “verbal and structural dynamics, the

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<sup>1</sup> “Pluriversality [favoring relationality] is a concept emerging from decolonial theory that provides a counternarrative to contemporary Northern assumptions of the universal” (Perry 293).

poetics, [...] our understanding of the particular postcolonial condition being represented (race, resistance, liberation, reconciliation, precarity, and so on) may be shaped and sharpened” (*ibid* 3). Therefore, postcolonial poetics becomes the part of the “analysis of postcolonial texts’ structural, symbolic, and perceptual effects, and [encompasses ...] applying diagnostic frameworks such as ‘resistance’, ‘terror’, or ‘trauma’ to them” (*ibid* 4).

The reading tools addressing the poetics of the postcolonial artefact in *Postcolonial Poetics*, such as attention to techniques of juxtaposition, multi-vocality, and hybridity, speak to the argument put forward in this thesis in investigating Gurnah’s literary production as instances of “resistance literature” (Harlow 1987),<sup>2</sup> through Boehmer’s emphasis on “writing-becoming-resistant” (52), and through the reading process as “going between [and] across, [...] and] working between constantly shifting and migrating interpretations” (*ibid* 53). The aesthetic perspectives of Gurnah’s novels, thus, invites a method of reading suggested by Boehmer regarding the reading process as active interaction with the poetics of the postcolonial artefact, which can render it as literature of resistance.

In each analytical chapter, accordingly, this thesis studies three main strands of its analytic perspectives. The first section of each chapter is dedicated to analyzing sociopolitical allusions and references and literary intertextualities, as used in and signifying the postcolonial poetics of Gurnah’s narratives, implicating hospitality. References to sociopolitical contexts embed the narrative within the novel’s larger social and political backgrounds, studying the hospitality of home- and hostland and inclusion/exclusion based on these features and representations in the texts. On the one hand, literary intertextualities indicate the novels’ hospitality to and inclusion of certain intertexts and the texts’ experience of plurality and multiculturalism. On the

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<sup>2</sup> Although “resistance literature” is the title of Barbara Harlow’s book (1987), in this thesis, its use does not necessarily overlap with Harlow’s discussion of such literature. In the context of this thesis, resistance generally refers to the characters’ resistance and challenge of the powerful discourses which have excluded and continue to marginalize their discourses. Moreover, in the case of Gurnah’s novels studied here, resistance literature follows the definitions of such literary productions and refers to “writing-becoming-resistant” as used by Boehmer (52) in *Postcolonial Poetics*. It thus furthers Harlow’s use of the term and its inclusion.

other hand, these intertextualities allow analysis of hospitality and negotiations of identity through intertexts. Literary intertextualities incorporate hospitality by creating a shared (para)-textual knowledge between the reader and the text/the characters and setting parallelisms that can help read the characters' negotiations of hospitality and narrative agency, and thus decipher the possible meanings of the narratives. The second section of analysis in each chapter generally concentrates on the portrayal of hospitality in the relationships in familial and social contact zones. It shows how negotiations of identity and agency and subversion of subalternity within these uneven power relations can occur. The third and last section of each analytical chapter focuses on hospitality, at metanarrative and narrative levels of the texts, in representing female characters and their narrative agency within the novels. As such, this section, like the others, questions the extent to which these representations overlap with Gurnah's authorial claim and practice of his novels being hospitable to female narratives in challenging dominant discourses.

The methodological approach in this thesis considers both narrative and metanarrative aspects of analyzing Gurnah's fiction. Due to thematic and analytic similarities, all three novels studied in this thesis invite this analysis method. The complicated ways these novels interact with the reader call for combining the aforementioned notions to address the thematic and analytic perspectives they put forward. Gurnah's implementation of certain rhetorical and stylistic techniques and choices in representing characters, relationships, and spaces can best be read through these notions. For instance, sociopolitical references and literary intertextualities, revealing the postcolonial poetics of Gurnah's texts in communicating his thematic perspectives, summon concepts of multiculturalism, hospitality, and theories investigating power relations through these references and intertexts. Regarding the analysis of familial and societal relationships, Foucault's power/knowledge structure and Derridean hospitality, in delineating the relationships, are crucial analysis tools.<sup>3</sup> In the same

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<sup>3</sup> Gurnah's selected novels for this study can also be analyzed through other analytic perspectives that directly deal with colonialism, racism, postcolonialism, neocolonialism, and gender inequalities, i.e., the issues these novels mainly incorporate. However, the miscellany of settings and character types and the specific objectives of this thesis required certain notions (hospitality, multiculturalism, and power/knowledge) to be included, which, in a way, also include the concepts mentioned above. For

vein, the representation of female characters and their negotiations of narrative agency needs to be studied within the theoretical framework introduced above, with a specific focus on the subaltern theories and their interrelationship with the concept of hospitality discussed in Chapter Two. In the following, we will turn to Gurnah and his oeuvre to learn about his works' ethos and embed his narratives within the analytic framework of this thesis.

At the time of writing this thesis, Abdulrazak Gurnah, a Zanzibari born writer, is a Professor of English and Postcolonial Literatures at the University of Kent and is on the editorial board of the literary magazine *Wasafiri*. He has also edited two volumes on African writing and is the author of *The Cambridge Companion to Salman Rushdie* (2007). Gurnah is also a prolific author of several scholarly articles, two of which are based on his own experience as a migrant writer in England, "An Idea of the Past" (2002) and "Writing and Place" (2004). Murray considers how Abdulrazak Gurnah and his literary and nonliterary practice have been received within English Literature circles, calling attention to his exclusion as a novelist in early years, a status to be changed later with the publication of *By the Sea*, which ensured his eminence "as a novelist and academic well-versed in postcolonial theory" (Masterson 414). In the following decade, and continuing to this day, he was and is mainly known as a novelist (Murray 142).

In "Writing and Place" (*Wasafiri* 2004) Gurnah locates his writing in his own experience and learning in different places – home, Koran school, the streets, and his own miscellaneous readings – which he found "flatly contradictory to what [he] was learning at [a colonial] school" (60). As he contends, "[o]ut of it [these contradictory narratives] came the energy to refuse and reject, to learn to hold on to reservations which time and knowledge will sustain" (*ibid*). He reflects this energy in his fiction, and through the narrative techniques and the poetics of his texts, his fiction challenges the still prevalent (colonial and) dominant discourses.

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future studies, though, other and perhaps more encompassing perspectives from other theorists and fields can also be applied to shed light on different aspects of analysis.

Gurnah also relates his writing to his experiences of migration and dislocation, to write about “this condition of being from one place and living in another not as a unique experience which I have undergone, but as one of the stories of our times,” acknowledging English as a “spacious and roomy house, accommodating writing and knowledge with heedless hospitality”<sup>4</sup> (“Writing and Place” 59). In an interview with Nasta, Gurnah points out that the label of “stories of our times” refers to a movement within literature to reverse the institutional knowledge produced by the West about others, which has:

brought the need to listen to the stories of these [non-Western dislocated] people. Whereas before stories would be told about them, now their own stories have to be heard. [...] So ‘the story of our times’ can no longer be sealed in a controllable kind of narrative. The narrative has slipped out of the hands of those who had control of it before. These new stories unsettle previous understandings. [...] It also makes us realize how accessible other knowledges are. Whereas without those kinds of raised voices coming from other directions, things often seem unreachable, impossible to understand, or at least to understand in any kind of subtle or complex way. Then you read things by others which give you access – even if one’s understanding is slight – to different ways of thinking and understanding. In that sense the world actually becomes a smaller place where we can make connections and which is more and more understandable. (Gurnah, Interview with Nasta 358-9)

As Nasta also points out, Gurnah’s novels “not only interrogate standard European versions of history but also complicate the strategic nationalisms of some earlier fictions by African writers” (352), whose filiations with African nationalisms is problematized through Gurnah’s narratives. In this regard, Murray considers Gurnah’s use of synecdochic Zanzibari paratexts as his way of presenting the “complication of national affiliation” (146), disturbing “the myth of the land of ‘milk and honey’” (Alloo 84, qtd. in Murray 146), and undermining any sense of the hospitality of the represented Zanzibari homeland in his fiction. This way, even if his characters want to

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<sup>4</sup> Gurnah’s point here opposes Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s writings on English as a medium of writing in African literature in his book *Decolonising the Mind* (1986), where he regards English in Africa as a “cultural bomb” (3), expunging cultural history of the pre-colonial nations and lands.

embrace their national and root identities through negotiations of hospitality, they are depicted as excluded through the inhospitalities of the national land.

In a similar vein, in an interview with Clair Chambers (2011), Gurnah repudiates the label of postcolonialism and declares that he does not consider himself a “postcolonialist,” noting that the term is “clearly just a useful postcolonial way of thinking about how we organize the texts that we teach.” As such, this way of categorizing texts allows for the discovery of “shared tropes and concerns, and perhaps [to] theorize and analyse in a certain way.” He continues to state that, however, “[i]t’s not a part of identity, but a nice tolerant term, that is so capacious that you can put it almost anywhere these days” (Gurnah, Interview with Chambers 124). Gurnah’s unwillingness to position himself within the category of postcolonial writing and criticism is because he believes that in its institutional practice, within the framework of Western discourses, colonial or postcolonial cultural production and analysis “recede[s] into unimportance, into a kind of necessary detail to the larger issue” (Gurnah, “Imagining Postcolonial Writer” 30). Moreover, he notes that labels such as “[“world literature, postcolonial literature and literature from the Global South”] limit the interpretation of this kind of literature somehow, because it contains more than that description” (Gurnah, Interview with Roth, Holzenthal, & Zingel 1).

Another reason for distancing his literary practice from postcolonial labeling and ambivalence in accepting such a label can be traced in Ania Loomba’s argument regarding some African writers’ detachment from strict adherence to nationalisms. She noted that, since “anti-colonial movements have rarely represented the interests of all the peoples of a colonised country [...], African novelists since 1960s can also be regarded as ‘no longer committed to the nation’ (Appiah 66, qtd. in Loomba 32). As also noted by James Clifford, “[t]here are no postcolonial cultures or places: only moments, tactics, discourses, and so forth. *Post-* is always shadowed by *neo-*” (Clifford, “Diasporas” 328). In such circumstances, Gurnah’s works detach themselves from the nation and nationalistic beliefs overriding preceding African novelists’ works, and in doing so, his novels reflect inhospitalities embedded in nationalism and African nationalisms in particular. Clifford’s point (above) will be

further explicated in the context of Gurnah's fiction and this thesis, where Gurnah's treatment of specific nationalist discourses and the narratives supporting and/or originating from African nationalisms will be foregrounded.

In the following, a review of the critical studies of Gurnah's works shapes the analyses in this thesis and positions this study in relation to other scholarly works and articles. It is acknowledged that *Gravel Heart* has not been the focus of many analytic reviews due to its being recently published (2017), making this thesis one of the few works starting to study this novel analytically.

Much as research on stories and their significance in Gurnah's oeuvre may abound, none view his fiction in the light of entanglements between powerful discourses of knowledge and discourses and narratives produced from the subaltern positions of enunciation, which may challenge the doctrine and practice of multiculturalism and hospitality in fictional (and non-fictional) multicultural spaces, and create a rhetoric of resistance to such discourses. Moreover, to my best knowledge, no research to the date has studied the representation of female characters in Gurnah's texts, neither have they touched upon this issue from the viewpoint of hospitality, both at the textual levels of Gurnah's fiction and as the para-textual element of the implied author's hospitality to the female narrative agency in his fiction. These gaps in the research are made evident through a brief overview of related studies, given below.

The bulk of research done on Gurnah's oeuvre indicates the significance of narratives and power relations, the narration of identity through storytelling, displacement, alienation, and last but not least, the Indian Ocean littoral and its role on the lives of characters in Gurnah's fiction: Chambers (2011); Hand (2010, 2012, 2015); Steiner (2010, 2012); Helff (2009, 2010); Murray (2013); Samuelson (2013); Lavery (2013); Kaigai (2014); Okungu (2016); Kohler (2017); Falk (2007, 2020); Datta (2020). While sharing common perspectives with these studies, this thesis differs in methodology and perspectives of analysis in using the Derridean concept of hospitality. The thesis also furthers the scope of the study by extending the areas of analysis regarding hospitality concerning female characters within Gurnah's fiction. Here, the focus is on hospitality in the existing power relations and discourses produced between groups of

people – immigrants or hostland locals – and also between these groups and home/hostland states, and how these relations are altered or negotiated through the stories narrated by characters.

Gurnah's fiction is peopled with immigrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, self-exiles, diasporic groups, travelers, as well as locals from Zanzibar and Britain – recognized as homeland or hostland, depending on the direction of migration. The novels studied here illustrate how hospitality and power relations and hierarchies between these groups of people lead to identity formation and possible (de)valorization and (de)construction of the dominant discourses. Moreover, Gurnah's strategy of creating a narrative that comprises a vast range of characters is coupled with the lengthy time span of the narratives, allowing for very detailed and complex explorations of these issues as they unfold in time, space, and individual experiences. In his novels, Gurnah illustrates pre- and post-independence Zanzibar and England during the 1990s and early 2000s through the perspectives of immigrant and refugee characters living in England at the time of the main, or frame, narration; we hear the stories of their lives in both locations and during these time periods. Felicity Hand noted that Gurnah's novels are "on *behalf* of the migrant" ("Becoming Foreign" 39; emphasis in original) and that they are:

the 'contrapuntal' rewritings of imperial narratives as Gurnah's African migrants relate their individual responses to the decolonization and independence of Zanzibar. Their stories add another vital strand to the stories of which Empire has been constructed while at the same time their accounts of hollowness and dislocation serve to highlight the uprootedness of today's citizens of the global village, migrant or native. (Hand, "Becoming Foreign" 40)

My argument complicates Hand's point that Gurnah's fiction is "on *behalf* of the migrant" in two ways. Firstly, although Gurnah's immigrant characters are, to some extent, able to narrate their stories to fellow immigrants and refugees, their stories do not often reach their counterparts from the host culture. Secondly, in such cases (but not in all instances), since their stories do not find "hospitable" (Derrida 2000) listeners from the host culture, they cannot be regarded within the novels as "add[ing] another vital strand to the stories of which Empire has been constructed." The extent to which

Gurnah's novels add to imperially constructed stories is, therefore, put into question by the novels themselves, although it is, of course, to be hoped that such works of literature allow us greater understanding in the "difficult" business of gaining knowledge in this area. Nevertheless, in some other cases where hospitable spaces are available for the interactive sharing of stories, it is possible to read Gurnah's narratives in light of Hand's comment, which presents immigrant stories as acts of "rewriting" imperial stories. Perhaps, the implied audience of Gurnah's fiction, i.e., generally the academics and people who have sociopolitical knowledge of the references and allusions he makes in his novels, can appreciate the "vital strand" he attempts to add to the Empire and imperial stories, by challenging and/or subverting them. This perspective also reverberates with John McLeod's point regarding literature produced in the diaspora as an act of resistance in the face of imperial and dominant discourses and kinds of literature (this will be further discussed in Chapter Two).

Erik Falk's study, "Locating Abdulrazak Gurnah in the Global Literary Marketplace" (2020), explores at a para-textual level the location of postcolonial writers and the medium of language in the texts they produce. Falk's study is significantly related to this thesis as it probes the complexities of African and African authorial identities, undermining the culture-specific notions of identification. Moreover, Falk's study undermines the homogenization of the African experience of colonial encounters and its institutionalization within postcolonial studies "characterized as it has been by insufficient historical and local knowledge" (159). This premise relates his study to this thesis in interrogating the dominant discourses of knowledge and regimes of truth about Gurnah's status as a migrant writer and his characters as immigrants from Africa. Instead, it indicates them as "resist[ing] both African nationalism for its potentially violent exclusionism, and the idea of the 'postcolonial writer' for its privileging of the colonial encounter to the disregard of other, preceding and longer histories" (Falk 166).

In the following, a group of studies which have generally focused on the Indian Ocean Littoral and their relation to this thesis are given. Through allusions to *One Thousand and One Nights*, Meg Samuelson's "Narrative Cartographies" (2013) regards beautiful

Zanzibarian objects in *By the Sea* as triggers for and tools to connect stories of the Indian Ocean littoral. The stories are seen, like those of Scheherazade's, as a way of "survival" for the immigrants, creating a "poetics of passage" and "solidify[ing] or sully[ing] the bonds between or encasing subjects" (Samuelson 78). Although for slightly different purposes, the narrative objects and foregrounding of *One Thousand and One Nights* in her analysis bring together Samuelson's and my study. In this thesis, these objects and the literary intertextualities depict parallelism between the texts, cultivating the hospitality in the relationships portrayed in *By the Sea* and the other two novels studied here. In another study that emphasizes movement, trade and storytelling in Gurnah's novels, Sophy Kohler (2017) points to "the role of cultural and social exchange in facilitating and furthering trade along the Indian Ocean rim" (274). She regards stories as a means of traveling while staying put in one place. Kohler's study is on *Paradise* and *By the Sea*. The former deals with displacement through traveling for trade between the Zanzibari coast and the mainland Tanzania (called the interior), while the latter reads displacement against the backdrop of immigration to England (Saleh and Latif) and travels taken to different parts of the world as trade requires (Hussein). Allusions to travels in Kohler's study can embed the notion of migration, and although not directly analyzing the relationships in diaspora, it focuses on the relationships built along the lines of trade.

Taking a different approach, Charne Lavery's (2013) study of Gurnah's novels investigates the relationship between the Indian Ocean space and Gurnah's narrative form, thus studying space in connection to literary practice. She states that the representation of the Indian Ocean "is [...] linked to its representationality [which] involves an exploration of the space of the literary text itself: the interrelationship between the space *of* and *in* narrative" (Lavery 117; emphasis in original). As mentioned in the title of her study, the Indian Ocean space is represented through "white-washed minarets and slimy gutters," which refers to "representation of space" in Gurnah's novels as space "in" narrative. The minarets and gutters also, however, have the role of "representational space" – space "of" narrative, and hence are related to Gurnah's practice in his novels. The concept of representation – and, for that matter, representation in and of narrative – can be read along with Stuart Hall's idea of

“representation” in “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’” (1997), which is crucial in determining the relations and hospitality in the hierarchical power relations in Gurnah’s texts. Lavery argues that textual elements such as travel, multiple narrators and narrative perspectives, and the silences in narrating the Indian Ocean are what make Gurnah’s fiction “spatially inflicted” (117). Much as the prime focuses of our studies differ, my reading of Gurnah’s fiction converges with Lavery’s on the centrality of travel and representations of space as well as representational spaces as they entail hospitality practiced in these spaces. These two studies also both focus on multiple narrative voices and multiplicity of positions of enunciation implemented in these novels, i.e., in how these multiple narrative voices represent and are represented differently within the narrative itself. As will be further discussed in the analysis section, Gurnah’s use of the theme of travel and its link to migration has possible implications about creating a strand of knowledge through this passage and afterward. Reading Gurnah’s novels as instances of “polyphonic” – in Bakhtinian sense – texts is another point that unites my study with Lavery’s. In this regard, the existing “dialogism,” emphasizing the porousness of meaning and the significance of hospitable human interactions in negotiating identity and agency within power relations, are foregrounded in both studies. However, the dividing line between Lavery’s essay and mine lies in this thesis’ emphasis on also the inter-racial, inter-cultural and cross-continental relationships, which will be unravelled in the analysis sections of this thesis.

Several studies dealing with the refugees, asylum-seekers, immigrants, their identities, and the diaspora have also been produced. Sissy Helff, in her essay entitled, “Illegal Diasporas and African Refugees in Abdulrazak Gurnah’s *By the Sea*” (2009), lies close to this thesis insofar as she bases her analysis on Derrida’s notion of “hospitality” to study the reception of refugee and immigrant characters in the host country. She argues that “illegality and limits of hospitality” are what leads to the creation of a “complex and heterogeneous picture [which challenges] common stereotypical images of ‘the African Refugee’ in Britain and Europe by revealing national and societal inclusion and exclusion strategies” (Helff, “Illegal Diasporas” 67). My research differs from (and may add to) this essay in looking at hospitality in the *actual* relationships between

all the characters, including the refugee and immigrant characters illustrated in the novels, and not just the possible implications that hospitality can have regarding certain relationships. However, both studies explore the hypothetical challenges that can arise through those characters' narrative agency and narration of stories. Another study related to this thesis, although quite different in scope, methodology and theoretical perspectives, is Lucinda Newns' (2015) reading of *By the Sea*. Her study criticizes the "postmodern discourses of movement [such as] immigration [as an aesthetic] valorization of displacement" (*Abstract*). She argues that postmodern discourses neglect the "experiences of those who are forcibly displaced" (Newns 506). She further suggests that these "forcibly displaced" characters in Gurnah's novel opt for "storytelling rooted in the domestic sphere as an alternative restorative migrant aesthetic practice" (*ibid*), which can also be seen as an alternative way to negotiate their identities.

Several studies, like this thesis, analyze these relationships alongside the concepts of power, hospitality, and discourse regarding human relationships. Falk's study of subject-formation in a "highly unstable and cosmopolitan social reality" (Falk, "Subject and History" 2007, Diss.) looks for ways in which characters can redeem themselves of "alienation" and gain "more viable states of being" (*Abstract*). Falk regards diaspora as prevalent in and applicable to both the immigrant residence and homeland, calling for "family" rather than the physical homeland as the domain and base to narrate the self even when this family is "global and trans-cultural" (27). In the same vein, this thesis also studies hospitality in familial relationships and the significance of hospitable relational spaces for the characters' negotiations of identity and narrative agency. Furthermore, the emphasis on "cultural [un]belonging" (Falk 47) is the driving force in Falk's reading of Gurnah's *Admiring Silence* and *By the Sea*. Falk's study, thus, concentrates on the issue of inclusion and/or exclusion through the idea of cultural belongingness. In line with Falk's study, in this thesis, the notion of cultural belongingness becomes relatively ambivalent and relative because of the heterogeneity of the positions from which cultural identity and inclusion/exclusion can be negotiated.

Another instance of study along these lines is Anne Okungu's ("Narrative Power" 2016, Diss.) examination of the quotidian relationships in Gurnah's novels up to 2011 (the publication date of *The Last Gift*). She examines the power relations existing in such relationships far from "macro-political power plays." She traces these "plays" in Gurnah's novels through narrative strategies, "[that is] complex narrative perspectives, vivid descriptions, imagery, symbolism and credible characterization" (*Abstract*), which open up a perspective on ordinary lives and interactions. "Intra-family tensions" (Okungu 93) in *The Last Gift* and "inter-family interactions" in *By the Sea* (*ibid* 125) are significant domains of analysis in both Okungu's and Falk's studies, and thus unites their studies with this thesis. Nevertheless, this thesis also concentrates on inter-cultural societal and familial relationships between different characters, irrespective of their ethnic background. Moreover, this thesis also foregrounds "macro-political power plays" and the relationships between the state and people (through the hospitality of the state), which are not touched upon in Okungu's study.

More in conversation with my thesis as regards inter-cultural relationships, Helff's "Imagining Flight" (2010) investigates the refugees' status and argues that Gurnah's novel *By the Sea* challenges the stereotypes surrounding them, with journeys and border crossings as emblematic of the "protagonists' lifelines" (Helff 393). "Imagining Flight" problematizes the contact zones between refugees and people of the host country and concludes that multiple perspectives and complexity of the lives and status of the refugees are aspects to be considered. The argument shows that the refugees of the novel gain power through the mastery of the language and, perhaps, through academic positions to a certain extent. My study departs from this essay in questioning the endurance and depth of such power and agency, even asking if it ever existed in the first place, i.e., whether academic position or linguistic competence can address and maybe transcend the dominant discourses which try, in John McLeod's words, to keep immigrants in their place (2004). In other words, this thesis questions the extent to which the masteries mentioned above can resist dominant discourses before being inhospitably silenced and marginalized by them.

In a similar vein by focusing on relationships, Tina Steiner (2010), in her study of Gurnah's *Desertion*, analyzes the "politics of relation rather than one of exclusion" ("Writing 'Wider World'" 125) and argues for a "re-definition of Africa" (124) in and through Gurnah's works. Her study, like this thesis, goes against the ideas of nationalism perpetuated by the movements of and after independence, which are based on the concepts of "rooted" rather than the "rhizomatic identities" suggested by Deleuze and Guattari (qtd. in Steiner 127). By rhizomatic identity, she means a type of "relational identity" (127), which she finds to be the case with the characters in Gurnah's novels. This relation, she discusses, is not necessarily between those with genealogical ties but can extend to people from different cultures, as found in the case of *Desertion* (2005), between the British Martin and the Zanzibari Rehana. Contrary to her argument, though, and as the novel shows, the granted hospitality does not last forever (Martin leaves Rehana in *Desertion*), thus indicating the superficiality, or at least fragility, of relationships between different races and cultures – and, in the current study, between African refugees or immigrants and their British counterparts. The example from *Desertion* alone would not warrant my claim, which is based on considering other characters' behavior in other novels by Gurnah, too. Consideration of his other novels, such as *Paradise* (1994), *Admiring Silence* (1996), *The Last Gift* (2011), and *Gravel Heart* (2017), shows that although both hospitable and inhospitable relationships exist in Gurnah's fiction, inhospitable communications in the relationships between the characters from different racial and ethnic divides outnumber the hospitable ones. In *Admiring Silence* (1996), for instance, the unnamed African narrator-protagonist is abandoned by his British wife and daughter; Anna eventually ends up separating ways with her British boyfriend Nick because of his cheating on her in *The Last Gift* (2011); and the Anglo-Indian Billie deserts Salim in *Gravel Heart* (2017).

A closer relationship exists between this thesis and that of Ezekiel Kaigai. In "Encountering Strange Lands" (2014, Diss.), Kaigai analyzes the human relationships in Gurnah's novels with an emphasis on "inhospitable circumstances [due to relocation as regards the immigrants]" and a "negotiation of hospitable space" (iii). The two studies overlap in focusing on hospitality in relationships. However, Kaigai's concern

is to show how the “unspoken speak” (Kaigai 112) and is enabled through the silence of characters in *The Last Gift* (2011) and *Admiring Silence* (1996). As discussed in the analytic chapters, this argument contradicts the claim put forward in this thesis, which regards silence not as an empowering tool, but mainly as a token of disempowerment and marginalization. This study, while taking into consideration several other theoretical issues too, may complement Kaigai’s research by expanding the scope and outcomes of research into negotiations of hospitality in intercultural and societal relationships with detailed analyses of *By the Sea* (2001), *The Last Gift* (2011), and *Gravel Heart* (2017).

This thesis is organized into six chapters, each of which is shaped around the argument put forward at the beginning of this chapter. Chapter one states the aim and rationale of this thesis and lays the groundwork for the whole research by introducing Gurnah and his works and the subjects of concern in this study. The chapter establishes the significance of hospitality in areas with power hierarchies encompassing human relationships, relationships between state and people, and hospitality in the representations of people and spaces in the three novels under study in this thesis to investigate resistance to dominant discourses and doctrines through interactive communications. Through a brief review of the literature, this chapter also justifies the significance of the current study.

Chapter Two sets the theoretical background for the analyses of the novels studied in this thesis. It presents an outline of interrelated theories and philosophical concepts, which in their tailored format can be applied to investigating Gurnah’s novels in this study in light of the suggested argument and discussion. Although from a miscellany of philosophies and theories, when connected to one another, these theories form the most relevant analytic framework for the specific purposes of this study.

Chapter Three, the first analytic chapter of this thesis, following an outline similar to that of the two following chapters, analyzes relationships between characters or between state and characters and their negotiations of hospitality, identity, and narrative agency in the asymmetric power relations in *By the Sea* (2001). By using theories of hospitality and multiculturalism, this analysis sheds light on the politics of

inclusion and/or exclusion and negotiations of identity and narratives as far as the characters are concerned. Needless to say, these characters are from diverse national, ethnic, racial, class, and gender backgrounds, and their marginalization, which occurs in inhospitable spaces, is not restricted merely to certain ethnicities, classes, or genders. In other words, these characters, irrespective of the identity factors mentioned above, might be prone to inhospitalities and exclusions, even authorial inhospitalities, and thus, their negotiations of identity and narrative within dominant discourses might be hindered. The analyses focus on the representation of relationships and characters and on certain aspects of the novels' poetics, such as incorporating and juxtaposing sociopolitical references and literary intertextualities to delineate these relationships. In this regard, hospitality in representing female characters and their narratives is also significant, and this perspective drives the last part of analyses in each chapter.

Chapter Four concentrates on Gurnah's *The Last Gift* (2011) and implements the same (mentioned above) analytic theories to study the characters' negotiations of identity and narrative agency as ways of resisting dominant discourses of knowledge. *The Last Gift* hosts several first- and second-generation immigrant characters whose lives are portrayed through the focalization of four protagonists. For this reason, this novel's analysis follows a more complicated approach than the other two novels studied here, where the attempt is to locate the discussion on each aspect and character separately.

Chapter Five analyzes Gurnah's *Gravel Heart* (2017), again with analytic tools similar to those mentioned above, but focusing more on human relationships through writing letters. All the three novels analyzed in this thesis present familial and societal relationships as the space for negotiations of identity and subjectivity, where the uneven power relations and the range of hospitality in these relationships determine the success/failure of these negotiations. It is argued that the narratives produced in these spaces and relationships if communicated in hospitable environments, can challenge and may even subvert powerful discourses of institutional knowledge, which have perpetuated stereotypical perceptions and marginalized other discourses.

Finally, Chapter Six concludes the discussions made in all the previous chapters and closes the arguments put forward in the hope of opening up new perspectives to

Gurnah's fiction and his treatment of the narratives, especially stories arising from the position of the subaltern. Through the theoretical perspectives applied to study the texts in question, this thesis indicates the significance of interactive communications, which necessitate the hospitality of the interlocutors in characters' constructing and negotiating their identities by sharing their discourses and narratives. Thus, this thesis will allow and shed light on Gurnah's attempt to portray multiplicity, pluriversality, and relationality of people's experience in colonial, postcolonial, neocolonial, and migration spaces and situations.

## CHAPTER 2

### HOSPITALITY AND MULTICULTURALISM: IDENTITY AND NARRATIVE AGENCY

#### 2.1 Introduction

Power relations and identity and narrative agency negotiated through hospitality and multiculturalism in multicultural home/hostland and immigrant diaspora settings are among the focal points in Abdulrazak Gurnah's *By the Sea*, *The Last Gift*, and *Gravel Heart*. Abdulrazak Gurnah's novels host several themes and subjects such as home and displacement, memory, migration, pre- and post-independence Zanzibar, and narration of the Indian Ocean, colonialism and racism, to name just a few. Other broader themes like human relationships in the multicultural spaces of immigrant diasporas and Zanzibar are also illustrated in these three novels. Multiethnic and multicultural settings serve primarily to open discursive spaces to negotiate hospitality, power relations, and identity as well as narrative agency regarding people in those settings. In Gurnah's fictional world, the representations of these settings and of characters at the intersections of class, race, gender and sexuality, and nationality, illustrate (in)hospitality to identity negotiation processes, and the texts show this (in)hospitality through political and social references and literary intertextualities in the texts as well as through the actual stories shared by the characters. The first analytic perspective of this thesis addresses the nature and the representation of (in)hospitable multicultural home/hostland settings in these novels through sociopolitical allusions and references and literary intertextualities, to probe into their impact on negotiations of identity and agency. Secondly, with regard to the formation of identity and agency, the significance of storytelling in the (in)hospitable multicultural spaces and settings – within familial and societal relationships – and its contribution to the power/knowledge system in the novels will be further elaborated and posited. Finally,

the positionality (and specificity of those positions) in sharing those stories will be shown to contribute significantly to the characters' negotiation of identity and hospitality and to their resistance to dominant discourses of knowledge. Based on these three interrelated and multi-layered perspectives, as stated previously, the thesis argues that the novels present inhospitality and inhospitable spaces and relationships as hindering characters' negotiations of identity and narrative agency, and thence as blocking their resistance to dominant and powerful discourses that define them through stereotypical perceptions and representations, undermining any multiculturalism practiced in home- and hostland settings. In other words, as a result of this hypothesized finding, it is suggested that, although partially empowered through their stories narrated in hospitable relationships and spaces, inhospitality is shown, ultimately, to disallow the subversion of subalternity and negotiation of power. If given a chance to be related in hospitable spaces, however, such stories and narratives, particularly when they are told from the subaltern's perspective, can challenge and resist dominant discourses of knowledge and definitions of national identity – although perhaps not to the extent of deconstructing and/or subverting those discourses. Such challenges or actions of resistance are possible because such stories can potentially gain the power to contribute to knowledge production, which may overthrow stereotypical understandings. In other words, the stories narrated within familial and interpersonal societal relationships are ways for the subaltern to speak and negotiate his/her identity and attain agency. Nevertheless, as the analyses of Gurnah's novels will show, these resistance activities, if not articulated and practiced in hospitable environments and spaces, will not successfully challenge the dominant discourses of specific racial, class, and gender binaries. As John McLeod notes in *Postcolonial London* (2004), "Sadly, even if oppressed peoples intend and attempt resistance at a local level, it does not always follow that their tactics have significant global impact" (13).

As mentioned above, this study focuses on the representation of hospitality in human relationships, i.e., relational spaces, and the dialogic communications made in the multicultural home/hostland as they are found in three of Gurnah's novels. These connections are made across different levels of what Stuart Hall calls "the positions

of *enunciation*,” which help them negotiate their identity in and through the existing power relations and (in)hospitable spaces. According to Hall, positionality and representation play essential roles in the process of a person’s identification:

Practices of representation always implicate the positions from which we speak or write – the positions of *enunciation*. What recent theories of enunciation suggest is that, though we speak, so to say ‘in our own name,’ of ourselves and from our own experience, nevertheless who speaks, and the subject who is spoken of, are never identical, never exactly in the same place. (Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 222)

As happens in discourse, the concept of representation is embedded within what Foucault referred to as the “Power/Knowledge” system (further discussed below) in multicultural and (in)hospitable spaces. Representation entails positionality and can be related to subaltern studies<sup>5</sup> within diaspora/multicultural contexts, which – considering the focus of this thesis, is the situational position occupied by the characters in Gurnah’s novels, and might lead to their marginalization and exclusion through inhospitalities. This thesis will analyze such representations and positionings through the concepts and practices of hospitality and multiculturalism to probe the characters’ negotiations of identity and (narrative) agency within powerful discourses. There is no dichotomous divide between the characters in these novels as regards subalternity. This position is not confined to the presumption that all subalterns are non-Westerns and mainly immigrant characters. Furthermore, unlike theoretical discussions of real-life subjects, here, the concern lies specifically with the fictional characters within the texts of Gurnah’s novels, their relationships, their process of identity-formation, and the implications of those relationships in the (in)hospitable system of dominant and powerful discourses.

Since the novels analyzed in this research involve several demographic diversities, settings and time periods, the theoretical framework needs to be tailored to address the texts’ complexities. This framework requires the use of foundational theories that have been revisited and criticized by later critics who are, nevertheless, dependent upon the

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<sup>5</sup> The term “subaltern studies” is intentionally written in lowercase to differentiate from Ranajit Guha’s and the Subaltern Studies group’s works.

older works for delineating areas of study. In the following section, some theories are introduced and discussed in detail to lead to the concrete analyses of the selected three Gurnah novels. As introduced above, the concepts of power relations and powerful discourses, and their roles in representation and negotiation of hospitality and heterogeneous (subaltern) identities or “identities of difference” (Hall, “The Multicultural Question” 122) in the multicultural (in)hospitable settings of the texts, invite theories from Foucault, Hall, Spivak, Derrida, and McLeod. The combination of notions from these philosophers and theoreticians, as implemented in this study (in a format customized to account for the time lag between some of these theories’ production and the publication dates of the novels) is the most relevant methodology for the materials and specific aims of this thesis. The methodological approach of this thesis, thus, incorporates notions of hospitality and multiculturalism and their practice and impact on power relations and negotiations of identity and (narrative) agency in multicultural settings represented in Gurnah’s fiction. For the sake of clarity concerning the interconnected theoretical and philosophical concepts used, this chapter is divided into two major sections: the first part introduces the concept of Derridean hospitality, which for the specific purposes of this study and their codependency (as discussed in Chapter One), is linked to the notion of multiculturalism(s), i.e., the text’s experience of multiculturalism at narrative and metanarrative level. The second section, tracking down narrative agency and negotiations of identity, focuses on the concept of Foucauldian power/knowledge, interlinked and read through notions of subalternity, identity, subjectivity, and agency.

## **2.2 Hospitality**

The philosophical concept of hospitality, following Jacques Derrida’s definition of the term in *Of Hospitality*<sup>6</sup> (2000), will pave the way for putting the argument regarding the multicultural settings of Gurnah’s novels and prepare the context for reading this notion along with the concept of multiculturalism. Derrida based his argument

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<sup>6</sup> It was first published as *De l’hospitalite* in 1997, stemming from a 1996 seminar series.

concerning hospitality on Kant's definition and understanding of the notion. In agreement with Kant that hospitality is an "obligation," he noted:

Hospitality is certainly, necessarily, a right, a duty, an obligation, the greeting of the foreign other [l'autre étranger] as a friend but on the condition that the host, the Wirt [a German word], the one who receives, lodges or gives asylum remains the patron, the master of the household, on the condition that he maintains his own authority in his own home, that he looks after himself and sees to and considers all that concerns him [*qu'il se garde et garde et regarde ce qui le regarde*] and thereby affirms the law of hospitality as the law of the household, *oikonomia*<sup>7</sup>, the law of his household, the law of a place (house, hotel, hospital, hospice, family, city, nation, language, etc.), the law of identity which de-limits the very place of proffered hospitality and maintains authority over it, maintains the truth of authority, remains the place of this maintaining, which is to say, of truth, thus limiting the gift proffered and making of this limitation, namely, the being-oneself in one's own home, the condition of the gift and of hospitality. (Derrida, *Of Hospitality* 4)

Derrida goes on to make a distinction between the "law of hospitality" and "laws of hospitality." The former stands for the unconditional acceptance of a guest, while the latter delineates the "rights and duties that are always conditioned and conditional" in offering one's hospitality (Derrida, *Of Hospitality* 77). Derrida disagrees with Kant's idea of "unconditional hospitality" (4), and believes that such "unconditionality" is impossible based on the "constitution and the implosion of the concept of hospitality [which can also be called its] self-deconstruction" (*ibid* 5). By calling hospitality a "self-contradictory concept and experience" (*ibid*) when practiced, Derrida indicates the "intentionality" (*ibid* 8) of this concept; I suggest, and also according to Derrida's quote above, that these ideas can be linked to the experience of "accepting" asylum-seekers, immigrants, visitors, and travelers into one's territory, home, and country, which is also an intentional action. In this regard, concerning the British context and proliferation of migration there, Derrida stated that "[i]n the British press refugees and asylum seekers are often portrayed as parasites upon the nation's hospitality" (61). As explored by Derrida, the topic or concept of hospitality significantly illuminates the dynamics concerning the way Gurnah's fictional characters are received as

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<sup>7</sup> The Greek word *oikonomia*, which in turn is composed of two words: *oikos*, which is usually translated as "household"; and *nemein*, which is best translated as "management and dispensation" (Leshem 228).

guests/strangers in the represented home- and hostland spaces, i.e., in Zanzibar and England respectively; in other words, the extent to which they are included, or excluded as “the Other” or “parasites.” The specific example of Saleh in *By the Sea*, at the moment of arrival at Gatwick airport – the very “threshold” (Derrida 9) of England – and dealing with the immigration officer is a case in point; Chapter Three will examine this perspective in relation to *By the Sea*. In *The Last Gift*, explored in Chapter Four, Abbas and his second-generation immigrant family, and the way their English hosts receive them, are notable examples, as well. Finally, Chapter Five shows how *Gravel Heart* represents this concept in practice regarding characters in relational and relative spaces of homeland and hostland. In this regard, Peter Barry points out that “a seemingly innocent word like ‘guest’, is etymologically cognate with ‘hostis’, which means an enemy or a stranger, thereby inadvertently manifesting the always potentially unwelcome status of the guest” (*Beginning Theory* 62). He relates this specific example to deconstruction and continues:

deconstructive reading uncovers the unconscious rather than the conscious dimension of the text, all the things which its overt textuality glosses over or fails to recognise. This repressed unconscious within language might be sensed, for instance, in [...] the word ‘guest’ [which] is cognate with (that is, has the same original root as) the word ‘host’, which in turn comes from the Latin word *hostis*, meaning an enemy. This hints at the potential double aspect of a guest, as either welcome or unwelcome, or as changing from one to the other. This notion of ‘hostility’, then, is like the repressed unconscious of the word, and the process of deconstruction, in revealing the unconscious of the text, might draw upon such disciplines as etymology in this way. (*Beginning Theory* 68)

Following the distinction between Kant’s and Derrida’s definitions of hospitality, and how, according to Derrida, this notion may problematize the negotiation of being “accepted” as a guest, refugee, citizen, and so on, it is equally important to study how the concepts of “community” and “guest and parasite” entail hospitality and vice versa. Derrida believes that community is based on “nationalist identitarianism” (qtd. in Caputo 107), where it often “implies a harmonious group, consensus, fundamental agreement beneath the phenomena of discord or war” (*ibid*). In agreement with Derrida’s point, although this may be a general belief, it is certainly not the case because of diversities and heterogeneities, as will be discussed in detail in the section

on multiculturalism. Derrida holds that such a belief about harmony or homogeneity renders the community “as much threat as promise” (*ibid*). This perception of the community can be considered in light of hospitality, where the guests are seen to threaten the community’s harmony and cohesion. The community, then, tries to “prevent the ‘other’ from crossing over ‘our’ borders [...] from disturbing ‘our’ language, culture, religion and public institutions. As a result, they could not be more inhospitable to the coming of the other” (Caputo 106). From the point mentioned above, the distinction between the guest and parasite is made clear, as Derrida explains:

In principle, the difference is straightforward, but for that you need a law; hospitality, reception, the welcome offered have to be submitted to a basic and limiting jurisdiction. Not all new arrivals are received as guests if they don’t have the benefit of the right to hospitality or the right of asylum, etc. Without this right, a new arrival can only be introduced ‘in my home’, in the host’s ‘at home’, as a parasite, a guest who is wrong, illegitimate, clandestine, liable to expulsion or arrest. (Derrida, *Of Hospitality* 59)

Similarly, in such circumstances, Kevin Nosalek suggests that if immigrants want to survive in the host’s territory, they have to obey its rules and keep its order, and go through certain stages of “acculturation” and “assimilation” (28). In such a situation, “the recreation of an image of the homeland in the hostland becomes difficult if not impossible, especially for the first generation immigrant” (Nosalek 5). This discourse was prevalent – again as discussed below – in England during the 1960s and 1980s, with Thatcherism as its pinnacle, and also in Gurnah’s novels which refer to sociopolitical issues such as Zanzibari independence and revolution, the 9/11 bombings, and the US-Iraq War, to name just a few. As observed in Gurnah’s narrative settings, the discourses regarding foreigners and immigrant groups as parasites and as risking community cohesion are affecting the characters’ lives in their interpersonal and social relationships, even leaking into private spheres of familial relationships. The reflection of this concept, i.e., hospitality, in Gurnah’s novels can be noted in different levels: in the relationships between the characters and the state, irrespective of home/hostland; also, in the interrelationships between the characters, irrespective of their ethnicity and nationality. For instance, in the metropolitan hostland, hospitality can be applied to the case of all the immigrant, refugee, asylum-seeker, and self-exile

characters and how they are either received by the state or by the host culture people. On the other hand, the host/guest relationship is evident in the way hospitality can be applied to the homeland. That is to say, in Gurnah's fiction, this notion addresses both homeland and hostland spaces and affect familial and societal relationships as well, and also leak into the relationships even between the characters from similar ethnic, cultural, gender, and class backgrounds.

The politics of hospitality and inclusion/exclusion in the three novels studied in this thesis can be detected in numerous cases, for instance, in the case of Saleh's interpersonal societal relationship with Celia and Kevin Edelman and such relationship of Latif with Jan and his mother, Elleke, in *By the Sea*. In *The Last Gift*, the concept emerges in the host and guest relationship when Anna visits Nick's parents' home and when Jamal and Lena visit Harun's home. The same may be said of visits in *Gravel Heart*, in scenes where Salim is in his uncle's home, the uncle is in his sister's (Salim's mother's) home, and finally, where Billie is seen in Salim's home. These cases are sometimes in sharp contrast with the hospitality and cultural values Gurnah sketches out in scenes depicting some Zanzibari hosts in their own country and their guests; examples of these are the visits of Martin Pearce to Hassanali and Rehana's house in *Desertion* (2005), and Hussein to Rajab Shaaban's home in *By the Sea*. Nevertheless, Gurnah also pinpoints inhospitalities attributed to the Zanzibari state and homeland people, and thus, undermines the connotation of homeland as a hospitable space and people from the same national background as hospitable hosts and thus, renders the practice of this concept extremely ambivalent and open to questions. The idea of the guest and parasite mentioned above will be discussed more fully in the following sections, and the examples mentioned here will be analyzed separately and in full detail in the analytic chapters.

Another significant point about Derridean hospitality is his use of the term "hostage." Pointing out the word's etymological connections with the words hospitality, host, and guest (in French, both host and guest are "l'hôte") (Derrida 9), Derrida states that "[t]he one inviting becomes almost the hostage of the one invited, of the guest [hôte], the hostage of the one he receives, the one who keeps him at home" (*ibid*). In the

multicultural context of the represented home/hostland (Zanzibar and England) in Gurnah's fiction, this notion can be observed in the threatening impact of the immigrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, and visitors/travelers upon the "host" country, its culture, and people. This is also true about some interpersonal and familial guest/host relationships portrayed in the novels. A passage about traveling tradesmen in Zanzibar in *By the Sea* is a case in point, for it shows that the demographic changes caused by these people can be felt by the local community, as recognized in Saleh's narration; he perceives a reversal of the roles of host and guest, as Derrida suggests. Such reversal of the roles is a situation that Derrida sees as being criticized, mainly when applied to the postcolonial situation of refugees and immigrants. He expresses a desire to change the status quo as in the following: "[w]e know that there are numerous what we call 'displaced persons' who are applying for the right to asylum without being citizens, without being identified as citizens. It is not for speculative or ethical reasons that I am interested in unconditional hospitality, but in order to understand and to transform what is going on today in our world" (Derrida 33). According to Derrida, what determines the label "displaced persons" – as reflected in Bhabha's analysis of the Other – is their "birthplace" or where they come from. Moreover, Derrida's suggestion that "[i]n general, it is the birthplace which will always have underpinned the definition of the stranger" (14) needs to be extended to lineage, for the birthplace of one's forebears underpin the definition just as much with respect to the admission of strangers to both one's home and one's home country. Other than (ancestral) birthplace, homogenizing racial differences also affirm the boundaries mentioned above, as suggested by Hall, and even those born in the metropole do – sometimes but not in all the cases – feel like "familiar strangers" (Hall, Interview with Chen 192). In this regard, McLeod's explication of this situation seems apt:

[...] two conflicting models of national identity [that] sit uncomfortably together: the first derived from one's place of birth (*jus soli*), the second predicated upon lineage and racializing notions of inheritance and bloodlines (*jus sanguinis*) – and the shift from the former to the latter will come to dominate British notions of national identity in subsequent decades (Cohen 1994; Baucom 1999). (McLeod 78)

The critical point in these questions also refers to how Gurnah's characters of immigrant descent – especially in *The Last Gift* – face exclusion based on not only their place of birth, which is England but on where the lineage is deemed to start. From such perceptions arise the question of who is regarded as “proper[ly] English” (LG 95). As in *The Last Gift*, Anna, when a *guest* at Nick's parents' home, is pestered with the question of “[w]here are you from, Anna?” (LG 116). This repeated question sets and reinforces a boundary between the guest and the host and renders her a “stranger” as well as, or perhaps more than, a guest, even though she was born and raised in England. Following this philosophical background delineating the politics of hospitality and inclusion/exclusion, the next section will put this concept in the framework of multiculturalism and multiculturalism, which will pave the way for the analyses of the novels studied in this thesis.

### 2.3 Multiculturalism

This section explores the concept of multiculturalism and its relation to this thesis. In light of the discussions below, I want to suggest that hospitality is inherent in multiculturalism as its prerequisite, that these two concepts are commensurable and operate through asymmetric power relations. Therefore, this section will cross-reference to its previous and following sections to define its applicability to the novels studied in this thesis. Firstly, this topic is relevant to Gurnah's novels' settings, as the characters live their lives in multicultural spaces of home- and hostland, that is, in Zanzibar and England. As regards Zanzibar, the multiculturalism of the island can be linked to its history of Persian settler colonialism since the 10<sup>th</sup> century CE and Arab and European colonialism since 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> (Wachtel, “Writers and Company” [no page]). It can also be traced back to its long history of musim trade (seasonal trade) as a result of “*musim*, the winds of the monsoons”<sup>8</sup> (*By the Sea* 14; emphasis added) – where a considerable number of merchants from the Indian Ocean littoral come during

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<sup>8</sup> “The word ‘monsoon’ comes from the Arabic word *mausim*, meaning season. Basically, it describes a seasonal wind shift over a region that is usually accompanied by a dramatic increase in precipitation.” (*Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network*. <http://www.weatherfarm.com>). Here, the word refers to the seasonal trade in and through the Indian Ocean littoral.

the trade season, and where British (former)-colonizers also frequent. England is also a multicultural space with vast numbers of immigrants and its inorganic and diverse nation dating back to even before the *Empire Windrush* migrations starting in 1948.<sup>9</sup> Several cultures co-exist in both locations where these novels are mainly set. Both the multiculturalism of these places and the multiculturalism – or what Stuart Hall terms “multiculturalisms” (Hall 96; Fish 386) – practiced in those settings are crucial to understanding the (in)hospitable spaces and relationships between the characters and how this notion (multiculturalism) affect negotiations of hospitality, identity, and agency.

Furthermore, for the specific purpose of this thesis, the theories of multiculturalism, employed together with the concept of hospitality, delineate spaces of subaltern resistance and negotiations of powerful discourses within Gurnah’s fiction. Thus, different definitions and perceptions of multiculturalism and its current shape, as they indicate power/knowledge systems in practice, will help in a deeper reading of Gurnah’s novels. Moreover, they provide a background for the discussion of identity formation and negotiation of hospitality through power relations and dominant discourses within these cultural settings. To discuss these ideas, a summary of the conceptions of multiculturalism and the multicultural question seems apt here. In doing so, this section firstly introduces the problems threatening the notion and practice of multiculturalism, then suggests how those problematic issues can be challenged or dealt with, and finally, how this whole discussion can be applied to Gurnah’s fictional world.

In *The Multicultural Question* (2001), Stuart Hall explores the history of the conception of multiculturalism at both academic and sociopolitical levels. In the face of the current controversy about “multicultural” and “multiculturalism,” Hall distinguishes between the adjective “multicultural” and the noun “multiculturalism”

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<sup>9</sup> It should be noted that intermingling between people of different ethnicities and races was the natural outcome of human beings’ first movements onward and perpetuated and intensified through colonialism and the subsequent migration. Here, I have referred to the *Empire Windrush* of 1948 to distinctly point to the multiculturalism of the UK after this period which is closer in time to the settings of the novels studied in this thesis.

to point out the different ways in which these definitions can shape understandings of the current situation in societies which claim to be multicultural. While the former is used to denote a country comprised of diverse cultures and point to its cultural heterogeneity, the latter term denotes the strategies such countries opt for in order to deal with these cultural heterogeneities. In this regard, Hall pointed out that:

In fact, “multiculturalism” is not a single doctrine, does not characterize one political strategy, and does not represent an already-achieved state of affairs. It is not a covert way of endorsing some ideal, utopian state. It describes a variety of political strategies and processes which are incomplete everywhere. Just as there are different multicultural societies, so there are very different “multiculturalisms.” (Hall, “The Multicultural Question” 96)

Multiculturalisms show the variations and alterations in practice in multicultural spaces, impurity, and heterogeneity of demographic features reflected in the differences in population, as of race, ethnicity, class, and gender and sexuality. Hall’s insight into these distinctions also benefits the analyses of Gurnah’s narratives, as the portrayal of the characters happen in different multicultural spaces, and their relationships can be read through multiculturalism(s).

Hall introduces the problematic area of multiculturalism and the multicultural question, which hinders negotiation of multicultural identity at the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality and which, as a result, lead to what he calls “multicultural drift” or the “democratic cosmopolitan limit on both liberal and communitarian alternatives” (“The Multicultural Question” 126; emphases removed). In his view, “multicultural drift” is a current and “passive revolution,” as this thesis may show Gurnah’s novels as such. Hall adds that “passive revolutions happen. Only they happen more incrementally” (Hall, Interview with Back 291). Liberalism, with its advocacy of “universal citizenship” and “cultural neutrality,” falls short of responding to the multicultural question due to the increasing heterogeneity of the population. “Universal citizenship” has not been applicable because of the inherent disparities in its theory and practice. The latter concept’s achievements, “cultural neutrality,” are significant; however, it works in homogenous communities and societies and cannot address Britain’s multicultural metropolis (*ibid* 116). In fact,

cultural neutrality is no far cry from the separation of public and private, which, in reality, is impossible to sustain. That is because, “[e]verywhere, ‘the personal’ has become ‘the political’” (*ibid* 118). That is to say, individual choices make sense only in the cultural contexts in which they are situated. In response to the deficiencies with the two concepts of “universal citizenship” and “cultural neutrality” mentioned above, as Hall continues, British politics suggests a “social-democratic reformist program” (*ibid* 119). This action has resulted in “a haphazard response to the growing visibility and presence of the ethnic communities at the heart of British life, and it constitutes a species of multicultural drift” (*ibid*).

According to Hall, on a spectrum ranging from “liberalism and universalism” to “communitarianism and particularism,” the latter advocates the particularity of communal characteristics regarding ethnic and racial identities. This particularity, according to Hall, “overessentializes cultural difference [... and] gives power to established authority over others” (“The Multicultural Question” 125). In this way of thinking, then, binaries still exist, and there is no space for community members to defy their communities’ doctrines, let alone define themselves in ways diverging from them. In Hall’s words, “[t]his seems to be the critical frontier where cultural pluralism or ethnic communitarianism encounters *its liberal limit*” (*ibid*; emphasis original). According to Hall, neither of the political actions, in the form of liberalism or communitarianism, address the multicultural question in the British setting, which eventually results in “multicultural drift” (Interview with Back 291). Gurnah’s fiction shows this multicultural drift in the portrayal of the heterogeneous relationships and spaces which undermine overessentializing differences through communitarianism; his characters are not affiliated with specific communities, nor are they bound to nationalistic feelings. Moreover, Gurnah’s representations of characters do not follow liberalism and universalism, which flatten diversities and ignore heterogeneities.

In particular, Gurnah’s novels illustrate Hall’s belief that one of the factors intensifying the multicultural question – and this is perhaps a controversial problem for the practice of multiculturalism – is “globalization” (Hall, “The Multicultural Question” 100), which has drastically changed the shape of social as well as political relations all over

the world. It has opened up new world order and, despite having “differentializing effects,” has undermined traditionalism through homogenizing tools and effects (*ibid* 99-102). However, in contrast to globalization’s homogenizing mission, these “differentializing effects [...] entail more discursive model of power” and create subaltern “resistance and counterstrategies.” In a discursive model of power, the binary relation between “Traditionalism” and “Modernity” is displaced, opening up space for the “proliferation of subaltern differences” (*ibid* 102). This is the case analyzed in this thesis, with respect to the characters of Gurnah’s novels and their resistances and challenges to dominant binaries. Despite the homogenizing and hegemonizing measures of globalization, then, Hall accords these subaltern and marginal proliferation of difference, which create “a new kind of localism,” immense significance (*ibid* 103). Hall’s definition of the local is also applicable to some of Gurnah’s characters. The relevance of his use of the term local, considering the local as unstable and “transhistorical,” with “no fixed political inscription” (*ibid* 103), is explained in the passage below:

The local[’s] political thrust is determined not by its essential content [...], but by its articulation with other forces. It [the local] emerges at many sites, one of the most significant being that planned and unplanned, compelled and so-called “free,” migration, which has brought the margins to the center, the multicultural disseminated “particular” to the heart of the metropolitan Western city. Only in such a context can we understand why what threatens to become the moment of the West’s global closure—the apotheosis of its global universalizing mission—is *at the same time* the moment of the West’s slow, uncertain, protracted decentering. (Hall, “The Multicultural Question” 103)

This thesis looks into hospitality toward these cultural and political destabilizations of hegemonic hierarchical structures by analyzing how margins come to the center and question Western globalization’s supremacy and its practice of multiculturalism, albeit in certain and limited respects within the boundaries of this piece of literary analysis. The marginal or subaltern positions, if they operate in hospitable spaces, rigorously undermine the boundaries between tradition and modernity as well as community- or nation-state-driven concepts of culture, cultural identity, and belongingness through perpetuating difference.

Hall argues that in the negotiation of identity in the last decade of the twentieth century, cultural differences manifest themselves in reaction to the modernizing mission of universalism and globalization. This reaction creates hybridity in the sense of translation between traditionalism and modernity. Thus, hybridity expands along this spectrum and encompasses cultural negotiations, translations, and transformations, which is the characteristic feature of multiculturalism. In this regard, Bhabha notes that:

It is not simply appropriation or adaptation; it is a process through which cultures are required to revise their own systems of reference, norms and values by departing from their habitual or “inbred” rules of transformation. Ambivalence and antagonism accompany any act of cultural translation because negotiating with the “difference of the other” reveals the radical insufficiency of our own systems of meaning and signification. (Bhabha, “The Voice of the Dom” 14)

Bhabha’s point speaks to the criteria behind the universalizing and homogenizing mission of Western liberalism in the name of multiculturalism. It undermines flattening of heterogeneities and celebrates negotiating identities through ambivalence and antagonisms. As will be indicated through the analyses in the following chapters, Gurnah’s characters’ negotiations of identity and subjectivity follow similar lines as Bhabha’s argument. Vijay Mishra, also questions the supremacy of “liberal universal ideas,” i.e., that of liberal universalism, which according to him, erases or alters the differences based on specific universally accepted criteria and thus, hinders “radical reorganization of existing life and political worlds” (“Multiculturalism” 226). What this notion (liberalism) overlooks, however, are the “identity politics” and “citizenship” of those in the so-called multicultural countries, the concepts which are complicated enough not to be addressed by merely liberal universalism and its reference points. As a solution, Mishra follows Parekh in suggesting the “redress [of] an educational system that makes little concession to other ethnic values” (*ibid* 227), that is, “changes in institutional structures and their control” (*ibid* 229), which may compensate for the disparities in the knowledge which causes racist views (*ibid* 227). Like Parekh, Mishra “insists upon the dialogic nature of the multicultural enterprise” (*ibid* 229). In this regard, and in order to see the nation as a whole in a “radical postnational form” (Hall, “The Multicultural Question” 120), Hall argues that the

multicultural drift – discussed above – can be turned into “a political will” (*ibid* 119) if racism’s two registers, i.e., the “interdependence of biological racism” and “cultural differentialism,” could be obliterated through interaction between the concepts and bodies of communities and nation-states where they would be considered as neither distinct entities nor “abstract notions.” Thus, it can be argued that the representations of hospitable relationships and spaces in Gurnah’s fiction, where the fictional characters can attain agency to share their narratives through interactive communications and negotiate their identities and subjectivities, address Hall’s solutions to the problem of multicultural drift mentioned above.

According to David Morley, Stuart Hall’s theory of multiculturalism “explores the rise – and subsequent demise: ‘multicultural drift’ – of multiculturalism in the UK and its quite transformed relation, in the post-9/11 period, to new forms of social conflict defined not so much by race as by religion” (230). Hall is thus seen to reject the idea of basing multicultural questions on the differential characteristics of “race alone,” which he considers reductionist. Instead, as he states in an interview with Les Back (2008), other features determine differences and how they are negotiated in search of a “common [living] space” (Hall 298). Furthermore, other sociopolitical and historical discourses and events such as the 7/7/2005 London bombings can arouse religion-based social conflicts, affect the relationship between non-immigrant and immigrant groups in the country, and diminish hospitality to diasporic communities as well as to foreigners and immigrants from outside. As Christopher Allen argues, such discourses revive the Thatcherite discourses of assimilation of some twenty or thirty years before, which attempted to flatten the heterogeneities and differences and show hostilities toward resistance activities within and migrant flow from outside (16). In the context of Gurnah’s novels, as well, references to 9/11 and its impacts on the lives of the characters undermine the multiculturalism practiced in England, as exclusions pervade the represented lives in these narratives. These circumstances are portrayed in Gurnah’s fiction through hospitality in the relationships between the characters and the state’s hospitality and inclusion of foreigners and immigrant groups.

The depiction of this time interval helps read Gurnah's fiction, which overlaps with this period and has similar political, sociological, and cultural reverberations. In this regard, the concept of historical specificity or conjuncture (Hall, "Gramsci's Relevance" 23) and also that of "intersections" or "crosscutting(s) [crosscutting relations of regional, cultural, and national differences]" – or what Hall calls, "regional specificity, social alliances, and the social foundations of the state" (*ibid* 27) – are "the levels of determination" (*ibid*) for Gurnah's texts and his characters' lives. In analyzing hospitality in the human relationships and negotiations of identity and agency in Gurnah's novels, different factors of race, gender, economic and social status, and community affiliations should specifically be considered, along with the historical specificity of those positionings.

Furthermore, in the circumstances of British society, as Hall introduced them, negotiation of identity becomes more "associational," rather than determined only by the collective identity of the (diasporic) community/ies. In this multicultural context, the question of "national identity" for the British locals becomes the critical criterion determining different races and ethnicities within British society. Nevertheless, as regards the community affiliations and filiations, it must be noted that within these diasporic communities, "there are also differences which refuse to be consolidated [... that is,] none [of those ethnic communities] is a racially or ethnically segregated ghetto" (Hall, "The Multicultural Question" 106-7). Unfortunately, though, these differences are flattened in light of sociopolitical events (some of which were mentioned above), both in real-life England and in England as the represented hostland in Gurnah's fiction.

Nevertheless, as can be observed in multicultural situations, despite Western-oriented hegemonizing global universalism missions, this homogenization process can be challenged, as it is in Gurnah's fiction. In such a situation, as McLeod points out by referring to the impact of literary works, the subaltern negotiations of space is likely to be realized. In this regard, and with multiculturalism used in the plural form, as suggested by Hall, one of the many types of multiculturalisms, called "critical or 'revolutionary' multiculturalism, foregrounds power, privilege, the hierarchy of

oppressions, and the movements of resistance. It seeks to be ‘insurgent, polyvocal, heteroglossial and anti-foundational’” (McLaren & Goldberg, qtd. in Hall 97). As is notable in Gurnah’s fiction, the characters’ stories and actions signify no linear definition of their identity and character differences, evading any simple categorization through their community traits or ethnicities. Gurnah’s novels, in their polyphonic narrative style and depiction of hospitality through embedded sociopolitical context and literary intertextualities, characterization, and hospitality in the representation of familial and interpersonal societal relationships can be considered as “insurgent, polyvocal, heteroglossial and anti-foundational,” where “vernacular modernities” (Hall, “The Multicultural Question” 97) question the binaries buttressed by universalism or what Stanley Fish calls, “supracultural universal” (382), in the guise of multiculturalism.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, the negotiations of belongingness and ownership reconfigure British identity and society (Hall, “The Multicultural Question” 108). In other words, “[i]n diasporic conditions people are often obliged to adopt shifting, multiple, or hyphenated positions of identification” (*ibid* 114). As it is also observable in Gurnah’s fiction, the characters, irrespective of their cultural belonging and identity, adhere to other and multiple ways of being British and cherish their hyphenated identities if given the hospitable spaces to gain agency and share their narratives. However, these characters, even the second-generation immigrants in *The Last Gift*, experience problems with hostile hosts, who hinder their negotiation of identity and the narrativization of their discourses, as discussed in the analyses of the novels in this thesis.

Gurnah’s fiction can be read along lines similar to those of John McLeod’s study of the literary productions in postcolonial London (2004). McLeod’s book refers to the representations of immigrants and immigrant life in post-*Empire Windrush* (1948) London. Their resistance activities have plenty of affinities with immigrant characters’ situation in Gurnah’s fiction and Gurnah’s own situation as an immigrant academic and novelist in England. McLeod points to the immigrants’ ambivalent status as

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<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, this is not the case with all Gurnah’s characters, as it will be shown, more often than not, the female characters and their narratives are represented and defined through fixed binaries, unable to challenge the patriarchal order and male discourses.

“strangers” in cosmopolitan “polycultural” London, where their citizenship rights were not reflected in housing, employment, or access to other institutional rights. On the one hand, the *Windrush* immigration aroused “reactionary responses at the levels of state and street which refused to accept the newcomers’ legitimacy and rights of tenure” (McLeod 2). Gurnah’s characters’ struggles to negotiate hospitality and their rights of belonging and tenure are similar to the immigrants depicted in McLeod’s book. On the other hand, it can be said that the *Windrush* was the start of a long series of responses, as a result of which “London occupies a particularly significant place in the evolution of postcolonial oppositional thought and action, and has long been an important site of creativity and conflict for those from countries with a history of colonialism” (6). As an instance of these activities, the proliferation of literary works, depicting subaltern lives in “frequently hostile and unwelcoming” London, which “offer alternative and revisionary narratives of subaltern city spaces which do not easily succumb to the demands of authority,” can be noted (McLeod 4). The metanarrative elements within Gurnah’s novels, where the character(s) write down their/their parents’ stories, too, can be regarded as some resistance activity against the subordination of the subaltern figures to negotiate their identities and narratives in generally hostile environments. Such activities challenge “English national identity and belonging [...] by emergent alternatives that are by no means desirable” (McLeod 75). Subaltern resistance narratives such as Gurnah’s characters’ stories indicate the continually changing definitions and perceptions of Englishness, which have tried to negotiate hostility with hospitality. This moment is what Hall calls the crucial moment of “recovery of lost histories” (Hall, “Old and New Identities” 74). This action is the “imaginary political reidentification, reterritorialization and reidentification” (*ibid*). It creates a “counterpolitics [...] which help the marginalized] resist their [the marginalized’s] exclusion, their marginalization. That is how and where the margins begin to speak. The margins begin to contest, and the locals begin to come to representation” (*ibid*). In other words, with the emergence of various marginal groups of migrants, especially after the *Empire Windrush* immigrations of 1948, there have existed many different ways of being “British.”

For Gurnah's fictional characters, voicing the stories (of the past) in hospitable spaces, i.e., narrativization of the characters' identities, becomes the only possible way to negotiate their hybrid identities in the home/hostland. Moreover, these narratives and any hospitality offered will, it is hypothesized, ease the process of the negotiation of their positionalities and heterogeneities (as discussed earlier). For the immigrant characters, Stuart Hall's point below seems particularly apt:

Third-generation young black men and women [...] will contest the Thatcherite notion of Englishness, because they say this Englishness is black. They will contest the notion of blackness because they want to make a differentiation between people who are black from one kind of society and people who are black from another. Because they need to know that difference, that difference that makes a difference in how they write their poetry, how they make their films, how they paint. It makes a difference. It is inscribed in their creative work. They need it as a resource. (Hall, "Old and New Identities" 80)

Hall also points out that differences should be recognized and registered; the strategies which excluded and inferiorized the marginalized should be effaced, and the eradication of different forms of racism should become an obligation on the government (*ibid*). This argument, therefore, indicates the interconnections between the practices of multiculturalism and hospitality, proving the latter as a prerequisite for the practice of the former. In the illustration of characters in Gurnah's novels, "the dialogic nature of the multicultural enterprise" refers to the interactive communications between the characters from various social, cultural, ethnic, and gender backgrounds, whose relationships determine negotiations of identity and narrative agency as they negotiate their ways in and through hospitality and hospitable spaces. In line with Parekh and, following him, Mishra (discussed above), Gurnah's novels look for "changes in institutional structures and their control" and resistance to dominant discourses, which can eventually deconstruct the binaries and produce new and more encompassing discourses based on more "complex ways of knowing" (Gurnah, "Writing and Place" 60). In this sense, then, Gurnah's narratives become instances of resistance literature and what McLeod terms the literary works' impact as a subaltern negotiation of space and resistance activities, where "the subaltern

contingencies of everyday life contest and dismantle authority” (*Postcolonial London* 11).

Nevertheless, *vis-à-vis* the multicultural drift and the inadequacy of the Western political traditions of liberalism and communitarianism, Hall calls for an analysis of the changes in the British multicultural context that have come about during the nearly sixty years since the *Empire Windrush* of 1948. In his interview with Les Back (2008), Hall describes the current situation as follows:

I don't mean that there's nothing to multiculturalism but its drift. Without antiracist politics, without the resistance to racism at the local level, without a change of consciousness among black people, there's no multiculturalism of any kind. [...] There hasn't been a profound change in British society. We haven't got to the deep level of racism in the culture that I think throbs on. Well, has nothing changed? Yes, some thing has changed. What has changed is, you go into the street—and I came here in 1951—and it just looks different. Britain will never go back to being a culturally homogenous society ever again. [...] It doesn't, unfortunately, lead to or underpin a very active black politics, which, as you know, has sort of declined since the 1980s in a way. [The years] 1980 and 1985 were the last moments of a really big black conscious political movement.” (Hall, Interview with Back 290)

According to this piece of the interview, which can also apply to the years Gurnah emigrated to England and was writing his novels and the time settings of all the three novels studied in this thesis, it can be argued that Hall's views resonate with the relationships and resistance activities Gurnah portrays in his fiction. As also argued by Hall, these resistance activities are necessary and effective even at the local level. Nonetheless, as will be discussed in the body of this thesis, the hypothesis is that although they might be effective at a local level to challenge the dominant discourses, they cannot open up subaltern negotiations of spaces to the extent of subverting those powerful discourses.

Hall's views can be taken as core elements in research into multiculturalism and novels encompassing multicultural spaces and multiculturalism. Just as concepts like “multicultural drift” open up to criticism the practice of multiculturalism in the multicultural spaces depicted in novels, they also call for the discussion of hospitality

in such spaces, and thence prepare the ground for a recognition of the importance of hospitality in the practice and realization of multiculturalism. Therefore, a union between these two concepts, i.e., multiculturalism and hospitality, creates more and new ways to analyze literature related to multiculturalism. For this reason, this thesis, in addition to presenting analyses of Gurnah's novels through the lenses of multiculturalism and hospitality coupled together, calls for further research using both these theoretical perspectives and the analytic tools suggested and employed in this study. In the following section, the focus will be on the concept of power/knowledge as defined by Michel Foucault. It will concentrate on how the concepts introduced in these sections, i.e., hospitality and multiculturalism, can be related to and read through this concept.

#### **2.4 Power/Knowledge and Negotiations of Narrative Agency**

This section concentrates on the negotiations of identity, subjectivity, and narrative agency, from subaltern positions of enunciation in asymmetric power relations, using Foucauldian power/knowledge structure. The hospitality and multiculturalism discussed throughout this thesis are interrelated with the notions of power and knowledge discussed below. In the form of (shared) narratives, the discursive representation of the existing power hierarchies and relations between Gurnah's characters will be examined in this thesis, to see whether these hierarchies can be resisted, undermined, subverted, and altered within the represented (in)hospitable multicultural spaces in the novels. It is suggested that the narratives and knowledge produced by those with more social and political power, i.e., the dominant and powerful discourses, can be problematized and resisted through the representation and narratives of those in subaltern positions. Furthermore, the channels and agencies involved in articulating and representing these subaltern positions, i.e., representation, within the novels are crucial in negotiations of identity, subjectivity, and hospitality within these powerful discourses. This point does not mean to imply that the characters in Gurnah's novels can be strictly divided into those who can exercise power and those who cannot, for this thesis refers to the "specific conjunctural positionings" (Hall, "The Multicultural Question" 103), which define subalternity as a fluid rather than as

a clear-cut position occupied by the characters of his novels. In the following, the definition of Foucault's power/knowledge concept will prepare the context for discussions of the power relations depicted in Gurnah's fiction.

Based on the notion of power/knowledge (*pouvoir/savoir*) developed by Michel Foucault – also implemented and criticized in postcolonial studies (discussed below) – the idea of power and how it produces discourse and its interrelationship with knowledge is explained, with a specific focus on the discourse of “the West and the Rest” as suggested by Stuart Hall (1992). To start, a detailed definition of discourse can embed the discussion of power/knowledge in the context of this research. In Hall's words:

Discourses are ways of talking, thinking, or representing a particular subject or topic. They produce meaningful knowledge about that subject. This knowledge influences social practices and so has real consequences and effects. Discourses are not reducible to class interests but always operate in relation to power—they are part of the way power circulates and is contested. The question of whether a discourse is true or false is less important than whether it is effective in practice. When it is effective—organizing and regulating relations of power (say, between the West and the Rest)—it is called a “regime of truth.” (Hall, “The West and the Rest” 160)

The given definition implies that discourse “limits the other ways in which the topic can be constructed,” and that “it is itself produced by a practice: ‘discursive practice’ – the practice of producing meaning” (Hall, “The West and the Rest” 155). This definition entails questions regarding the spaces where discourses operate and whether they can be “outside power” and “ideologically innocent” (*ibid* 157). Concerning this point, Hall criticizes binaries by referencing Derrida that, “[t]here are very few neutral binary oppositions. One pole of the binary, he argues, is usually the dominant one, the one which includes the other within its field of operations. There is always a relation of power between the poles of a binary opposition (Derrida, 1974)” (Hall, *The Spectacle of the ‘Other’* 235).

Several of Foucault's concepts and definitions are central to the argument of this thesis. Considering power and knowledge as breeding each other, Foucault believed

that each society has its “regime of truth” (“Truth and Power” 133), in the framework of which knowledge is produced and accepted. This regime of truth is based on the exclusion of and inhospitality toward others, through “(a) the construction of ‘otherness’ and exclusion; (b) stereotyping and power; (c) the role of fantasy; and (d) fetishism” (Hall, *The Spectacle of the ‘Other’* 257). Explanations of all these points surpass the scope of this research, so suffice it to say about the role of stereotyping, that in its production “there are gross inequalities of power” (*ibid* 258), and that it fixes and essentializes differences. In Gurnah’s novels studied in this thesis, the regime of truth is shaped through various ways of stereotyping the Other (immigrants and their descendants), which not only impact hospitality in the relationships between the characters but also, as will be shown through sociopolitical allusions of the texts, affect the politics of inclusion/exclusion and hospitality in the depicted macro- and micro-spaces.<sup>11</sup> In other words, this regime of truth is observable – although “contested” (*ibid* 249) and resisted – in the stereotypical “naturalizing” and “essentializing” discourse of the fixity of the cultural attributes of the (black) Other, and especially the immigrant people. In fact, the substitution of cultural differences with natural differences works through “stereotypes” (*ibid* 257), avoids “modification and change” in discourse, and “secures discursive or ideological ‘closure’” (*ibid* 245). In this regard, Hall pointed out that,

Within stereotyping, then, we have established a connection between representation, difference, and power. [...] We often think of power in terms of direct physical coercion or constraint. However, we have also spoken, for example, of power *in representation*; power to mark, assign and classify; of *symbolic* power; of *ritualized* expulsion. Power [...] has to be understood here [...] in broader cultural or symbolic terms, including the power to represent someone or something in a certain way—within a certain ‘regime of representation’. It includes the exercise of *symbolic power* through representational practices. Stereotyping is a key element in this exercise of symbolic violence. [...] The circularity of power is especially important in the context of representation. The argument is that everyone—the powerful and the powerless—is caught up, though not on equal terms, in power’s circulation. No one—neither its apparent victims

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<sup>11</sup> In this thesis, the term macro-space is arbitrarily used to show societal relationships and spaces, and micro-space refers to familial relationships and spaces within Gurnah’s novels.

nor its agents—can stand wholly outside its field of operation. (Hall, *The Spectacle of the 'Other'* 259-261; emphases in original)

This type of discourse and “regime of representation” produces a type “of knowledge [which] is internal, not external” (Hall 225-6), i.e., it becomes ossified through the system of representation which refers to the channels and agencies mentioned previously. Nevertheless, according to Foucault, the regime of truth mentioned above is exposed to “the issue of a whole political debate and social confrontation (‘ideological’ struggles)” (“Truth and Power” 131-2), i.e., referring to and encompassing subaltern resistances and negotiations of space introduced earlier in this chapter.

Such ideological struggles, for instance, start from undermining the production of powerful discourse – which also may encompass stereotypical understandings – in and through colonial discourse and context about (ex)colonized people, immigrant groups, and foreigners. In this regard, Spivak pays attention to the notion of power/knowledge embedded in decolonized spaces and people, where she discusses:

The political claims that are most urgent in decolonized space are tacitly recognized as coded within the legacy of imperialism: nationhood, constitutionality, citizenship, democracy, socialism, even culturalism. In the historical frame of exploration, colonization, decolonization, what is being *effectively* reclaimed is a series of regulative political concepts, whose supposedly authoritative narrative of production was written elsewhere, in the social formations of Western Europe. They are thus being reclaimed, indeed claimed, as concept-metaphors for which no *historically* adequate referent may be advanced from postcolonial space. That does not make the claims less urgent. For the people who are making the claims, the history of the Enlightenment episteme is “cited” even on an individual level, as the script is cited for an actor’s interpretation. (Spivak, *The Spivak Reader* 163-4; emphasis in original)

Spivak questions whether such narratives can be historically referenceable from a postcolonial perspective by pointing to the site of the “authoritative narrative of production” – i.e., Western Europe – which encompasses the production of knowledge and thus power. Spivak’s point also interrogates the status quo after decolonization in most decolonized spaces, where nationalisms, in their formulation of “regulative political concepts,” follow the dominant discourses of the West, that of Enlightenment

in particular. Gurnah's novels, in the same vein, by depicting the inhospitalities in the political system after the decolonization and revolution in Zanzibar, point to and undermine the origin of those political discourses, i.e., Western Europe. Spivak's argument and ideological struggle reverberate with Hall's discussion of the discourse of "the West and the rest," which stands on the premise of power/knowledge mentioned above. According to Hall, the discourse of "the West and the Rest" was produced during the Enlightenment, and as a product of the thinking characteristic of that period; it organized people on hierarchical levels, shaping the West's conception of itself. This conception was based on "what it [the West] lacks, and what it differs from, i.e., the 'Other'" (Hall 177). It produces "knowledge" and "a system of representation [which] draws crude and simplistic distinctions and constructs an oversimplified conception of 'difference'" (*ibid* 143-6). Hall argues that this discourse was not "innocent," having been shaped between "unequal powers," the language of which was "exploitation" of the "dominant power" (*ibid* 159). He further suggests that this discourse, despite "many internal differences" (*ibid* 145) is still valid – regulated and guaranteed through what Foucault called the "system of dispersion" (*ibid* 156), in modern sociology because of the dominance of Enlightenment discourse within that discipline. Therefore, it is perhaps inevitable where definitions of social identity are discussed, even in this thesis.

Similar to Spivak, Hall questions the position from which this discourse is produced and sustained. Disagreeing with Foucault's "endless" play of power positions, Hall, although admonishing against the pitfalls of "taking positions too seriously," points to their momentary correctness, i.e., that of, for example, Western exclusionary discourses explained above. The play of positionalities also opens up a space for what Hall calls the "instability of democratic rule" or "continuing problems of political legitimacy and stability," especially in decolonized spaces (Hall, "The Multicultural Question" 99-100), which he believes: "[...] have roots in the countries' recent imperial history. This postcolonial 'double inscription' is taking place in a global context where direct rule, governance, or protectorship by an imperial power has been replaced by an asymmetric globalized system of power which is postnational, transnational, and neo-imperial in character" (*ibid*). This situation, as mentioned

above, is perpetuated in the post-revolution Zanzibar portrayed in Gurnah's novels, where neo-imperial regulations lead to purifying activities such as the expulsions and exterminations of citizens.

Nonetheless, the institutional knowledge and discourse produced by "Western Europe" is also contestable. Observations related to this led Jane M. Jacob to claim that "Precisely because cities are sites of 'meetings', they are also places which are saturated with possibilities for the destabilization of imperial arrangements. This may manifest through stark anticolonial activities, but also through the negotiations of identity and place which arise through diasporic settlements and hybrid cultural forms" (qtd. in McLeod 12). In Gurnah's fiction, the extent to which the dominant body of knowledge and discourse can be undermined through the representation of hospitality and characters and the stories narrated by them is explored; or, as McLeod puts it, these novels question the extent to which "examples of postcolonial transformation [may] disrupt the systems of power/knowledge in which they are contained" (13). In the analyses of Gurnah's novels presented in this thesis, it will be found that, especially in the settings such as London, encounters between different kinds of people from a diversity of ethnic backgrounds are encounters between different discourses of this nature, that is encompassing the ideological struggles mentioned above.

In the modern definition of power and hegemony, resistance – or the ideological struggle mentioned above – against the state becomes possible and realized. According to Foucault, power is not necessarily negative and repressive: "it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, [and] produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression" ("Truth and Power" 119). Nevertheless, Hall's definition of power and hegemony, which excludes repression as their single aspect, and Foucault's suggestion of the productive aspects of power, have been contested by Gayatri Spivak in her claim that "[t]here is no need to valorize repression as negative and production as positive" (Spivak, *The Spivak Reader* 151). Ania Loomba, too, has questioned Foucault's view mentioned above. Through reference to Megan Vaughan, she makes the point that power, set against the backdrop of colonial Africa [...], was

“repressive;” it was argued that, unlike Foucault, who regarded power producing “individuation,” in case of the African subjects, it worked the other way round as s/he was considered already as “Other” (qtd. in Loomba 52-3). In a context closer to the specific settings of the novels studied in this thesis, John McLeod’s depiction of power hierarchies in *Postcolonial London* (2004) seems apt, as he points out that, “London’s diaspora communities are not immune from pursuing internally their own forms of compulsion which mobilize hierarchies of gender, sexuality, age, class, caste and other social categories of identity; while structures of state authority are by no means inevitably or perpetually oppressive” (11). In other words, the generation and ossification of these hierarchies are not merely a result of the state’s oppression, but also of different forms of inhospitalities. Therefore, in this study, both repressive or productive aspects of power, with their subsequent positive or negative outcomes, are discussed to form discursive knowledge about the characters’ identities. Moreover, this productive or repressive power, as indicated through the analyses, can be resisted, if given the hospitable spaces, through the marginalized or subaltern characters’ narrative agency and the relation of their stories, which define, even at a local level, their subjectivity and confirm their individuality to pinpoint the complexity and heterogeneity of knowledge about them and non-host country others.

The area of “ideological struggle,” i.e., resistance in the context of this thesis, encompasses the relationship between civil society and the state on one level and the relationships between people in the society on another. This notion connects Foucault’s definition to this thesis with a focus on immigrant groups as well. The other focal point here is what is regarded as “truth” incarnated in “institutional knowledge” plus “ideological” differences and discrepancies in the characters’ consciousness in Gurnah’s fiction. To clarify, Foucault’s idea of “relations of power” seems apt as it divorces power from the state, claiming that this relation is based on “other, already existing power relations” (“Truth and Power” 122). In fact, this notion regards power relations in larger contexts, confirming the significance of hospitality in human relationships, including the social and ideological confrontations mentioned above. Such human relationships, in fact, comprise the core notion of hospitality and determine negotiations of identity and agency as regards the characters in the analyzed

novels in this thesis. The relationships analyzed in this study include those between immigrant groups and the hostland state as well as people with their homeland. At the interpersonal societal level, the analyses concentrate on immigrants' relationships with other immigrants in diasporic spaces and non-immigrants in the home- and hostland.

Gurnah's treatment of the ideological struggle can be noted in his characters' application of their narrative agency. In his essay, "Writing and Place" (2004), Gurnah wrote: "with time, dealing with contradictory narratives has come to me to seem a dynamic process even if by its very nature it is a process first undertaken from a position of weakness" (60), which may refer to the heterogeneous positions of enunciation in resisting discourses of power. In an interview with Tina Steiner, Gurnah points out the significance and role of this positionality:

I think I would have meant that this is a defensive position. What I was referring to is how these narratives, or narratives like these, are actually challenging a dominant narrative, obviously a European or an imperial one, because they offer more details, and even appear to contradict themselves at times because they're not as consistent as that all powerful narrative. [...] Because quite often [...] it might be that it's not possible to actually deliver the definitive rebuttal to that imperial narrative. So, in that sense, delivered from a position of weakness, but that too has a kind of dynamism about it because you're not seeking to produce one powerful narrative. You're already granting that this is a narrative which is bitty, fragmented, incomplete, and a guy down the next street may very well contradict it." (Gurnah, Interview with Steiner 160-1)

Gurnah's point speaks to the positionality and the ambivalence required in dealing with these positions of enunciation, which undermines the production of all-encompassing powerful narratives. Although these positions can have, as also according to Hall, momentary correctness ("The Multicultural Question" 99), they cannot be thought as perpetuating unlimited power and agency. Such also should be the case with dominant and powerful discourses, i.e., their supremacy and power should be challenged and undermined from other positions of enunciation. This discussion will be followed up in the next section, where the focus will be on the concepts of subalternity, identity, subjectivity, and agency and their negotiations within lopsided power relations following the discussions in this and the previous parts. It will concentrate on how the concepts introduced in these sections, i.e.,

hospitality, multiculturalism, and power/knowledge determine negotiations of subalternity, identity, subjectivity, and agency.

## **2.5 Subalternity, Identity, Subjectivity, and Agency**

The discussion in this section mainly focuses on the definition of identity and of cultural identity in relation to subalternity, subjectivity, and agency in the homeland and diasporic hostland, mostly following Stuart Hall's essay and lecture "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" (1990) and "Through the Prism of an Intellectual Life" (2007). Definition of the term identity commences with acknowledging the fact that "identities are never completed, never finished, that they are always, as subjectivity itself is, in process" (Hall, "Old and New Identities" 69). Identity is not "a sealed or closed totality;" it can be "contradictory," always in the "process of formation" (*ibid* 71). The second aspect of this definition caters to the construction of identity within power relations and elaborates that identity is embedded in "more than one discourse, as composed always across the silences of the other, as written in and through ambivalence and desire" (*ibid*). The third point by Hall, in this definition, is that individuality, like identity, is "not settled in the past but always also oriented toward the future," molded by "conditions of existence" (Hall, "Through the Prism" 308).

Culture, discourse, and language<sup>12</sup> are thus seen to be the primary zones for a person's identification. Hall argues that all subjects are "displaced" and "decentered" ("Through the Prism" 308-9), and the identity of any subject is produced through the discourse that surrounds it ("Cultural Identity and Diaspora" 224) with respect to the "positions" the individual occupies within power relations. Furthermore, Hall points out that Foucault's insight that "in order to become 'subjects' we must be 'subjected' to discourses which speak us [i.e. representation – discussed below], and without which we cannot speak," is also relevant to the concepts of identity and subjectivity (Hall, "Through the Prism" 308). Following Foucault, Spivak also suggests that "the subject 'subjects' itself through 'ability to know'" (*The Spivak Reader* 155), and Hall

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<sup>12</sup> Language may refer to both native or another language of preference/obligation as the communication medium. Either language can have political and social criteria behind their selection and can, thus, have discursive consequences based on certain choices.

calls this process an “imaginative rediscovery” (“Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 224) through discourse, which encompasses discovering “places from which to speak” (*ibid*). In other words, Foucault and, following him, Spivak believed subjectivity can be multiple, but contradictorily so because of working through subjectivization. Subjectivity, concerning identity and agency, since it requires “self-consciousness” of the subject, should go through the institution of *pouvoir savoir*, that is, power/knowledge, to determine what Hall calls positionality.

As Gurnah’s fiction deals with the themes of identity and agency, as he noted in an interview with Nasta (mentioned in Chapter One), “I’ve always been interested in the issue of people negotiating their ‘identities’” (Gurnah 356), they can be read through the concepts introduced above, more specifically through historical conjuncture and positioning in discourse and power relations. Positionality and speaking from a “position” in Gurnah’s context find their reflections in the characters’ narrative agency, i.e., their narrations of themselves through their stories and their willingness to know, which can be realized in hospitable spaces. Their negotiations of identity and subjectivity, thus, happen in and through discourse and within the power/knowledge structure discussed earlier. Moreover, at different stages of their lives, these characters change their positions of enunciation of identity. These positionings change according to the physical and metaphorical journeys these characters take and the range of hospitality they receive in different spaces, which determine their positions on the power hierarchies in their familial, and interpersonal societal relationships. For instance, at the beginning of *By the Sea*, Saleh struggles to negotiate his identity from the position of an elderly and poor asylum-seeker. However, when he recounts his past story, he is seen – in his past life – in the position of a powerful and prosperous furniture tradesman and a citizen in Zanzibar. These dramatically different positions alter his way of negotiating hospitality and his individuality as he is located in different discourses of power at these different points of time.

Thus, Gurnah’s novels illustrate that the (re)construction of identity in home/hostland settings is embedded within one’s narratives and deeply connected to the interconnections and dialogism, i.e., discourse, and takes place “within [...]

representation” (Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 222). This representation includes dominant discourses that delineate power relations and hospitality in the relationship between the characters at specific “historical conjuncture(s)” (Hall, “Through the Prism” 313). The representation can take many forms, and it can lead, in the case of immigrants and their narratives, to being rejected and excluded or accepted and included or shades of both. In other words, people can get “subjected” through various forms of representations that might/might not cater to and be either hospitable or inhospitable to certain definitive factors. As discussed in the Power/Knowledge section, the representation system can be inhospitable and thus may flatten the diversities within race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and class, and eventually lump individual subjects in the stereotypical discourses of representations. Such representations are abundant in Hall’s *The Spectacle of the ‘Other’* (1997a) and “The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power” (1992). While “collective cultural identities” (Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 223) may reverberate with similarities and the collective imaginary of people belonging to some specific culture(s), reflected in their narratives, folktales, traditions, and practices, they are also rife with heterogeneities and differences which should be taken into consideration in representation. In representing communities of the same ethnic and cultural background, it should be noted that since community members do not necessarily fit within the communities’ pure and homogeneous understanding of themselves and their practices, the “essentializing” definitions of community, where heterogeneity in the practices of the members of those communities get obliterated, must be “resisted” (Hall, “The Multicultural Question” 120). This is the case represented in Gurnah’s fiction, where the characters’ heterogeneities cannot be identified through their group/community traits and require hospitable spaces of negotiation through narratives to make themselves known. For instance, concerning ethnic minority communities – which can be extended to include Gurnah’s immigrant and immigrant descendant characters –, Hall stated that:

Migrant communities bear the imprint of diaspora, “hybridization,” and difference in their very constitution. [...] Their vertical integration into their traditions of origin exist side by side with their lateral linkages to other “communities” of interest, practice and aspiration, real and symbolic.

Individual members, especially the younger generations, experience the contradictory pulls which these different forces exert. Many are making their own negotiated “settlements” within and outside their communities. (Hall, “The Multicultural Question” 120)

Therefore, any claim about purity, exclusive national identity, and homogeneity, despite nationalism’s rigidly imposed national and cultural boundaries, has to be challenged and resisted. In other words, a “new [decentered] ‘transnational’ phase of the system” is produced, which has a “cultural ‘center’ everywhere and nowhere” (Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 215). Cultural identity in the diaspora is not based on the single premise of national roots. Therefore, Hall argues,

It is [...] important to see this diasporic perspective on culture as subversive of traditional nation-oriented cultural models. Like other globalizing processes cultural globalization is deterritorializing in its effects. [...] Cultures, of course, have their locations. But it is no longer easy to say where they originate. [...] They [black identities] are the outcome of their own relatively autonomous formation. However, the logic that governs them involves the same processes of transplantation, syncretization, and diaspora-ization. (Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 215)

On the other hand, and as a contrary conception to the previous view of cultural identity, this way of regarding cultural identity is sensitive to the “differences,” i.e., hybridity and heterogeneity, as well as similarities. It is rooted in the transforming nature of history with which identity formation becomes a process based on different “positionings” – discussed above.

The final concept in the discussion of identity, subjectivity, and agency is the closely related concept of subalternity, which like multiculturalism, has a close relationship with the concept of hospitality discussed earlier in this chapter. There is a direct link between the two concepts as the more hospitable the space, the less subalternity is to be experienced and observed in that space, and vice versa. This interconnection will be explicated in more detail below, following an introduction to the concept of subalternity as used by Spivak.

The term subaltern has been defined and used by a number of theoreticians who usually base their discussions on Antonio Gramsci’s notions of “subaltern” and

“hegemony.” Ania Loomba points out that “Subaltern” was a “military term [... the] origins [of which] is somewhat inconsistent with its current usage, borrowed from Gramsci, as a shorthand for any oppressed person” (67). Regarding the use of the term by Spivak, Moore-Gilbert notes that “Spivak extends the reach of the term [subaltern] in essays like ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ [1988] by using it to figure social groups further down the social scale and consequently even less visible to colonial and Third World national-bourgeois historiography alike” (79).

Based on Moore-Gilbert’s reading of Spivak’s definition of the term subaltern, it is suggested that:

the subaltern is to be seen above all else as an (empty) ‘space’, or rather ‘inaccessible blankness’, from which an interrogation of the dominant conceptions of subject-constitution and practices of subject-positioning, whether in the international division of labour or Western ‘radical’ cultural theory, can potentially be mounted. (Moore-Gilbert 101-2)

Therefore, the power/knowledge dichotomy entails the existence of subalternity. Moreover, the discourse of the West and the Rest suggested by Stuart Hall pinpoints this very idea. In fact, this understanding of the term and its application resonates with Hall’s notion of the positionality of the utterance/positionalities discussed earlier, in that the specificity of the position can determine its acceptability or rejection, and thus, its inclusion or exclusion, which connects it to the practice of hospitality mentioned above. It also suggests that the position of subalternity can be a possible space where dominant discourses can be resisted and challenged. In this regard, and in the specific context of Gurnah’s fiction studied here, Guha and the Subaltern Studies group’s question, “what are the archives and how are they produced?” (Chakrabarty 15), can be paralleled with the knowledge produced through the consciousness of the characters, which can be seen as a kind of resistance to those “archives” and dominant narratives, i.e., the Eurocentric narratives and discourses, if shared in hospitable spaces. It is important to note that these characters’ narratives need not necessarily come from the immigrant, refugee, asylum-seeker, or self-exile characters. Instead, the point is to tailor narratives produced from the subaltern’s subject position, which can crisscross class, gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality.

In the context of Gurnah's novels, resistance is possible through agency as channeled through hospitality. This thesis supports an idea of agency that adheres to that of Spivak in the conception of "freedom of subjectivity" and the action done with "responsibility," which requires hospitable environments of negotiation – which lack in most relational spaces between the characters, and also between the characters and states in Gurnah's fiction. According to Spivak, agency refers to the situation where "one acts with responsibility, that one has to assume the possibility of intention, one has to assume even the freedom of subjectivity in order to be responsible. That's where agency is located" (Spivak, *The Spivak Reader* 294). Concerning the context of Gurnah's fiction and the representation of characters therein, the way agency is defined and practiced by the characters in (in)hospitable spaces becomes relevant, for, according to Spivak, it is one of the ways for the subalterns to undo the subaltern space.

Nevertheless, subalternity in Gurnah's fiction is to do with the inability of characters to be heard and listened to, in the sense that they are not attended to when they speak and form conversations, due to, for instance, colonialism, colonial ideology, racism, and inhospitalities. In other words, "[...], 'the subaltern cannot speak,' means that even when the subaltern makes an effort to the death to speak, she [...] is not able to be heard, and speaking and hearing complete the speech act [and thus dialogism and hospitality needed to negotiate one's identity]" (Spivak, *The Spivak Reader* 292). Subalternity cannot thus be overthrown – or at least challenged – unless dealt with in more hospitable space<sup>13</sup> and with more consciousness about the situation, where citizens across the intersections of difference can be equipped with the necessary narratives to represent themselves. In relation to the three novels analyzed here, this question can be asked regarding the relationship between the characters put in the subaltern position, i.e., at a lower level in the hierarchy of powerful discourses, and those with dominant knowledge and discourse. Specifically, the subalterns' voices that

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<sup>13</sup> Hospitable spaces connote spaces where racism and racist and colonial ideologies are obliterated. Although this might not be easily possible, it is the optimal level of hospitality as discussed in this thesis.

are incarnated in the stories they share need to be heard in hospitable spaces in order to give them agency to represent themselves.

More positive with respect to the subaltern's potential agency, Bhabha believed that the "split in colonial discourse," what he called: "time-lag," was a way to "subvert and transform the centre's narratives of self-description by revealing what has been left out or repressed in their constitution as 'monumental' symbols" (Moore-Gilbert 124). These "monumental symbols" can be extended to include the official systems of knowledge and stereotypes, which Bhabha thinks can be subverted. However, such a subversion requires attention and registration in the first place, and this is the very element that is missing in some of the relationships – between the characters and the characters and represented states – of Gurnah's novels in their subaltern situations, which affirms Spivak's view that the "subaltern cannot be heard." Nevertheless, "[...] material forms of resistance to (neo-)colonial domination, whether these take the form of insurgency, civil disobedience or peaceful democratic opposition" (*ibid* 148), can also be detected in Gurnah's fiction. In the section on hospitality, the effectiveness of such resistances has been explored. In the larger context of cultural production, referred to above, McLeod's point about resistance through literary productions is also worth noting; in his words: "[t]o live and write in London was not just to participate in English high culture; it was also to discover the means to disrupt and change it as part of a liberating and liberalizing postcolonial critique" (McLeod 62). The analyses presented in this thesis will probe into whether the representation of characters will provide them – especially the postcolonial immigrants and their descendants – with "freedom of subjectivity" and "intention" toward their narratives and discourses. More importantly, if these discourses are addressed and included in the metropolitan culture of England depicted in the novels with hospitality. Therefore, the representations of the characters' narratives in the novels studied can potentially have such disruptive effects and produce liberating agency if they (such narratives) are not assimilated into the host/global culture's grand narratives.

In the following chapters, the analyses of *By the Sea*, *The Last Gift*, and *Gravel Heart* will indicate whether or to what extents these novels can be seen as instances of

resistance literature, through the texts' poetics and the representation of characters and their negotiations of identity, subjectivity, and agency, in challenging the powerful discourses of knowledge and destabilizing stereotypical understandings, especially about immigrant and immigrant descendant characters. Furthermore, through analyzing the hospitality of environments and relationships between the characters in those spaces, the novels' representation and experience of multiculturalism will show if subaltern negotiations of space have been realized or if multiculturalism has drifted into mainstream grand narratives and discourses.

## CHAPTER 3

### NEGOTIATIONS OF HOSPITALITY AND NARRATIVE AGENCY IN *BY THE SEA*

#### 3.1 Introduction

Abdulrazak Gurnah's sixth novel, *By the Sea* (2001), is co-narrated by two protagonists, Saleh Omar and Latif Mahmoud, who are both from Stone Town, Zanzibar, and have a shared history of familial ties and enmity, much of which was unknown to Latif. *By the Sea* as a whole is Saleh Omar's story, encompassing his arrival at Gatwick airport in November 1993, England, as an asylum-seeker and his life before (1960-1979) and after (1993-4) this moment in the narrative. The other story in the novel is about Latif Mahmoud, a former refugee and a professor of English literature in England. The aunt of Latif's father's (Rajab Shaaban), Bi Maryam, was Saleh's stepmother, through whom Saleh inherited a house which became one of the reasons for Rajab Shaaban and Saleh's enmity during the 1960s, in the heyday of Zanzibari independence and revolution. However, their major conflict was rooted in a deal through a Persian trader, Hussein, due to which Shaaban lost his house and its contents to Saleh. Another point worth mentioning about Hussein is his pedophilic abuse of Hassan, Rajab Shaaban's son and Latif's older brother. In the same period, Shaaban's house was used as security on a loan Saleh had given to Hussein. Following this incident, after many prosperous years for Saleh during which he got married, had a daughter, and established himself as a successful businessman, Shaaban's wife, Asha, by manipulations through some influential political figure who was her lover, sends Saleh to prison on charges of fraud without proper trail. Saleh unfolds this shared history to Latif some thirty years after those incidents in a different location, that is, in England. Through Latif's visits to Saleh, in which he tries to fill in the gaps in the family feud story they come to share, they finally reach a reconciliation, which ends

Latif's hostility toward Saleh. These two characters both need to be hospitable to each other's stories, to bridge gaps in each other's knowledge, which will help them realize their identities and also to receive "understanding" in a "strange land," rife with inhospitalities toward both (*BTS* 243).

*By the Sea's* "postcolonial poetics" (Boehmer 2018), following the theoretical perspectives introduced in Chapter Two, can be analyzed through the notions of hospitality and multiculturalism in the novel's multicultural settings. These notions and settings are shown to help or hinder characters' negotiations of identity and narrative agency. The extent to which hospitality can open up spaces for resistance against dominant and powerful discourses through literary production and representations is explored in this chapter. The significance of hospitality in the culturally diverse fiction of Gurnah is best explained by Steiner, who states that:

Gurnah's awareness of the complexity of the Indian Ocean world underwrites a narrative suspicious of group identity conceived through the universalisms of race, culture, or national filiation. Instead, Gurnah shows how such identities produce exclusion and violence (in particularly gendered forms). When asked in an interview about the role of literature as politics, Gurnah answers cryptically "it should be about what cannot easily be said" (Nasta 362). What cannot easily be expressed are precisely those risky gestures towards the other, the hospitality towards the stranger that insists on affective relationships across political boundaries. (Steiner, "Writing 'Wider Worlds'" 133)

The politics of inclusion and exclusion, which underwrites the notion of hospitality, are practiced in the multicultural context of the Indian Ocean world, as discussed by Steiner above. In Chapter Two, it was discussed that McLeod regards the literature produced in the diaspora as reflecting resistance activities (14). For this reason, Gurnah's narratives and representational practice read through "power *in representation*; [and] power to mark, assign and classify" (Hall, *The Spectacle of the 'Other'* 259; emphasis in original), will be analyzed to see whether such resistance activities and the subversion of powerful discourses can be realized. The novel's poetics in the implementation of sociopolitical allusions and literary intertextualities and narrative objects in *By the Sea* in confluence with his representation of familial and societal relationships, and also the representation of female narratives comprise

the analysis, which opens the space for the study of hospitality and multiculturalism in his narratives.

This chapter is divided into three sections, each of which studies how (in)hospitality affects the characters' negotiations of identity and narrative agency in the novel's multicultural contexts. The first section depicts hospitality through the analysis of these characters' lives, either in their home/hostland, focusing on the novel's incorporation of sociopolitical allusions and literary intertextualities as well as narrative objects. The sociopolitical references encompass colonialism, independence, the revolution in homeland Zanzibar, and the migration flow to the hostland England. The literary intertextualities base the argument about hospitality on the parallelism between some literary texts and the novel. On the other hand, the narrative objects start and develop the stories and entail contextual and thematic meanings. The second part focuses on hospitality in the relationship between the characters through the novel's representation of relational and physical spaces. The last part deals with hospitality in representing female characters and their voices and narratives in Gurnah's novel to see into their negotiations of identity and narrative agency.

### **3.2 Sociopolitical References, Literary Intertextualities, and Narrative Objects**

In this section, Gurnah's stylistic techniques of incorporating literary intertextualities and sociopolitical allusions and narrative objects in showing hospitality and unraveling the characters' stories will be studied, i.e., it will focus on how these techniques function to help/hinder negotiations of identity and narrative agency as Gurnah's characters are concerned. For instance, the analepsis and prolepsis in the narration through the incorporation of narrative objects and the anti-linear and polyphonic procession of storytelling indicate the complexity of the identification process, which vitalize, in Stuart Hall's words, "rediscovery" and "reimagining" of the past ("Old and New Identities" 79), and thus narration of one's stories in (in)hospitable spaces. Moreover, Gurnah implements narrative objects which "build or break relationships" (Newns 297), causing (in)hospitalities in those relationships. Another instance concerning the poetics of the text is using two narrators (i.e. polyphony) in this novel, which according to Felicity Hand, "demonstrates how perspective can color one's

interpretations of events” (“Becoming Foreign” 46). This view pinpoints the role of the narrative structure in creating and conveying the meaning and, through polyphony and dialogism, in negotiating identity and hospitality through different and diverging perspectives. While being mentioned when appropriate, the narratological structures of Gurnah’s novels are not, however, the focus of this thesis, which remains steadily focused on hospitality and multiculturalism, and therefore approaches the novels’ polyphony as indications of both the texts’ hospitality to voices from different angles and the depiction of (in)hospitality in the relationship between the characters involved.

*By the Sea*’s narrative tropes set the stories within the novel in motion. According to Mustapha Kharoua, Gurnah’s “anti-linear narrative covers the wider ground of geopolitical dimensions that parallel the narratives’ thread to contribute to enriching the investigation of the past” (133). These dimensions reverberate through Gurnah’s implementation of sociopolitical references and literary intertextualities and narrative objects, which open up the paths for the discussion of hospitality and the politics of inclusion/exclusion, further discussed below. The three primary narrative objects in *By the Sea* speak to three analytic perspectives in this novel. All these narrative objects are related to Hussein, who is the axis on which the whole events of the novel revolve. Hussein’s visit to Zanzibar during the *musim* (seasonal trade) and his lodging with Rajab Shaaban Mahmud’s family – Latif’s father – occasions the significant role of the three narrative objects: a casket of *ud* (incense; “aloe wood”)<sup>14</sup> – given to Saleh as a part of the price Hussein had to pay to buy an ebony table, an ebony table,<sup>15</sup> and an old map sent to Saleh the following year. The possession and the loss of these objects are tailored throughout Gurnah’s narrative. As will be discussed in the following, the first narrative object of the novel, the casket of *ud*, embeds and parallels the literary

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<sup>14</sup> “Aloe wood, *ud-al-qimari* [...]. The *ud* was a resin which only an aloe tree infected by fungus produced. A healthy aloe tree was useless, but the infected one produced this beautiful fragrance” (*BTS* 14).

<sup>15</sup> Hussein gave Hassan (Latif’s older brother) the ebony table as a gift and a proposal of his lustrous feelings. After Hassan escapes home following Hussein’s departure, when Saleh takes Rajab Shaaban’s house and belongings, the ebony table returns to Saleh. Several years after this incident, Latif goes to Saleh to ask for its retrieval at one point in the story on his mother’s insistence. However, Saleh never returns the table but eventually regrets his action while talking about it to Latif.

intertextualities of the text and, through them, the discussion of hospitality. The other one, the ebony table, opens the doors to depicting hospitality in familial and interpersonal societal relationships between the characters. Finally, the maps contextualize sociopolitical issues related to both home- and hostland settings and dissect (in)hospitality in (post)colonial discourses represented in the novel. Therefore, these narrative objects will each be discussed in relation to the aspects of analysis mentioned above.

One of the significant literary works with which *By the Sea* is strongly related through intertextuality – indeed, upon which the circular narrative of the novel is based, is *A Thousand and One Nights*. Numerous references to the *Nights* indicate its great significance as a parallel narrative that hints at negotiations of hospitality, identity, and narrative agency, for this intertext dwells on such negotiations through shared narratives. In the same vein as the *Nights*, *By the Sea* is polyphonic, and has recurrent motifs; according to Samuelson, *Nights* is used in *By the Sea* for its “mise-en-abyme effects” and is the latter’s “model of emplotment” (79). Furthermore, the similarities between the two texts, in narrative structure and in use of a story-telling narrator, according to Helff, can be read as characteristic of the “ethnic auto/biographical life writing of refugees” (Helff, “Imagining Flight” 395), through which their identities can be “retrieved” (*ibid*). Saleh’s allusions to the *Nights* and the concept of a “middle passage” between two lives show the parallelism he sees between his life and those characters populating the *Nights* stories, as he shows when describing this image: “Too many *A Thousand and One Nights* stories when I was younger perhaps, that image of the passage. It was just a conceit, but the feeling of the end of a life comes back to me even though I know that the previous one still pulses within me” (*BTS* 63).

As mentioned above, *By the Sea* treats the *Nights* as a parallel story to indicate the similarities between the protagonists Saleh and Scheherazade. In *By the Sea*, Saleh is the storyteller whose stories have instrumental objectives similar to Scheherazade’s. Like Saleh, Scheherazade tries to negotiate hospitality through stories; therefore, her narrative agency plays a significant role in putting off death and finally saves her life. That is, she narrates for survival (Ruberto 270). In *By the Sea*, Saleh openly compares

himself to “Shahrazad” (171) and narrates tales to negotiate hospitality with his listeners and survive the traumatic memories that have occupied his mind. The existence of a hospitable listener, Latif, helps him to negotiate his identity through interactive communication and to understand other oppressed people in the generally inhospitable relational and physical spaces depicted in the novel. As he tells Latif:

So then these are the events that befell. Many of them [the events] are difficult to speak of without drama, and some of them fill me with anguish, but I crave to utter them, to display them as judgments of my time and of the puniness of our duplicitous lives. I will tell them briefly, for many of them are events I have tried hard not to dwell on, for fear of diminishing what little I have left with bitterness and helplessness. I have had many years to think about them in the scale of things, and in that respect I have learnt that it is as well to live quietly with my grazes and sprains when others have to bear intolerable cruelties. (*BTS* 212)

As in the *Nights*, in *By the Sea*, “stories do not flow from a single source or point of origin but are indebted to other tales” (McLeod 186), proving them to be interactive and codependent, thus requiring hospitality as discussed above. As regards the storytelling, Helff also notes that “This repetitive act of storytelling dominates the primary narrative [of *By the Sea*] and functions as a narrative circle of retrieval of refugee identities” (“Imagining Flight” 395). Following this perspective and despite Newns’ considering the narrator Saleh’s storytelling as existing for the sake of the act of storytelling (515), for Saleh, narrative agency and tale-telling open up ways to negotiate hospitality in different spaces and rediscover his identity, which was metaphorically confiscated, together with the casket of *ud* – the narrative object mentioned above and further discussed below. This casket was “signals of a story I [Saleh] hoped to convey” (*BTS* 8). Besides, as Scheherazade’s stories start with *jinn* (djinn) and beautiful objects with intricate plots (Samuelson 84), so do Saleh’s, triggered by the *ud*, an ebony table, furniture, and maps. Concerning objects in the *Nights*, Warner remarks that “In the ‘thing-world’ of *The Nights*, [...] ‘stories continually test the border between persons and things. Slaves – persons reduced to things, to chattels – are omnipresent’ and ‘it is not always clear which way possession runs’” (qtd. in Samuelson 82). The extent of inhospitality in the detention center where Saleh resides temporarily after arriving in England is shown through Saleh’s

comparing himself and the fellow asylum-seekers in the center with the objects that were formerly stored there. The previous function of the detention center as a “warehouse” (*BTS* 43) housing objects indicates how the boundary between persons and objects is blurred through inhospitalities inflicting the immigrant characters in the novel. In the face of this objectification, Samuelson notes that “Stories [...] emerge as particularly potent ‘things’ capable of redistributing agency and subjectivity, constructing new assemblages that shatter the subject-object binary organising relations to both inanimate entities and objectified persons” (87). It can be argued that, however, the potency of the stories can only be realized through narrative agency permitted by in hospitable relationships and spaces with hospitable listeners, and through interactively communicating those narratives, as further discussed below.

The significance of objects in revealing stories, i.e., narrative objects, emphasizes the importance of their loss as well. The first narrator, Saleh, begins his tale from the point of his seeking asylum, thus, at a lower level in the power hierarchy. Saleh’s identification position introduces him as “a refugee, an asylum-seeker” (*BTS* 4), a person at a loss of citizenship. Deprived of the casket of *ud* by the hostile customs officer, Kevin Edelman, at Gatwick airport, Saleh is “depersonalized” (Newns 515) and identified as a “refugee,” “with restricted movement,” physically and metaphorically (Kohler 275). That is because the confiscated casket of *ud*, the “fragrance [of which] comes back to me [Saleh] at odd times” (*BTS* 14), opens the door to a series of memories of events, the stories through which he can travel spatiotemporally within his consciousness and narrate his subjectivity. Cooper notes that “stories like smells [reverberating the smell of *ud*] permeate and travel where they will” (88). Also, according to Newns, “[t]he absence of the *ud* and the narratives it contains disrupts Saleh’s agency as storyteller as he is required to speak through the narrative structures of the asylum-granting state, within which he becomes a mere object of other people’s stories” (516). This “involuntary object of another’s design” (*BTS* 68), i.e., Saleh himself, has to speak through his sparse luggage, of “what have left behind,” which is a symbol of “dispossession” and “loss” (Kohler 276), and which points out the inhospitalities he faces. The “momentary” feature of the paltry of objects “acts as a kind of flashback to a former life, one from which Saleh seems to have

separated himself upon entering the UK. This moment marks a change in Saleh's story: it is no longer 'his life' but rather 'a life,' a story of the past he is obliged to tell; it is a story of loss" (Kohler 276). This feeling of void and lack of hospitality needs to be filled with the stories Saleh wants to remember and share to "recreate this lost world" (Ruberto 269).

As the *Nights* create a thematic and structural context for *By the Sea*, so do references to Herman Melville's *Bartleby the Scrivener*, which pinpoint the novel's representations of negotiations of hospitality and identity. In an interview with Tina Steiner, Gurnah explains why he refers to the Bartleby character in his novel. He states:

[B]ecause he's [Bartleby] fascinated by the choice that he makes, not just the silence choice, but [...] by withdraw[ing] himself. And what's unclear in reading Bartleby [...] is the question whether Bartleby is defeated. Clearly, he is, but is he defeated to the point of wanting to commit suicide? [...] or is it a retreat which inevitably means that you can't retreat from human contact and intercourse, if you do that it is a kind of death. Or is it that because nobody except the narrator who in fact misunderstands what he's doing, that there is no possibility of intercourse with somebody who chooses to withdraw himself, and because Saleh Omar himself also does that after he's been released from prison, [...] he too is somebody kind of retreating. He doesn't go as far as Bartleby of course, and indeed in the end he's pulled out of that, but he's fascinated by what it means for Bartleby to do what he does. (Gurnah, Interview with Steiner 166-7)

The impact of *Bartleby* can be considered as producing thematic and contextual similarities, especially regarding Gurnah's narrator character Saleh, as his repetition of Bartleby's buzz phrase, "I'd prefer not to," becomes the hinge statement in defining Saleh's state of mind after enduring traumatic experiences. This acute feeling of "resignation" (*BTS* 198) in the face of the difficult situation of being a silent asylum-seeker who cannot communicate with the inhospitable hostland becomes Saleh's possible identification position due to inhospitalities inflicted upon him since his arrival to England. As he thinks, Rachel (the social worker who helps Saleh and befriends him) regards this indifference and "resignation" as the outcome of this way of identification. Saleh thinks: "[p]erhaps she was afraid that I saw myself as a kind of Bartleby, as someone with a secret and burdensome history who sought to expiate it with silence" (*ibid*). Nevertheless, Saleh's silence hints at the inhospitality of his

interlocutors who do not listen to him. His silence does not arise from a preference or choice, as he several times mentions his urge to narrate his story; for example, in a statement like this: “I [Saleh] needed to be shriven of the burden of events and stories which by telling would fulfil the craving I feel to be listened to with understanding” (*ibid* 170).

However, this stoicism, or what Gurnah calls “retreat from human contact,” in his relationship with a hospitable listener like Rachel, gives way to Saleh’s renewal of his stance toward the text, which results in a different positioning to realize the necessity of hospitable, communicative relationships in articulating his identity. He considers reading *Bartleby the Scrivener* again “before speaking his words as the utterings of an admired desperado” (*ibid* 244). Hence, such a re-visitation shows the impact of a hospitable addressee, which helps Saleh revise and reevaluate his former positions of identification (Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 226).

*By the Sea* delineates hospitality in both homeland and hostland by references to the sociopolitical and cultural circumstances described through its characters’ stories. Gurnah’s narrative questions the extent of hospitality practiced in the homeland, both before and after the Zanzibari revolution. Furthermore, the politics of hospitality can also be applied to England, the multicultural hostland for Gurnah’s characters, to see if these spaces are hospitable or if “certainties of English place are challenged by the spontaneous and contingent transformations of subaltern renegotiations of space” (McLeod 71) and negotiation of identity in those spaces. Gurnah’s treatment of hospitality in *By the Sea* includes the two senses of hospitality concerning the characters’ homing/homemaking desires and actions in homeland and hostland and hospitality in the representation of the spaces these characters occupy.

Reading *By the Sea* in terms of hospitality in these multicultural contexts and through Hall’s conception of multiculturalism requires analysis of the concepts of home, homelessness, and homeland. Felicity Hand relates these concepts to that of identity and points out that:

The concept of home is inevitably tied up with the notion of identity, the story we tell of ourselves or the one which others tell of us. Identities are free-floating, unlimited by borders and boundaries. When migrants cross a boundary, there is hostility and exclusion as well as welcome and inclusion, with both responses often overlapping each other. (Hand, "Becoming Foreign" 43)

This point emphasizes the significance of hospitality in one's negotiations of identity. It can further be extended to include the politics of inclusion and exclusion, i.e., hospitality, as far as the homeland is concerned. In other words, the practice of hospitality does not necessarily require people who have crossed the borders but can also affect peoples' lives within their borders. In the following, firstly, the hospitality of homeland in colonial Zanzibar will be studied, with a focus on colonial discourse and education and how hospitable they have been toward the people they have ruled. Secondly, the focus will be on the post-revolution Zanzibar and hospitality and the politics of inclusion/exclusion in the aftermath of independence and revolution. Finally, through references to migrations to England and its ensuing problems, the hospitality of the hostland will be examined.

In *By the Sea*, Saleh's narration of the colonial Zanzibar starts with his allusions to the imperial and geopolitical history of Zanzibar, which explain the multiculturalism of the Zanzibari state. He recounts:

The Portuguese, rounding the continent, burst so unexpectedly and so disastrously from that unknown and impenetrable sea, and put paid to medieval geography with their sea-borne cannons. They wreaked their religion-crazed havoc on islands, harbours and cities, exulting over their cruelty to the inhabitants they plundered. Then the Omanis came to remove them and take charge in the name of the true God, and brought with them Indian money, with the British close behind, and close behind them the Germans and the French and whoever else had the wherewithal. (*BTS* 15)

This summary illustrates Zanzibar's long history of being colonized and plundered, creating a multicultural setting in which different discourses could subordinate local narratives and identities and inflict inhospitalities toward them. These different discourses and inhospitalities are shown to have triggered the situation after independence (further discussed below). Through Saleh's reflections on colonial education, for instance, *By the Sea* sheds light on how such education has shaped the

(formerly)-colonized people's perceptions of themselves and how this manipulation has gone "unchallenged." This juxtaposition in the form of stories told by and about the (formerly)-colonized people is given in the passage below:

In their [the colonizers'] books I [Saleh] read unflattering accounts of my [his and other Zanzibaris'] history, and because they were unflattering, they seemed truer than the stories we told ourselves. [...] It was as if they had remade us, and in ways that no longer had any recourse but to accept, so complete and well-fitting was the story they told about us. [...] It was how they understood us and how they understood themselves, and there was little in the overwhelming reality we lived with that allowed us to argue, not while the story had novelty and went unchallenged. The stories we knew about ourselves before they took charge of us seemed medieval and fanciful, sacred and secret myths that were liturgical metaphors and rites of adherence, a different category of knowledge which, despite our assertive observance, could not contest with theirs. So that is how it seems when I think back to the way I was as a child, with no recourse to irony or knowledge of the fuller story of the multitudinous world. And at school there was little or no time for those other stories, just an orderly accumulation of the real knowledge they brought to us, in books they made available to us, in a language they taught us. But they left too many spaces unattended to, could not in the nature of things do anything about them, so in time gaping holes began to appear in the story. It began to fray and unravel under assault, and a grumbling retreat was unavoidable. Though that was not the end of stories. (*BTS* 18)

Saleh's point indicates Western discourses' dominance, which has silenced other heterogeneous and local discourses to the extent of "remaking" the consciousness of him and his fellow (formerly)-colonized people. Silence, one of the central motifs in Gurnah's fiction, introduces the silence of history and the mutations in discourse in the inhospitable discourses of Orientalism (Said 1978) and "the West and the Rest" (Hall 1992; discussed in Chapter Two), disseminated by colonial education and discourse. Latif, like Saleh, is critical of colonial education, which has, for years, silenced the many narratives that have been subordinated to other powerful, domineering, and inhospitable colonial discourses. He laments his "typical [...] colonised ignorance" (*BTS* 118):

I knew a little bit about the fishing banks of the Newfoundland, and the Fire of London and Cromwell, and the Siege of Mafeking and the Abolition of Slave Trade, because that was what my colonized education had required me to know, but I knew nothing about Dresden or a multitude

of other Dresdens. They had been there for all these centuries despite me, ignorant of me, oblivious of my existence. It was a staggering thought, how little it had been possible to know and remain contented. (*BTS* 122)

These discourses are not constitutive of parameters such as positionality and heterogeneity within the groups of people summarized within certain stereotypes. Therefore, as also elaborated by Hall, such discourses and “symbolic representations” (*The Spectacle of the ‘Other’* 259) are reductive in producing the types of epistemic knowledge based on which the Other is marginalized and his/her discourse excluded and silenced, and thus, must be challenged and resisted. Lavery takes a relatively positive side and notes that silence reveals “complex, unwritten histories,” which inform of the existence of “alternate knowledges” and also call into attention “the irreducible multiplicity of perspectives that are linked with the representation of Indian Ocean space” (125). As such, considering the poetics of textual juxtaposition, which Boehmer regards as emblematic of resistance literature (*Postcolonial Poetics* 43), it can be noted that Saleh’s representation of the colonial status quo through juxtaposing it with alternative forms of discourses, which are “different category[ies] of knowledge,” undermines and resists the forms of knowledge perpetuated by the colonial education. Perhaps, Saleh’s reference to “gaping holes [...] in the story” is a moment of revelation to depict his resisting thoughts against such hostile grand narratives and starting a new way of telling stories.

Such resistance to dominant discourses, by Gurnah’s use of allusions and references to sociopolitical events, can also be realized through the (subaltern) characters’ narrating their identities, considered as rewriting their histories, which have been absent from the characters’ colonial education and the histories summarized in stereotypical discourses. In this regard, also, the existence and the loss of beautiful objects – “trophies of worldliness” (*BTS* 20) – in *By the Sea* (as mentioned above), which allude to inhospitalities, homelessness, identity crises, and which obscure the sense of belonging, are strategies Gurnah uses to emphasize the significance of narrating identity with a resort to a (silenced) past and also oriented toward the future (Hall, “Through the Prism” 308). In Chapter Two, it was shown that the notion of negotiating identity within Hall’s notion of the discourse of the West and the Rest

indicates the necessity of the narratives produced by the rest to reconfigure the discourses through which they have been articulated. Referring to the oral stories produced by the characters in his novels, Gurnah remarks in an interview that:

I wouldn't want to say that I want to privilege orality as a written form of history but I would want to say that, particularly when it comes to telling certain kinds of histories, the history of colonialism and the understanding of the relative values of cultures, the relative values of histories, that there is space to contest the written history because it is the victor's history. [...] a cultural contest, [...] the only thing you can rely on is the very history that has been absented from that account. (Gurnah, Interview with Ruberto 270)

The oral stories and versions of histories shared by the characters in Gurnah's novels in general and in *By the Sea*, in particular, are extensions of the stories Gurnah heard as a child (Interview with Ruberto 270). However, as he states in this interview, these (hi)stories "were completely absent from the telling of the history of colonialism in East Africa" (*ibid* 272). His characters' colonial education in pre-revolution Zanzibar and also, Gurnah's own colonial education in England after leaving Zanzibar had silenced and marginalized the histories from and about Zanzibar. Nevertheless, being an academic in England, Gurnah acknowledges that he has learned how to read critically and reflect on these discrepancies in his creative narratives. Gurnah laments that people from his homeland coast "were not thinking or reflecting on their culture or their history [causing their narrative of history to] be written by someone else" (*ibid* 275), which makes him reflect on these points in his works. As such, Gurnah's narrative opens up spaces for viewing the entanglements in narrating one's identity and history from both an outsider's (Rachel's) and insiders' (Saleh's and Latif's) perspectives.

In this regard, and in illustrating the colonial Zanzibar as an inhospitable space for people living there, Gurnah's motif of cartography and the object of the map, rendered ambivalent and subtle, also indicate the novel's poetics of juxtaposition, which call for reading with resistance or, as Boehmer puts it, "writing-becoming-resistant" (*Postcolonial Poetics* 52). According to her:

[R]eading involves negotiation [...] between the reader or interpreter and the text [...]. This is perhaps the more so in writing that consciously uses juxtaposition and nonsynchrony, impelling the reader to double back, follow fresh lines of implication, and broach hitherto unasked questions. The back-and-forth processes of conjecture and speculation that juxtaposition encourages also allow hidden and as-yet-unsayable meanings to be suggested, in ways that are at once powerful and oblique, especially for those who are forbidden or excluded in some way. (Boehmer, *Postcolonial Poetics* 52-3)

As regards maps, on the one hand, they show Western discourses' dominance, injected through colonial education. As such, in *By the Sea*, maps represent the prevalence of the Western cartography as they determine the politics of ownership as in Saleh's comment: "[n]ew maps were made, complete maps, so that every inch was accounted for, and everyone now knew who they were, or at least who they belonged to. Those maps, how they transformed everything" (*BTS* 15). On the other hand, however, these mappings are resisted through the stories narrated by the characters, challenging and remapping those Western discourses.

*By the Sea's* recurrent allusions to maps is juxtaposed with the characters' mapping out their stories through objects such as maps, which is a way to create the double meaning and resistance mentioned above. The transformative agency of the maps can be read in two strands: One is expressed in Saleh Omar's interest in maps, recounted through the story of his first encounter with one when a teacher drew a map of the world on the board at his colonial school. He narrates:

I speak to maps. And sometimes they say something back to me. [...] Before maps the world was limitless. It was maps that gave it shape and made it seem like territory, like something that could be possessed, not just laid waste and plundered. Maps made the places on the edge of imagination seem graspable and placable. And later when it became necessary, geography became biology in order to construct a hierarchy in which to place the people who lived in their inaccessibility and primitiveness in other places on the map. (*BTS* 35)

In this sense, the colonized spaces and colonial homeland, due to colonial discourses and perceptions, become instances of inhospitable space represented through maps and borders. In fact, metaphorically, cartography and bordering become inhospitable tools dividing people on the basis of their race and lineage. According to Kharoua, "Saleh's

obsession with maps foregrounds the colonial and post-colonial understandings of modernity which has remapped the world to revolve around Europe as the center” (132). Studied on the scheme of power/knowledge discussed in Chapter Two, the authority of the Western discourse in shaping epistemic knowledge, including the stereotypical epistemology of the rest of the world for that matter, is what turns “geography into biology” (*BTS* 35). However, the second strand is that this discourse is undermined through Saleh’s dialogic relationship with the maps (Samuelson 82), negotiating space and spatiality with the transformative stories he shares if given the hospitable environment. Thus, the transformative agency of Saleh’s stories can “deconstruct the given realities mapped out by cartography” and “challenge the imperial mythology of ownership” (Helff, “Imagining Flight” 397). In this sense, the image of the “wiped off [map] on the board” (*BTS* 38) at the end of Saleh’s story of the drawn map on the board at school suggests erasing and resisting those dominant discourses of cartography.

Saleh’s resistance to powerful discourses, which in his view, have been “studying me [him] and noting me down, explaining me and summarizing me” (*BTS* 65), happens through his spatial movements, remapping his world, and his communication through stories he shares. By traveling from Zanzibar to England and, later, wandering through the furniture shops in his new place of residence, and by his metaphorical movements through time in the narration of his stories, Saleh undermines the relentless absolutism of the maps and cartography. In his case, “[a]lthough the profusion of discourses seemed at first disabling, he [Saleh] realized that negotiating multiplicity allowed him to stake out a particular relationship to knowledge” (Lavery 121). As pointed out by McLeod referencing de Certeau:

If the map is the defining representation of the Concept-city which colonizes space in order to produce a static depiction of the city as place, then the wanderings of those who tour the city write new scripts of city-space in the delinquent narratives of their passage. ‘What the map cuts up’, de Certeau writes, ‘the story cuts across.’ (McLeod 9)

In response to some critics’ comments that consider Saleh’s wanderings as his identification from the disempowered position of an asylum-seeker (discussed above),

Gurnah's point seems apt. In relation to immigrant and refugee characters of his novels, who also happen to have resemblances with his own experience of learning and sharing narratives, Gurnah asserts that:

I was learning from the mosque, from Koran school, from the streets, from home and from my own anarchic reading. And what I was learning in these other places was at times flatly contradictory to what I was learning at school. This was not as disabling as it might sound, though it was sometimes painful and shaming. With time, dealing with contradictory narratives in this way has come to me to seem a dynamic process, even if by its very nature it is a process first undertaken from a position of weakness. Out of it came the energy to refuse and reject, to learn to hold onto reservations that time and knowledge will sustain. Out of it came a way of accommodating and taking account of difference, and of affirming the possibility of more complex ways of knowing. (Gurnah, "Writing and Place" 60)

Although colonization through maps and cartography presents a hegemonic homogenized illustration of spaces, the movements regarded "in terms of speech acts" (McLeod 9) deconstruct and destabilize these narratives of space. In Gurnah's narrative, then, maps become significant elements of representation. In this regard, Helff remarks that:

There is a whole range of different mapping strategies which might be of importance in this [Gurnah's] context. In short, the novel utilizes mimetic as well as diegetic mapping strategies. By addressing famous intertexts, Gurnah consciously inscribes his work in literary traditions as diverse as Homer's *Odyssey* and the stories of *The Arabian Nights*, Anton Chekov's *Selected Stories* and Herman Melville's *Bartleby the Scrivener*. While locating the novel in the contemporary era of globalisation and modernity, Gurnah's narrative vividly reflects transcultural dimensions such as intertextuality and intertwined histories. By weaving intertextual references into the main body of text, the novel fabricates a transcultural meta-narrative. (Helff, "Imagining Flight" 396)

Therefore, mapping out the narrative as a "mob of tales kept together" (Tonkin, qtd. in Murray 144) and employing intertextuality as the defining characteristics of his novels, Gurnah demands the reader to read his novels contrapuntally with the intertexts he has referred to.

*By the Sea*, also represents the inhospitality of the homeland through the portrayal of the state of affairs in post-revolution Zanzibar, and how the characters in the novel are affected and their discourses marginalized by the hostilities of the state. According to Falk, “[i]n Gurnah’s fiction African nationalism is constantly ridiculed and critiqued” (“Subject and History” 30). African nationalisms leave the citizens with no option but exile “to get away from the malice of the state,” as Latif asserts (*BTS* 120). This exile can occur in or close to the homeland, as Hassan’s alienation from the society after his being seduced by Persian Hussein finally sends him to exile in the Gulf, or like Saleh and Latif, exiles may find themselves cut from their cultural roots and homeland. Saleh’s exile is different from Latif’s as it is forced rather than a voluntary movement. In fact, caught between the entanglements of post-independence hostile sociopolitical circumstances, Gurnah’s characters look for other ways to negotiate home and belonging because, as Steiner points out, “postindependence nationalist identity politics [...] so often rely on projecting a precolonial homogeneity” (“Writing ‘Wider Worlds’” 128). The representation of the history of Zanzibar, and the state of confusion after independence, as Steiner, notes “destabilizes notions of nationalism and filiation” (*ibid* 125), which brings about transformations in the negotiation of identity through cultural filiations and relations with the homeland. The ensuing escape or exile, as News also remarks, is “associated with the exclusionary machinery of nationalism” (516).

*By the Sea*’s allusions to the political system at home country indicate the exclusory system of Zanzibar and the “hierarchies of domination” (Steiner, “Writing ‘Wider Worlds’” 125) before and after the independence of 1963 and the revolution of the following year. Saleh describes this period after the revolution: “It [Zanzibar] rigged an election, falsifying the figures in front of international observers, whereas before it had only gaoled, raped, killed or otherwise degraded its citizens” (*BTS* 10) to show the adversity of post-independence circumstances and the inhospitality of the state. The political circumstances in Zanzibar, as Falk points out, moves from the supremacy of Omani and Arab rulers in the period of German and after that British imperialism to the predominance of the tenets of African nationalisms after the revolution, which exclude the Omanis and Arabs and their descendants in an attempt to efface the traces

of heterogeneous nation and culture. Expelling the Omani Arabs is an action to capitulate Zanzibar's multiculturalism and plurality to African nationalisms, which are inhospitable to strands of heterogeneities in culture and which causes corruption, making its citizenship rights exclusive on the basis of race and continuing on the trails of binary segregations practiced during the colonial period. This action is sketched out in *By the Sea* through unfair trials and imprisonments, which "fill the prison up from the day after independence" (*BTS* 217). During this period, Saleh is imprisoned and deprived of his belongings and family due to the familial feud orchestrated by Rajab Shaaban and exacerbated by Rajab's wife's vengeance for the ebony table. Saleh describes the state of affairs in the country through reference to the citizens' constant dread: "for years I have lived like that, poor and frightened like everyone else, ears cocked for the latest malice and vindictiveness by our rulers, although our condition eased a little over the last ten years [since 1984, because he met with Latif in England in 1994]" (*ibid* 236).

Through allusion to Julius Nyerere (*BTS* 107), the socialist prime minister and then president of Tanzania after independence (1961-1985), *By the Sea* illustrates the failure of the Tanzanian socialist government system, which "establishes a set of criteria to include and exclude individuals" (Falk, "Subject and History" 32), which sets the novel's instances of refusal of hospitality in the independent homeland. African nationalism's extreme measures, which terminated the annual musim trade (Kaigai 157), which created a *mélange* of cultural contacts, are steps to erase multiculturalism at the expense of assimilation (Hall, Interview with Back 297). Gurnah's criticism of the rhetoric of exclusion and inhospitality, as indirectly presented, for instance, in the termination of the musim trade, is depicted in a scene where a character named Abdulrazak, who was a gardener for Hussein's grandfather, mourns his death. This point is important because the grandfather was a prosperous merchant in the far East whose trade was sustained through the musim. His death and the gardener's mourning connote the end of the musim tradition (Samuelson 81), which implies inhospitality and a cleavage in the Indian Ocean littoral.

Although, as discussed previously, Saleh's wanderings can be read as a type of resistance activity, his involuntary movements leave him with existential struggles and a passive form of resistance that is close to resignation, reflected in his repeatedly using Herman Melville's Bartleby (from *Bartleby the Scrivener* [1853]) character's catchphrase "I'd prefer not to." This feeling is intensified by his imprisonment without a proper trial (Hand, "Untangling Stories" 82) in his homeland. Gurnah's portrayal of inhospitality in the homeland undermines African nationalism<sup>16</sup> and the corrupt political system in Zanzibar, which treats citizens unjustly, especially after the revolution. A couple of years after the revolution, the nationalization of the banks (*BTS* 210) triggers his being sent into detention centers for eleven years for an unspecified and debatable crime. Falk argues that this instance shows the "bankruptcy of the political juridical system" ("Subject and History" 31) in the Zanzibari setting, which sends the citizens into exile. Saleh's second involuntary movement at sixty-five for fear of being tried unjustly again after Hassan is back is another case in point. Hassan, Latif's older brother, who had fled with the merchant Hussein, has come back to demand the right for the house Saleh inherited from Rajab Shaaban's aunt, Bi Maryam, who was Saleh's stepmother. Saleh is, in a way, part of the circumstances at home that took place, reemphasizing Chatterjee's point that "home is not a complimentary but rather the original site on which the hegemonic project of nationalism was launched" (147). The title of the last chapter of *By the Sea, Silences*, where the two narrator characters come together and voice the silences in their accounts, indicates the silenced voices, by African nationalisms, of the subalterns, and how they are denied hospitality in writing their history. As these family stories are connected to the sociopolitical corruption leading to Saleh's detention and imprisonment, in a way, they narrate the post-independence silenced histories. The national radio news, referred to as "rewriting history" (*BTS* 228), which Saleh

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<sup>16</sup> According to Lofchie quoted by Falk, in Zanzibar, in the heyday of independence and the revolution, these two types of nationalisms existed side by side: "'Arab' nationalism became a means for the ruling class to prolong political influence, and was channelled first through the Arab Association, and later through the Zanzibar Nationalist Party (ZNP). Though claiming to be multi-racial and multi-cultural, the party was largely conceived as serving 'Arab' interests. 'African' nationalism, for its part, was a response to this force (Lofchie 157-67). After the stalemate and reholding of the elections in 1961, and the formation of a coalition after the 1963 elections, the country was largely racially divided due to the parties' campaigning" (Falk, "Subject and History" 29).

overhears in the island detention center, testifies the brutalities inflicted by those in power, altering the truth.

The other way *By the Sea* illustrates the inhospitality and the calamities caused by the homeland after the revolution is through the motif of loss, which is tailored throughout Gurnah's narrative as mentioned previously. Narrated through loss and dispossession, Saleh's account, at some point, intersects with Latif's narrative object (ebony table) and stories. Saleh's own loss of his possessions and his family, which happens before leaving for England, is sketched through Latif's analeptic comment during a visitation to his house to ask for the retrieval of the ebony table on his mother's demand. He describes Saleh's belongings as:

all of them [the furniture of Saleh's house] [being] objects which had beauty and purpose, but which stood like refugees in that room, standing still because pride and dignity demanded it but none the less as if they had a fuller life elsewhere. Looking like objects in a gallery or a museum, brightly lit and roped off, to celebrate someone's cleverness and wealth. Looking like plunder. (*BTS* 102)

Latif's comment blurs the boundaries between objects and persons and illustrates Saleh's future status as an asylum-seeker, "an involuntary object of another's design" (*BTS* 68). As explained previously, Saleh's loss is profound; as after the revolution in Zanzibar and following that the nationalization of banks (*ibid* 210), he has to return the loan he had taken out some years ago to expand his business in the furniture trade but having failed to do so, and without a proper trail at Party headquarters due to the corrupt state system after the revolution, he is forced to give up his house and is imprisoned for eleven years. During this time, he loses his wife and newborn daughter, and his house, without knowing his crime. After he is "released under amnesty in 1979" (*BTS* 233), his furniture trade turns into a vegetable and fruit trade, which, as Kohler remarks, indicates loss of belonging and thus, loss of identity (278). It can be suggested that the furniture shop in Zanzibar, which Saleh owned before his imprisonment, connotes tenacity, structure, immobility, and prosperity. Simultaneously, the change in his trade to selling perishable vegetables and fruits epitomizes decay and homelessness, which foreshadows his asylum-seeking in England. Saleh describes furniture as what "weighs us [people] down and keeps us on

the ground, and prevents us from clambering up the trees and howling naked as the terror of our useless lives overcomes us. It keeps us from wandering aimlessly in pathless wilderness, plotting cannibalism in forest clearings and dripping caves” (*BTS* 3). After he leaves involuntarily for England, in the face of his status as a refugee who is “wandering aimlessly” between the furniture stores at the small by-the-sea town in England, he desires immobility and stability epitomized by the furniture. These stores connect him to his past and help him, through stories, in the rediscovery and the reimagination of his identity from a different “position of enunciation” (Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 222), i.e., away from the loss and many deprivations he has experienced. Saleh and Latif’s experiences depict an “allegory” or a “microcosm” of pre- and post-independence “brutalities” inflicting Zanzibari citizens, either at home – as discussed earlier – or in Britain (Hand, “Becoming Foreign” 50).

As discussed earlier, *By the Sea*’s references to the plot’s sociopolitical context parallel a family feud story as the microcosm for inhospitalities in the power relations in the bigger picture of society (Hand, “Becoming Foreign” 50). Through these references and the recurrent motifs of journey, sea, and cartography, the narratives within the novel take a critical stance toward the dominant – generally stereotypical and inhospitable – discourses produced and used as institutional knowledge (colonial discourse) about specific people and regions. Saleh and Latif’s resistance to the dominant narratives of the West and their search for identity in the hostland reverberate throughout their stories about journeys and the action of spatial journeys they take from their by-the-sea homeland to another by-the-sea town in England, in the case of Saleh, and to the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and then England for Latif. The action of changing their names, enforced in Saleh’s case and voluntary as regards Latif, which sends their past into temporary exile, indicates inhospitality of the homeland and identities shaped therein, thus their desire to build new positions of identification in the hostland. Elisabeth Mudimbe-Boyi’s view on these journeys’ connotations reflects the motif of the journey and identity negotiations in Gurnah’s narrative. She remarks that these journeys embody:

the quest of colonial and postcolonial subjects caught in epistemological ruptures and entangled in multicultural contexts. [...] They are in search

of roots and ground, of new cultural and ethnic spaces in which to construct new identities for themselves. Their experience of exile may be geographical, psychological, cultural or racial. (qtd. in Rodriguez 101).

Nevertheless, the hostland does not offer hospitable environments and spaces to neither Saleh nor Latif to gain narrative agency and renew their identities.

As discussed in the previous section, bereft of his belongings, name, citizenship, and homeland, Saleh's "forced emigration" has made him "an involuntary instrument of another's design, a figure in a story told by someone else" (*BTS* 68-9). When he arrives as an asylum-seeker in England, the meagerness of his luggage contents conveys a sense of loss to the reader. This feeling of homelessness is doubled when Edelman (the customs officer) confiscates Saleh's casket of *ud*, an action which Saleh describes as "plunder" and as theft (it is "stolen" from him) (*BTS* 48). Edelman also cruelly denies him hospitality through his lecture on the rights of belongingness and the "damage" that the likes of Saleh cause in England, telling Saleh that, for these reasons, the hostland will make life hard for him (*ibid* 12). He also talks about the Europeans' right to stay (*ibid* 31). As such, Edelman's definition of rights echoes Caryl Phillips' comment in *Extravagant Strangers: A Literature of Belonging* (1997):

"The once great colonial power that is Britain has always sought to define her people, and by extension the nation itself, by identifying those who don't belong". Thus, he argues, many black or Asian immigrants and their descendants in the postwar period who did not conform to the predominant image of white cultural acceptability felt they had no 'place' or 'space' to express their relationship to the dominant narratives of British life. (Phillips x, qtd. in Nasta, *Home Truths* 3)

Edelman's treating Saleh with open racism denotes the inhospitality of the hostland. As noted by Helff, Saleh's position as a refugee, at the beginning of the novel, "marks a lack of homeland and of previous social status and identity and self worth, a lack reinforced by racist abuse in all its guises" ("Imagining Flight" 391). Saleh's silence on arrival at Gatwick airport, a silence he assumed because of a ticket seller's advice, is an inhospitable silence that deprives him of the ability to communicate with the host. This phony silence can be considered as an entry ticket for Saleh (Olussen 2009; Farrier 2011), providing "a certain type of narrative" (Hand, "Untangling Stories" 81)

of “what a ‘legitimate’ refugee should look (and sound) like” (Newns 512). Therefore, as Newns puts it, “By [...] remaining silent in the face of the immigration officer’s questions, Saleh performs a narrative of his life which becomes the replacement for all stories which may have come before, solidifying his new identity as a ‘refugee’” (*ibid*). In this regard, Helff notes that:

For Gurnah, storytelling and silence are means of communication which at times reflect strategic decisions on the side of the refugee. In this context, *By the Sea* depicts silence not merely as the refugee’s non-ability to communicate in the host’s language but as a consciously chosen speech act. (Helff, “Illegal Diasporas” 72)

In an interview with Nisha Jones regarding the role of silence in his fiction, Gurnah remarks that “Remaining silent is a way of preserving dignity and at the same time not putting yourself in harm’s way. Silence is ambivalent. It is also powerful and can be more eloquent” (39). Nonetheless, Edelman and his discourse favoring European imperialism emphasize that “imperial stories silence an *other* side of the story” (Gurnah, Interview with Ruberto 283; emphasis in original). Therefore, the deprivation imposed by Edelman read as a strategic action also silences the plethora of Saleh’s narratives which could resist Edelman’s dominant discourse about rights of “belonging” (*BTS* 12). Saleh’s assertion that “[s]ilence imposes unexpected discomfort on you” (*ibid* 13) also proves his “confiscated” ability to articulate his rights from the position of the subaltern, even though it was a piece of advice by the ticket-seller back in Zanzibar to secure him the refugee status possibly. Edelman’s imperialist views, in an inhospitable manner, reject Saleh at the threshold of the metropole hostland and deprive him of his historical narratives, which are dramatized through Saleh’s self-imposed yet forced silence.

The inhospitality of the hostland, alienating Saleh and his narratives, is also evident in the other spaces he occupies after he arrives in England. The detention center, which can be regarded as an inter-space within the hostland – as the refugees and asylum-seekers do not still have legal citizen status – is a case in point. It is a space where Saleh and many fellow asylum-seekers like him keep their stories to themselves and silently wait for the social workers to help them. As discussed earlier in this chapter,

this space shatters the borders between objects and people, thus treating them with utmost inhospitality. As Helff remarks: “when the reader follows Saleh to his new, temporary home, a detention centre somewhere in the British countryside, and eventually shares Saleh’s brief, reserved memory, he or she might experience unfathomable loneliness and an impression of refused hospitality” (“Imagining Flight” 399).

Neither Saleh’s nor Latif’s exile brings them face to face with absolute or “unconditional hospitality” (Derrida, *Of Hospitality* 5) from the hostland, not even conditional acceptance, as they experience racism in its different forms. Felicity Hand argues that “although Saleh and Latif have a great deal in common, [...] their different social status in British society produces dissimilar outlooks on what it means to be a migrant and refugee in Europe in general and in Britain in particular” (“Untangling Stories” 77). Although different from Saleh’s, Latif’s experience and his process of negotiations as a refugee in England from the GDR, and before that as an international student there, is not bereft of hostilities in various forms. The whole thirty-four years’ story, between his arrival in England and his meeting with Saleh, although absent in the novel, is narrated through ambivalent feelings of loss and freedom. His diasporic hostland experience is “far away enough to experience the sense of exile and loss, close enough to understand the enigma of an always-postponed ‘arrival’” (Hall, Interview with Kuan-Hsing Chen 192), as he reflects: “Leaving. I’ve had years to think about that, leaving and arriving, until the moments acquire a crust and a gnarled disfigurement that gives them a kind of nobility” (*BTS* 104). Despite his academic niche and different status in comparison to Saleh, Latif is also the victim of the racist abuse, which is the starting point for his account of himself, indicative of the complicated experiences he has had and the hostilities he has endured in becoming a known poet and an academic. The hostility of being called a “grinning blackamoor” in the streets of London (*ibid* 72) and its connotations of essentialist and stereotypical meanings associated with “other,” “wicked,” and “beast,” disarm Latif. He feels “suddenly weak with a kind of terror at such associations. This is the house I [he] live[s] in, I thought, a language which barks and scorns at me behind every corner” (*ibid* 73). This feeling calls for renegotiations of his subjectivity within the

inhospitable society. After this moment in the narrative, he decides to call the social work center and ask for Saleh's number. The story of their meeting to share the stories of the past is discussed in the following sections analyzing familial and societal relationships, where (in)hospitalities are shown through the portrayal of these relationships through which the characters' negotiations of identity and subjectivity can be possible if they are granted agency to tell their stories.

### **3.3 Familial and Societal Relationships and Poetics of Space<sup>17</sup>**

The discussion that follows employs the notion of hospitality as elaborated by Jacques Derrida in the multicultural context and relationships of Gurnah's novels. Gurnah's fiction deals with – among many other concepts and perspectives – the concepts of hospitality and multiculturalism, as discussed in Chapter Two, in delineating asymmetric power relations and inclusion/exclusion of certain narratives and discourses in the represented multicultural spaces. In this section, as represented in the portrayal of characters and spaces and their entanglements and relationships, hospitality is analyzed to see into negotiations of identity and narrative agency as well as the subaltern resistance activities (through voicing their narratives) through familial and interpersonal societal relationships. Refused or offered hospitality in relationships between the characters and (in)hospitality of the places/spaces determine whether the negotiation of identity, which requires narrative agency and dialogic relationships, can be realized. The polyphonic style of Gurnah's novel and its poetics – discussed previously – proves the importance of a dialogic perspective, and more significantly, that of sharing narratives and knowledge. On the significance of co-narration, Kaigai notes that “co-narration, which presumes acts of simultaneously speaking and listening, is a gesture towards resolving frozen communication” (182). Habermas's point in this regard also seems apt. He stated that:

From a normative point of view, the integrity of the individual legal person cannot be guaranteed without protecting the inter-subjectively shared experiences and life-contexts in which the person has been socialized and formed his or her identity. The identity of the individual is interwoven with collective identities and can be stabilized only in a cultural network that

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<sup>17</sup> *Poetics of Space* is also the title of a book by Gaston Bachelard (1957).

cannot be appropriated as private property. (Habermas 119, qtd. in Hall, "The Multicultural Question" 118-9)

The identification process, then, according to the explanation above, is based on inter-subjective familial and societal relationships built, which demands the hospitality of the involved parties in the first place. As such, the relationship between the characters as represented through Gurnah's narrative should be analyzed. This section discusses hospitable and inhospitable relationships between the characters in *By the Sea*. It studies (in)hospitalities in these relationships at familial and societal levels, at physical and relational spaces, in giving the characters the narrative agency to negotiate their identities through their stories.

As explained previously, offered hospitality creates spaces of communication for characters and helps their identification process through stories. Whenever hospitality in contact zones turns into hostility, the characters find that their voices are silenced, and their stories and discourses not heard, as the discussion on the "subaltern cannot be heard" (Spivak 1995) has previously testified. In the power relations between the host and the guest, the subaltern's position cannot be overthrown, and the dominant narratives cannot be resisted and challenged if the subaltern is not granted the opportunity, i.e., the narrative agency, to speak and be attended to. By the same token, the contact zones between the characters in *By the Sea* are narrativized to depict the existing uneven power relations and (in)hospitalities therein.

*By the Sea* illustrates Saleh and Latif experiencing various types of inhospitalities in their lives. These forms of inhospitalities are sometimes depicted through denial of homely and welcoming spaces and sometimes hostilities through the racism of some kind. Denial of home and homely spaces were discussed concerning inhospitality of state home/hostland through sociopolitical references and allusions. Here, the focus is on inhospitalities in the relationship between the characters, either hostility from one's family members or reflected in one's societal relations outside of the family circle. For instance, Saleh continues to be denied home and hospitality in different ways at specific points throughout his life, especially in his relationship with his father. In this regard, Helff connects Saleh's asylum-seeking situation to an earlier event when he

was excluded from his father's home in Zanzibar and subsequent involuntary dislocation. Helff points out that,

Being locked out of his father's house marks an ultimate experience of being excluded for young Saleh. The padlocked and bolted front door becomes the crucial border for the boy. In fact, it reduces him to being a guest in his own home. Consequently, the boy is only allowed to enter his home if his father, the master of the house, asks him in. Bereft of his agency, Saleh has lost his status as son; and when his father remarries and moves the family to a new place, Saleh eventually concludes that 'in a sense he moved me as well even before I knew about dislocation' (*BTS* 185). Indeed, this point in life turns Saleh into a wanderer, a stranger and eventually an asylum seeker. (Helff, "Imagining Flight" 398)

The novel also sketches out inhospitalities experienced by Latif through the rejections he encounters from his family members, especially from his brother Hassan who does not allow him to his confidence (*BTS* 93). The narrative object that triggers Latif's story and is the reason for the family feud between Saleh and Latif's father is an ebony table given as a gift to Latif's brother, Hassan, from his lover, the Persian merchant Hussein. Loss of the ebony table is linked with the loss of the house and its contents by Rajab Shaaban to Saleh – who had Rajab's title deeds as security for a loan he had given to Hussein the previous year. This loss indicates Rajab's loss of ebony table and with that Hassan (*BTS* 71). After Hussein takes off, Hassan follows him, and Rajab Shaaban is bereft of his house, son, and wife, whose indiscreet adulterous relationships take her away. The familial relationships turn hostile, and Latif is the most hurt in this situation. His communication with his family is shattered through that loss, and his identity is narrated through "hostilities, contempt, and superciliousness" (*ibid* 207), both toward Saleh and his parents. As a result of this, Latif exiles himself to escape from the homeland and family, distancing himself from his family identity of Ismail Rajab Shaaban Mahmud to take on the new name of Latif Mahmud. He rejects his father's and grandfather's names (Rajab and Shaaban, respectively) as these men were considered drunkard failures in his hometown to carve an identity different from theirs. He chooses Latif for "its gentleness and the softness of its modulations, God's name" (*ibid* 133) but keeps the family name Mahmud, that of his great-grandfather, who was a pious and respected man. To confront his family's inhospitalities, Latif never returns to Zanzibar and cuts off all relations with home and homeland until he meets Saleh in

England and listens to his narration of their shared (hi)stories, which, in the end, resolves their enmity. Even when he hears from Saleh that his brother Hassan is back and has demanded the rights to their family house, he is not tempted to return. The inhospitality of his homeland incarnated in his family's failures – in his mother's indiscreet and adulterous sexual relationships, and his father's phony piety after the loss of their house – drives Latif away to the German Democratic Republic and from there to England where his family cannot reach him (*ibid* 169).

Exiled from the homeland, the two narrator characters of *By the Sea* negotiate hospitality and inclusion or exclusion in a hostland and diasporic space in their interpersonal and societal relationships. In England, Saleh's experiences are again different from Latif's. In the different contact zones in the hostland, for example, the airport, the detention center, and Celia's bed and breakfast, he expresses a feeling of desperate exclusion as he is denied hospitality in these spaces. *By the Sea's* portrayal of inhospitable relationships goes along with the poetics and representation of inhospitable physical and material spaces. Celia's bed and breakfast and the customs office's inhospitality, for instance, are depicted through the description of squalor in these places. Celia's bed and breakfast are described as "an old dark house [... smelling like] damp chicken shit in an enclosed space" (*BTS* 49), and the customs office as "coldly lit and silent empty tunnels" (*ibid* 5), which led to "a small windowless room with a hard floor" (*ibid* 6). These spaces also embed inhospitable behaviors and treatments. In Celia's bed and breakfast, for instance, Saleh is rejected through the racist comments of two other asylum-seekers, Ibrahim and Georgy. Although both Ibrahim and Georgy suffer from the cruelties and hostilities of both the hostland and their homelands, which keep them in the purgatorial status of detention centers and temporary lodgings, they pour out their "passionate hostility" toward Saleh (*ibid* 53). Rejected by fellow immigrants, Saleh is also denied hospitality through Celia's behavior. She does not call him by his proper name, using names like "Mr Naashab," "Mr Bashat," "Mr Showness," and finally "Mr Showboat" (*ibid* 54, 55, 56, 58). The action of eventually anglicizing his name indicates Celia's lack of care and hospitality to her guest, whom she supposed could not speak the language. In a way, through inhospitable language, the novel shows the inhospitality of the host, as well

(Derrida, *Of Hospitality* 7). Furthermore, Celia's nostalgic feelings about a past when "[t]here weren't any foreigners then" (*BTS* 54) laments over the current situation that "[n]ow foreigners are everywhere, with all these terrible things happening in their countries" (*ibid*). While her argument may contain hospitable phrases like, "[w]e can't send them [asylum-seekers] back to those horrible places" (*ibid* 55), it connotes her undecidedness in either offering or denying her hospitality: "I don't know what we can do [about foreigners]" (*ibid*). Another instance, as discussed previously in this chapter, is the social contact between Saleh and the customs officer, Europe's gatekeeper – or "bawab" as Saleh calls him (*ibid* 31) – who, not only refuses Saleh his hospitality but also warns him of the misfortunes that will befall him if he stays.

In addition to illustrating the spaces and interpersonal relationships discussed above, usually with people from the host culture, relationships between people from the same ethnic and cultural background, i.e., between Saleh and Latif, also indicate the degree of hospitality/hostility practiced. After dedicating two chapters to the separate narration of similar life stories by Saleh and Latif, the last chapter of *By the Sea* brings these two protagonists together to share their common history. In the first section of the chapter, because of the family feud between them and the gaps in Latif's knowledge of Saleh's misfortunes caused by his [Latif's] parents, their relationship is based more on unforgiven hostility, especially that of Latif. Hand suggests that the perpendicular angle between Latif and Saleh's chairs in Saleh's apartment (*BTS* 144) indicates a point where their stories will intersect one another ("Untangling Stories" 85). This positioning of the chairs, according to Kohler, indicates that "their stories [are] at sharp angles to one another" (Kohler 283). However, in their next meeting, they share stories and a meal over a round table, which shows negotiation and a growing fraternity and homo-social relationship, rather than opposition and hostility. Moreover, the way Saleh receives Latif, unlike the latter's angry moments, his frown, and his calling Saleh a "relic," a "jinn" from the *Arabian Nights*, and "a liar," can be read as an instance of "unconditional hospitality" which helps them reach reconciliation and understanding. Eventually, as Falk argues,

Over the course of the story, a tentative and fragile relationship which is laden with emotional pain, anger, and feelings of shame emerges between

the protagonists who partly collaborate, and party compete in remembering the past. The contrastive and uncertain reconstruction of a time and a place through differing, partly incompatible, memories can be seen as yet another way for Gurnah to complicate the idea of localized experience and identity. (Falk, “Subject and History” 164)

This discussion paves the way for analyzing hospitable relationships and spaces in the following, encompassing relationships across different cultures, ethnicities, and national affiliations, as shown below.

Along with the inhospitalities portrayed in the relationships between the characters in *By the Sea*, this novel also pays attention to spaces and relationships where hospitality is extended and where negotiations of narratives and identity can occur. The instances of friendly relationships built between Saleh and Latif (after they reconcile through sharing stories of the past; Falk’s point above), Saleh and Rachel, and Latif and Jan and Elleke are owed to the conversations and dialogism (Hall, “The Multicultural Question” 118) between them in contact zones. The “dialogic intersubjectivity” between the characters in *By the Sea*, rather than “isolation,” regards the negotiation of identity as “identity of relation” rather than that of “root identity” (Steiner, “Writing ‘Wider Worlds’” 127). Therefore, “[a]gainst the universalism of both colonial dominance and African nationalisms [discussed earlier in this chapter], Gurnah narrates stories that speak of relationality with the Other” (*ibid*). As such, hospitality politics surpass the linguistic, community, and cultural borders, molded through the discourses of homogeneity and harmony, which regarded individual identities as exclusory of the inevitable heterogeneities and conjunctural positionings. As Hall pointed out,

[...] global interdependence and interconnectedness [since the spread of *Homo sapiens* from east Africa]<sup>18</sup> would undermine strongly centered but exclusive identities and open the possibility of more complex ways of individuals and groups positioning themselves in their own narratives. (Hall, “Through the Prism” 315)

*By the Sea* illustrates the relationships between the characters beyond the narratives of exclusion from either homeland or the metropole hostland. Identity formation, thus,

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<sup>18</sup> I am indebted to Dr. Metin Yüksel for pointing out the origin of human movements.

becomes “transcultural and global [through the] re-imagination of the family [community] and love relationships” (Falk, “Subject and History” 27). Nasta’s point concerning the diasporic space in which the characters in *By the Sea* live is relevant here. It discusses a “homing desire,” which requires hospitality, as well as a desire for and growth of “new identities and subjectivities” (*Home Truths* 7), which as regards Saleh and Latif, have to be defined in terms different from the machine of African nationalisms. Nasta remarks that,

Diaspora is [...] as much about settlement as displacement and exists on a shifting axes of differently articulated positionalities, which may be linked to specific histories of recent migration but can also, in later generations, depart from them. As one critic has persuasively argued, specific diasporic communities grow out of a ‘confluence of narratives’, creating the sense of a shared, if heterogeneous, history. As such, the conceptual parameters of a ‘diaspora space’ is lived not only by migrants or their descendants, but ‘equally by those who are constructed and represented as indigenous’. (Nasta, *Home Truths* 7-8)

Said’s writings on exile can also be used in considerations of the diasporic situation, for in his words, since exiles are “cut off from their roots, their land, their past. [...] they] feel [...] an urgent need to reconstitute their broken lives” (Said, *Reflections on Exile* 177). As such, hospitality in the cultural encounters of diasporic individuals become significantly determinant of their success in negotiating their heterogeneous group identities or their individual identities as exiles in the hostland or in resisting the dominance of certain discourses. Said went on to explain that, put in the situation of exile, individuals grow an “exaggerated sense of group solidarity, and a passionate hostility to outsiders, even those who may in fact be in the same predicament as you” (*ibid* 178). This point explains the situation discussed above, with Georgy and Ibrahim’s hostility to Saleh. It can also be added that the exile, when faced with hostility from the hostland, is triggered to define him/herself through group identity. That is why Latif decides to visit Saleh, only after receiving a racist comment from an Englishman, as he admits: “Perhaps being called names in the streets made me wish for a kind of solidarity” (*BTS* 74). In this regard, as Newns notes:

By resisting the image of the unencumbered exile who shirks off home and through this process finds self-actualisation through authorship, Gurnah

asserts the value of homely places for those who have been denied them, as spaces where the depersonalising work of displacement and the asylum system can be resisted by the restorative work of storytelling. (Newns 312)

In (in)hospitable contact zones, “where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination” (Pratt 4), Gurnah’s characters from different cultures attempt to negotiate their individuality through relationality and the exchange of stories. This condition is especially vital to refugee/immigrant characters, whose life accounts narrated in hospitable relational spaces can be regarded as and shape resistance to the dominant discourses mentioned above. As the social worker Rachel remarks concerning the plethora of (homeless) asylum-seekers and refugees: “often we’re [the social workers] trying to get people to remember, to make a case for themselves. And if they can’t remember we have to make it up between us. Imagine someone else completing those stories that are missing” (*BTS* 204). In this regard, Kaigai notes that in Gurnah’s narrative, “through the presentation of [...] encounters with strange places and people, the narrative helps us reflect on how such encounters affect the ability to voice oneself and be heard, even in disappointment” (138). Concerning this point, Gurnah, in an interview with Ruberto, points out:

Even if what we call ‘asylum seekers’ now are able to have, as in *By the Sea*, a sympathetic reader like Rachel there is still a limited amount they can read [about those asylum seekers’ experiences and traumas: “complex narratives that lurk behind the apparently readable exteriors”] even if they offer love and sympathy. That isn’t to say that one shouldn’t read, but rather to say to read humbly, modestly and cautiously, there is obviously a great deal more one can’t read. I remember when I was writing *By the Sea* these issues of telling the stories of asylum seekers or migrants, they were all doing it. [...] it was very much relevant to some of the things you were seeing happening, the ways of appropriating other people’s narratives and delivering them in a certain homogenised fashion or a certain categorising fashion [...]. There were several things going on at the same time, at least in that respect, of what you think you can read and what is actually available behind that. I think *By the Sea* was an attempt to do just that [explore different ways of reading]. (279-80)

Gurnah’s point shows his representations in *By the Sea* and the stories of the characters (and their cultural productions) to falling into the framework that, despite their attempts, cannot always be read as “cultural strategies that can make a difference [...]:

those that can make a difference and can shift the dispositions of power” (Hall, “What Is This ‘Black’” 86). Therefore, although Rachel is a sympathetic and hospitable listener of Saleh’s stories in *By the Sea*, there are many instances where hospitality gives way to hostilities in the contact zones.

In this novel, the homing desire and search for new identities and subjectivities are, to some extent, formed through Saleh and Latif’s interaction and narration of their stories. Concerning the immigrant identities in Gurnah’s fiction, Hand refers to the “alienation and loneliness that emigration can produce and the soul-searching questions it gives rise to about fragmented identities and the very meaning of ‘home’” (“Becoming Foreign” 39). Saleh and Latif gain a homely sense of understanding of and sympathy for each other’s traumas in life after sharing their stories. Saleh recounts this situation:

‘I have tired you,’ he [Latif] said gently. I struggled not to weep at the respite he offered me, even if only for the moment. Feeble, after all. When I looked up it was to see him wearing a strained smile on his face, and I thought he was in need of some respite too. ‘It must have tired you to have to listen to me say some of those things,’ I [Saleh] said. ‘It must have been very unpleasant.’ (BTS 193)

In this relationships, as Steiner notes: “[h]ome is to be found in practices rather than in a particular locality” (23).

Other than Saleh and Latif’s growing fraternity, *By the Sea* also portrays encounters between these two characters and people from the host culture, which depict willingness to know and thus traces of positive hospitality. The relationship between Saleh and Rachel is of this kind, as she visits Saleh on a regular basis and listens to his stories, which “gives [him] comfort” (BTS 1) and helps him cope with his new lonely condition as a refugee in England. Rachel’s visits have helped him “remember courtesies and care, have brought me [him] affection and allowed me the opportunity to be affectionate in return. [...] her visits have done me good” (*ibid* 202). Another case in point is reflected in the novel’s portrayal of Latif’s relationship with his German host in Dresden, a pen-friend Jan and his mother, Elleke, herself a refugee in GDR from Czechoslovakia. As he reveals, Latif’s visit to Jan and Elleke is shaped in

his mind by “the pleasure they [Jan and Elleke] took in their hospitality” (*ibid* 135). The fact that Elleke washes Latif’s wounded foot when he visits them for the first time at their home in Dresden can be read as a remarkable example of unconditional hospitality. Even though Elleke tells Latif stories about her time as a colonial in Kenya, she does so without compromising Latif’s feelings and honor, which is shown by the fact that, in his own narrative, Latif does not refer to any offense. Finally, although they are from different cultural backgrounds, their relationship proves to be better than Latif and his parents. In fact, it can be said that these friendships are shared irrespective of nationality and race.

In addition to depicting these friendly relationships, in its depiction of physical spaces, *By the Sea* also illustrates and suggests that the coastal areas are more hospitable than the other places (Samuelson 87). The juxtaposition of these spaces with inhospitable spaces mentioned above testifies this notion: Saleh’s college friends, Jamal Hussein and Sefu Ali, who were from the mainland and the coast respectively (*BTS* 175-6) – with whose families Saleh stays for a while after finishing college and before returning home – show how discrepant they are in offering their hospitality. Saleh describes the places far from the coast through their poor qualities of hospitality. In contrast, the coast and the metaphor of the moving water create a more hospitable space. Saleh even tells Rachel that he will be “well [...] Here by the sea. In the little flat” (*ibid* 68). That is why Saleh describes his return to the coast after three years of being away for college in this way:

Being back on the coast was like being back at home, or more than that, like recognizing that here I had a place in the scheme of things. [...] Back on the coast, I felt part of something generous and noble after all, a way of living that had a part for me and which I had been too hasty in seeing as futile raggedness. (*BTS* 175)

This description of the coast as a hospitable space gives Saleh a sense of belonging where he has a “part” that identifies him. Even the island detention center near Zanzibar, where Saleh was kept before being transferred to the mainland prison, was less hostile. It is depicted as a space where the detainees were allowed to walk around the island, and even their cells were not locked down during the nights. The fact that

they can chat with the warden and the other soldiers also indicates their freedom and communication. The warden is shown to express “his welcome,” which, according to Saleh, is “as if we [the detainees] were longed-for guests that he was happy to see at last” (*ibid* 222). He even offered Saleh the chance to leave with the Omani detainees and be free (*ibid* 225). This quality of hospitality attributed to coastal places and their juxtaposition with hostile inland places and people also indicates the possibility of resistance, redefinition, and fluidity in such spaces. As Paul Gilroy remarked in *Black Atlantic*:

The fluidity and flux of the sea across which cultures, peoples and politics move have been appropriated as dynamic tropes of the restlessness, provisionality, adaptability and itinerant character of diasporic (especially black) cultures. In representing diasporic cultures in terms of transatlantic routes and in opposition to the sedentary politics of oppositional nationalist political movements, Gilroy recast aquatic metaphors as figuring the enabling political and cultural possibilities of ‘creolisation, métissage, mestizaje, and hybridity.’ (Gilroy 2, qtd. in McLeod 163)

Nevertheless, the qualities of fluidity and flux and hospitable spaces, where storytelling is “a medium for tracing along the littoral and enabling passage between distant places, rendering the sea a connective tissue rather than divisive element” (Samuelson 79), vanish when in the post-independence Zanzibar, the entries become regulated through customs, with Faru (Saleh’s former assistant) as a “bawab” or gate-keeper officer (*BTS* 207). Faru’s gate-keeping pinpoints the inhospitality of the post-independence, post-revolution Zanzibari state; Faru’s reputation as an unforgiving and menacing brute (*BTS* 100), further connotes the hostilities inflicted upon people after the revolution.

Another prominent example for offering hospitality is Hussein’s lodging with Latif’s family, when Rajab Shaaban, in a hospitable manner, arranges for Hussein to stay in a room in his house (*BTS* 82). Nevertheless, *By the Sea* shows the reversal of the roles of the guest and the host as Hussain later betrays this bond of trust, and the host becomes the hostage of the guest. He seduces the son of the house, Hassan, and even the wife, Asha becomes, in a way, his hostage (Derrida, *The Principle of Hospitality* 9) by offering herself to him in demand to leave her son alone (*BTS* 93). In fact, Asha’s

subordinating herself to Hussein, caused by the son's malice, leads us to the discussion, in the following section, of hospitality toward female characters in Gurnah's fiction.

### **3.4 (In)hospitality and Women**

In *By the Sea*, the representation of inhospitality, partly through shaped relationships and shared stories, is primarily based on dominant stereotypical and patriarchal images and marginalization of female characters. Although Gurnah, through the accounts of the narrator characters, undermines xenophobic inhospitality's general binary beliefs, a reading of the narrative at the intersections of gender and social status indicates the dominance of patriarchal and imperial discourses and practices in place. These powerful male discourses, which perpetuate imperial narratives, inflict exclusion and violence on female characters in the novel by defining them in stereotypical ways through their wives, body and sexuality, domestic roles, and sometimes gullibility. Such representations open up the space for the argument that Gurnah's narratives in general, and *By the Sea* in particular, are not hospitable to the narratives produced by and about the female characters. The argument is based on the notion of hospitality in Gurnah's fiction, which will also be thoroughly analyzed regarding the representation of female characters in other two novels studied in this thesis, i.e., *The Last Gift* and *Gravel Heart*. In this section, *By the Sea*'s representation of female characters and their stories, as well as their narrative agency within Gurnah's fiction, are the focus of attention.

It can be suggested that in Gurnah's fiction, women are represented through the strands mentioned above, i.e., through their wives, body and sexuality, domestic roles, and gullibility. Besides, women's narratives are marginalized by dominant patriarchal discourses, and in case they are heard, it is only through those motifs. From among the ten novels of Gurnah, only *Dottie* (1990) is narrated through a female narrator's perspective. As such, the female characters' voice is sacrificed to shore up the male narratives. The inhospitality of Gurnah's narrative toward female characters puts them in the position of the unvoiced subaltern. This way of representing female characters,

one being their roles in the narrative, and the other, related to the stories they share, question the (extent of) agency granted to female characters in Gurnah's novels.

The representation through the strands mentioned above in *By the Sea* starts with women's quotidian role. The female characters' relationship with home and homemaking is prominently sketched out in the novel, and their role in maintaining home politics is significant. Felicity Hand regards women in *By the Sea* as restoring order; in her words, "it is the women who will put things straight and get the nation on its feet again" ("Untangling Stories" 84), where the family is an allegory for the nation. Numerous examples of women solving the issues in *By the Sea* may testify to Hand's point. After the enmity between Saleh and Rajab Shaaban reaches its highest point when Saleh decides to get Shaaban's house – which was agreed between Shaaban and Hussein as a security to Hussein's doing business for him, it is Asha (*BTS* 209), Shaaban's wife, who puts Saleh in jail through her relationship with the influential political figure, the Minister of Development and Resources (*ibid* 108, 210, 211). Although it can be argued that she gets the power and agency to ruin Saleh's life by sending him to prison and causing his family to perish after he was sent away, it is notable that her agency comes through her sexuality. In her book, *Woman's Body, Woman's Words* (1991), Fedwa Malti-Douglas points to the role of woman's sexuality in the most notable of the narratives, one of which is *A Thousand and One Nights* stories (15-28) and other fairy tales which are alluded to in *By the Sea* (230). Asha's description by Latif is apt here to indicate her representation through her body and sexuality:

In the afternoon when my mother was dressed to go out, her eyes glowing and lined with kohl, her lips gleaming like wet blood, I looked at her with pride and a kind of fear. [...] My mother took lovers. She slept with other men. Not professionally, not in numbers. Perhaps only one or two. (*BTS* 80)

Throughout the narrative, her wife and sexuality are at the forefront. As discussed above, she even uses her sexuality in offering herself to Hussein in lieu of her son to save Hassan from lustful Hussein (*ibid* 160), which is described by Latif in her losing "respect for herself" (*ibid* 164).

Gurnah's narrative, through excessive sexual allusions, suggests the objectification of the female characters. By reducing their role to that of the sexual object in the powerful machinery of the political events leading to Saleh's imprisonment, *By the Sea* underrepresents women occupying different positions simultaneously and do not allow them to negotiate through other possible perspectives of identification. This sexuality is the only position from which the women can enunciate their identity in the power relations as they are always waiting, "proving and ripening until a man came to ask for her [them]" (*BTS* 148). A pertinent example of the invisibility of women is expressed through Saleh's perception of what happened to the girls in his hometown: "[a]t a certain age they [girls] disappeared into the house, and then you forgot what they looked like, you forgot they existed, until they reappeared years later as brides and mothers" (*ibid* 146). Previously, Saleh, as a child at school, expresses his lack of knowledge about the girls being absent at school for some time, only to mean that they had been married, "[m]arried off, married by, done to" (*ibid* 36). Saleh's words show how the patriarchal codes have restricted female agency and how terrible it is to be a woman in that hostile society: "I [Saleh] try to imagine what that would have felt like. I imagine myself a woman, feeble with unuttered justification, unutterable. I imagine myself defeated" (*ibid*). Saleh's empathic description also not only indicates the inhospitality of his homeland to women to the extent of their non-existence but also emphasizes their lack of narrative agency in negotiating their identity, which he regards as "unutterable."

The other female characters in *By the Sea* also get their share of inhospitalities. Bi Maryam and Bi Sara (with "her reputation for disposing of husbands" [*BTS* 182]), the two sisters, the former being Saleh's stepmother, are portrayed through their gullibility (Bi Maryam fooled by Saleh [*ibid* 192]), and the patriarchal Islamic codes which tie them to home after their husbands die to mourn for nearly four months (*ibid* 187). This bereavement does not allow Bi Maryam to do business, which causes the loss of her former husband's wealth, except for the house put in her name, which Saleh finally inherited after her death. Women are subalterns compared to their male counterparts, whose very existence is defined through domestic roles specified for them. In Saleh's story of Bi Maryam's first husband's mother, the fact that marriage after the death of

the husband is regarded as “a way of giving her protection and respectability” and that “she had no choice but to accept, as she saw no other way to clothe her shame and abandonment” (*ibid* 179), very well indicates how degraded women are in that context and how they are treated in an inhospitable manner in those spaces. These patriarchal rules marginalize women, and their narrative as lack of perspective equals a lack of voice and agency for these female characters. As regards Elleke, a character from both colonial and later refugee background, it can be argued that she can also be regarded as a subaltern figure who is the victim of inhospitalities and abandonment by her only family left, i.e., her son Jan. As narrated by Latif, Jan and Latif run away with Elleke’s life savings to get out of GDR, tour Europe, and possibly never return.

The inhospitality of the narrative to female voices and stories can be tracked down through another connotation of the concept of homemaking mentioned previously. Newns remarks that since homemaking does not generate any “creativity” for its repetitiveness, it can be considered as “operations of patriarchy” and, thus, as “obstacles to women’s liberation” (291, 294). However, she contends that storytelling in the face of homelessness for the refugees and immigrants can be read as a form of homemaking, giving agency to the storyteller. Newns regards Latif’s allusion to his mother’s oral stories as empowering women’s role (294). Nevertheless, I want to suggest that Asha has no significant agency compared with her male peers in the novel. That is because the stories referred to are fictional, like the ones shared by Scheherazade in the *Nights*, and also, Asha is never mentioned to tell her life story – neither narrated by herself nor by Latif – as the reader has no access to the inventory of her experience.

Although it can be asserted that representing women in Gurnah’s narrative in this way indicates the brutalities that inflicted women in the patriarchal and inhospitable society of Zanzibar, it does not give them agency to challenge the certainties of patriarchal and religious codes. Eventually, as subaltern figures, the women’s negotiation of spaces is dramatically restricted throughout *By the Sea*, and they bear inhospitality in their home communities and Gurnah’s narrative. Inhospitality to female narrative voices and stories, and depicting them through certain inhospitable discourses as

discussed above, undermine the multiculturalism of voices and the polyphony of Gurnah's fiction which are at the forefront of his authorial claim.

### **3.5 Findings**

In this chapter, Gurnah's representation of hospitality in the multicultural context of his novel *By the Sea* by implementing narrative objects, sociopolitical references, and literary intertextualities, the representation of the relationships between the characters, and the representation of women and their narratives were discussed. It is suggested that sharing one's stories and communicative interactions in hospitable spaces are, as Newns puts it, "a means of creating a sense of home in the face of material homelessness" (509). This sense of home, and together with that negotiation of identity and subjectivity, can be created by offering one's hospitality and homelessness by lack thereof. Thus, the material homelessness can be amended through hospitable dialogic and inter-subjective relationships and stories shared by the characters who have been othered and alienated and whose stories and discourses have been subordinate to the powerful discourses. These powerful discourses have been depicted in the form of references and allusions to the exclusory discourses of European colonialism and African nationalisms, which are inhospitable to subaltern resistances and negotiations of spaces by silencing those narratives.

## CHAPTER 4

### NEGOTIATIONS OF HOSPITALITY AND NARRATIVE AGENCY IN *THE LAST GIFT*

#### 4.1 Introduction

*The Last Gift* (2011), Abdulrazak Gurnah's eighth novel, recounts the story of Abbas, an immigrant from Zanzibar, and his family in England during the early 2000s. The novel also relates his earlier story in colonial Zanzibar in the 1950s, which he has kept secret from the family for over thirty years. Although temporarily and linguistically disabled by a diabetic stroke, which launches the narrative, Abbas feels the urge to share his story with his wife and children. The "gift" of the title, also suggested by Chambers (2011), refers to Abbas's story, which provides his wife and children with the knowledge of his past and his and the children's origins. This secret story is the account, during the 1940s and 50s, of his childhood, followed by his marriage and abandoning his wife Sharifa with an unborn child, which was caused by the feeling of being fooled into a marriage with a woman he guessed might have been pregnant with someone else's child before marrying him. Abbas thought that his hasty marriage to Sharifa was, in fact, to save her from shame and dishonor. This secret account arouses temporary disdain and hostility in his family members but eventually elicits their sympathy for him (*LG* 194, 262).

The novel also narrates the story of Abbas's family members, Maryam (his wife), Anna/Hanna<sup>19</sup> (his daughter), and Jamal (his son). Maryam had been left on the steps of a hospital in Exeter a couple of days after birth in the 1950s. She was passed from one foster family to another – five foster families until the age of seventeen – until she

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<sup>19</sup> Hanna changes her name to Anna. In this chapter, it will be referred to as Anna for the sake of consistency.

finally eloped with the thirty-four-year-old Abbas. She had been unable to cope with her last foster family due to problems caused by an attempted rape by a relative of that family. In the present time frame of the narrative, i.e., sometime in the early 2000s, the daughter Anna is twenty-eight in the story, teaches English at a school, and has recently moved in with her English boyfriend Nick, whose family are from a former colonial background. The son Jamal is twenty-six, doing a Ph.D. research on “migration trends and policies in the European Union” (LG 86) at the University of Leeds. As the novel’s events proceed, he starts a romantic relationship with one of his flat-mates, Lena, an Irish-Italian woman.

Claire Chambers’ remarks on *The Last Gift* recognize and identify the novel’s concerns. She notes that

The author explores signature concerns relating to filiation and affiliation, race and racism, migration, memory, ageing, intergenerational tensions, gender, and storytelling. However, this novel is unique among Gurnah’s novels in offering commentary on recent socio-political events, including 9/11, the 2003 Iraq War and associated demonstrations, and violence against the Palestinians. It is also strong on the internalization of racist discourse by the younger generation, British-born children of migrants. [...] Clearly visible beneath this patina of multiple clandestine narratives, Gurnah has created a novel replete with black humour, contemplative politics, and great generosity. (no page)

Unlike *By the Sea* and *Gravel Heart*, which deal with refugees and first-generation immigrants, *The Last Gift* addresses broader immigrant life issues and different generations of immigrants in England. In comparison to *By the Sea*, there are more inter-cultural relationships in this novel and, for that matter, more entanglements as regards negotiations of hospitality between home and host culture concerning the different generations of the immigrants. In addition to the interactions and relationships between people from diverse racial, ethnic, class, and gender backgrounds, cross-generational contacts between people of the same race and ethnicity are also foregrounded. In this chapter, these relationships are studied through the notions of hospitality and multiculturalism introduced in Chapter Two to probe into these characters’ negotiation of identity, belonging, and narrative agency in their families and the societies of home/hostland.

*The Last Gift* is a sequel to Gurnah's earlier novel, *Admiring Silence* (1996). *The Last Gift* relates the unrevealed story of the escapee of *Admiring Silence*. The two novels' events are parallel to some extent, especially in terms of the time setting, although not in the same spatial settings, never bringing the two novels' characters together. *Admiring Silence* does not recount the unnamed narrator's father's whereabouts – i.e., Abbas (also the father in *The Last Gift*), with whom the reader becomes acquainted in the sequel. As suggested by Kaigai, the story of *The Last Gift* “is constructed [sic] such a way that it intersects with the one in *Admiring Silence* through the ‘metanarrative’ of father and son, both of whom try to recuperate memory in their separate attempts to search for identity and belonging in what the texts present as inhospitable environments” (116).

*The Last Gift* divides Abbas's life story into the periods of past and present – although not chronologically structured in the text: the stories remembered and recounted of the time before he escaped from Zanzibar (the 1950s), and also the time after, i.e., the long years at sea as a sailor, followed by the time of his settlement to a stable life in England (the 1970s) and his current situation after suffering two strokes followed by a third stroke which ends his life (the 2000s). The reader views the story through all the four central characters' focalizations, i.e., Abbas, Maryam, Anna, and Jamal. The four characters' consciousnesses are narrated by an omniscient narrator – extra-diegetic hetero-diegetic in Rimmon-Kennan's narratological terminology (1983) – using the stream of consciousness technique to reveal and move between the different perspectives of these characters, connecting the stories of the four characters in a polyphony, which makes a whole of the novel's main storyline. Furthermore, these focalizers comment on one another's behaviors and actions, criticize them and pass judgments where necessary, which help the reader see them from the other characters' perspectives. As suggested by Okungu, the novel is “[Gurnah's] application of implied authors in the form of multiple narrators, [a] technique [which] helps to draw readers in to his texts” (Okungu IV).

As explained in the theory and the previous chapter, Jacques Derrida's concept of hospitality can be used to delineate the relationships in the multicultural home/hostland

represented in Gurnah's novels. In *The Last Gift*, as in *By the Sea* and *Gravel Heart*, interactions between the concepts of hospitality and multiculturalism encode the types of relationships created and maintained between the characters – and also between the characters and states (home/hostland) – as they go through negotiations and translations of their identity and narrative agency. Hospitality underlies the acceptance and inclusion or denial and exclusion of narratives of the characters into mainstream and powerful discourses, as it does regarding the inclusion and/or exclusion of the characters' into host circles. Furthermore, hospitality applies to both narrative and metanarrative levels of acceptance regarding the represented lives of the characters – especially female characters – and the stories that the characters are allowed to tell at the textual level of the novel. In other words, hospitality goes beyond the multicultural contexts of the novel and encompasses the text's inclusion of specific narratives. In light of this argument, the analysis also hopes to lay bare the novel's poetics to represent itself and its characters as resisting powerful discourses in negotiating hospitality, spaces, and identities.

As the novel deals with different periods of time and closely related issues engaging different generations in the grip of societal and familial entanglements, this chapter is divided into three sections. The first section studies the representations of hospitality in macro-spaces through sociopolitical events affecting the characters' lives and the characters' negotiations of narrative voice and identity in those spaces and also through the text's poetics (still with reference to Boehmer's use of the word). Unlike the chapters discussing *By the Sea* and *Gravel Heart*, however, there is no section in this chapter dealing with literary intertextualities of *The Last Gift*, not because there are no such intertexts in this novel, but because of their less significant role in shaping the thematic and analytic perspectives of the novel. The second part focuses on hospitality concerning the micro-space of the family and interpersonal, societal relationships between the characters. It analyzes the enunciation of identity through the negotiation of narrative agency in the interrelationships between the characters at the familial and societal levels. The last section discusses the narrative's hospitality to women and female characters and their narratives and narrative agency within the novel's text.

## 4.2 (In)hospitality in Macro-Spaces

As mentioned earlier, this chapter analyzes processes of negotiating identity and narrative agency in *The Last Gift* to see how such negotiations can challenge dominant and powerful discourses of knowledge in the novel by reading multiculturalism through hospitality. References to sociopolitical issues such as the 9/11 bombings in the USA (2001), the War on Iraq in 2003, and allusions to the Palestinian Intifadas (1987, 2000) and the Bosnia-Serbia War (1992-95) adds political specificity and contributes to the realism of the novel's fictional representation of hospitality and hostility toward foreigners and immigrants, and especially immigrants from Muslim backgrounds. *The Last Gift*, with a specific interest in these sociopolitical events, furthermore portrays Abbas and his family in circumstances where conservative politicians presented foreigners and migration as responsible for "bringing about a loss of European identity" (Lamont in Allen 18),<sup>20</sup> and labor politicians were no less inhospitable, suggesting that immigrants were "'swamping' our [British/English] schools" (Blunkett in Allen 15).<sup>21</sup> Such discussions revived the Thatcherite discourses of almost twenty or thirty years before the time setting of Gurnah's novel. In fact, according to Christopher Allen, such notions and commentaries caused the "development and transition of the 'new racist' ideologies of the early 1980s" (Allen 16), as shown in the inhospitable sociopolitical environment sketched out in *The Last Gift*. Mentions of Abbas watching the news of the wars in Bosnia and Iraq (*LG* 29, 120-1), together with direct references to the then-current political events, position hospitality in the relationships between the characters and their lives in the political macro-spaces which encompass and affect the everyday micro-spaces they occupy. *The Last Gift* also illustrates the tensions created by these macro-contexts in these characters' lives, which are also intensified by the cross-generational differences, i.e., between Abbas and his children. Moreover, the depiction of the micro-space of

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<sup>20</sup> Norman Lamont, former Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer: "Down with Multiculturalism." *Daily Telegraph*, 8 May 2002.

<sup>21</sup> David Blunkett, Center-left Home Secretary in Arun Kundnani: "'Stumbling On': Race, Class and England." *Race & Class*, vol. 41, no. 4, 2000; Arun Kundnani, "From Oldham to Bradford: The Violence of the Violated." *Race and Class*, vol. 43, no. 2, 2001.

the family parallels that of macro-space through sociopolitical issues and their impact on the hospitality in the relationships between family members and their English peers from non-immigrant families and people in the hostland. This section concentrates on hospitality politics in macro-spaces and the characters' negotiation of belonging and identity through their narrative agency and resistance in light of the sociopolitical references and allusions in *The Last Gift*.

The body of literature on the 9/11 attacks in 2001, which is the main sociopolitical context of the novel (*LG* 121), can illuminate *The Last Gift's* concerns. Tahir Abbas (in 2004) found that "Just as present-day Islamophobia relies on history to fill in the substance of its stereotypes, the contemporary fear of Muslims has its own idiosyncratic features connecting it with the more recent experiences of colonialism, decolonization, immigration, and racism" (Abbas 29). Allen, similarly argued that Islamophobia in the United Kingdom was intensified following the 9/11 attacks, which gave it a "newer and possibly more prevalent societal resonance and acceptability" (2). Such views led to a general disregarding of "the UN's recognition of this problem [Islamophobia]" a few years earlier (*ibid*). This new wave of Islamophobia regarded immigrants as a threat and as the "enemy within" (Abbas 30), who "through high birth rates, asylum seekers, and proliferating immigration, were insidiously attempting to infiltrate and conquer Europe" (Allen 8). Concerning the Muslims' situation and how they were identified by the non-immigrant people in the hostland, Allen's study concludes that:

Those post-9/11 reificationary processes have both "newly established" and "reestablished" Muslims as chimerical "Others," drawing upon recent events as well as the legacy of anti-Muslimism endemic to the wider European setting. Consequently, since 9/11 British Muslims have found themselves increasingly identified in predetermined and bipolar ways, and, more dangerously, have to do the same in terms of self-definition as well. As Ziauddin Sardar has suggested, Muslims are now identified as either "terrorists" warring against the West or "apologetics" defending Islam as a peaceful religion. (Allen 10)

Similarly, the situation could also have been exacerbated by the 7/7/2005 London bombings that happened soon after the publication of these articles, but six years before that of Gurnah's novel, although not compatible with the latest time setting

within the novel, which is sometime in September of 2003. As explained in detail above, the current historical setting of *The Last Gift* promotes Islamophobia, and thus, inhospitality in reaction to the 9/11 attacks. As noted by Allen, “Muslim communities have expressed their concern not only about the climate of hostility, but also about the way in which their lives and communities are increasingly framed in terms of problematization and criminalization” (20). The 9/11 also exacerbated the affected groups’ circumstances by hostilities and other reactionary and incendiary attacks, like attacks to a mosque in Exeter after the 9/11, “where seven pig heads were impaled on spikes outside of a mosque and what was purported to be pigs’ blood was smeared over its outside and entrance” (Allen 4). References to the occupation of Iraq and demonstrations against it also emphasize inhospitality in existence and practice of Islamophobia and anti-immigrant sentiments in the novel’s setting. The picture sketched out in this novel does not resemble McLeod’s representation of postcolonial London society in the 1990s and 2000s and the literary works produced therein, for McLeod presents a generally optimistic view of the future and literary works as instances of resistant literature. McLeod’s *Postcolonial London*, published in 2004, does not cater to Islamophobia and its aftereffects, that were intensified by the so-called 9/11 (2001) attacks in America, and thus, falls short of paying attention to immigrant and immigrant writers’ struggles in resisting such an inhospitable and dominant narrative. In the novel, however, Jamal’s envisioning of a post 9/11 world order is gloomy:

Those planes exploding into the towers, the hardheaded brutality of that act of terror, whatever its rationale, changed that [how safe he had believed the world they lived in to be]. He understood that such desperate acts of violence were the response of the weak against the strong, and that what made them repulsive was also part of their impact, their unpredictability, their indiscriminate destruction. Those planes exploding into the towers, and the deaths of three thousand people and near deaths of many others, released a rage and panic that would lead to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of other people, to the destruction of countries, to mass arrests, to tortures, to assassinations and to more acts of terror. He did not know this as he watched the images and listened to the stories, but he knew that retribution would follow because that was what it meant to be a powerful state, and that what was to come would be worse than what they were looking at. (*LG* 122-3)

Through Jamal's perspective, the novel shows the realization that the acts of terrorism, "desperate acts of violence," from the position of the subordinate and the powerless, are in reaction to the existence and perpetuation of wars and terrorist activities in the countries of the powerless people. Nevertheless, Jamal also knows that the state responses to terrorism will eventually lead to state terrorism against the powerless and that the circumstances for many foreigners living in those powerful and enraged states will deteriorate. Tahir Abbas's study also predicted such hostile responses. After explaining the status quo at the time of his writing, he claims that British Muslims' status in relation to "community cohesion, citizenship, and multicultural philosophy" (34) will be questioned. Abbas goes on to remark that:

In the near future, as western targets may well become increasingly targeted by extremist groups, relations between Muslims and their western hosts will continue to remain problematical, with discussions focusing on citizenship, civil society, multiculturalism, and political representation and participation (as components of democracy), and identity, gender, inter-generational development, radicalism versus liberalism (as components of the individual). (Abbas 34-5)

Abbas' point includes different political and social realms of civil life, where inhospitality through denial or problematization of individual as well as social rights will be observed. This situation, undermining multiculturalism and its practice, aligns with the depiction of multicultural English (macro-)spaces in *The Last Gift* where, for instance, segregations at school – even before the 9/11 – indicate the inhospitality of the state toward its immigrant and foreign citizens. For instance, the hostland's inhospitality, which creates an unhomely feeling, is evident when Anna and Jamal are excluded from Christianity-related activities at school as Anna remembers:

The teachers did little to make it easy for the Muslim children, keeping them together in one class while the Nativity play or the harvest festival went on in the hall. They [the Muslim students] were the awkward squad, and the school did not mind them knowing that they were. (*LG* 113)

Coming from a Muslim background, Abbas and his family – as mentioned earlier – become prone to religious discriminations and exclusions in addition to the tacit and explicit racism they have endured on the basis of their race, such as Jamal's experience of racism at a local store, which makes him feel insecure (*ibid* 119). Such divisions

shape the first-and second-generation immigrants' lives and consciousness in *The Last Gift*, as the text shows through Anna and Jamal's feelings of unbelonging and alienation. For example, Jamal "could not quite make himself say *home*, when he meant England" (*ibid* 47; emphasis in original). As the text indicates, Jamal never felt connected to his birthplace (England), and his academic position, especially the subject of his Ph.D. study, intensified this feeling:

That feeling – that there was something to be ashamed of – had been with him most of his life, even when he did not know of its presence and had only slowly begun to understand its several causes. It added to the sense of difference and oddness that he had grown up with, a sense of strangeness. He had learned to recognize that feeling in many ways, and not just in response to hostility and unkindness and the teasing at school. He saw it in the stilted and careful smiles he received from some of the mothers of other children he knew, in the way people tried hard to prevent him from noticing that they had seen something to notice, in the ingenuous and sometimes insistent and cruel questions the children asked about his country and its customs. It was years before he learned to say *this is my country*, and it was Hanna who taught him to say that. (*LG* 45; emphasis in original)

In fact, England is the only place Maryam, Anna and Jamal have the right to call their homeland because of being born and raised there. Gurnah breaks down the distinction between homeland and hostland and problematizes the connotation of homeland as a hospitable space, as these three main characters are alienated within the land of their birth, and treated as the Other. That is why, after 9/11, living in England becomes more difficult for Abbas's family, especially for Anna and Jamal, who have a vague knowledge of their father's origins, and for whom the inhospitable silences and untold stories of their parents (for their mother does not know where her birth parents came from) leave them with only an ambiguous or at least unresolved sense of racial and national identity. Evidently, Maryam does not have a straightforward story of her beginnings, either; but the conditions are more unwelcoming for Anna and Jamal, who have more social interactions in the aftermath of 9/11, and are trying to negotiate their subjectivity and consciousness through their narrative agency. These feelings are aggravated by a series of hostile events at familial and societal levels (discussed in the following sections). Sesay notes, in *Write Black, Write British* (2005), about the second-generation immigrants that: "they are reminded constantly that they are 'not of

here' even though they believe and feel that they are" (Sesay 16). For Maryam, this has been compounded by constant rejections from foster families, but in marrying Abbas she has found a sort of surrogate immigrant identity. As explained in detail below, the case with her children Anna and Jamal is more acute, for they are persistently pestered by questions regarding their origins and home country.

*The Last Gift*'s incorporation of narratives related to religion and its entanglement with 9/11 indicate the significance of the then-current political and religious background in shaping hostilities and exclusions toward Muslim populations, immigrants, asylum-seekers, refugees, and their descendants. Regarding these characters in his novels, in an interview with Tina Steiner, Gurnah notes that these hostilities need not solely be the racial issues, but it might justifiably be on account of religion, "not in the sense of practice, but in the sense of cultural belonging" (163). He sets the example:

Being a Muslim in this current climate is not easy for her [Anna]. She changes her name, she doesn't know why. She doesn't discuss it. But there are various ways in which she wants to distance herself. Jamal attempts to analyze this a little bit. There are various ways in which she wants to distance herself from this mess of her identity. Incidentally she's not the only one who's doing that. I have various people in *The Last Gift* who are in some ways also trying to evade their selves, obviously Abbas. (Gurnah, Interview with Steiner 163)

Unfortunately, Abbas's wife and children do not know people from their parents' places of origin, nor do they belong to any specific diasporic communities, and thus, it becomes almost impossible for them to feel any connection to non-English geographic roots. As a result, they can only, to a limited extent, take advantage of the limited comforts to be gained by sharing with other migrants "connections of some kind, [such as if] they come from the same country or know people in common" (Gurnah, Interview with Ruberto 278-9). As will be explained below, Jamal and Maryam, however, do turn to some diasporic communities with which they might find a "collective" but "heterogeneous cultural identity" (Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" 223), hoping to make the negotiation of their identities more manageable through the narratives they share in such communities. As regards the other two protagonists of the novel, Abbas manages to reconcile his past and present through his

narrative agency and sharing his stories of the past with his family, and especially with his hospitable listener, Maryam. This sharing, which happens after Abbas' second diabetic stroke, will be further discussed in the next section. As for Anna, despite her ambivalent and at times problematic relationship with the home/host culture and people, as well as with her family, and especially her father (discussed under familial and societal relationships), the novel presents her negotiations of identity through her recurrent dreams of a house, metaphorically connoting the house of her identity or her home/hostland (discussed below).

*The Last Gift*'s poetics play an essential role in delineating the narrative's perspective on and treatment of its embedded sociopolitical references and allusions. In the light of the sociopolitical references discussed above, hospitality and resistance will be studied concerning Gurnah's implementation of the concepts of home and silence as (in)directly affected by the sociopolitical events in macro-spaces. It will explore the specific ways certain physical and relational spaces and notions – i.e., home and silence, respectively – are represented to indicate how politics of hospitality and inclusion/exclusion are played out and how negotiations of identity and narrative agency through resistance to dominant (stereotypical) discourses are/not realized in Gurnah's fiction. Cited by Nasta, Gurnah's novels focus on the "people [including immigrants] who are in every respect part of a place, but who neither feel part of a place, nor are regarded as being part of a place" (*Writing Across Worlds* 352). By referring to belongingness, through Nasta's point, it can be said that the meaning of home is tied up with the hospitality of the home/hostland. Home and homely spaces and feeling, engendering hospitality, are the inevitable prerequisites for negotiating one's identity, which can be realized partly through narrative agency and communal interactions between people. In *The Last Gift*, apart from the unwelcome behavior and unhomely spaces, lack of interaction between people and silences cause feelings of inhospitality, unhomeliness, and unbelonging in those who are constantly marginalized. Thus, the homing desire and narrative agency get mutated in reaction to dysfunctional communicative processes, hindering social and cultural negotiations.

Spaces of home and homeliness are intertwined with the novel's representation of silence, which is rendered differently in macro- and micro-spaces. The latter point will be posited in the discussion of familial and societal relationships in this chapter. As regards the macro-spaces, Benita Parry, in "Speech and Silence in the Fictions of J. M. Coetzee,"<sup>22</sup> points to the equivocal connotations of silence in fiction, noting that: "Within the discussion of colonial and postcolonial discourse, silence has been read as a many-accented signifier of disempowerment and resistance, of the denial of subject position and its appropriation" (152). Following Parry, Okungu also regards silence in *The Last Gift* to be both an act of "selfempowerment [sic] and resistance" and, at other times, "disempowerment" (105). However, concerning the macro-spaces represented in *The Last Gift* and the characters' relationships in the society and their social entanglements, my argument opposes Parry's and Okungu's regarding the silences as a tool of self-empowerment and resistance. As depicted in this novel, silences are less an act of resistance than inhospitality, marginalization, and subalternity, the impacts of which are omnipresent in the micro-space of the intra-familial and interpersonal relationships given the evidence in the next section.

Home and homely spaces and silences therein, regardless of home/hostland, are differently portrayed and labeled for the four characters in *The Last Gift*, as these spaces are perceived in distinct ways by each. In Abbas's case, for example, England is the macro-space where his feeling of alienation and unhomeliness is prolonged even after his living there for a long time, making him feel like a stranger. Taking Abbas as that one character in *The Last Gift*, who suffers being the victim of (in)voluntary silences through inhospitalities in different physical and relational spaces, and who is shown to have a conscious perspective about the conflicting views of the home- and hostland, we can see how the novel represents his marginalization by silencing and paralyzing his narrative agency. It is depicted in the novel that his persistent feeling of alienation stems from the inhospitalities and his lack of addressees in the broader English society, should he decide to share his stories, as he reflects:

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<sup>22</sup> "Speech and Silence in the Fictions of J.M. Coetzee" is a chapter in *Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970-1995*.

They [his non-immigrant English counterparts] keep catching us out in our lies, our betters, hardly listening to the stories about our tolerant, smiling, harmonious ancient civilizations. That is what I would like to have told my children if I had spoken about that little place [Zanzibar]. That we lived together in peace, in a forbearing society built as only Muslims know how, even though among us were people of many religions and race. (LG 243)

By touching upon the silencing of Abbas's narratives, that how stories of the distant ex-homeland go unnoticed in the inhospitable hostland, and may even be considered as lies, Gurnah pinpoints the marginalization of certain narratives which might contradict, and thus resist, the long-held dominant stereotypical accounts and discourses accumulated and considered as truth – creating a “regime of truth” (Foucault, “Truth and Power” 133). Moreover, references to Muslims' intermingling with other races and religions in Zanzibar, in this quote, presents an idyllic picture of multiculturalism *vis-à-vis* the unhomely and inhospitable picture of interactive spaces between different ethnic groups (races and religions), and thus, the failure of multiculturalism in practice in England, as also depicted elsewhere in the novel.

*The Last Gift* sketches out inhospitable and unwelcome spaces, which silence and marginalize certain narratives even in the case of those immigrant/(descendants) characters who do not have a sense and consciousness about a homeland other than their current residential space of the hostland, to emphasize that this action of othering stems from racial and ethnic differences supporting stereotypical beliefs. For instance, for Maryam, Anna, and Jamal of the story, the concepts and the meaning of homeland and hostland are the same as these characters cannot be considered immigrants who have crossed borders, whose lack of knowledge about their roots makes this equation even more substantial in their case. In inhospitable spaces and through inhospitalities, they become alienated from the only place they can claim as their home and thus, are unable to negotiate their subjectivity as long as their narrative agency is restricted and their discourses unnoticed. This is the reason why Maryam feels estranged about how she is received, reflected in her conception of herself as a stranger even though she was born and raised in England (LG 242). Narrated by Abbas, the reader learns that:

After all these years, when she [Maryam] has known nowhere else, she still speaks of here [England] as a strange place. [...] This is the only place

in the world where she should not feel a stranger. She tells me that is how she felt all along, and now she feels like an old servant in a large household, allowed to go about her business so long as she is not a nuisance. (LG 242)

In addition to feelings of unbelonging and alienation, *The Last Gift* illustrates the living circumstances as even more disconcerting and alienating for immigrants and their descendants, exacerbated by the 9/11 frame narrative of this novel, as discussed earlier. It can be argued that, such representations of the feeling of exclusion, rooted in the racial and ethnic differences, which have not lost their significance and impact in the postcolonial home/hostland, are Gurnah's method of showing the failure of multiculturalism in these inhospitable spaces.

As discussed above, communal interactions emphasize the significance of hospitable community-based (including familial) dialogism, hence narrative agency, for (re)construction and negotiation of identity and creating a homely feeling. Also, as argued by Stuart Hall, the impact of diasporic community on the lives of people is considered to be paramount, especially in shaping their "collective identity" ("Cultural Identity and Diaspora") and, as Said pointed out, for the sake of "group solidarity" (Said, *Reflections on Exile* 382). Such spaces, McLeod notes, create "the possibilities of subaltern communities of support" (110). In this regard, it is imperative to study *The Last Gift's* attention to (immigrant/diasporic) communities and their impact on the characters' lives and negotiations of identity. This novel does not embed Abbas and his family in any specific diasporic community. The characters do not seem to belong to the immigrant community of a specific descent, such as the Zanzibari-British or Zanzibari-Muslim community. Friends and neighbors from the same or similar ex-colonial background are not mentioned. Nevertheless, although there are not many instances of diasporic environments and interactions in *The Last Gift*, specifically regarding Abbas' immigrant family, possible candidates for such spaces help see homing desire exercised and hospitality negotiated in those spaces. The instances are the Refugee Center where Maryam works, which accepts immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers from many different cultures, and the Islam Reading group Jamal attends, which is bonded, as its name suggests, around religion and not any particular immigrant community. Through communing daily with deracinated people, her work

at the refugee center encourages Maryam to probe her foster family about her birth parents, to reconcile with her past, and to get a sense of herself and her subjectivity, although neither the refugees nor the center itself is directly involved in these efforts.

Clifford notes that “*Community* can be a site both of support and oppression” (“Diasporas” 314). *The Last Gift* does not illustrate the oppression inflicted by the community as the characters do not belong to any specific communities. However, it portrays these two artificially created communities of support as extensions of some of the theoretical meanings of home for two of the characters, i.e., Maryam and Jamal. These communities help them think beyond their ambiguous immigrant identity, which has excluded them from other inclusive and hyphenated identities and cross-cultural hospitable and homely relationships. As Meher also notes regarding the concept of home in migrant/diasporic communities:

[In the situation of migration] Since “home” ceased to be a real place, feeling at home is essentially a subjective and culturally determined link to the imaginary [where] extended cultural boundaries enable the formation of new and pluralistic domestic and collective homes. As cultural boundaries expand, the idea of home admits instability into its assumed notion of purity and homogeneity. Home in any case of diasporic representation is always ambiguous and fluid. (Meher 155)

In this sense, it can be suggested that the play acted by the refugees and migrants from different countries and ethnic lineages at the end of *The Last Gift* has such effects. The Refugee Center helps other refugees reconnect with their homeland, and in a way, reinscribe their identities through this play. The unanimous chanting of a song at the end of the play, where “[t]heir [the actors and the audience] faces [...] glittered with smiles” (*LG* 70), proves the creation of a homely feeling not confined to the homeland. It thus shows a more inclusive definition of the concept of home and belonging.

As regards the Islam Reading group, in light of the 9/11 discussion above, Tahir Abbas’s point that, after 9/11, “identification with Islam is gaining strength among some members of this [immigrant] latest generation, both as a reaction to racist hostility as well as a desire to understand Islam in more precise detail” (Abbas 35),

seems apt. Jamal attends the Islam Reading group with political awareness to negotiate his identity with the religion he is “nominally part of” (LG 120). He recounts:

not so long after that first meeting came the 9/11 bombings in New York, and the wars that followed, which made knowing more imperative. He would have attended the group anyway, but now he did so with the need to hear different voices on what was happening in the world. (LG 121)

However, as Chambers points out, this group does not “foster radicalization, terrorism, repressed sexuality, and other clichés associated with young male Muslims; [...] Gurnah sidesteps such a predictable approach [cultural stereotype], making Jamal’s group a mundane (and humane) ‘talking shop’” (no page). Islam Reading Group opens new spaces for Jamal’s negotiation of identity through the discourses of religion he is entitled to through birth. Moreover, it sets a multicultural space hospitable to “different voices,” so Jamal can negotiate his subjectivity through diverse narratives and communicative relationships shaped by the Group.

Apart from the Islam Reading Group, *The Last Gift* creates other hospitable negotiative spaces where Jamal can exercise his narrative agency and narrate his father’s story; perhaps most significant among these, Jamal’s writing his father’s story gives him a voice and agency to resist the prevalent and often acceptable (stereotypical) knowledge surrounding the immigrants’ lives. This action of writing indicates “creativity and opportunity” (McLeod 80) in the face of voicelessness and silences. It implies that this “immigrant story,” as Jamal calls it (LG 279), is “yet to be written;” it is an act of “reinscription” (McLeod 80). As Rodriguez points out,

their [the immigrants’] displacement makes them create voices that will serve as a shield for their lack of place and identity. Eventually, they reconnect with their homeland either through redefinition, adoption of the Otherland, and/or the act of writing as a means of reclaiming what seems lost. (Rodriguez 107)

In this regard, by choosing Jamal as a future academic who writes his father’s story and studies migration movements to Europe, Gurnah emphasizes the intellectual’s role as “an agent in the world” (LG 85), and in representing the subaltern voices that cannot

otherwise be heard (Spivak 292, 307), even though there is no “expectation of having arrived at transforming knowledge” (LG 85), as Jamal reflects.

Nonetheless, although these instances indicate resistance even at a local level to how the immigrant lives are summarized and put into institutional and stereotypical powerful discourses, as Hall also notes, Gurnah renders the story’s power ambivalent as this recognition might not find hospitable listeners and get the opportunity to challenge dominant epistemologies and eventually be registered as valuable and significant pieces of discourse. As Hall reminds us, “what replaces invisibility is a kind of carefully regulated, segregated visibility [...] marginalized again by aggressive resistance to difference [...] and the return to grand narratives of history, language, and literature” (“What Is This ‘Black’” 87). An instance proving Hall’s point – also related to the novel’s incorporation of sociopolitical context – is the demonstrations, “[t]he march on 15 February 2003,” protesting the “justice of inflicting war on Iraq” (LG 125), which signify:

For Jamal, in any case, it [the demonstration] was a desperate yell of protest at the swell of ugly rhetoric that required him to be mute, that required his compliance with the violent designs of people whose goodwill he thoroughly doubted. Compliance, that was the vogue word of the time, and he did not want to comply. (LG 125)

Eventually, the outcome of those demonstrations shows the relevance of Hall’s point, as Jamal reports: “Bush and Blair took no notice, of course [...] and went right ahead with their war [Iraq war], [which] made Jamal wonder what it meant to be a citizen” (LG 125). Thus, *The Last Gift* remains equivocal in the representation of the activities of resistance which indicate inhospitality of the hostland through “compliance,” and power exerted through making the citizens passive and submissive. The novel questions the power gained through the “carefully regulated, segregated visibility,” (Hall, “What Is This ‘Black’” 87) achieved through literary productions or social demonstrations, in the society that constantly marginalizes subaltern voices and does not create hospitable spaces for the narration of margins’ accounts, nor the ability to challenge the discourses of power.

Home and homing desire, tied with the concepts of identity and hospitality, are also reflected in one of the central heterotopic symbolisms in *The Last Gift*. The novel illustrates Anna's negotiations of identity and hospitality through her dream, who has no memory of origin, unlike Abbas, and thus no conflicting narrative between homeland and hostland. *The Last Gift* portrays this dream of the house through the representation of space (of the house), making the house itself a representational space delineating various connotations regarding the notions of hospitality and identity. The novel describes Anna's dream, which can be taken as her subconscious and alternative negotiations of identity, as follows:

[S]he lived in a part of the house and the rest of it was a derelict, with sagging roof beams and creaking, half-rotten wooden windows. There was someone else in the house, not someone she saw, but who was there in the vicinity, just out of the frame. It was not Nick, or it wasn't most of the time. [...] It was not a house she recognized, even as a picture. Everything about it was unfamiliar. The ruined part was barnlike and empty, and visible from every part of the rest of the house. In a strange, unsettling way, she felt she was always visible to the dereliction as well, as if it was something living. That part of the house was brown, not a real colour but more like a colour of exhaustion. The paintwork was peeling, and its beams and bannisters leaned slightly from age and fatigue. Its dereliction was malign, watchful, accusing. [...] The dream sprawled for hours, and in it she was ridden with guilt. [...] she was lying to whoever was there listening to her. [...] she knew that they would not be able to rid the house of its malign decay or relieve her of her guilt. [...] She could not be sure that some suffering or pain had not occurred in that derelict house, or was not even occurring at that moment. (*LG* 89)

The house in the dream can connote the dreamer's metaphorical sense of a house of identity and belonging. It can also be read from the perspective of the hostland as home, creating a sense of home for the stranger others. Take the first connotation, the novel's incorporation of words relating to hopelessness and guilt may directly refer to Anna's portrayal in the narrative as negligent to her parents, whose sense of identity is not shaped or malformed in the light of exclusive ways of identifying herself as British (*LG* 119). The unfamiliarity and emptiness of the house connote the shallowness and foreignness of the house of individuality she has built for herself. The dream reveals and exacerbates Anna's perpetuating insecure feelings due to her second-generation female immigrant status. Her observation of her unbelonging is

reflected in her subconscious, despite her strenuous efforts to identify herself as British and even though there is no other place she could call home.

Regarding the second connotation, i.e., the hostland as home, the house's representation of space: derelict, sagging roof beams, brown colour, etc., plays out the inhospitality of this space as Gurnah tends to show inhospitable spaces as such. Therefore, in *The Last Gift*, like *By the Sea*, such houses become Gurnah's representational spaces for the concept and connotations of inhospitality. As Okungu also points out, Gurnah implements: "[...] symbolism [...] especially in the relationship between characters and (mis)use of the spaces they occupy, the significance of rot, filth and squalor in the said spaces as well as the use of irony, coincidences, silences and suppressions" (IV) to track down the inhospitality of those spaces. The house is a frightening and menacing derelict that reflects the house's inhospitality. This house can be the England she lives in, denying her the hospitality required to feel welcome and at home. In this light, it can be said that the hostland is illustrated as a derelict, showing how unhomely this space is. In the dream, a reference to her boyfriend may imply that he is a part of this inhospitable space, whose inhospitality is reflected in his relationship with Anna and his lack of interest in her recounting the dream after the dream was over, thus restricting her narrative agency.

On the other hand, as explicated by McLeod in *Postcolonial London*, another connotation of the derelict house may suggest "the kind of space where new inclusive ways of conceiving of identity might be built in which the relationship between so-called native and foreigner is recalibrated" (McLeod 80). The depiction of home, dereliction, and disordered houses and spaces, i.e., such representational spaces in Gurnah's fiction, may have similar connotations. Through Anna's dream thus, Gurnah conveys the shaken and challenged city spaces and English national identities portrayed in *The Last Gift*. Although the dream is shown to cause Anna distress at first and has a tone of disappointment through its reflection of dismal places with the symbolic brown color, it becomes the primary (subconscious) space where Anna can question her belonging in the inhospitable space. The dereliction, epitomizing England, shows new ways of associating with it and a new way of negotiating and

constructing identity in it, as in its last occurrence, the house in the dream is located by the sea, maybe somewhere in Zanzibar, where she can relate to her roots. This last occurrence induces a relatively positive and promising feeling, and by pinpointing positionality, maybe it also initiates Anna's change of attitude and position of enunciating her identity. It is narrated as follows:

Instantaneously she found herself on a terrace looking out to sea and to the town round the curve of the bay. A man spoke softly nearby, and when she turned to look she saw a dark-skinned young man sitting on a stool with his hands in a tub of washing. [...] Later, in the early hours before morning, she dreamed that she was riding a horse across a beautiful landscape of gentle hills and sheltered pasture, with the shadow of mountains in the far distance. (LG 206)

As also mentioned previously, McLeod, based on Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic* (1993), regarding London, argues that "images of water have proved vitally important in the cultural reimagining of notions of home, belonging and identity, as well as opening up new ways of identifying London's place on a larger transcultural map" (163). McLeod continues:

The fluidity and flux of the sea across which cultures, peoples and politics move have been appropriated as dynamic tropes of the restlessness, provisionality, adaptability and itinerant character of diasporic (especially black) cultures. In representing diasporic cultures in terms of transatlantic routes and in opposition to the sedentary politics of oppositional nationalist political movements, Gilroy recast aquatic metaphors as figuring the enabling political and cultural possibilities of "creolisation, métissage, mestizaje, and hybridity." (Gilroy 2, qtd. in McLeod 163)

Following the same line of argument, it can be said that the house's location in Anna's dream represents Gurnah's way of suggesting the fluidity of her identity. Since this last episode of the dream happens after Anna's knowledge of the father's secret story, it marks the beginning of her exceeding and resisting the rigidity of the exclusory parameters which defined her previously. This way of identification "substitutes national regard with transcultural travails," i.e., it defines her in more of "transcultural conjunctions" than through British exclusivism (McLeod 169).

In a more general approach to the images of water and the sea, concerning other characters of Gurnah's fictions, it can be said that as was the case with the coast and people from the coast in *By the Sea*, *The Last Gift* implements similar images of the water, the sea, and the coast to illustrate hospitality in these spaces. On the one hand, *The Last Gift*'s representation of spaces related to water and the sea – especially the Indian Ocean, as in *By the Sea*, indicate flux and fluidity, constant motion, and freedom as described by Abbas in his sea voyages, showing multiculturalism and *melangé*. On the other hand, in his recorded stories, Abbas relates the stories of his fourteen years at sea, sketching out the almost-unconditional hospitality he received in those places/spaces. He talks, for example, of when he met different people on his trips and was welcomed by them despite being a stranger (*LG* 253-61). The imagery of the water becomes Gurnah's poetic technique to depict space in parallel with the concepts of hospitality and multiculturalism and the fluidity and hybridity of identity and narratives. As Lavery notes:

The indeterminacy and ambivalence between 'solid' and 'seeming' is suggestive of the role which the representational space of the Indian Ocean plays in Gurnah's writing, serving to complicate and nuance representations of identity, race, power, home and history. His novels stage the problems of perspective through narrative position, of authority through dialogue, and of history through gaps and silences – produced by and producing Indian Ocean space. (Lavery 125)

In *The Last Gift*, the sea and the coast, as different houses, both become the tools for the "representation of space," and they also become "representational space" (Lavery 117). They become a representational space of hospitality, multiculturalism, inclusion, and multiculturalism in practice. In other words, these concepts become engraved in the depiction of water and the sea.

A point of departure from this section's discussion might be considering the relativity of the image of water in Gurnah's representations of space and representational space to be interlinked with the relativity of the relational spaces in *The Last Gift*'s depiction of micro-spaces such as familial and interpersonal societal relationships, discussed in the following. The concepts of the home and silence, as Gurnah's recurrent motifs in his fiction, not only represent the (in)hospitality of macro-space relationships, but also

(in)hospitality in the micro-space relationships and relational spaces, where through the narrative agency in the interactions or lack thereof, identities can/not be negotiated, and dominant discourses can/not be challenged.

### **4.3 (In)hospitality in Micro-Spaces**

The previous section of this chapter mainly focused on hospitality and multiculturalism depicted through sociopolitical allusions and references and, in their light, the poetics of home and silence in *The Last Gift*, affecting narrative agency and negotiations of identity. As discussed earlier in this chapter, these sociopolitical events affect hospitality in the macro-spaces and determine the position of characters in relation to the state (home or hostland). This section will show that those sociopolitical events impact the micro-space of the family and interpersonal, societal relationships and determine hospitality in the relationship between the characters – especially the immigrants and their descendants – and other characters, either non-immigrant hostland locals or other immigrants. Hospitality in these relationships in the form of mutual dialogic interactions, which require sharing intimacies and stories, is necessary to form a narrative agency to negotiate identity, subjectivity, and discourses. Therefore, this section concentrates on familial and interpersonal societal hospitality and relationships and how they help or hinder the characters' narrative agency and identification processes.

Incorporating sociopolitical issues and their impact on the hospitality of the home- and hostland in *The Last Gift* is accompanied by representations of the relationships, tensions, and conflicts in Abbas' families. The family plays like a microcosm of the societal events in the narrative, where the family members are trying to maintain their relationships in a friendly enough manner despite not always sharing or understanding each other's experiences. The inter-generational tensions are also portrayed to show the discrepancies in how the generations build consciousness around the ideas of belonging and alienation. *The Last Gift* illustrates that the issue of identity in the immigrant family is problematic. If we take Falk's view that, rather than the physical homeland, the institution of "family" is the space and base in and from which the self is narrated, even when a family is "global and trans-cultural" ("Subject and History"

27), then Abbas' families can be seen as the micro-spaces in which the narration of identity can be realized. In such conditions, as Kaigai notes: "dialogism may be seen as having a particular connection to identity politics" (114). However, as *The Last Gift* shows, this narration is hindered by inhospitalities and silences. This novel illustrates Abbas and his family's convoluted and often lacking communication, especially concerning Abbas' life before settling in England, frustrating the children's negotiation of identity through narrative impasses at the familial level. It can be argued that, in such an environment, Anna and Jamal become projections of uprooted displaced individuals – second-generation migrants, rather than first-generation Zanzibari-British people with hyphenated identities.

Gurnah shows the inhospitalities and alienations in relationships and spaces in Abbas' three different familial relationships sketched out in *The Last Gift*. Abbas' alienation is depicted, firstly, through his father Othman, the miser's house described as like a "labour camp" (*LG* 57), where he was the only one to go to school, thanks to his older brothers' insistence (*ibid* 61). The second inhospitable family space is his family and home with Sharifa, which he remembers through the "humiliation" he had to endure (*ibid* 140). It became the site of hostilities due to silences and lack of straightforward and guileless dialogue, which eventually drove him away. These environments escalate Abbas' escape to England, only to let him shape the third family space, where his prolonged inhospitable silences about his past cause his children's unsatisfied and unrealized sense of their individuality. Similarly, silence does not benefit Abbas as much as it has lasting and irreparable repercussions for him and his family in the end. While silence had protected him from confrontation with his past – he was keeping it secret – it becomes painful when it is no longer voluntary and when he recognizes that secrecy itself has damaged his life. Thus, he is in an undesirable subject position that tortures him, especially after his strokes. As Kaigai notes: "For Abbas, the silence enforced on him by his illness is oppressive. It has reduced him to an object to be narrated by others" (140). Plus, according to Okungu, "Abbas' silence also arises out of unpleasant experiences from the wider community [where he thinks about what stories he can share with his family]" (Okungu 112). Thus, breaking this silence is of uttermost importance, as narrated by the omniscient narrator of the novel: "Words

were coming back to him, and he was eager for them when at first, he had not cared. Now he wanted the words back so he could talk so that he could tell her [Maryam] about his years of silence, so he could describe to her his wretched cowardice” (*LG* 127).

Through the entanglements between the characters and their commentaries on one another’s actions, this novel attempts to hint at the significance of hospitable relationships and spaces for the narration of stories and the negotiations of identity. Gurnah does this, for example, through Maryam’s commentary that “bewildering stories [...] make them [the children] unsure and afraid about themselves. It makes them lose confidence” (*LG* 242), proven to be true in the depiction of Anna and Jamal’s exasperation as a result of Abbas’ silences in relating to the world. As narrated by the omniscient narrator, the reader learns that “Jamal worried about what his [Abbas’] silences contained” to the extent of questioning his father at the sickbed in hospital, but “she [Anna] had tired of that, not from dislike of him [Abbas] but because of the pointless tedium of whatever it was he would not tell them about himself” (*LG* 79). *The Last Gift* shows that silences and lack of communication as well as inhospitalities of the hostland hinder necessary negotiations for the realization of subjectivity and agency, despite Anna and Jamal’s desperate search for their roots through their father’s stories. *The Last Gift* illustrates alienation and paralysis in defining one’s subjectivity through the characters’ – Abbas and his family – reactions to silences. Since questions about their father’s past end in silence, Anna and Jamal feel lost, and Maryam disconnected, as she knows that “[t]he children found his [Abbas’] silences daunting” (*ibid* 98) and perhaps she also does. All the silences and the resulting vague and missing knowledge about their origins and communities or spaces of belonging make them feel ashamed of not knowing their racial roots as, for instance, the lunch scene in Nick’s parents’ house will clearly show. Such feelings of shame make Anna, who tries to find a plausible story about her roots by being inquisitive, complain that:

‘They are lost,’ she said. ‘Ba deliberately lost himself a long time ago, and Ma found herself lost from the beginning, a foundling. What I want from them is a story that has a beginning that is tolerable and open, and not one that is tripped with hesitations and silences. Why is that so difficult? I want to be able to say this is what I am. Yes, I know, so has every human being

who has ever given the matter some thought, but I don't want to crack the mystery of the soul or the nature of being. I just want some simple boring details. Instead we get snippets of secret stories we cannot ask about and cannot speak about. I hate it. Sometimes it makes me feel that I am living a life of hiding and shame. That we all are.' (LG 44)

In such an environment, Anna and Jamal have no other option but to construct their identities based on the snippets of stories they have heard from their parents and relying on their childhood events: "She had given up trying to unravel her unknown mongrel origins, and interested herself in what she was in her life, not what she came from" (LG 79). In a way, Anna becomes a clear example of a mimic (wo)man (Bhabha 1984) by relying on her British habits in order to identify herself as a normal Englishwoman, and distancing herself from her family by developing stereotypical notions about immigrants and abandoned babies, as she comments: "Of course it's not strange for immigrant men to be bigamists, and foundlings were everywhere in the 1950s. How perfectly ordinary" (LG 196). Neither does she wish to hear their stories.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the macro-space sociopolitical events also affect the micro-space relationships. In this regard, Tahir Abbas describes the situation after the 9/11 attacks as the period when "subsequent generations of British South Asian Muslims have begun to question their parents' religious and cultural values" (Abbas 28). This commentary can be extended to include people of other ethnic backgrounds, as portrayed in Abbas and Anna, and how their intergenerational tensions, in terms of religion, alienate Anna. Anna's behavior falls out of the boundaries defined by the religion she is "at least nominally part of." The novel describes Anna's allying herself with her British nationality and context through reactions against her immigrant father's religious beliefs – but it is hard to claim that this is mimicry, since she belongs by birth to a society where the majority also reacts against these beliefs:

She loved sex. [...] The experience liberated her from the fears she had absorbed from her parents, from her Ba [father] and his immigrant anxieties, his obsessive desire to escape notice, his secretiveness. Her pleasure in sex made her feel sophisticated and worldly, and somehow that she belonged here. (LG 170-1)

*The Last Gift* incorporates many instances of Anna's attempt to "remake" herself at a distance from her parents' immigrant culture, as "a young Englishwoman making her way in the world" (LG 31), defining her moving in with Nick as "[...] starting again, like making something new out of bits and pieces, like having another go at getting it right this time" (*ibid* 73).<sup>23</sup> These examples reflect her sense of alienation from both cultures, though, and emphasize the importance of hospitality in interactive communications within families for negotiations of narratives and of identity and belonging, which is lacking in Anna's familial relationships.

*The Last Gift's* attention to and inclusion of each of the four family members' negotiations of hospitality, identity, and narrative agency in (in)hospitable spaces delineate how blocked communications impact those negotiations. In this regard, apart from representing Abbas' and Anna's relationship with their family/ies, *The Last Gift* also pays attention to Maryam and her coming of age in the spaces created by the foster families. The novel portrays Maryam through a narrative of lack and loss, as a person who had enough "sense to know that she was someone without any worth" (LG 181). Maryam's feelings of worthlessness were caused by the inhospitality of the foster families and the English social assistance service that sent her off from one foster family to another. This situation is described as creating "too much anxiety in her life [that] she could not make her mind quiet enough to take things in at school" (*ibid* 181). Indeed, this inhospitality gives birth to these "anxieties," which affect her school years and lead to a bizarre upbringing and low self-esteem. Even her fifth and last foster family, who seemed to create a peaceful environment for her, who was childless and "wanted to help someone [...] a child whose life was unfortunate" (*ibid* 276), also turn hostile and silence her when she wants to share the traumatic rape attempt incident (by the relative of the family who was living with them).

In the face of perplexities and feelings of alienation and uprootedness brought about by silences and lack of interaction in familial relationships, as discussed above, Gurnah

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<sup>23</sup> Ironically, though, during their move, her plants get "mutilated," her ironing board "twisted," and a leg of a chair "broken" (LG 72), foreshadowing, through these symbolisms, the damages Nick inflicts on her after moving, which proves her not "getting it right this time."

pinpoints hospitality in these relationships as the only possible way for the characters' negotiations of their individualities. In this regard, by citing Bakhtin, Maxwell remarks that "[t]he very being of man (both internal and external) is a *profound communication. To be means to communicate [...]*" (qtd. in Maxwell 217; emphasis in original). Finally, *The Last Gift* puts the message confirming the significance of one's knowledge of his/her past and origins, some story to cling to, in the mouth of Jamal's neighbor, an immigrant writer. For Harun, stories are vital, the lack of which equating a person's nonexistence:

I wonder if it could ever be true, that you would reach a time when the moments of your life would say nothing to you, when you could look around you and have no story to tell. It would feel as if you were not there with these nameless and memoryless objects, as if you were no longer present among the bits and pieces of your life, as if you did not exist. (LG 213)

On the contrary, agreeing with Abbas' point that "the less we know the more plump and content we become" (LG 242), Okungu suggests that Abbas' silence buttresses the "family stability" and that this stability "disintegrate[s] when the silences are broken" (96-7). In this regard, Kaigai also notes that broken silences jeopardize the familial relationships and "disrupt existing relations" (140), as observed in its ignition of Anna's anger – "I can't bear these shitty, vile immigrant tragedies of yours" (LG 194).

Nonetheless, it can be argued that *The Last Gift*, through the portrayal of characters' views on the subject of silence and their sense of identity (explained in detail above), emphasizes the significant impact of knowing. The series of events, and change to more hospitable attitudes and relationships after the revelation of Abbas' past in the novel, indicate that such knowledge can provide a firmer sense of identity and a base in known origins from which to move forward. For Gurnah's fictional characters, the stories of the past, i.e., narrativization of the characters' identities, become the only way to negotiate hospitality and their hybrid identities in the hostland. For instance, Abbas' feeling of "displacement" is to some extent compensated for by "voic[ing]" his stories to his family, as the recordings of his stories indicate: "His voice was clear and composed, most of the time, and even the difficult parts were calm and eloquent" (LG 262).

There is a dynamic process of negotiations and translations in Maryam, Anna, and Jamal's characters as they continue to transform throughout the narrative. Although at first arouses disquiet, Abbas' story also creates conciliatory approaches to the narration of the past: Maryam's relation of her account of the attempted rape and orientation toward a less essentialist definition of the self; and Anna and Jamal's more inclusive way of negotiating their hyphenated identities. Through describing Anna – the most contrary family member to her father – as “moved [...] with the story of his [Abbas'] youth and all that wandering around the world” (*LG* 265), *The Last Gift* proves the conciliatory feature of the truth. The knowledge of the past, in Anna's case, helps her go beyond “strategic essentialism,” which essentializes the “difference into two mutually opposed either/ors,” and which defined her through a “monolithic sense of Britishness” (Hall, “What Is This ‘Black?’” 91) in negotiating her identity. In other words, her sense of identity becomes more fluid and accepting of different positions of enunciation, which surpasses the exclusory criteria that defined her identity previously. The reader can see that all family members come to a reconciliation with the past towards the ending of the novel, especially Anna and Abbas, as Anna experiences a sense of catharsis and revise her opinion of her father, as well. In the wake of the father's secret story, Anna's identification with Britishness alters drastically. In order to end her relationship with Nick, she detaches herself from “a partner in waiting” (*LG* 74), and the “partner left at home” (*ibid* 167), “like a neglected wife who had no option but to endure” (*ibid* 172) to someone who rejects Nick's demand of a “last fling” (*ibid* 236) which she considers as his “colonial instinct” (*ibid* 237), even after cheating on her. This momentous act of resistance signifies her clearer understanding of the disillusioned position she was pushing herself to fit in and brings about self-confidence to rely on in the end.

Negotiations of (in)hospitalities and inclusion/exclusion, either within the family or in the relationships formed with other groups of people outside of the nuclear family, create a translation, hybridity, and heterogeneity in one's definition of identity. This hybridity and heterogeneity also create positionings that are constantly shifting and being negotiated. The characters adapt to the nuances involved in defining their

subjectivities within different contexts and resist the exclusory and stereotypical discourses that define them within essentialist frameworks.

Interpersonal societal relationships between the characters – both immigrants and non-immigrant locals – and the characters’ positionings in relation to one another in the micro-spaces of the host culture are also hugely influenced by the sociopolitical events – mentioned previously – in the macro-spaces. For this reason, the analysis might merge these spaces at some points to hint at those mutual impacts. The representation of interpersonal societal relationships in *The Last Gift* regards the politics of hospitality between the guest and the host – the immigrant/immigrant descendant and the so-called indigenous locals of the host culture. *The Last Gift* portrays these relationships mainly through Anna’s relationship with her British boyfriend, Nick, and his family, where, as the novel shows, the negotiation of hospitality and belonging are not realized with people of the host culture. In these relationships, Gurnah shows that hostilities come about through ingrained stereotypes and prejudices rooted in colonial worldviews, which, as portrayed in this novel, block any resistance to those stereotypical discourses and undermine the multiculturalism and hospitality of the host culture.

*The Last Gift*’s representation of the way Anna is received and treated by Nick and his family, whom Chambers labels as “culturally chauvinist” – “(admirers of Orwell, Forster, Conrad, and Kipling)” (no page), detects the collapse of politics of hospitality and multiculturalism as these people deny Anna’s right to belong to her birthplace. The following section – (In)hospitality and Women – will touch upon Anna’s subordination to patriarchal order based on traditions. Nevertheless, it is imperative to note her subalternity to patriarchies and inhospitalities in her interpersonal societal relationships with Nick and his family, as well, and thus pinpoint her doubly subaltern position in the context of the novel. The latter group’s inhospitalities are observable in several cases (*LG* 91, 105, 114, 166). These can be detected in Nick’s superficial relationship with Anna (*ibid* 90-2), where he does “not always listen when she [Anna] talked, interrupting her when he had tired of listening to her” (*ibid* 171). Moreover, Nick accuses Anna of having “little fun-filled daydream desires” and “unfulfilled

ambitions” (*ibid* 236). Finally, when he learns about Abbas’ secret story, although he has never met with Anna’s family in their three-year relationship (*ibid* 166), he insults him by calling him an “absconder” (*ibid* 235).

In a way, Nick’s inhospitality symbolizes the whole narrative’s inhospitality to female characters and their stories, discussed under (In)hospitality and Women. Anna becomes the victim of extreme hostilities. Unlike her lifestyle, which is more assimilated to English culture than that of her family (as discussed earlier, such actions could be considered as a form of mimicry), all she receives is Nick’s sister and her boyfriend’s “hard, unabashed look, as if weighing up a judgment for later” (*LG* 115). Also, while she tries hard to fit into English culture and its narratives, for example, by attending the Easter ceremony with Nick and his family – in order to “feel that she had been invited into their warmth and intimacy, and she wanted to share it fully” (*ibid* 112) – she fails in winning the affection and hospitality of local hosts or at least those portrayed so in the novel, proving her status of “not quite/not white” (Bhabha, “Of Mimicry” 132). Their inhospitality finally makes her feel that: “She did not think they liked her, and she could not make herself like them, not even Jill [Nick’s mother] who had shown her kindness. She thought it was a kindness offered in shame to disguise their distaste” (*LG* 228).

In its representation of inhospitalities, the novel illustrates Nick and his family still adhering to colonial discourse in understanding the present day world, with its second and third generation British citizens of immigrant and mixed-race origins. An instance of this is Ralph’s (Nick’s father’s) comparisons of “national character,” as in his discussion of the difference between the “British steadiness” and other nations’ national and cultural characters, addressed to Anna on the false assumption she would know about the other people’s ways of living because of her perceived racial difference: “Other peoples are cowed and obedient. It may even be that they do not recognise their oppression as injustice but as the order of existence. Is it something in their cultures that incline them to be that way? Is it religion? Is it a historical conditioning of the brutal misuse?” (*LG* 106). Ralph’s point, concerning Anna and the oppressed people he refers to, can be read through Stuart Hall’s perspective and his

criticism of the substitution of cultural differences with natural differences, which works through “stereotypes” (Hall, *The Spectacle of the ‘Other’* 257), avoids “modification and change” in discourse and “secures discursive or ideological ‘closure’” (*ibid* 245). In other words, cultural differences give way to natural differences and racism in Ralph’s stereotypical discourse which gives him the “power to mark, assign and classify; [a type] of *symbolic* power; of *ritualized* expulsion [of the Other]. Power, it seems, has to be understood here, not only in terms of economic exploitation and physical coercion but also in broader cultural or symbolic terms, including the power to represent someone or something in a certain way – within a certain ‘regime of representation’” (*ibid* 259-61; emphasis in original).

In another episode depicting Nick’s family lunchtime conversation, the novel also depicts inhospitality and exclusion from the host circle, making it inhospitable, by questioning Anna’s citizenship and marginalizing her by Nick’s extended family, as put in the mouth of Digby (Nick’s vicar uncle):

‘Yes, of course Anna’s British,’ Uncle Digby said. ‘But what was she before she was British?’ [...] ‘Do you mean you don’t know, or you don’t want to know? It makes me sad to hear you speak with such little interest about your home, Anna.’ [...] ‘We see families falling apart because their children do not want to know about the world their parents are originally from. To keep communities together, host and stranger need to know each other, but we cannot know each other if we don’t know ourselves. We who care for the welfare of immigrants work as hard as we know how to get that message across, to encourage people to know. Those words *I am British* feel like a cold tragic blast to me sometimes.’ (*LG* 116-118)

Digby’s reference to “host and stranger” fixes the idea that immigrants, even their descendants, people like Anna, for example, who have been born and raised in England, are regarded as “strangers.” As Derrida discussed, hospitality only applies where there are specific rules (*Of Hospitality* 5), but these rules are eschewed in Digby’s binary distinction of “them and us.” Besides, while Digby emphasizes knowing, he assumes the discourse of power stuck in fixed binaries in creating the atmosphere required for knowing Anna. Such ways of receiving the guests affect the relationships between the characters from diverging ethnic, racial, and national backgrounds in *The Last Gift*. Digby is entrenched in the colonial discourse of his past,

which reinforces Anna's "exclusion" from the circle of British locals and the identity of "Britishness" that she has carved for herself, since (as a second-generation immigrant with no knowledge of any other national identity) she has no other. This idea reverberates in Caryl Phillips's remark that this kind of query is "[t]he problem question for those of us who have grown up in societies which define themselves by excluding others. Usually us. A coded question. Are you one of us? Are you one of ours? Where are you from? Where are you really from?" (Phillips 98, qtd. in McLeod 181). In agreement with Tina Steiner (in an interview) that the society wants to "put her [Anna] in a box," Gurnah comments that:

She's rejecting [the] position of weakness [...]. She's rejecting the indeterminacy of the migrant second generation. Are you English? Are you British? Are you something else? Where do you belong? So what Digby's wanting to say, we know you don't belong exactly, where do you really belong? It's a way of debating of how someone like her might be read, but also how someone like her wishes or is afraid of being read. So she is not interested, particularly, in being given this indeterminacy. She wants to be English. Not because, at least not in the novel anyway, not because there's anything in particular she admires about being English, but so she can just get on with her life, like everybody else. (Gurnah, Interview with Steiner 163)

Gurnah's argument reverberates through Jamal's comment in emphasizing the point that Anna was not necessarily enthusiastic in taking English identity – which may even involve consciously employing varying degrees of a sort of enforced mimicry – and in identifying herself with English people, because as she describes:

There are times when I hate they [her parents] brought me here, [...] That they did not find another place to have me and to have you [Jamal]. Not because the other places are free from cruelties and lies, but just to be saved from so much demeaning pretence. Not to have the chore of pretending to be no different from people who are full of shit about themselves. (*LG* 46)

Anna, in a sense, does not favor the idea of having to "pretend," i.e., practice the strange form of mimicry enforced upon second generation immigrants; however, she takes on this role to survive in an inhospitable environment. Needless to say that, the feeling of dislike she has for the English home/host people is owed to the hostilities Anna has experienced as a second-generation migrant.

The stereotypical discourses and various types of racism mentioned above, as *The Last Gift* shows, may well pass on to the next generation, as the examples of Nick and Anthony (the boyfriend of Nick's sister) clearly illustrate: "their milieu's racism is exposed in 'jungle bunny' taunts from Nick's vicar and his sister's boyfriend" (Chambers, no page). Nick also passes racist judgments on "immigrants" by making fun of Anna's family, lumping Anna with all other immigrants:

[...] I feel sorry for people like you because you don't know how to look after yourselves. Your father was a whingeing tyrant, bullying everyone with one misery or another, in the grip of a psychic crisis, so it seemed. [...] Your mother was an abandoned baby and doesn't know who she is. [...] But no, it had to be another festering drama. And then it turns out your father is an absconder and a bigamist but he couldn't just talk about this, the whole crowd of you in the grip of a hopeless melodrama, acting like immigrants.' (LG 235)

In Kaigai's words, "[m]atters take a tragic turn when Hanna's [Anna] story is turned against not just herself but all migrants" (143), which are echoed through other episodes as well. These feelings about different races and immigrant groups, and this way of understanding the world might also develop, even if unconsciously, as pointed out by Stuart Hall that: "this [British] culture does partly live off a reservoir of unconscious feelings about race, and in particular those feelings remain unconscious because they're about race. It's difficult for them to get expressed somehow" (Interview with Back 287). Perhaps Nick and his generation belong to the group of English people whose "history happened overseas, so they don't know what it means" (Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses* 633). Such a lack of awareness creates problems in the politics of hospitality towards diasporic foreigners and immigrant groups because the hosts do not know that there is anything they need to correct. However, the older generation, especially those with experience in the colonies, claims not just awareness but knowledge of historico-political events and the British empire and its former colonies, as represented by Uncle Digby and by Nick's father, Ralph. Therefore, it can be said that Nick and his family resemble those who practice "exclusionary consolidation of national culture and identity increasingly grounded in a notion of racialized whiteness" (McLeod 192), so their inhospitality is intentional, and their hospitality, at best "practiced" (LG 99). Thus, we may be able to say that there are

nuances in the inclusion/exclusion dialectics regarding the immigrants due to unwelcome behaviors as much as arising from the difficulties in integrating with the host culture. Hence, in the context of this novel, the hospitality provided by Britain's "multicultural" context does not allow such integrations to take place. In the following section, as mentioned above, the focus will be on how the female characters are treated by other characters in *The Last Gift* and how the politics of hospitality can be applied to their representation.

#### **4.4 (In)hospitality and Women**

This section discusses how female characters are represented as shaping their (narrative) agency in the generally patriarchal and inhospitable spaces in Gurnah's narrative. In this regard, according to Chambers, "Ethics relating to gift giving, hospitality, and benevolence towards strangers are foregrounded in this novel [*The Last Gift*], although ethnic minority subjects, old people, and women are seldom lucky enough to benefit from these small acts of kindness" (no page). *The Last Gift* illustrates women and their narratives being prone to hostilities and inhospitalities in two perspectives. Firstly, the novel depicts such inhospitalities in the way female characters are treated and their voices heard by other characters. *The Last Gift*'s stereotypical images operate by presenting women mainly through the sexist indices of bodies and sexuality, scheming wives, and domestic roles. The representation of women and their narratives as subaltern and through the above-mentioned stereotypical images in *The Last Gift* is not limited to the women from immigrant groups and their descendants, such as Sharifa, Maryam, and Anna. Interestingly enough, patriarchal order is also practiced in the relationship of different generations of the British characters in Gurnah's narrative – for Ralph and Jill (Nick's parents) and Anthony and Laura (Nick's sister and her boyfriend). Secondly, *The Last Gift*'s inhospitality can be detected in the extent to which female characters' narratives are related or shared in Gurnah's novel and how they are treated by the implied author. It can be argued that not only does the implied author represent the female characters in the novel in an inhospitable manner, but also some (male and female) listeners in

the novel are inhospitable to female narratives. Furthermore, the implied author and the novel do not welcome or create a homely environment for female narratives.

*The Last Gift* silences many stories about or told by female characters, i.e., women's narratives, and it goes contrary to Gurnah's own claim about the representation of women in his fiction. In an interview with Mark Ruberto, Gurnah points out that in his authorial practice and the depiction of women, he has tried to "imagine a woman going through the experiences which I [Gurnah] had gone through, it was really a matter of imagining, trying to imagine how it could be" (287-8). He then continues: "People like Ngũgĩ, Soyinka and many African writers, have absented women, particularly Muslim women or, if they are out there, they are either clichéd or stereotyped, stereotyped as marginalised, stereotyped as without agency" (288-9). Despite this recognition, Gurnah's novel narrative does not use central female characters (they are portrayed as subaltern characters), nor are its female characters given agency, either in action or in their narratives, to move beyond the stereotypical roles defining them. As discussed in Chapter Two, subalternity cannot be overthrown – or at least challenged – unless with more consciousness about the situation, where citizens across the intersections of difference can be equipped with the necessary narratives to represent themselves. However, the women in Gurnah's fiction become subalterns – sometimes consciously, but mostly not – whose voices cannot be represented by themselves. In *The Last Gift*, Sharifa (Abbas's abandoned wife in Zanzibar), whose voice is never heard in the narratives of *The Last Gift* or (its prequel) *Admiring Silence*, is a prominent example of silenced female voices and narratives. Her side of the story about Abbas's abandonment and their child's (il)legitimacy is not given in either novel. On the one hand, it can be argued that silence does not necessarily mean a lack of agency, and speech does not guarantee power and agency as the discussion of "the subaltern cannot be heard" clearly indicates.<sup>24</sup> The title of the prequel, *Admiring Silence*, might have similar reverberations as well. On the other hand, however, it can also be suggested that Gurnah absents and estranges women's voices in his narratives just as much as the "many African writers [such as Ngũgĩ and Soyinka, mentioned above]" he referred

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<sup>24</sup> I am indebted to Dr. Elif Öztürk Avcı for her enlightening insight in this case.

to, for in his novel, their (women's) voices and stories generally appear when they shore up other male narratives. As such, Maryam's rape story sets the atmosphere for Abbas' secret story to be shared: "I [Maryam] want you [Anna and Jamal] to know, so that you don't think there is a dirty secret I am keeping from you" (*LG* 193).

Concerning the location of gender in colonial discourse, Ania Loomba has pointed out that: "dominant scientific ideologies about race and gender have historically propped up each other" (63). These ideologies operate in a way that,

In the debates on women's intelligence and psychology [...], we can see how scientific knowledge is refracted through the prism of prejudice, so that age-old ideas about women's instinct as opposed to men's rationality, or about female behavioural patterns, are regularly recycled as 'latest' scientific discoveries. (Loomba 63)

Such representations directly relate to how women are treated in Gurnah's novel as much as in colonial novels. In reference to Gurnah's depiction of the female characters, it should be noted that portrayal of the colossal gap between Abbas and Maryam, or Anna and Jamal, does not necessarily engender inhospitality in the representation of female characters but can be considered as the authorial attempt at a realistic depiction of (immigrant) women and how they are treated in diaspora settings. In this regard, *The Last Gift's* illustrating female characters at opposite poles of male characters does not necessarily indicate a lack of impartiality in portraying the female characters, but instead reveals traces of colonial discourse and orientalism still in place with regard to treating women by other characters in society. The portrayal of Anna and Jamal in such a stark contrast is coupled with depicting the characters of Maryam and Abbas in a similar contour. For instance, the narrative, in several cases, through Maryam's focalization, calls the readers' attention to her naiveté and worthlessness (*LG* 181) and defines her through all different types of shortcomings (thus hindering her agency), by emphasizing what she did not have, reverberated through a powerful single-word statement of "[w]ithout" (*ibid* 49). This example shows the consequences of the way she was treated in different contact zones. At its opposite end, Abbas's ability to tackle the problems, his worldliness through his sea voyages, and being a well read person highlight his being less subaltern than Maryam. The fact that Abbas, in his career, is

promoted to the position of the “chief engineer” (*ibid* 52), but Maryam changes positions between the hospital cleaner and the hospital canteen worker – “and here she was still doing the same sort of thing a whole lifetime later” (*ibid* 15), also testifies the point introduced above.

The other characters’ treatment of women as subordinate to and somehow less important than the male characters can also be seen when it is noticed that Jamal is portrayed as an understanding figure with a clearer sense of reality, whose sensible reaction to his father’s secret story sketches him as Anna’s sharp opposite. In contrast, Anna is depicted as the character who loses her composure and says: “I can’t bear these shitty, vile immigrant tragedies of yours. I can’t bear the tyranny of your ugly lives. I’ve had enough, I’m leaving” (*LG* 194). The novel’s portrayal of Jamal and Anna at contrasting positions – the former a successful Ph.D. student of Sociology and the latter as a less successful English teacher and a “partner in waiting” (*ibid* 74) – indicates realism in the representation of immigrant women. These instances concerning the four protagonists of *The Last Gift* may distinctly signify how the novel taps into the situation of first-/second-generation immigrant women as (doubly) subalterns.

Such treatments apply to where the relationships between the characters and the ways of treating women by the characters convey similar alienation of female characters’ voices and stories. The representation of women/female characters in *The Last Gift* is mainly through three strands of bodies and sexuality, scheming wives, and domestic roles. It focuses on the narrative’s representation, as put by the omniscient narrator and the characters – focalizers and other characters – and how such representations create spaces of inhospitality for the female characters within the novel and hinder their negotiations of identity and (narrative) agency. The analysis thus will follow the incorporation of the three strands mentioned above and their impact on female stories and agency.

The reader encounters women in Gurnah’s narratives portrayed through the same stereotypical images he criticizes in his predecessors’ – Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o and Wole Soyinka’s – novels. *The Last Gift*’s stereotypical images operate by presenting women

mostly through the sexist indices of bodies and sexuality, scheming wiles, and domestic roles. Although as discussed above, these strands may create a realistic picture of (immigrant/immigrant descendant) women at some point, they also indicate the novel's inhospitality towards women and their narratives, which is evident in implementing discourses on body and sexuality when describing female characters in the novel through the omniscient narrator and other characters' perspectives, but not when describing the male characters. These representations can be read through the doctrine and the discourse of Orientalism. Indeed, the unknown peoples and lands have been described in Orientalist discourse, "strongly marked by gender distinctions and [drawing] much of its subconscious force from sexual imagery" (Hall, "The West and the Rest" 166). In *The Last Gift*, women's bodies and the sexual imagery attached to them intrigue men and cause disorder in their lives, hence women's wiles. Such is the case with Sharifa, whose naked appearance on a terrace entraps the naïve and youthful Abbas (*LG* 134-6). Gurnah's narrative depicts how colonial and patriarchal discourse defines women, even modern and apparently western women.

The third point concerning the realistic picture of (immigrant) women as subordinate to and somehow less important than their male peers in *The Last Gift* is their representation through their role in the domestic sphere, so much so that it becomes ingrained in their own and even some male characters' consciousness. In this sense, Clifford's point seems apt: "Life for women in diasporic situations can be doubly painful – struggling with the material and spiritual insecurities of exile, with the demands of family and work, and with the claims of old and new patriarchies" ("Diasporas" 314). Regarding Gurnah's narrative, Clifford's view can be extended to include women from the host culture as well. The prominent example of such a character, suffering "old and new patriarchies," is Maryam, who recounts herself to her children as "the household skivvy" (*LG* 189). Her awareness of the "fate [...] of] a lifetime of pots and pans" (*ibid* 185) and her silent acceptance of Abbas' ill-tempered abuses (*ibid* 9) indicates her lack of agency. *The Last Gift* shows Abbas exercising his masculinity and sexism on Maryam, especially after his strokes, by calling her a "bitch," an "old whore," a "harpy," and a "parasite" (*ibid* 258, 259, 249). Similarly, Jill's (Nick's mother) repetition of Ralph's sentences to show her agreement with him

makes “Anna wonder if, despite her appearance of self-assurance, Jill was struggling against shyness” (*ibid* 104). Jill’s reaction might be a latent display of subalternity, for it is Ralph who orchestrates long dinner-table speeches and silences others with an “assurance that his audience would remain obedient” (*ibid* 224). Jill never does so, nor does she object to her husband’s dominant behavior. Conformity, implying subalternity and subordination in *The Last Gift*, also illustrates Jill’s daughter Laura as subaltern, whose boyfriend Anthony beats her up and expels her from his firm and home (*ibid* 220). Laura is, in a way, more brutally subordinated than the other female characters portrayed in the novel.

In Gurnah’s novel, even when the female characters are not depicted as confined to the quotidian, patriarchal behaviors arise from the tensions between male and female characters, especially the first and second-generation immigrants. Regarding immigrant families, such behaviors originate – to some extent – from the rigid patriarchal beliefs and practices and cultural traditions that the first-generation bring from their country of origin and inflict on women (Clifford’s point above). The tension and coldness between Abbas and Anna is a notable example. It starts with Abbas criticizing Anna’s clothing and her boyfriends (*LG* 82), which leads him to say that: “What will anybody think if they see you like that? [...] That we have not brought you up to have self-respect” (*ibid* 94; emphasis removed). With such established forms of masculinity and Abbas’ hostile behavior – where he thinks sending Anna to university equals turning her into a “proper English girl” (*ibid* 95), it becomes difficult for Anna to build a friendly relationship with her father. In this situation, Anna’s nonconformity and dissent from her father’s religion which he does not even apparently practice in the first place (*ibid* 113), indicate a challenge to patriarchal and dominant discourses. Although it gives Anna the agency to resist such dominant patriarchal practices, the text, toward the end, by emphasizing her failure in her relationship with Nick and her regrets in how she had treated her father, shows that Anna was mistaken in her nonconformity all along. She thinks “of her life at home, of her childhood, of Nick, of what would become of her, and all these thoughts were accompanied by memories of embarrassment and by images of her incompetence and failure to act with resolution and kindness. Why had she waited so long?” (*ibid* 232). She becomes guilt-ridden and

regretful about her way of describing her family and especially her father, which “made him sound like a bigoted immigrant” (*ibid* 114). She finally transforms into a more sympathetic person and changes her positioning to reconcile with her father eventually, and after her breakup, she ponders: “[h]er life was about to start again and she was twenty-eight years old, a good age, and she could feel full of vigour and hope” (*ibid* 237).

Based on these discussions, it can be argued that the female characters are portrayed as bereft of their narratives and agency, as subalterns – and as doubly subaltern in the case of the characters from the migrant background – whose narratives shore up those of their male peers. Such representations, thus, may soundly prove the narrative’s and some characters’ inhospitality to its female characters and their narratives, which obstruct their negotiations of identity and resistance to powerful male discourses.

#### **4.5 Findings**

In this chapter, Gurnah’s *The Last Gift* was analyzed to see into the characters’ negotiation of hospitality, identity, power, and narrative agency in the face of and resisting dominant (stereotypical) discourses and marginalization in the (in)hospitable environments. The novel hosts characters from different generations of racial, ethnic, class, and gender backgrounds, whose (in)hospitable relationships with each other impact their identification processes and their sense of agency. Occupying different situations throughout the narrative determines these characters’ positionings in enunciating their identities through their narratives. Silence and secret stories create suspense in the narrative and alienate these characters and their narratives, which confine them to specific identification positions, usually as subalterns. In this regard, breaking the silence and sharing clandestine stories in hospitable spaces help the characters negotiate the subaltern spaces and resist the dominant and powerful discourses.

Abbas and his immigrant family – all the protagonists of this novel – endure different forms of racism through the host people and society’s inhospitalities. They are composed of different generations – immigrants and their descendants – attempting to

(re)construct their individuality. Eventually, when Abbas' secret is finally cracked open, they, especially Anna, undergo remarkable transformations in their identification positionings and their stance and hospitality in relation to others. In addition to positionings within the families, *The Last Gift* implements sociopolitical references to show (in)hospitalities and how they affect the relationships between the characters and how they are perceived and received. Highlighting sociopolitical events such as the 9/11 attacks in this novel helps the reader see Abbas and his family's difficulties constructing their relationships with the host in the inhospitable spaces.

Furthermore, the inhospitality represented in the relationship between the characters in this novel affects women and their narratives. This situation is reflected in illustrating female characters and their narratives as subordinated to male discourses. Their stories are not narrated for the sake of representing them but rather to vitalize male narratives. On the other hand, their male peers are also inhospitable to them through their behavior and not allowing their stories to be heard. Owing to these two ways of representation, Gurnah's *The Last Gift* can be argued to be an instance of a narrative that is inhospitable to women and their stories, thwarting their narrative agency and potential negotiation of identity through narratives.

## CHAPTER 5

### NEGOTIATIONS OF HOSPITALITY AND NARRATIVE AGENCY IN *GRAVEL HEART*

#### 5.1 Introduction

*Gravel Heart* (2017), Abdulrazak Gurnah's ninth novel, relates the story of Salim and his family. Masud, Salim's father, abandons his seven-year-old son and his mother due to mysterious reasons unknown to Salim, to lodge at the back of a friend's shop sometime in the 1970s. The secret, although not revealed until the final part of the novel, is that Salim's mother, Saida, is forced to submit sexually to an influential political figure, Hakim, to save her brother Amir, whom Hakim had arrested and imprisoned on charges of his sister's (Asha) rape. Amir and Asha marry after Saida's submission to Hakim, with whom she has a daughter, Munira, and later marries. Salim takes a daily food basket to his father during these years, but the two barely speak, uttering no more than greetings and sometimes exchanging books. Amir is later appointed as a diplomat to the Zanzibar embassy in London. Sometime in the early 1990s, Amir takes Salim to England to study Business, only to find that Salim has decided to switch to a degree in Literature. Having failed to study the subject of his uncle's choice and after a quarrel with Asha concerning the story of his parents' forced separation, Salim is expelled from Amir's house to fend for himself. After many years and many economic and emotional hardships, and sometime after his mother's death back in Zanzibar in the 2000s, Salim hears that his father has returned from Malaysia (where his own father had taken him after hearing about Salim's mother's actions), he decides to return and hear the story of Masud's abandonment from his father's own mouth.

*Gravel Heart* is narrated by Salim, an intradiegetic homodiegetic narrator who tells his life story in the form of a *bildungsroman*.<sup>25</sup> The two final chapters of the novel, which reveal the old secret in two nights, are focalized through Masud and reported by Salim. The novel portrays Salim as a “neglectful” (*GH* 105), apathetic, resigned, and doubting character whose emigration to England is not triggered by social upheavals or family feuds (in this respect Salim’s migration is very different from Saleh’s in *By the Sea*). Nor does Salim’s leaving resemble Abbas’s flight in *The Last Gift*, which was caused by a feeling of being fooled into a marriage with a woman he guesses might have been pregnant with someone else’s child. There is no such dramatic event launching Salim’s departure. Like Latif in *By the Sea*, Salim is leaving to study in London and even has, at least at first, the support of an uncle.

*Gravel Heart*’s representation of (in)hospitality and a traumatic disruption in familial relationships parallels and is embedded in the sociopolitical upheavals of the Zanzibar state during the times of Independence (1963) and Revolution (1964) as narrated by Salim’s parents. The novel also captures immigrant life in England and the extent and quality of relationships and entanglements shaped therein during the 1990s and 2000s. Within these (in)hospitable familial and societal narratives, Gurnah shows the significance of narratives as acts of resistance and the negotiating of identities and agency within the asymmetric power structures of these spaces.<sup>26</sup> In this novel, resistance to dominant and stereotypical discourses, which subordinate characters, only happens through hospitable discursive relationships and the exchange of narratives. In this regard, (re)conciliations in familial and societal relationships and integration of characters within different environments and with different people are shown to require hospitality in these relationships and physical and relational spaces.

The representation of characters and spaces and their relationships in *Gravel Heart* sketches out a generally inhospitable and bleak picture delineating the inability of the

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<sup>25</sup> *Bildungsroman* is the name affixed to those novels that concentrate on the development or education of a central character. (Thamarana 22)

<sup>26</sup> As in the previous chapters, “space” includes physical and metaphorical (relational spaces) connotations.

characters to negotiate their narrative agency and identity and resist powerful (stereotypical) discourses/(of knowledge). Mainly through the story of Salim and his familial and societal relationships, Gurnah depicts unmoored characters searching for hospitable spaces – either relational or physical, or both – and seeking listeners for their stories. *Gravel Heart* shows hospitality and hostility through sociopolitical references and allusions and literary (cultural) intertextualities, and their impact on characters and their familial and interpersonal societal relationships. At a metanarrative level, the novel's hospitality to narratives shared by the characters, at the intersections of race, ethnicity, and gender and sexuality, is also foregrounded, which calls into question Gurnah's own politics of inclusion and exclusion as regards certain narratives. This chapter looks into the spaces mentioned earlier, and is divided into three sections, although the discussions in these sections might leak into one another. The first part analyzes the politics of hospitality and power relations in the discursive representations of sociopolitical context and literary intertextualities and attempts to probe the effect of and their relationship with the novel's negotiation of hospitality and multiculturalism. The second part mainly concerns the familial and societal relationships constructed between the characters, which, within lopsided power relations and through offered or denied hospitality, allow/block their negotiations of narrative agency and identity. The last section of the chapter analyzes the practice of hospitality concerning female characters of the novel. In this part, the focus is on two subjects: first, the representation of female characters in the narrative, which as will be shown, is mainly through discourses of body and sexuality and women's wiles manipulating power relations and male characters; the second point concerns the narrative's hospitality to and inclusion of female narratives and stories, analyzing the metanarrative level of the text discussed above.

## **5.2 Sociopolitical References and Literary Intertextualities**

*Gravel Heart* illustrates hospitality and hostility, and asymmetries in power relations and their social and individual impacts by referring to sociopolitical context and inclusion of literary intertextualities in the narrative. As was the case in *By the Sea* and *The Last Gift*, Gurnah employs these references to introduce and convey politically conscious themes and analytic perspectives in his fiction. In an interview

with Tina Steiner, he discusses how he sees his literary intertextualities as functioning hermeneutically:

[The] recognition of intertextualities to some extent reintroduces us to each other as readers. We are reading the same thing, and this gives a sense of a shared textuality, and I think that's pleasing, just in itself. But in another way of course, they provide a very convenient echo or resonance, so that you don't have to reinvent the wheel. Because there is this shared textuality, it means you can gesture towards another text and it enriches this one, but also, I think, enriches the reader's understanding of what's going on there. And I guess you can do several things here, you can disguise all this so that it requires proper scholarship and literary detective work to find the parallels; or you can make it interesting by reinventing it in a way so that it's like but displaced in a particular way so that it's not an obvious echo, as I suggested, or resonance, or illusion, if you want. (Gurnah, Interview with Steiner 166)

Gurnah's point here can be extended to include social and political references, abundant in his fiction, in the sense of creating parallelism between the contextual and the textual. This section, in the light of the concept of Derridean hospitality (discussed in Chapter Two), will show how the incorporation of sociopolitical references and allusions and literary intertextualities lays bare hospitality and the nuances in power hierarchies that affect characters' inter-relationships and their relationship with the state and society (home- and hostland). Indicated through these techniques, we will see that the novel shows how existing power dynamics affect the politics of inclusion and exclusion (hospitality) in the relationships mentioned above, hindering or assisting negotiations of narrative agency and identity, and resistance to powerful discourses. Such resistances require communal interactions and hospitable spaces and environments for those interactions to take place. This section will focus on the politics of hospitality by touching upon the novel's sociopolitical references to Zanzibar, other (ex)-colonial countries, and England. It will also study literary intertextualities and their role in defining the politics of hospitality in *Gravel Heart*.

In his fictional oeuvre, Gurnah has always incorporated the social and political issues related to his and most of his fictional characters' homeland, Zanzibar, generally during its most unstable years of independence from British colonialism (1963) and its following year of revolution (1964), which altered its citizens lives drastically. Erik

Falk points out that Gurnah's "anti-nationalist view [...] predominates in his literary writing [...], which consistently satirizes and ridicules the post-colonial Tanzanian nation, African nationalism and Pan-African sentiment" (Falk, "That Little Place" 157). In this regard, Gurnah criticizes the fiction of writers like Chinua Achebe and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, which celebrate and include African nationalism in their writings, which in his view flattens the heterogeneities within African nations and reduces the multiplicity of attitudes and practices in various African states before colonization to an idyllic and fictional history before the colonial rule.<sup>27</sup> Gurnah remarks that these fictions "simplify the true complexity and difficulties of the negotiations that had to take place for what were, in many cases, unstable societies to live alongside each other. And you couldn't get anything much more complicated than the coast of East Africa where I grew up" (Interview with Nasta 359). With its history of littoral connections through colonialism (even before European colonialism), trade, and peoples' movements in the Indian Ocean, the coast of East Africa has been a dynamically multicultural and heterogeneous space, which Gurnah's novels use for its rich associations with many of the themes that they explore. In relation to this, Datta notes that the Indian Ocean littoral can be seen "[a]s a mode of thinking which encourages identities that are unmoored from strict adherence to nation and continent, [...] which] also seeks to build alternative communities across the ocean space" and that "[t]his communal space [...] is a non-identitarian and dynamic grid, peopled by crossings, movements, and flows across the ocean" (3). In contrast to this, though, the discourse of African nationalism prevalent during Zanzibari decolonization and the revolution that followed, and discourses supporting the necessity of purifying the African race, threatened many people's sense of belonging and even citizenship, and led to actions that went so far as unfair executions and expulsions from the country (Gurnah, Interview with Nasta 360; *GH* 179, 180, 214). Concerning the changes in people's lives and the politics of citizenship in Zanzibar after the turmoil of independence and

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<sup>27</sup> Gurnah acknowledges that "Independence however was crucial to this [celebration of African nationalism] too. There was a desire for a progressive ethos that says, 'This is how we unify', 'This is how we come together to respect ourselves.'" (Interview with Nasta 359)

revolution, since such nationalistic beliefs came in “very useful politically,” Gurnah notes that:

‘Everyone who is not like me or like us is a stranger, is marginal to the real political, authentic citizen.’ Many African societies have used this as a way of expelling and tormenting, in Uganda for example, with Idi Amin, and in Zanzibar. So the idea of who belongs then becomes one that is made into an essentialist question. One is made into a certain kind of ‘African’ so when you ask the question ‘What is an African?’ an African becomes somebody ‘who looks like me’. Not someone who has some kind of citizen rights to the place. (Gurnah, Interview with Nasta 360)

As a consequence of such inhospitalities and exclusory activities before and after independence and the revolution, the majority of Zanzibari citizens of Arab and Omani descent were either expelled or fled, and these events were prompted, pursued and supported by African nationalist discourse that talked of purifying and reforming the African race who were regarded as the rightful residents. Gurnah’s *Gravel Heart* is implanted in this context. The novel mentions Abeid Karume’s presidency (the first president of Zanzibar, 1964-72) and his expelling of citizens, and following the annexation of Zanzibar to Tanzania, alludes to Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere’s (the first president of Tanzania, 1964-85) formation of the “one-party state,” circa 1965, as examples of such purifying political activities and periods: Masud recounts his opinions of this period sardonically:

As one exalted His Excellency the President [Abeid Karume] argued, the one-party state was an authentically African concept, a continuation of the traditional practice of rule by consensus – that is, since he was the President, everybody was bound to agree with him anyway, so what was the point of having another party? Another Excellency [Julius Nyerere], who wrote poetry in his spare time from guiding the state, suggested that it was logical for all citizens to prefer a one-party state. Rather than introduce contention and fitna [Arabic: wiles; my trans.] with an opposition outfit, a one-party state encouraged dialogue and bonding between the people, freeing the spirit for that uniquely African civility of communal unity and obedience that was the envy of the world. His Excellency the Poet was fond of obedience and thought it a virtue of great value. (*GH* 187)

Ironically, there is more “obedience” and coercion through power than “consensus” in ruling Zanzibar after the independence. *Gravel Heart* indicates inhospitality<sup>28</sup> by pointing to the corruption of the political system and relations in Zanzibar and the unstable state of affairs there, even dating back to the time before the independence and revolution – with British colonialism’s intolerance of “sedition” (*GH* 17) and also even to the time before British colonization. In this way it indicates Gurnah’s attempt to show how such instabilities and inhospitalities brought about adversities to citizens and drove them away all through those years. Masud turns to the period starting British colonial rule, making this point, and also referring to heterogeneities – “internecine mayhem”<sup>29</sup> – which were compacted and delivered as homogeneous what was, even back then, a heterogeneous nation:

The British had no business interfering in this internecine mayhem – they had not yet taken our little territory in hand for its own good – but they did so anyway because they wanted the world to run as they liked it, even if it was only a caprice on their part. Exile this one, replace that one, hang the malcontents, even bombard the whole town ... why not? It was necessary in order to establish who was superior and had the power, and who should do precisely what he was told. Historians can always be found later to offer weighty policy explanations that prompted one party meddling or another, to describe avarice and destruction in reasonable words. (*GH* 196)

The representation of this inhospitable atmosphere in the home country in *Gravel Heart*, through the reflection of real sociopolitical issues and activities, is delineated through the fictional characters’ lives. The novel’s depiction of this inhospitality and its associated inhospitable spaces and political relations is realized through the relation, by characters (especially Saida and Masud) of executions and expulsions, and of the incessant production of inaccurate and powerful historical discourses silencing other narratives. The inhospitality of Zanzibar, causing perplexities about this new

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<sup>28</sup> In the discussion above, the term inhospitality cannot be replaced with “nationalism,” for nationalism does not necessarily refer to inhospitalities that may inflict on subjects. In other words, nationalism can engender both positive and negative connotations, the positive aspect of which does not denote inhospitality.

<sup>29</sup> This may refer to the period before British colonization, i.e. the troublesome years of German and Portuguese colonial attempts.

discourse of Pan-Africanism, as viewed from Masud's perspective, endangers its citizens' lives and rewrites history:

There was no choice but to sit silently while the history was narrated anew, no choice but to wait in a dumbly unenthusiastic silence for the mocking dismantling of our old stories, until later we could whisperingly remind each other what the plunderers had tried to steal from us. At times it became harder and the humiliations and dangers mounted. (*GH* 180)

Furthermore, through the sociopolitical allusions to decolonizing activities (mentioned below), such as that of Saida's father (Salim's grandfather), Ahmad Musa Ibrahim, an educated and well-traveled man, *Gravel Heart* shows how extermination and the following silencing and subordinating of people were realized in Zanzibar. *Gravel Heart*'s portrayal of Ibrahim's misfortune questions the extent to which Zanzibari politics justly and equally treated its citizens, and especially those who were active during decolonization and had a part in it. Before independence, during the 1950s and the early 1960s, the novel tells us that Ahmad Musa Ibrahim was active in the circles of anti-colonial intellectuals who were supporting modern nationalist movements, following nationalist leaders like "Saad Zaghloul Pasha, the Egyptian statesman [...], Gandhi and Nehru, and Habib Bourguiba, the Tunisian insurrectionist, and Marshal Tito" (*GH* 16). In the novel, Ahmad Musa Ibrahim is presented as a political activist who "donated to the [political] party and gave fund-raising speeches in local meetings and participated in the organisation of the rallies which simultaneously offered a raucous challenge to the colonial order and taunted political rivals" (*ibid* 18). Despite his anti-colonial activities, however, he was "killed during the revolution because he did all that he did for the wrong political party" (*ibid*). Thus, Ahmad Musa Ibrahim's arrest and execution indicate how inhospitalities through political corruption, in the form of persecutions with unfair trials or total lack thereof, affected people's lives dramatically. *Gravel Heart* also sketches out Ibrahim's family's subalternity – deprived of their home and "too frightened to resist" (*ibid* 20) – parallel with even more people's subordination, who are depicted as paralyzed by "terror" after the revolution. The relation of those years are put in Saida's and, later, in Masud's mouth. Here, Salim reports Saida's description of the circumstances in those days:

In those five weeks [after the revolution] it was impossible to believe that life could ever be any different from the panic they [people] lived in at that time [...]. They all did what they could to show the men with guns that they were obedient, harmless, pathetic people without the slightest spark of defiance or rebellion. There was nothing to fear from them. They would not dream of causing their new rulers any annoyance or irritation. It took a while, but their lives became tolerable somehow amidst that terror. [...] When they started to go out more regularly, it was to see how changed and quiet the streets were, how some houses stood empty or had new people staying in them, how armed men in unfamiliar uniforms stood on street corners or wandered into shops to help themselves to what they needed. They learned to avoid eye contact, to avoid provocation, to avoid looking at the acts of malice performed in plain sight. (*GH* 20)

By illustrating the terror reigning after the revolution, through the concepts of material homelessness and subjugation (“We [people] were to say alhamdulillah [Arabic: Thank God; my trans.] and do what we could” [*GH* 22]), Gurnah problematizes the hospitality of the homeland. *Gravel Heart* divorces the idea of homeland as a hospitable space by representing silent and subjugated people, secluded houses and streets, and actual sociopolitical events. These subjugations are tailored to the real sociopolitical event of President Abeid Karume’s assassination in the decade after the revolution:

The President [Abeid Karume] was assassinated in the early years of the [1970s]. The appointment of a new President did not at first diminish the arbitrary violence of the state, which had the assassins to deal with now, many of them former allies, in addition to the other enemies it had been busy persecuting for a while. There were show trials to be held, expulsions to be ordered and vengeful exiles and reluctant clemencies to be decreed. The new President, though, was a milder man, a former school teacher, a Master Boy Scout, and was reputed to be pious. (*GH* 214)

As represented, the inhospitality of the homeland blocks any kind of resistance, given that many of its citizens are expelled from work and country, and have to endure political, economic, and social instabilities and hardships. It badly affects the first impressions of a homely space for the characters populating Gurnah’s fiction. The state worked through coercion rather than concession during those unsteady and insecure years. In such circumstances, “[t]he only reform possible for those you [the government] suspect is extermination or expulsion, cut prune incinerate” (*GH* 179-80), forfeiting the citizenship, within the three months, of those who left (*ibid* 202). In

such a volatile society where resistance becomes impossible, leaving turns out to be the only option, “to throw themselves on the mercy of a brother or a cousin living in a more fortunate place, further up the coast or across the ocean” (*ibid* 23), as staying equals constant fear for one’s safety. The novel presents a case of the subsequent expulsions and emigrations due to losing one’s job and the subsequent economic and social disruptions in the figure of Maalim Yahya (Masud’s father), a revered religious scholar and a Koran teacher who sought refuge in Dubai (*ibid* 181).

The novel undermines the connotation of homeland as a welcoming and hospitable space; as Masud notes: “To the government, this search for connections across the ocean demonstrated the underlying foreignness of these people and it waited patiently for their departure, stripping them of whatever it could in the meantime” (*GH* 180). Finally, through the representation of sociopolitical upheavals, *Gravel Heart* emphasizes the significance of relations and “connections” in creating home and homely feelings, instead of the physical space of the homeland: “the search for work and a place of safety made many people remember that they were Arabs or Indians or Iranians, and they resuscitated connections they had allowed to wither” (*ibid* 180). In the face of calamities befalling people’s lives in Zanzibar in the frenzy of and after the revolution, Gurnah opens up spaces of hospitality offered through hospitable relations and the welcoming approaches of other people and states. The novel presents Malaysia as an instance, through Masud’s account: “It is a surprisingly hospitable city” (*ibid* 249), he says. The section analyzing the familial and societal relations will further discuss the role and significance of these relations in *Gravel Heart*.

*Gravel Heart* also incorporates copious sociopolitical references related to several other African countries and Britain – the hostland of the immigrants in this novel. Gurnah illustrates the social and interpersonal relationships between the characters by depicting sociopolitical context to hint at how the characters negotiate their identity and narrative agency to cope with different (traumatic) experiences in the multiculturally diverse and discrepant (in)hospitable environments. *Gravel Heart*’s characters come from various countries (mainly African), where the circumstances are represented to have been hostile/inhospitable enough to send citizens into exile. The

portrayal of the (sometimes profoundly traumatic) experiences in these characters' lives affects their range and depth of interaction with one another and their sense of solidarity with their fellow immigrants in the narrative. The breakdown of hospitality in such societal and friendly relationships hinders communication through shared narratives and, thus, blocks the negotiation of subjectivity and resistance to the stereotypical discourses; such inhospitality reverberates through Salim's words: "We did not talk to each other about intimate pains. We managed those kinds of things on our own" (*GH* 89).

Gurnah weaves specific and real sociopolitical contexts and histories of countries such as Zanzibar, South Africa, Nigeria, and Sierra Leon (his characters' places of origin) together with the then-current sociopolitical events happening in England (where the characters reside), to reveal the politics of hospitality and resistance in all these places. The novel's illustration of this miscellany of sociopolitical references is illustrated through Salim's experience of lodging in a flat shared by three other African residents, each from the countries mentioned above. Gurnah portrays these characters at specific historical conjunctures of the countries they come from, and according to Salim, all are "living lives in some disarray" (*GH* 85). These sociopolitical allusions indicate the inhospitality of these characters' homelands which reverberate through their personal relationships. Peter is from South Africa, whose story is embedded in the Apartheid context. He mocks "politicians of all complexions, Muslim fanatics, Afrocentric gurus, the international community – especially the international community, bankers, generals, faith-healers ... liars, liars and bullshitters, all of them" (*ibid* 86). Alex is Nigerian and talks about "the huge appetites of Nigerian politicians for stolen wealth." He notes: "When it came to pilfering public money, they [Nigerian politicians] were definitely the worst in the world. [...] Nobody else came close to Nigerian corruption" (*ibid* 90). Mannie is from Sierra Leon, and he struggles with his family's Islamic views, being more liberal in his outlook and personal relationships (*ibid* 91). Amos, another Nigerian, who joins after Alex leaves, is quite a bullying character, formerly a child soldier in the Biafran war (*ibid* 107).

Through this miscellany of actual historical events, and by setting the examples from the daily lives of his fictional characters, Gurnah emphasizes the complexity of the experiences and entanglements of people who are, once in the hostland, in danger of being summarized and flattened as homogeneous through inhospitable stereotypical discourses. Placing the period of Salim living at the OAU House as within the time of South African Apartheid, and alluding to the Biafran War in Nigeria, creates spaces for the characters' derangements and silences. For example, as Salim narrates, they "picked up bits of information about each other but did not probe. [...] Amos, it turned out, had been a child soldier in the Biafra war, but we could not ask him anything about it because his eyes filled with tears the moment he blurted the words out and then he rushed out of the room" (*GH* 107). Also, Peter is illustrated as a person whose "silences were deep and troubled" (*ibid* 86). Salim's descriptions show how silence can become an important indication of complexities that cannot be shared, or possible to be shared only through "intimacies:"

Everything is complicated and questions simplify what is only comprehensible through intimacy and experience. Nor are people's lives free from blame and guilt and wrong-doing, and what might be intended as simple curiosity may feel like demand for a confession. You don't know what you might release by asking a stupid question. It was best to leave people to their silences. (*GH* 108)

*Gravel Heart's* combination of the histories and social and political events of different homelands and the hostland indicates a mutual lack of hospitality, understanding, and agreement between people from different places. In the diasporic environment depicted in this novel, the problem might reside in the lack of knowledge and common generalizations and stereotypes made about people from different racial, ethnic, and gender backgrounds, which creates hostile behavior against the immigrants. However, the novel shows that such inhospitalities also apply to how the immigrants regard their English hosts ("angry English men and superior madams" [*GH* 251]) and also other fellow immigrants. For instance, Amos calls all Muslims "fanatics, imperialists, racists [... who] came to Africa and destroyed our culture. They made us subservient to them and stole our knowledge and inventions and made us into slaves" (*ibid* 100). The state of conflict is also intensified in Amos and Peter's argument; while Amos "sneers" at

Peter, saying that: “You South Africans have no sense of history,” Peter replies: “But at least we know it instead of inventing a history that did not exist” (*ibid* 101). In fact, despite Said’s view that exile might produce “[group] solidarity” with other exiles (Said, *Reflections on Exile* 382), in this novel, it arouses misunderstandings and hostilities embedded in widespread stereotypical discourses. The landlord, Mr. Mgeni, himself an immigrant from Malindi, Kenya, had named the flat “The OAU House” – meaning “The Organisation of African Unity” (*GH* 85). Nonetheless, this name is rendered ironic in view of the disparities and conflicts just mentioned, for the flat-mates do not adhere to any shared sense of history, their experiences differing in complex ways, and sometimes even conflicting, which affects their relationships with each other. In fact, through sketching out a fictional picture encompassing the diversity of experiences, multiplicity, and positionalities, *Gravel Heart* signifies how the specificity of positions of enunciation determines hospitality and the way people view and treat each other. In *Gravel Heart*, although silence is rendered ambivalent through Salim’s comments and narrations (mentioned above), as in the two novels studied earlier in this thesis, it is emphasized that breaking those silences and the negotiations of one’s narratives are necessary to understand one another better and appreciate each others’ traumatic experiences.

*Gravel Heart* emphasizes the significance of specific historical conjunctures in determining the characters’ particular and also shifting subject positions, as well as hospitality and the range of their interactions in specific contact zones. As mentioned above, the attention to sociopolitical references and allusions also includes the events happening in the hostland. These references call attention to the possibility of hostilities arising from some recent – in the context of the novel – sociopolitical events such as the 9/11 attacks. Salim’s reflections in the following, unsent, letter to his mother show *Gravel Heart*’s awareness of the irresolvable problematic relationships as long as these multipolar hostilities exist, also affecting people’s lives. Salim recounts:

The language people speak on the news and in public has changed too since those killings in New York, and the talk is all about Muslim fanatics and terrorists. They speak a familiar language of freedom but plan to

enforce it with violence. I guess that is familiar too. You would not recognise the way some of the bearded ones speak either, how it was all a plot by Kissinger and the Jews, who planted the bombs to make it seem that Muslims had done it so that America could take over the Muslim world and crush it. [...] I feel more of a stranger here now. I hate it but I still stay. I feel like a traitor but I am not sure who it is that I am betraying. (GH 150)

Feeling alienated from both the people of his Muslim culture and the hostile discourses and narratives of the hostland, Salim feels like a “traitor” who cannot negotiate his way and get on with his life. The interesting point about Salim’s understanding of the situation is that he is shown to grasp fully the mutual hostilities caused by such terrorist actions, which is indicative of Gurnah’s sensitivity to and reflection of the heterogeneity of discourses produced at various stages and by different groups/individuals. Such “feeling of loss, [...] the sense of wrong-doing” (GH 121) also stem from inhospitalities of space regardless of the sociopolitical references made in the novel. Salim’s feelings on arriving in London and later on, when he can see a clearer picture of himself and the space he occupies, renders a picture of his negotiating with (in)hospitable environment. *Gravel Heart* shows how the lives of the characters are affected by inhospitable multicultural spaces such as London. It represents Salim’s narrative and his representations of the city and its people as replete with words and encounters connoting inhospitality, describing London as an “alien and hostile city” (*ibid* 67), in which “[fabled London] life turned out to be frantic” (*ibid* 61). Salim himself is portrayed as intimidated by these unwelcoming spaces and peoples in this cosmopolitan place. He recounts:

London terrified me so much. The streets confused me. [...] I felt as if the city despised me, as if I were a tiresome and timorous child who had wandered unwelcome out of the dust and rubble of his puny island shanty into this place where boldness and greed and swagger were required for survival. (GH 61)

While this state of alienation fades away in time, to be substituted by feeling “secure” (GH 69), especially when he gives an “upbeat account” of his life in England to his father and realizes that he “missed it” (*ibid* 172), Salim never feels a sense of belonging there. He is afraid of being “naturalised” (*ibid* 128), and “turning into one of England’s helots, becoming accustomed to bondage.” He thinks “[p]erhaps it was time to go

while I had the strength, or maybe in a year or two” (*ibid* 127), and shows fear when imagining a future when “one day England kills us too” (*ibid* 133).

*Gravel Heart* also represents the inhospitality of the city through “the chaotic languages of London, which did not speak to each other [...] in the city’s human carnival” (*GH* 66). This inhospitality, in the form of lack of interaction between different groups, is also reflected through the inhospitality of the languages which do not necessarily communicate:

when I [Salim] spoke [English] it sounded wrong: not the grammar and the arrangement of words but something deeper, as if I was making things up and my stumbling efforts were evident to everyone. I did not have the self-possession of the other students and I felt uncomfortable among them.  
(*GH* 107)

According to Derrida, “the first violence which the foreigner undergoes [is perhaps] to have to claim his rights in a language he does not speak” (*The Principle of Hospitality* 7). Derrida’s point addresses the lack of hospitable interaction between Salim and his classmates in college, as he recounts: “I never spoke to any of its [England’s] world-citizenry about the realities of the lives they [he and his fellow immigrants] had left behind” (*GH* 107). This situation does not come about due to his inhospitality but because of the irrevocable incongruities between how these people – themselves heterogeneous – regarded the world, and doubts that they themselves were hospitable enough to incorporate the others’ narratives. Gurnah tailors the inhospitality of the hostland in Salim’s opinion about his hostland peers at college: “If the posters and the campaigns and demonstration were a guide, any injustice in the world seemed to be theirs to claim, [...]. They were fortunate people who desired to own even the sufferings of others [... demanding] respect [to] everyone’s humanity” (*ibid* 108). “Any injustice in the world” lumps all others into one category, which shows that these “fortunate people” have insufficient knowledge, or stereotypical perceptions at best, of people from other parts of the world, also lack the willingness to unlearn their stereotypical views, or at least extend their hospitality to hear and include others’ stories.

In *Gravel Heart*, apart from showing inhospitality through references to the sociopolitical contexts of homelands and hostland, Gurnah uses literary intertextualities to depict inhospitality and resistances to it through juxtaposing this text, like his other novels, with other literary works, which makes his “writing-becoming-resistant” (Boehmer, *Postcolonial Poetics* 52). As discussed in the introduction to this section, he implements these intertexts also as a hermeneutic procedure to hint at a common inventory with the readers of his narratives. As such, Gurnah’s novels’ poetic use of allusions to other literary texts creates a parallelism between his narratives and those texts, sometimes used as framing devices to facilitate the reading process of his novels. In an interview with Mark Ruberto, Gurnah remarks that his novels use “books as a means of hinting at parallels, hinting at comparisons” (288). In *Gravel Heart*, Salim’s studying Literature at university makes allusions to many literary texts possible. From among this inventory, William Shakespeare’s plays – especially, *Measure for Measure* (the novel’s title coming from this play)<sup>30</sup> (GH 254-8), and Anton Chekhov’s plays, especially *The Cherry Orchard* (*ibid* 134), are prominent ones.<sup>31</sup>

In the previous chapters, the depiction of hospitality in such intertextualities was read contrapuntally with that of the novels and the stories shared by the characters. Similarly, in *Gravel Heart*, literary allusions open up ways to read hospitality politics in the novel. As mentioned above, the novel’s title is taken from Shakespeare’s play *Measure for Measure* (1623) which has significant overlapping with the novel’s storyline and is, in fact, a frame story for the novel, although with a different ending. Since *Measure for Measure* is a play whose driving force is relationships and their hospitalities in the context of power hierarchies, Gurnah uses allusions to the Shakespearean plot to delineate the significance of hospitable relationships in one’s

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<sup>30</sup> The Duke Vincentio refers to Barnadine (the unrepentant murderer) as “Unfit to live or die. O gravel-heart!” (*Measure for Measure* 4.3.64).

<sup>31</sup> Other works and names alluded to in *Gravel Heart* are Ferdowsi’s *Shahnameh*, the stories of *One Thousand and One Nights*, *David Copperfield*, *Anna Karenina*, *Another Country*, *Things Fall Apart*, *The Mystic Masseur*, *The Rainbow*, “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,” *The Winter’s Tale*, and names such as Virginia Woolf, Joseph Conrad, John Dos Passos, Rabindranath Tagore, George Bernard Shaw, Herman Melville, Sir Walter Scott, and Graham Greene.

life and how even intimate relationships can affect and be affected by one's course of actions in the context of more modern power hierarchies. After hearing from Masud the mysterious story of his abandonment, Salim shares the play with him and points out the similarities between his family's traumatic experience due to the lack of hospitalities in power relations and Shakespeare's play. As in the play, where Isabella is asked to submit herself to Lord Angelo to save her brother Claudio, Saida has to give consent to Hakim to save her brother Amir. However, unlike the play, there is no Duke of Vienna, Duke Vincentio, to save the Isabella-figure. Plus, as also Salim notes, "Nor was there any role for you [Masud] in the play, Baba" (*GH* 256), which anticipates – as an analepsis – the uttermost inhospitalities Masud endures in his relationship with Saida and Amir.

*Gravel Heart's* other major literary intertextuality is Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*; a play which Salim goes to see performed in London. There are again some similarities between this play's and the novel's storylines. Nevertheless, the novel incorporates one of the side stories of the play, that is, Lyubov's leaving her husband for another man, and her son's drowning after that incident. This story overlaps with Salim's family story to the extent that his mother was unfaithful to his father. Salim's weeping for this story and the scene where Lyubov says: "*If only this burden could be taken from me, if only I could forget my past*" (*GH* 134; emphasis in original), may indicate the resemblances Salim sees between this character and his mother after she is coerced into having a relationship with Hakim (*ibid* 40). Through Salim's reflection that "human sorrow was always based on regret and pain in the past, and that neither time nor location nor history made much difference" (*ibid* 134), Gurnah indicates the universality of such feelings regardless of one's nationality, race, and history, the communication of which can be possible through such literary productions in hospitable spaces.

At a metanarrative level, it can also be argued that incorporating these works produces a reservoir of heterogeneities and hospitalities – in the assembly and inclusion of heterogeneous literary texts – which parallel the heterogeneities in *Gravel Heart's* representation and inclusion of characters and their lives. These heterogeneities

indicate how people occupying different subject positions are, in an inhospitable manner, constantly objectified, lumped together, and treated as similar in some literary productions and powerful discourses of knowledge and also in real life. In this regard, in order to emphasize the significance of local discourses of knowledge, *Gravel Heart* uses Salim's lack of information about the Muslim population of Sierra Leone through his reference to Graham Greene's book, *The Heart of the Matter* (1948),<sup>32</sup> to indicate the problematic status of certain discourses which have been inhospitable and have summarized, falsified, or absented other narratives of knowledge. He tells his father about Greene's book:

The only book I had read about Sierra Leone [...] was something by Graham Greene, and I did not remember any mention of Muslims in it [Green's book] apart from the corrupt Syrians whom all the English characters spoke about sneeringly. That was how people like you [Masud] and I came to know of so much of the world, reading about it from people who despised us. (*GH* 252)

As Salim points out, the only way Muslims (Syrians) have been depicted in Greene's book is through stereotypes such as their "corruption." In fact, through Salim's point, *Gravel Heart* questions the hospitality of literary works in their apparent inability to integrate multiplicity and heterogeneity and in their development of certain discourses.

In the following section, the discussion will concentrate on (in)hospitality in familial and interpersonal societal relationships, negotiations, and engagements to illuminate the significance of hospitality in those relationships to help one negotiate identity, subjectivity, and narrative agency through the relation of one's experiences and stories.

### **5.3 Familial and Societal Relationships**

*Gravel Heart* revolves around the story of Salim and his family. Their lives are transformed by the asymmetrical power relations in society and resulting hostilities which cause Saida's submission to Hakim (a powerful political personality), and following that Masud's abandonment and, later, Salim's (self)-exile to England. In an

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<sup>32</sup> The novel's name is not given in *Gravel Heart*.

interview with Mohan and Datta, Gurnah confirms that “*Gravel Heart* was [...] in an important way, about power and its capacity to distort the intimate reaches of relationships” (3). Gurnah incorporates the notion of hospitality in the micro-space of family, family stories and relations, and power dynamics at both intra- and inter-familial spaces, to reflect on the more general and encompassing power relations and their impacts at the societal level, in the (in)hospitable macro-spaces and relations he portrays in his fiction. Reading Gurnah’s fiction within the scope of familial relations will also illuminate how these relations are geared through social relations and how family becomes a microcosm for society.

As in the two previous novels studied in this thesis, by intertwining his narratives with inhospitable silences and blocked communications in the represented relationships – which create inhospitable relationships and spaces – Gurnah pinpoints the significance and impact of hospitable and friendly family relations and interactions between the family members, in the characters’ negotiations of their identity and subjectivity. In addition, Gurnah dwells on the critical concept of “intimacy,” indicating in his portrayal of communal relations the necessity of intimacy, trust, and hospitality in the relationship between his characters. Indeed, the novel shows that they are imperative for the characters to go beyond limited conversations in transient communications and interactions, which do not allow the interlocutors to negotiate their identity through relative and relational subject positions. Gurnah “envision[s] intimacy as it appears in the novels, as a continuous process of engagement and negotiation” (Interview with Mohan & Datta 5). In Gurnah’s narrative, engagement in one another’s stories – which annexes this engagement to societal relationships – becomes the building block for negotiating identities and narrative agency. As Datta also remarks: “*Gravel Heart* ultimately illustrates the condition of a whole community: people learn of themselves through others who have impacted their lives; life, as it were, is in community, even if dispersed across space and time” (24). This point also indicates the significance of narrative agency and hospitality.

Nonetheless, in the represented familial relationships in all three novels, the communication between family members is restricted due to the silences usually

arising from the traumatic experiences of the characters in inhospitable environments, and due to lack of intimacy which is both caused by and perpetuates the problem of (in)hospitality. In Chapter Three, the analysis showed that silences and inhospitalities in familial interactions in *By the Sea* created holes in Latif's story of his childhood and family feud with Saleh, later filled through interactive story sharing with Saleh. Chapter Four studied *The Last Gift's* treatment of these silences and showed a lack of communication which hindered the characters' understanding of their individuality, leaving them helpless in confronting inhospitalities and different types of racism. Focusing on *Gravel Heart* in this chapter, the analysis of the treatment of silences and blocked communications in the inhospitable spaces will show how they paralyze Salim's negotiation of his identity and his narratives, leading to hostilities on his part. These hostilities are directed toward Masud before knowing about the story of his abandonment; toward Saida because of Hakim; and finally, to other people he engages with in the hostland. Masud, too, is overwhelmed by Saida's concession to Hakim's demand; he grieves the loss of his wife through absolute resignation, "self-hatred," and "shame" (*GH* 247-8), never able to revive his sense of being. The novel's portrayal of characters, and especially of these two protagonists, as grappling with familial issues anticipates their struggles relating to broader society and how they perceive and are received in macro-spaces, as the evidence below will testify.

*Gravel Heart's* interesting approach to representing the father-son and mother-son relationships, i.e., Salim's relationships within his nuclear family, shows the inhospitality – with dried up intimacies – of the narrators of the stories (Abbas of *The Last Gift* was an inhospitable narrator for a long time, as well). In the depiction of these relationships, *Gravel Heart* does not concentrate on the inhospitality of the listener, nor on inhospitable spaces which hinder the relation of one's stories. This novel, especially when Salim is young, foregrounds the inhospitality of those who know what Salim has no knowledge of but craves to be enlightened about, leaving him to surmise based on the course of events and others' life stories. The opening statement of the novel, by the narrator Salim, anticipates how the events of the narrative and his lack of knowledge about them will define Salim's being: "My father did not want me. I came to that knowledge when I was quite young, even before I understood what I

was being deprived of and a long time before I could guess the reason for it” (*GH* 3). This abandonment and ignorance of its cause turns into an existential crisis: “[I felt] lost in a crowd or sinking soundlessly in the black-green water” (*ibid* 29). He is deprived of a story and an identity of his own, thinking his life memories “were not my [his] own. [...] and] were put there for me by other people. [...] When I reached this point I began to wonder if I knew anything about myself” (*ibid* 4).

The failure of hospitality in dialogic contact zones reverberates in the novel’s portrayals of the relationships between Salim and his parents. *Gravel Heart* sketches out this relationship through silence and shame, focusing on Masud’s “impenetrable” (*GH* 52) silences and decrepitude and Saida’s account of “half-truth” and shame (*ibid* 40-3). For example, although at one point Saida tells her then-fourteen-year-old son that the reason for Masud’s abandonment was “what I did” (*ibid* 43), she is portrayed as unable to communicate with him, finally sending him off to her brother in London. These circumstances make Salim an heir to his parents’ ways of relating to the world and communicating with people, especially in England. As discussed above, the macro-space social relationships are shaped by the micro-space familial relationships. Intensified by his feelings of intimidation and alienation, Salim cannot reconcile with his past because of the unknown. Like his parents, also, *Gravel Heart* portrays him as an inhospitable narrator in his relationships with other people. He is unable to build intimacy, even with his English-Indian girlfriend, Billie. Although he shares his life story with her, he feels “humbled in my need, a betrayer, hawking my agony for her sympathy, but she said no, it was a line we had to cross. You have to talk about the things that cause you pain” (*ibid* 144) (inhospitalities in their relationship will be discussed from another perspective, later in this section). The novel emphasizes hospitality and border-crossing in sharing one’s sufferings with trusted ones in Billie’s comment and regards self-imposed silences as impeding the negotiation of one’s subjectivity and narratives, and also inability to build relationships – Salim’s unsent letters to his mother, and his numerous short-term relationships with women, being other instances.

*Gravel Heart* implements the epistolary technique in some parts, through letters between Salim and his parents, to indicate the exhaustion of hospitable communal relationships. Gurnah uses this communication means to hint, paradoxically, at the lack of hospitality and interaction between the characters. On the one hand, Salim's assumed silence in his correspondence with Saida, in letters which do not reveal his sufferings, confirms his alienation from his family and his awareness of failure in reciprocity and intelligibility in his familial relationships. On the other hand, the reader has access to the inventory of Salim's sense of alienation and "homesickness" (*GH* 99), this time through his unsent letters written to both his parents. This deliberate action constructs an alternative sense of subjectivity for Salim to write his "solitary and gloomy reflections" (*ibid* 66). On an extra-diegetic level, these letters provide alternative stories about Salim's life for the reader. Taking the first connotation of these unsent letters, for example, this sense of alienation and lack of hospitable communication is shared with Masud:

And perhaps no one knows how to ask [about others' stories]. Even those who might have done, don't know how to enquire into what troubles someone like me. Is that how it was for you? Perhaps no one knows another well enough to care, or does not want to presume, or cannot see any troubling thing to ask about. In any case, if anyone does ask I would not know where to begin: with my mother and what befell her, with you, with Uncle Amir, with my journey into this wilderness, with how much I loathe this life, this place, this cringing? (*GH* 121)

This letter relates Salim's loneliness, displacement, and the growing inhospitality of his counterparts, both in his familial and interpersonal societal relationships. The second connotation of those letters is best described by Gurnah, which talks about such feelings of alienation and dislocation:

I keep thinking that the feeling at the base of this sense of dislocation is disappointment. Disappointed love describes it because it's not simply a question of a disillusionment with England. It's also disappointment with the self, disappointment with how the displaced person has been able to cope with the experience. It's disappointed desires as much as a sense of disappointed realities. (Gurnah, Interview with Nasta 357)

Gurnah's point parallels Salim's disappointment and his reflecting on the difference between his expectations and realities of his life in England:

[A]t first I thought my real life would begin after I reached London, that I would do things differently from then on. I thought everything would change for me here in the land of luxury and freedom and opportunity, that nothing could possibly thwart me. I promised myself that. But it turned out to be untrue. It was a lie I was forcing on myself because I had no choice. It seemed I did not have the strength and hardness for it. (*GH* 82)

Only through these letters can the reader see Salim as a loving child alienated from his family, whose love has not been channeled through hospitable behavior. Up until he can finally rebuild his relationship with his father and hear him tell his life story, Salim takes refuge in his hospitable notebooks to vitalize his narrative agency. However, their reunion allows them to start sharing their accounts and helps them negotiate their identities through stories. Masud's stories are reciprocated by Salim's account of his life in England, and Masud feels relieved after he tells the secret story. This parallels what happened with Saleh in *By the Sea*, and Abbas in *The Last Gift*, where father figures, come to a reconciliation with their past through sharing their secret stories. This can in *Gravel Heart*, as in *The Last Gift*, be regarded as their last mission in life, for Abbas and Masud die at the end of the novels. Salim, too, finds it reconciling: after putting his life in London in perspective and sharing his life in London with Masud, feels the sharing has, "to my [Salim's] surprise [...it] lifted the burden of years slightly" (*ibid* 172), which changes his feeling of displacement in London into a feeling of nostalgic attachment to the place he has left – to a certain extent (*ibid*). *Gravel Heart* also shows how these feelings change in the light of his father's story, filling in the gaps which had, for so long, hindered Salim's negotiation of identity through his familial relationships, affecting his interactions in broader society.

Another point of reference for the notion of hospitality in *Gravel Heart* is the representation of home and homely spaces, as in *By the Sea* and *The Last Gift*. The politics of hospitality work through the physical space of the family home to represent the double-edged meaning of home and homely spaces. By giving a pivotal role to Amir as both the guest and the host in different family home spaces at different stages of the narrative, Gurnah shows the politics of hospitality being exhausted by this one character. Derrida's notions of the host as being the hostage of the guest can perfectly apply to Amir's character (*The Principle of Hospitality* 9). The following examples

clearly show this point. During his stay at his sister's home, Amir is a welcome guest treated with unconditional hospitality as Saida sacrifices her marriage and family life (also that of her husband and son) to save him. Even before Amir's arrest, both Saida and Masud become the hostage of this guest, who does not "observe the rules of hospitality by respecting the being-at-home of my home [host's household]" through his inconsiderate manners (Derrida, *ibid* 14). Instead, he behaves with utmost freedom – he returns home late and awakens Masud to open the door, and he also plays the music aloud. He had also created a hole in his bedroom wall to spy on Saida and Masud (*GH* 210, 46). Amir's brazen demeanor and high expectations anticipate the destruction he brings to her sister and her family (*ibid* 211).

On the contrary, through this same character, *Gravel Heart* indicates the reversal of hospitality and hospitable spaces in the two homes described in the novel where Saida and Masud's hospitality is substituted by Amir and Asha's hostility. Amir as a host is represented in Salim's narration as treating his guest with increasing inhospitality. Saida and Amir's hospitality are shown as exact opposites, as Salim recounts his stay with Amir: "My [Salim] opinion was not required on any issue" (*GH* 60) [...] "I was a relation they were paying to educate and clothe, so it was only reasonable that they should be able to choose the clothes they were willing to buy for me" (*ibid* 61). Amir blocks Salim's negotiation of identity through his comment about Salim's diary-keeping, telling him that it is not a "wise" idea because one "can never unwrite them" (*ibid* 66). Nevertheless, given that writing, as a way of sharing one's narratives, assists with agency and constructing subjectivities and, in itself, even can be an act of resistance, Amir's words deny Salim such hospitable spaces. Asha also treats Salim "as if I [Salim] were a lazy servant, or rebuked me for a mishap to the children as she would an inattentive ayah" (*ibid* 63). From Amir and Asha's perspective, he is a disrespectful person whose passivity stems from neglect, lack of appreciation, and responsible feelings (*ibid* 158). Amir's inhospitality goes further after Salim fails to study the subject his uncle has chosen for him, and this being for him the last straw, he expels Salim from his home: "I [Amir] don't want you [Salim] here any more" (*ibid* 77). Amir's literally "silenc[ing]" (*ibid* 81) Salim, in not allowing him to defend himself (after the latter's quarrel with Asha about Saida's sacrificing herself), which

again reflects a failure of hospitality in familial relationships, also mirrors Salim's feeling of alienation in the hostland. Expelled from one host's house in Holland Park by his uncle's "unnecessary hard-heartedness" (*ibid* 82), he is on his "way to Guinea Lane" – epitomizing a wider and unwelcoming hostland society – "and more likely on the way to heartache and struggle, [...feeling] alone where I [Salim] was, and where I did not want to be" (*ibid* 81).

*Gravel Heart* does not limit the representation of inhospitable relationships and spaces to Salim's circle of family members and relatives. Gurnah plays out inhospitalities and lack of communication, and hostile interactions by depicting Salim's relationship with people in the hostland, as well. Salim's existential crisis of young age turns into negligence of his later years in England as the outcome of the events that took place. This might seem Gurnah's, in *Gravel Heart*, method of showing the significance of knowledge of the past and reciprocal hospitable relationships with one's family. Salim's negligence also emphasizes the novel's broader concerns about the formation and maintenance of hospitable relationships in society. Considering this, for instance, *Gravel Heart* molds one of the many psychological effects of Salim's traumatic parental experience into his fear of sexual intimacy with women as he narrates to the reader:

I could not tell them [his flat mates] that I felt alienated by the idea of being alone with a woman – or that was what I believed, despite my physical longings. It was not that I did not have desires and cravings, and I did what was necessary to satisfy those, but when I imagined intimacies with a woman, I felt a kind of nausea and anxiety, and had to suppress memories of the defeated silence that surrounded my father, and refuse glimpses of my mother's coercion and that man's hard hands on her. The idea of sexual intimacy seemed to me like a submission to an ugly and shaming force and filled me with a kind of terror. (*GH* 92)

Regarding *Gravel Heart*'s depiction of Salim's interpersonal societal relationships through the lenses of hospitality, we can say that since these relationships are shaped with people from a variety of social classes, genders, nationalities, and ethnic and cultural backgrounds, they open up the spaces for negotiations through multiculturalism, showing how multiculturalism is intertwined with hospitalities or hostilities. Salim's romantic relationship with Billie is a case in point, where while at

first she is portrayed as enthusiastic and caring about the relationship, attentive to Salim and his stories (as discussed previously in this chapter), she turns hostile in view of her patriarchal family who considers Salim as a “Muslim nigger from Africa” (*GH* 147). Although Billie’s subalternity and submissiveness to her mother’s rule are evident, she denies Salim her hospitality and adheres to the racist discourses of her family in planning to leave him (*ibid*), and eventually totally ignores his calls (*ibid* 149). Through Billie and her family’s inhospitality Gurnah, in a way, problematizes the connotation of subalternity with marginalization. In other words, the subaltern and obedient character of Billie marginalizes Salim by her inhospitality. Although coming from a multicultural background due to their hybrid roots, Billie’s family does not treat Salim through what is expected to be their multicultural upbringing, either. After this rejection, Salim loses faith in human relationships, expelled again with inhospitality, which intensifies his feeling of alienation in the hostland, making him feel “drained” (*ibid* 150).

Billie’s subordination to the dominant discourses of her mother and brothers, on the other hand, indicates their inhospitality towards a family member. Also, as will be discussed in the following section, it has undertones of inhospitality to female voices and agency at a meta-narrative level, which is analyzed through the representation of female characters in *Gravel Heart* in the next section. Finally, *Gravel Heart*’s inclusion of Salim’s failure to build lasting relationships with women, usually because of rejections and denial of hospitalities, reemphasizes the significance of hospitality in creating trust, intimacy, and relationships that can help one’s negotiation of subjectivity and agency.

#### **5.4 (In)hospitality and Women**

This section analyzes hospitality in the representation of female characters in Gurnah’s novel to look into their negotiation of identity and narrative agency and their resistance to discourses of power subordinating them. In similar veins to *By the Sea* and *The Last Gift*, *Gravel Heart* represents its female characters through stereotypical images, summarizing them through their wives and their roles within the limits of body and sexuality. Furthermore, as in the two previous novels mentioned above, Gurnah does

not always create spaces for female narratives to be shared, thus leaving their voices and stories subordinate to dominant male narratives and, in fact, helping the narration of those male stories.

The female characters in *Gravel Heart* all get their share of being represented, in Gurnah's narrative, through the inhospitable strands mentioned above, and indeed, as intensifying and perpetuating those discourses. To begin with, what escalates the plot of the novel is Saida's representation through her body and sexuality. The whole story occupying and shadowing Masud, Saida, and Salim's life is triggered by Saida's sexually submitting to a male character, Hakim, who introduces tragedy into their lives and affects all of their relationships. It blocks any resistance by keeping another male character, Amir, a hostage. Moreover, the reason for Amir's arrest also passes through female sexuality, since it was "for raping an under-age schoolgirl" (*GH* 229) – only this time, Asha seems to be a silent, but a lucky, victim. The discrepancy between the way Saida and Asha are treated in Gurnah's novel shows the significance of power relations, regarding not only gender but also class as the determining factor for the female characters' degree of subordination. Thus, since Asha is from a more powerful class than Saida, her victimization and subordination is less dramatic than Saida's, leading to her prosperous marriage to Amir, while Saida's subservience ruins her and her family's life.

*Gravel Heart's* depiction of women's physical beauty and representing them as property owned by men in post-revolution Zanzibar, accompanied by sexual overtones, through Masud's story narrated to Salim, emphasizes the inhospitality of the space and how women were treated inhospitably by their male counterparts. Furthermore, Hakim's overt sexual offer to Saida, as the pinnacle of this way of treating women, shows the importance of female representations through body and sexuality. Gurnah's awareness and sensitivity to female subalternity in his fiction, that he termed "cruelties against women" (Interview with Nasta 361), is channeled through Masud's story of post-revolution Zanzibar shared with Salim, which reveals how women were treated in those inhospitable circumstances and also, despite that, shows how women could have certain liberties:

Saida was beautiful, she was famed for it. People pointed her out in the streets, and youths sometimes walked behind her, smirking their adoration. In those years [after the Zanzibari revolution], the rules of sexual decorum people had lived by for generations were set aside. The new owners of the government and its offices did so contemptuously, pursuing women they desired without fear of causing offence, or perhaps they did so with such indiscretion deliberately to cause offence, in the way that men look to humiliate their defeated rivals by treating their mothers and sisters and wives with disrespect. [...] For the women it was sometimes impossible to say no, because of the insistence of the men or because of the threat to their loved ones or the needs of the family, and because they understood their obligations. Some people thought it a curse when their daughters grew up prettier than expected. It was a time when a beautiful daughter was cause for anxiety. But not all the young women were coerced. For some of them, it was as if after turmoil and deprivation, they who had been under surveillance all their lives now relished this unanticipated liberty and participated in it without heed for what might lie ahead. Something went out of our lives in this abandon, some quality of reflection and tenderness and fellow feeling. (*GH* 203)

As discussed in previous sections in this chapter, the inhospitality of the macro-space of post-revolution Zanzibar affected the micro-spaces of families, as the quote above clearly shows. Such inhospitalities go hand in hand to subjugate women more than their male peers. The circumstances took a tragic turn when men, subordinated and “defeated” by the hostilities of the sociopolitical oppressions in the macro-space, exerted their power in the micro-spaces of families, making women doubly subaltern, “by treating their mothers and sisters and wives with disrespect.” While Gurnah’s text pays attention to some women’s agency in getting certain liberties from deprivations and patriarchal order, such liberties still pass through a sexual discourse at their expense. This passage, although it shows Gurnah’s sensitivity to women’s subalternity, contradicts the way Gurnah’s narrative includes female narratives. *Gravel Heart* is indifferent to creating hospitable narrative spaces for these women’s voices to represent themselves fictionally and be heard. For instance, the novel touches upon Masud’s surprise in noticing that Saida did not leave Hakim after Amir was released and safe (*GH* 248); however, it does not give her voice to tell her side of the story and state of feeling, thus withholding from her the required narrative agency. Even her response to Hakim’s overt sexual offer (*ibid* 240), that ““You humiliate me. I am a married woman and a mother. I love my husband above any other person in this

world, and I will not bring shame to his home and my son's home'" (*ibid* 240), unhomes her, and deprives her the right to that space, and expresses her reputation through and subordinate to that of her husband and son.

In *Gravel Heart*, Gurnah uses the platform of female subalternity and that of Masud's shamed helplessness (*GH* 245), only to foreground his male character's victimization, by implication cleansing him from blame. Like *Measure for Measure*, *Gravel Heart* is an enigmatic work: interestingly, it does not grant Masud the agency to defend his family against Hakim's power over him and Saida. Instead, he is portrayed as a person who has to leave because of what Saida did to pinpoint Saida's wiles, "[n]o one will ever know" (*ibid* 244), and as discussed above, since the reader has no access to her side of the story, Masud becomes the victim of Saida and Amir's plot (*ibid* 245):

Whenever I [Masud] saw her, I struggled to prevent myself from breaking down with grief. I should have fought for her, but I did not have the strength to overcome those two shameless men who had taken over her life. I was not sure if she even wanted me to try. In a silent place in my mind, I knew that she had already given me up, and that the food she brought me every day was atonement for what she could not help but do. (*GH* 247)

In this way, the novel induces empathy, in both Salim and the reader, toward Masud by giving him a voice through which to relate his story to the son and also by showing how deeply in love Masud was with Saida, to the extent that he returned to Zanzibar after her death:

I've been waiting to tell you [Salim] this for many years, even though for a long time it was for the wrong reasons. I wanted you to know who was to blame but you were too young and I did not have the strength. In the end I thought maybe you had chosen your side. Now I just want you to know since you want to know. (*GH* 248)

Another case in point regarding the silencing of the female narrative in *Gravel Heart* is evident in the portrayal of the relationship between Salim and Billie discussed in the previous section. *Gravel Heart* sketches out Salim's character like his father, without agency to resist Billie's departure. Nevertheless, this lack of agency is depicted at the expense of Billie's hostility and her nonresistance to her family's racist discourse. The

novel does not dwell on Billie's subalternity and helplessness against the tyranny of a suicidal mother and two patriarchal brothers. Since she was shown to be deeply in love with Salim, with whom she had a long relationship, it is expected that she should go through similar hardships as Salim; however, this is never even mentioned in the novel. The novel dismisses Billie's voice and does not relate her story after she is forced to break up with Salim, again directing the reader's attention to Salim's calamity (*GH* 144-51).

In the previous section it was argued that hospitality in familial relationships creates spaces for the characters' negotiation of identity and belonging, as they also create a sense of solidarity between the family members by sharing stories of the past. In the representation of the familial relationship in Salim's nuclear family, the bond between the father and the son, a homo-social relationship, is reflected in Salim's "immediate" (*GH* 164) decision to return to Zanzibar after many years when he hears that Masud is back "to catch up with neryy the old man after all these years" (*ibid*). This relationship is illustrated as more vital and hospitable than the relationships between Salim and his mother despite his regular exchanges of letters with her while in England. Furthermore, the reader learns through Salim's account that he does not call Saida, not knowing "what I [Salim] would say to her" (*ibid* 130), and never visits Zanzibar until she died. Although the novel shows Salim's indifference to stem from the fact that Saida's husband, Hakim, might answer the call – and that he did not wish to hear his voice (*ibid*) – Salim's later comment in one of his unsent letters: "I have been waiting for you [his mother] to go [die]" (*ibid* 161), suggests his inhospitality to Saida, in fact blaming her for what has happened to his family. Finally, Salim's point that Saida is the "absent reader" (*ibid*) of his unsent letters ironically indicates *Gravel Heart's* absenting Saida and her voice in the conversation Salim has in his mind.

The representation of female-male relationships in the nuclear family as well as in larger social contexts in *Gravel Heart* locates inhospitalities as emerging also from gender position and differences, where female characters are doubly subaltern in the context of the novel, and also subordinated to male discourses at the metanarrative

level of Gurnah's text, which clearly indicates the absence and silencing of female voices and agency in his fiction.

## **5.5 Findings**

This chapter studied Gurnah's *Gravel Heart*, a novel dealing with families and familial relationships through the son's perspective, whose sense of identity cannot be constructed because of unknown stories about his parent's separation. From among the portrayed characters in the text, Salim is the only one who does not know the past and thus, tries to learn this through the events in others' lives. The novel spins around the story of Salim's family and foregrounds the characters' negotiation and understanding of the notions of morality and ethics and power relations. Gurnah embeds these characters' negotiations of identity and narrative agency through power relations in (in)hospitable societal and familial relationships. These relationships' inclusion or exclusion of these characters' narratives orchestrate or impede their ability to identify through their stories. The novel illustrates these relationships through sociopolitical references and literary intertextualities within the text, referring to hospitality in social and familial relationships built between its characters. Gurnah also pays attention to female characters and their narratives in representing hospitality in these relationships and spaces, only to inscribe them through specific sexual codes, foregrounding their wiles, and denying them the narrative space and agency required for their negotiation of identity and resistance against subalternity. With their stories subordinate to and affected by male discourses, *Gravel Heart* becomes an inhospitable space at the metanarrative level to include female voices and narratives.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

The current study is an attempt to investigate Abdulrazak Gurnah's fictional oeuvre and his narrative itinerary in representing fictional characters and lives and their narrative entanglements. Written by an author in exile, his narratives follow characters dislocated from their home and homelands, searching for hospitable relationships and spaces in different environments. It has studied negotiations of hospitality, identity, subjectivity, and narrative agency in resistance to powerful discourses in Gurnah's *By the Sea* (2001), *The Last Gift* (2011), and *Gravel Heart* (2017). The novels have been analyzed through the concepts of Derridean hospitality, Stuart Hall's notion of multiculturalism(s), and the Foucauldian concept of Power/Knowledge. As discussed in Chapter One, these theories and philosophies, when calibrated to allow comparison with each other, not only enable the analyses of the texts in question but also indicate the entanglements between these theories in light of the novels studied, opening up spaces for their reconsideration thanks to the analyses and in line with Stuart Hall's criticism of multiculturalism, drawing attention to "multicultural drift" (explained in Chapter Two). In other words, although they seem discrepant and do not discuss similar premises, the theories of hospitality and multiculturalism have been shown to be connected. Although these two concepts arise from different philosophical outlooks, the analyses of Gurnah's fiction, strongly suggest that these notions are interconnected and need to be discussed together. As also discussed in Chapter Two, the doctrine of multiculturalism cannot exist without hospitality: definitions of multiculturalism are posited upon the practice of hospitality; without hospitality, the whole concept of multiculturalism is called into question. In other words, multiculturalism cannot exclude considerations of hospitality – hospitality is an integral factor of multiculturalism. For people and states to practice multiculturalism

and claim to be multicultural, hospitality serves as a vital precondition. In this sense, Gurnah's novels show that when hospitality is shared by people from diverse ethnic, racial, national, class, gender and sexuality backgrounds, and through the intermingling of these different groups and their communicative interactions (which helps negotiations of identity and subjectivity through sharing narratives), multiculturalism becomes a possible outcome. His novels suggest that, however, such hospitable spaces are rare because the relationships are the relations of domination and inequalities.

The refusal of hospitality instigates exclusions based on single and exclusive definitions of national affiliations and identity, hence the demise of multiculturalism. Such a refusal excludes diversity and homogenizes heterogeneities which are the building blocks of the notion of multiculturalism. In such circumstances, the characters' negotiations of identity are encumbered as their narrative agency is blocked in inhospitable environments and spaces. Thus, these characters will not be able to resist the powerful and dominant discourses that have produced and perpetuated inhospitable stereotypical and homogenizing narratives and discourses.

Gurnah's fiction undermines multiculturalism practiced in multicultural spaces and settings by depicting a lack of hospitable spaces and relationships, indicating through negative examples the interrelationship between hospitality and multiculturalism discussed above. The novels illustrate the significance of hospitality in their portrayal of relationships and power relations, and the negotiations characters attempt through communications and sharing narratives. In light of this argument, this thesis has tried to lay bare Gurnah's fictional characters' processes of identification and resistance to dominant discourses, analyzing immigrant, refugee, asylum-seeker and (self)-exile characters who are generally put in subaltern positions to reveal negotiations of hospitality, identity, and subalternity in and through asymmetric and (in)hospitable power relations.

The three novels studied here are populated with a range of immigrant characters, plus those who can be called the host people. Gurnah's fiction, through his portrayal of characters, pays attention to relationships both within and between these groups, and

with the wider societies, states, culture, and people in both the home- and hostland(s). The politics of hospitality and inclusion/exclusion in these relationships determine these character's negotiations of identity and narrative agency through the stories they share. All three novels analyzed follow a similar structure in delineating the relationships discussed above. Gurnah uses sociopolitical contexts in the form of allusions and references, literary intertextualities, narrative objects, and polyphonic narrative technique, comprising the poetics of his fiction, to represent hospitality in the characters' familial and interpersonal societal relationships and to illustrate social relationships specifically through sociopolitical contextual references. This thesis added another perspective in its examination of the representation of relationships and characters, which is the consideration of hospitality in represented female characters and their narrative agency. As discussed earlier, negotiations of identity and narrative agency are possible in hospitable spaces and relationships. In Gurnah's narratives, however, female characters are often denied spaces hospitable to their stories and to negotiation of their subjectivities. Furthermore, these female characters' representations reproduce certain stereotypical parameters, such as body and sexuality, women's wiles, quotidian roles, and women's gullibility, which are driving forces in the plots of the novels under study here. Such inhospitable discursive practice regarding female characters is given impetus and separate analytic section in each chapter to point out inhospitality at the metanarrative level and as regards Gurnah's authorial practice, which goes against the claims made in his several interviews. Moreover, this section is separated in each chapter to prevent complications in analyzing negotiations of identity and narrative agency, which could haphazardly put women at similar status as their male counterparts if treated otherwise.

The three novels have been shown also to significantly undermine the connotations of homeland and home as hospitable places and/or spaces. This subversion is done through the sociopolitical references to the Zanzibari homeland and one's home by depicting different unhomely spaces within the physical spaces of home and inhospitable relationships within this space. By sketching out the inhospitalities within the Zanzibari homeland, Gurnah divorces his fiction from the trend of his predecessor writers of East African fiction, which generally advocated African nationalisms and

Pan-Africanism as decolonizing and resisting activity, in the form of the empire “writ[ing] back” (Ashcroft 1989). Instead, by illustrating the everyday experiences of his characters in post-independence and post-revolution Zanzibar, Gurnah ridicules nationalist feelings and postcolonial government, joining Fanon in criticizing the new “national bourgeoisie” (*The Wretched of the Earth* 108), that “often ran the new countries with a callous, exploitative tyranny reminiscent of the departed masters (Said, *Culture and Imperialism* 19). As the meaning of one’s home and homeland as a hospitable and welcoming space is eroded, Gurnah illustrates hospitality in built relationships which allow negotiations of narratives to occur. Since these negotiations are only possible through friendly and hospitable communications, they require the existence and/or construction of such relationships, irrespective of the physical home or home/hostland. Eventually, Gurnah’s novels foreground and pinpoint relationships as the most crucial spaces for negotiations of identity and agency within hierarchical power structures.

Gurnah also implements physical space in depicting hospitality and inhospitality of the various places and relationships. In this regard, the illustration of decay, squalor, dirty, and dingy places, for example, the portrayal of dark and messy houses, corridors, toilets, and dirty and unwashed beddings and towels, are metaphors showing and anticipating the inhospitalities which inflict Gurnah’s characters. On the contrary, the representation of bright, clean, fresh smells and places, especially places near the sea, become Gurnah’s metaphoric representational technique to hint at the hospitality of those spaces. Hence, his characters feel more welcome and included in such spaces, while the aforementioned dirty spaces alienate them and their narratives.

*By the Sea* (2001) is the first Gurnah’s novel studied in this thesis. The novel’s poetics and narrative technique render it a fertile space for the discussion explained earlier. Sociopolitical allusions and references in the novel embed the fictional stories within the real-life context and show the fictional characters’ lives in these contexts. These references create the macro-spaces to discuss the impact of these spaces, and hospitality and power relations therein on the characters’ behaviors and relationships. They also affect hospitality in the representation of characters and their narratives. As

a novel replete with stories, the significance of sharing these stories and narratives in the relationship between the characters is rendered paramount. Saleh and Latif are two characters who need to share their stories in hospitable spaces to negotiate their past with a present and (re)construct their identities by filling the gaps in each other's knowledge of the past. Since their stories, like themselves, travel through Gurnah's use of narrative objects such as a casket of *ud*, an ebony table, maps, and furniture, these objects set the novel's plot in motion.

Moreover, these narrative objects are used to delineate thematic and analytical perspectives in *By the Sea*. The most important of these objects, maps, intertwine and juxtapose colonial and anti-colonial discourses with each other and indicate how they (the maps and cartography) can be both a means of colonization and an act of resistance. In this regard, maps can be regarded as tools for determining borders and territories, thus a colonial object; on the other hand, mapping out stories and sharing one's narratives, plus journeys through space and time by Gurnah's characters, Saleh and Latif, can be considered as resistance activities (McLeod 9), challenging other dominant discourses produced through maps. In this sense, *By the Sea* renders this narrative object in double and ambivalent senses to show an alternative, resistant, and in Gurnah's words, "more complex ways of knowing" (Gurnah, "Writing and Place" 60).

(In)hospitality in the inter-cultural and societal relationships with the host state and people are observable in the second novel studied here, *The Last Gift* (2011). From among the ten novels of Gurnah to the date, this novel deals more with subsequent generations of immigrants in England and their predicaments within the host culture. In this sense, this novel, by depicting different generations of immigrant life, foregrounds the study of multiculturalism and hospitality together. *The Last Gift* violates the distinction between the homeland and the hostland as the second-generation immigrants cannot be considered entangled between these two spaces, for the two spaces are one in their case. As in *By the Sea*, the hospitable and interactive relationships between the characters determine their negotiations of narrative agency and identity, and paves the way for producing resistance narratives in the face of

stereotypical discourses from their host interlocutors. In this regard, the lack of hospitality in these relationships undermines the practice of multiculturalism in the relational spaces between the host and the guest. Through their familial and societal relationships, woven through silences and blocked communications, Abbas and his immigrant family try to negotiate their subjectivity and resist subalternity and marginalization. Gurnah's representations of physical spaces, as in *By the Sea*, play a significant role in delineating hospitality in these spaces. Gurnah indicates hospitality through his use of representational spaces, such as the sea and the homely spaces, which become emblematic in the portrayal of multiculturalism and multiculturalism.

*Gravel Heart* (2017) also concentrates on hospitality in human relationships for the characters to negotiate narrative agency and identity. Since many relationships in this novel dry up because of the silences caused by traumatic and disgraceful experiences, causing shame to the characters involved, the novel shows the protagonist Salim's sense of individuality being mal-constructed through the (un)sent letters he writes to his parents. Although these letters provide an alternative reading of Salim's experiences in (in)hospitable spaces, they do not help him define his subjectivity as an immigrant/guest, and thus the novel brings him together with his father, who could redeem Salim from his lack of knowledge about the past. Through interactive and hospitable story sharing with his father, Masud, Salim is shown to finally reconcile with his parents (although the mother is dead) and the bleak memory of the past. Like the two previous novels studied in this thesis, hospitality is shown through sociopolitical references, which indicate the impact of events in the macro-space and power relations on everyday experiences in the micro-space of the family. In *Gravel Heart*, social and political events relating the stories of (post)/colonial and post-revolution Zanzibar, in fact, illustrate inhospitality and neocolonialism in practice in post-revolution Zanzibar, which cause extermination and expulsion of many citizens and fear of many civilians. In this regard, Saida's behavior – sacrificing her reputation to save her brother – can only be explained through asymmetric social powers in the macro-space of the Zanzibari society. As an enforced action passing through her body and sexuality, Saida's behavior also calls attention to the hospitality of the novel toward the discursive and fictive representation of women in *Gravel Heart*.

This thesis has studied Gurnah's narratives dealing with migration issues and immigrant lives through the lenses of the new millennium (because of their dates of publication) and sociopolitical events affecting immigrant life. These twenty-first-century novels – although they require more investigation –, can show Gurnah's treatment of the issues mentioned above in ways different from his earlier novels such as *Pilgrim's Way* (1988), *Dottie* (1990), and *Admiring Silence* (1996). Gurnah's fiction, at least the novels studied in this thesis, touches upon the entanglement between hospitality and multiculturalism discussed at the beginning of this chapter and disintegrates and criticizes multiculturalism's practice in the multicultural spaces depicted in his novels regardless of home- or hostland. By representing the characters and their relationships within uneven power structures in these multicultural spaces, Gurnah pinpoints the significance of hospitality in these relationships in the characters' negotiations of identity and narrative agency and challenging the subaltern positions of enunciation through story-telling. In this sense, micro-space relationships can be considered a heterogeneous microcosm, but not an allegory (as discussed in Chapter One), of the macro-space relationships and power hierarchies in the multicultural societies illustrated in the novels. In this regard, these novels can be read in the macro-structure of the society, and the problems they hint at, as regards the characters, can be read through the problem of "multicultural drift," as explicated by Stuart Hall in *The Multicultural Question* (2001), discussed in Chapter Two.

Based on the analyses of the texts, the theoretical finding of the thesis contributes to the current discussions around the controversy and irresolvable entanglements between multicultural (multiculturality) and multiculturalism. This finding hints at the necessity of reconsiderations in the formulation of theories related to multiculturalism that can cater to and fix the discrepancies between the two terms. Although, as also discussed in Chapter Two, multiculturalism is not one single policy applied to multicultural states and spaces, making its use in plural, i.e., multiculturalisms (Hall, "The Multicultural Question" 96), more acceptable, it needs to be reconfigured following its relation to the notion of hospitality, as shown by this thesis, to open up new ways of dealing with the problem of multicultural drift. Moreover, this theoretical finding, which is the entanglement of the philosophy of hospitality with the theory of

multiculturalism, and the prerequisite of hospitality for the practice of multiculturalism, can be further studied by in-depth analyses of both perspectives to shed more light on the relationship between the two. Such analyses can even be embedded in studying further narratives and discourses of multiculturalism in literary studies, as well as in other disciplines such as cultural studies, political science, and sociology. In this thesis, however, because of the specific objectives of the research and the limitations of a primarily literary analysis, the study of the relationship mentioned above did not go further to include more evidence from related philosophical and theoretical perspectives and fields.

In analyzing Gurnah's novels in this thesis, theories related to subaltern studies and Foucauldian<sup>33</sup> power/knowledge were also used, indicating the inevitability of their connections with the notion of hospitality, which arise because, in order to avoid subalternity and to negotiate power relations, hospitality is essential. Subalternity and power relations encompass hospitality in a sense more inclusive and comprehensive than that proposed by Derrida. It can be said that this thesis, in a way, furthers the application of hospitality, both in theory (as mentioned above) and in practice, in analyzing Gurnah's fiction. Nevertheless, locating the relationships between these different theories, which arise from diverse, sometimes discrepant, disciplines and positions, requires more meticulous and focused research and analysis.

One of the strands through which this thesis studied hospitality to discourses and narratives was unearthing sociopolitical references and allusions in Gurnah's novels. References to Zanzibar's independence and revolution, British politics regarding immigrant groups, and life in the aftermath of 9/11 embed the fictional lives in real-life events and their impact on the characters' everyday experiences as immigrants or citizens in the hostland and homeland settings, respectively. In addition to the context's impact on the characters' lives, however, this contextualization lays bare Gurnah's attention to and inclusion of certain real-life references that might have

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<sup>33</sup> Although Foucault's notion of power/knowledge has been used throughout this thesis, an awareness of the recent debate on Foucault's sexual abuse of Tunisian boys (Guesmi 2021), which can be closely tied to his privileged status of being a white European, may open up spaces for reconsideration and "writing back" of the notion in question.

affected people's lives in their homelands or the hostland of migration. The same is true regarding the novel's literary intertextualities. Although such intertextualities do not have a similar function to sociopolitical references, they open up spaces for reading Gurnah's novels contrapuntally with many other literary works. This thesis has attempted to point to other literary works in the novels under study to see their treatment of hospitality and investigate the parallelisms between these texts. Moreover, the inclusion of particular literary works and allusions to specific writers within Gurnah's fiction, at a para-textual level, discloses the author's hospitality to those texts and writers in his authorial practice. However, this final point has not been investigated in this thesis due to the eclecticism in theory and methodology and thus requires further research.

Analyzing Gurnah's novels from the perspective of gender has allowed this thesis to shed light on a different layer of meaning his works can reveal. Negotiations of narrative agency, in relation to female characters, not only indicate hospitality of other characters to some or all women at the narrative level, but also take the analysis to the metanarrative level where authorial hospitality is also investigated. As the research conducted on Gurnah's fictional oeuvre has rarely considered analytic perspectives such as the treatment and implications of gender in his novels, it is suggested that further studies be done on such an important aspect of his novels, because they depict and illustrate the playing-out of gender hierarchies. This thesis was only able to consider gender to the extent that it was related to the depiction of hospitality and multiculturalism, which is to say in relation to some female characters. Nevertheless, it is suggested that a fuller investigation of Gurnah's novels through this angle would be fruitful, as the findings of this thesis strongly indicate the significance of gender in his fiction.

It is hoped that this thesis has accumulated the relevant analytic perspectives in Gurnah's fiction to study hospitality and multiculturalism in the relationships portrayed in the novels and put forward the significance of these concepts in the novels' depicted subaltern negotiations of identity and narrative agency in multicultural environments and spaces. Moreover, this thesis has aspired, through

unearthing the postcolonial poetics of Gurnah's fiction, to show his novels as examples of resistant literature – even if at a local level – challenging dominant and powerful discourses of institutional knowledge and stereotypical understandings.

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## APPENDICES

### A. CURRICULUM VITAE

#### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Soleymanzadeh, Laya

Nationality: Iranian

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#### EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MA	Urmia U. English Teaching	2012
BA	Urmia U. English Language and Literature	2009
High School	Shahed 1 High School, Urmia	2005

#### WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2017-2020	Turkish-American Association	English Instructor
2012-2013	Urmia University	English Instructor
2012-2013	Azad University, Urmia Branch	English Instructor
2010-2013	Language Center of Urmia University	English Instructor

## **FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

Advanced English, Upper-Intermediate Turkish, Intermediate French, Lower-Intermediate Arabic, Azerbaijani (Native), Persian (Native)

## **PUBLICATIONS**

1. Soleymanzadeh, Laya, and Javad Gholami. "Scoring Argumentative Essays based on Thematic Progression Patterns and IELTS Analytic Scoring Criteria." *Proceedings of the International Conference on Current Trends in ELT, May 29-30, 2013*. Urmia University, Iran. Edited by Karim Sadeghi. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 98, 2014, pp. 1811-9. Print.

2. Soleymanzadeh, Laya and Javad Gholami. *Instructing Thematic Patterns in Argumentative Essays*. Saarbrücken, Lambert Academic Publishing. 2016. Print. ISBN: 978-3-659-48630-2

## **HOBBIES**

Creative Writing, Movies, Gardening and Exterior Designing, Hiking

## B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKE ÖZET

### ABDULRAZAK GURNAH'NIN *DENİZ KENARINDA*, *SON HEDİYE* VE *ÇAKIL YÜREK* ROMANLARINDAKİ KONUKSEVERLİK, ÇOK KÜLTÜRLÜLÜK VE ANLATI EYLEMLİLİĞİ

#### 1. Giriş

Bu tezin özgün bir teorik bulgusu, konukseverliğin felsefi öncülü ile çok kültürlülük teorisi arasındaki karşılıklı bağımlılık ve karşılıklı ilişkidir; birincisi ikincisinin önkoşulu olarak, ikincisi ise birincisini besler. Bu tezde bildirilen araştırma, Gurnah'nın göçmen karakterlerinin ve romanlarının kendi göçmen kimliklerini anlatı aracılığıyla ve anlatı yoluyla müzakere ettiği hipotezi ve konukseverliğin romanların anlatı eylemliliğini temsilini analiz etmede önemli bir parametre olacağı şeklindeki ek hipotezle başlamıştır. Çok kültürlü ayarlar ilerleyen bölümlerde görüleceği gibi, Abdulrazak Gurnah'nın bu tezde incelenen üç romanı, konuksever mekanlarda anlatıların ve karakterler arasındaki ilişkilerin paylaşılması yoluyla konukseverlik, kimlik ve anlatı eylemliliği müzakerelerinin olasılığını göstermekte ve bu müzakereleri madun örnekler olarak göstermektedir. baskın ve güçlü bilgi söylemlerine karşı direniş. Bu tez, *Deniz Kenarında* (2001), *Son Hediye* (2011) ve *Çakıl Yürek* (2017) üzerinde çalışır ve fiziksel olarak karakterler, karakterler ve durumlar arasındaki ilişkilerde uygulanan misafirperverlik ve çok kültürlülük kavramlarına odaklanır. ve romanların çok kültürlü bağlamları içindeki ilişki alanları. Bu mekanlarda konukseverliği genişletmek, anlatı eylemliliği ve kimlik müzakerelerini sağlar, (madun) karakterlerin öykülerini – yazılı veya sözlü veya her ikisini birden – asimetrik iktidar ilişkileri içinde paylaşarak öznelliklerini müzakere etmelerine ve böylece özetleyen güçlü söylemlere direnmelerine olanak tanır, onları basmakalıp algılar yoluyla ve daha

genellikle onların söylemlerini ve anlatılarını göz ardı eder. Öte yandan, misafirperver olmayan ilişkiler ve alanlar bu müzakereleri engeller, bu öznellikleri marjinalleştirir ve diğer bilgi kaynaklarını ve üretimini dışlamaya ve bastırmaya devam eden güçlü söylemleri destekler. Bu anlamda, bazı kültürler/kültürel inançlar ve uygulamalar ve anlatılar dile getirilmez ve duyulmaz hale geldikçe, bu çok kültürlü mekanlarda uygulanan çok kültürlülük(ler)in altını oyar.

Özbilinçli bir yazar olarak Gurnah, kesin ya da tutarlı bir şekilde, bir “sömürge sonrası egzotik’te özümsememiştir” (Murray 152). Ulusal aidiyetlere gömülü yerleşik ve organize edilmiş yazı ve kimlik biçimlerini bozar ve “tür ve coğrafyadaki uyumsuz konumlarla yaratıcı bir şekilde mücadele eder, tekillik ve ayrılık kurgusunu açığa çıkaran bir “diasporik çoğulculuk” (Appadurai 346) biçimidir (Murray 152). Ayrıca, Gurnah’nın karakterlerinin - özellikle birinci nesil göçmenlerin - diasporadaki hikayeleri ve yaşamları, James Clifford’un “burası” ve “ora” ayrımı ve ilişkisi üzerinden okunabilir: “orada” antiteleolojik (bazen mesihvari) bir zamansallıkla eklemlenir. Doğrusal tarih bozulur, şimdi de arzulanan ama engellenen bir gelecek olan bir geçmiş tarafından sürekli olarak gölgelenir: yenilenmiş, acı veren bir özlem” (Clifford, “Diasporalar” 318). Bu tezde incelenen üç romanda, Saleh, Latif, Abbas ve Salim kahramanları, kendilerini zaman ve mekânın özgüllüklerine göre konumlandırma ve tanımlama konusunda benzer deneyimlerden geçerler. Mekân-zamansal hareketleri, konuksever (misafirperver) ortamlar ve ilişkiler içindeki konumlarını ve müzakerelerini belirler. Ayrıca, bu karakterlerin diasporadaki belirli ulusal topluluklara ait olma duygusu, diasporadaki anavatan veya anavatan topluluğu ile tutarsız ve bazen çatışmalı ilişkiler nedeniyle de doğrusal değildir. Bu anlamda, Gurnah'nın anlatılarının, ev sahibi ülkede diasporalar yaratan tarihsel ve kültürel olarak belirli insan gruplarından ziyade, evrensel göç ve diaspora deneyimi ve dolayısıyla Appadurai’nin yukarıda bahsedilen “diasporik çoğulculukları” ile ilgili olduğu söylenebilir. Aynı zamanda Stuart Hall’un diasporik halkların “gerçek ve sembolik diğer ilgi, uygulama ve özlem ‘toplulukları’ ile yanal bağlantılarıyla yan yana var olan köken geleneklerine dikey entegrasyon” fikriyle de yankılanır (“Çok kültürlülük Sorusu” 120).

Bu nedenle, Gurnah'nın anlatıları, karakterlerinin çeşitli deneyimlerine ilişkin müzakereleri ve güç ilişkileri içindeki değişimleri ve (bazen) ikircikli konumlanmaları ile ilgilenir. Gurnah'nın anlatıları, ulus-ötesi ve küresel bir bağlama yerleşmiş olsa da, karakterlerinin heterojen kimlik ve mekan müzakereleri yoluyla küreselleşmenin homojenleştirici taramasının evrenselliğini baltalıyor ve direniyor – özellikle de madun pozisyonlara yerleştirilen karakterler için görüldüğü gibi. Gurnah'nın anlatıları, genellikle aile ve toplumun mikro ve makro alanlarındaki insan ilişkilerine odaklanarak kamusal ve özel arasındaki sınırı ortadan kaldırırsa da, (üretilen literatürün) iddiasında bulunan Frederic Jameson'ın anladığı anlamda alegori olarak işlev görmezler: “Üçüncü dünya metinlerinin tümü zorunlu olarak alegoriktir, çünkü özel ve kamusal arasındaki [...] radikal ayrımı reddederler” (“Üçüncü Dünya Edebiyatı” 69). Gurnah'nın romanlarını hem mikro hem de makro uzamlarda dolduran insanlar arasındaki ilişkilerin gösterimi, farklı yaşam alanlarından gelen deneyimlerin heterojenliğine bakma zorunluluğunu ortadan kaldırır. Gurnah'nın kurgusu, estetik özellikleri ve karakterizasyonu, doğrusal olmayan ve çoksesli anlatı tarzı ve sosyopolitik referansların ve çeşitli yerlerden ve kültürel kökenlerden gelen edebi metinlerarasılıkların uygulanması yoluyla, Jameson'ın önemli ölçüde farklı bireysel konumlandırmaları ve özgünlüklerini homojenleştiren iddiasını baltalar. Bu tür edebiyattaki karakterlerin deneyimleri, bir bakıma, Gurnah'nın anlatıları, her bir karakterin müzakerelerinin yeniliğini ve bu sayede, bu bireysel deneyimlere özel veya kamusal alanlarda, farklı bir şekilde yaklaşmanın önemini vurgular.

Bu çalışmanın özel amaçları için, sırasıyla Jacques Derrida ve Stuart Hall tarafından tanımlanan ve incelenen misafirperverlik ve çok kültürlülük kavramları, Gurnah'nın metinlerini ve karakterlerinin konukseverlik, maduniyet, kimlik ve anlatı eylemliği müzakerelerini analiz etmek için Michel Foucault tarafından önerilen güç/bilgi yapısı içinde okunmuştur. Bu felsefi kavram ve kavramlar, bu tezin öne sürdüğü argümanı doğrudan içerdiğinden, bu tezin amaçlarıyla en alakalı olanlardır. Gurnah'nın kurgusunu ve bu kavramların tanımlarını okurken, ortaya çıktıkları felsefi bağlamların kapsamını aşmış (olabilir) ve böylece Gurnah'nın romanlarının çözümlemelerinde daha geniş uygulama alanlarını kapsayabilir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın odak noktası olan konukseverlik kavramı, Derrida'nın önerdiği gibi, yalnızca ev sahibi ile konuk

arasındaki konuksever ilişkileri içermekle kalmaz, aynı zamanda konuksever fiziksel mekanlara ve onların metaforik çağrışımlarına ve bu mekanların ve karakterlerin ilişkilerine de atıfta bulunur. Ayrıca konukseverlik kavramı, belirli anlatıların ve bu anlatılara karakterizasyon biçimlerinin dahil edilmesiyle ilgili yazar kararlarına da uygulanır. Başka bir deyişle, bu tez Derrida'nın konukseverliğin ardından Gurnah'nın belirli söylemleri içermeye/dışlama konusundaki konukseverliğini ve egemen (ataerkil) söylemlere direnen kendi kültürel üretimini de analiz eder. Bu anlamda, bu analiz aynı zamanda metinleri çok kültürlü ve çok boyutlu söylem örnekleri olarak öne çıkarır, farklı geçmişlerden ve farklı kesişme noktalarından karakterleri ve anlatıları kapsar. Bu nedenle, analizler ayrıca, ima edilen yazarın ve metinlerin konukseverliği teşvik etmesine bir antitez olarak görülebilecek kadın karakterlerin ve seslerinin ve anlatılarının romanlara dahil edilmesini/dışlanmasını da inceledi. İma edilen yazar ve karakterlerin kadın karakterlere ve güçlü erkek söylemlerine meydan okuyabilen öykülerine yönelik konukseverlikleri bu incelemenin bir parçası olmuştur.

Bu tezin teorik bulgusu olarak çok kültürlülük kavramının konukseverlik kavramıyla ilişkili olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bu itibarla, pozitif konukseverlik ve kapsayıcılık, çok kültürlülüğün sosyal ve ailesel temas bölgelerinde uygulanması için bağlamı hazırlar ve bunların eksikliği, çok kültürlü mekanlar olarak adlandırılan alanlarda uygulandığı iddia edilen çok kültürlülüğü baltalar. Başka bir deyişle, çok kültürlülük konukseverlik olmadan var olamaz, çünkü onsuz çok kültürlülüğün ön koşulu olan çoğulculuğu bünyesinde barındıramaz. Çok kültürlülük, baskın anlatılara meydan okumak ve (hatta bazen) yıkmak için farklı ifade konumlarından söylemlerin ve anlatıların müzakerelerini gerektirir, çünkü terim hem çokluğu hem de çoğulluğu ifade eder ve çağrıştırır. Bu nedenle, en azından nominal olarak çok kültürlü olan (çok kültürlülük uyguladığını iddia eden) mekanlar, hikayelerin anlatımına (anlatı eylemliği) ve kimlik müzakerelerine açık değilse, gösterildiği gibi, bu tür mekanların çok kültürlülüğü zayıflatılır ve sorgulanır.

Her analitik bölümde, buna göre, bu tez, analitik perspektiflerinin üç ana hattını inceler. Her bölümün ilk bölümü, Gurnah'nın anlatılarının sömürgecilik sonrası poetikasında kullanıldığı ve bunları ifade ettiği ve konukseverliği ima ettiği şekliyle

sosyopolitik imalar, referanslar ve edebi metinlerarasılıkları analiz etmeye adanmıştır. Sosyopolitik bağlamlara yapılan göndermeler, anlatıyı romanın daha geniş sosyal ve politik arka planına yerleştirir, metinlerdeki bu estetik özellikler ve temsillere dayalı olarak ev ve ev sahibi ülkenin konukseverliğini ve içirme/dışlanmayı inceler. Bir yandan edebi metinlerarasılıklar, romanların belirli metinler arası misafirperverliği ve içermesini ve metinlerin çoğulluk ve çok kültürlülük deneyimini gösterir. Öte yandan, bu metinlerarasılıklar, metinler arası konukseverlik analizine ve kimlik müzakerelerine olanak tanır. Edebi metinlerarasılıklar, okuyucu ve metin/karakterler arasında paylaşılan metnin üst düzeyinde bir bilgi yaratarak ve karakterlerin konukseverlik ve anlatı eylemliği müzakerelerini okumaya yardımcı olabilecek paralellikler kurarak konukseverliği birleştirir ve böylece anlatıların olası anlamlarını deşifre eder. Her bölümdeki analizin ikinci bölümü, genellikle ailevi ve sosyal temas bölgelerindeki ilişkilerde misafirperverliğin tasvirine odaklanır. Bu eşitsiz güç ilişkileri içinde kimlik ve eylemlik müzakerelerinin ve maduniyetin yıkılmasının nasıl gerçekleşebileceğini gösterir. Her analitik bölümün üçüncü ve son bölümü, kadın karakterleri ve romanlardaki anlatı eylemliğini temsil etmede, metinlerin üst anlatı ve anlatı düzeylerinde konukseverliğe odaklanır. Dolayısıyla, bu bölüm, diğerleri gibi, bu temsillerin, Gurnah'nın romanlarının baskın söylemlere meydan okuyan kadın anlatılarına karşı konuksever olduğu yönündeki yazar iddiası ve pratiğiyle ne ölçüde örtüşüğünü sorguluyor.

Bu tezdeki metodolojik yaklaşım, Gurnah'nın kurgusunu analiz etmenin hem anlatı hem de üst anlatı yönlerini ele alır. Bu tezde incelenen üç roman da bu analiz yöntemini davet ediyor, çünkü okuyucuyla etkileşime girdikleri karmaşık yollar, öne sürdükleri tematik ve analitik bakış açılarını ele almak için yukarıda belirtilen kavramların birleşimini gerektiriyor. Gurnah'nın karakterleri, ilişkileri ve boşlukları temsil ederken belirli retorik ve üslup tekniklerini ve seçimlerini uygulaması en iyi bu kavramlar aracılığıyla okunabilir. Örneğin, sosyopolitik referanslar ve edebi metinlerarasılıklar, Gurnah'nın tematik bakış açılarını aktarırken metinlerinin sömürge sonrası şiirselliğini ortaya çıkaran çok kültürlülük, konukseverlik kavramlarını ve bu referanslar ve metinler aracılığıyla güç ilişkilerini araştıran teorileri çağırır. Ailesel ve toplumsal ilişkilerin analizine ilişkin olarak, Foucault'nun güç/bilgi yapısı ve Derridacı

konukseverlik, ilişkileri betimlemede çok önemli analiz araçlarıdır. Aynı şekilde, kadın karakterlerin temsili ve anlatı eylemligi müzakereleri, maduniyet teorilere ve bunların İkinci Bölüm’de tartışılan konukseverlik kavramıyla olan karşılıklı ilişkilerine özel olarak odaklanılarak, yukarıda tanıtılan teorik çerçeve içinde incelenmelidir.

Bu tezi yazarken, Zanzibar doğumlu bir yazar olan Abdulrazak Gurnah, Kent Üniversitesi’nde İngiliz ve Sömürge Sonrası Edebiyatları Profesörüdür ve edebiyat dergisi Wasafiri’nin yayın kurulundadır. Gurnah ayrıca, ikisi İngiltere’de göçmen bir yazar olarak kendi deneyimlerine dayanan “Geçmişin Bakışı” (2002) ve “Yazmak ve Mekan” (2004) olmak üzere birçok bilimsel makalenin üretken bir yazarıdır. Murray, Abdularazak Gurnah’nın ve onun edebi ve edebi olmayan pratiğinin İngiliz Edebiyatı çevrelerinde nasıl karşılandığını ele alarak, ilk yıllarında romancı olarak dışlanmasına dikkat çekerek, daha sonra “*Deniz Kenarı*’nın yayınlanmasıyla değişen bir statüye dikkat çekerek, sömürgecilik sonrası teorisinde deneyimli bir romancı ve akademisyen olduğunu belirtti” (Masterson 414).

Bu tez, her biri bu bölümün başında ileri sürülen argüman etrafında şekillenen altı bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci Bölüm, bu tezin amacını ve gerekçesini belirtmekte ve Gurnah’ı ve eserlerini ve bu çalışmada ilgilenilen konuları tanıtarak tüm araştırmaya zemin hazırlamaktadır. Bu bölüm, egemen söylemlere ve doktrinlere karşı direnişi interaktif bir şekilde araştırmak için bu tezde incelenen üç romanda insan ilişkilerini, devlet ve halk arasındaki ilişkileri ve insan ve mekan temsillerinde konukseverliği kapsayan güç hiyerarşilerine sahip alanlarda iletişimin ve konukseverliğin önemini ortaya koymaktadır. İkinci Bölüm, bu tezde incelenen romanların çözümlemelerinin teorik arka planını oluşturmaktadır. Önerilen argüman ve tartışma ışığında bu çalışmada Gurnah’nın romanlarını araştırmak için uyarlanmış formatlarında uygulanabilecek birbiriyle ilişkili teorilerin ve felsefi yapıların bir taslağını sunar. Çeşitli felsefe ve teorilerden oluşsalar da, bu teoriler birbirine bağlandıklarında bu çalışmanın özel amaçları için en uygun analitik çerçeveyi oluştururlar.

Bu tezin ilk analitik bölümü olan Üçüncü Bölüm, aşağıdaki iki bölümüne benzer bir taslağı izleyerek, karakterler arasındaki veya devlet ve karakterler arasındaki ilişkileri ve *Deniz Kenarındaki* (2001) asimetrik güç ilişkilerinde konukseverlik, kimlik ve anlatısal eylemlilik müzakerelerini analiz eder. Bu analiz, konukseverlik ve çok kültürlülük teorilerini kullanarak, karakterlerle ilgili olduğu sürece, kimlik ve anlatıların dahil etme ve/veya dışlama politikalarına ve müzakerelerine ışık tutar. Söylemeye gerek yok ki, bu karakterler çeşitli ulusal, etnik, ırksal, sınıfsal ve toplumsal cinsiyet kökenlerinden gelmektedir ve konuksever olmayan alanlarda meydana gelen marjinalleşmeleri yalnızca belirli etnik kökenler, sınıflar veya cinsiyetlerle sınırlı değildir. Başka bir deyişle, bu karakterler, yukarıda bahsedilen kimlik faktörlerinden bağımsız olarak, konukseverlik ve dışlamalara, hatta yazarların konukseverliklerine karşı eğilimli olabilirler ve bu nedenle, baskın söylemler içinde kimlik ve anlatı müzakereleri engellenebilir. Analizler, ilişkilerin ve karakterlerin temsiline ve bu ilişkileri betimlemek için sosyopolitik referansları ve edebi metinlerarasılıkları birleştirmek ve yan yana getirmek gibi romanların poetikasının belirli yönlerine odaklanır. Bu bağlamda, kadın karakterlerin ve anlatılarının temsilinde konukseverlik de önemlidir ve bu bakış açısı her bölümdeki analizlerin son kısmını yönlendirir.

Dördüncü Bölüm, Gurnah'nın *Son Hediye* (2011) adlı romanının üzerine yoğunlaşır ve aynı (yukarıda bahsedilen) analitik teorileri, karakterlerin baskın bilgi söylemlerine direnmenin yolları olarak kimlik ve anlatı eylemliği müzakerelerini incelemek için uygular. *Son Hediye*, hayatları dört kahramanın odak noktası üzerinden tasvir edilen birkaç birinci ve ikinci nesil göçmen karaktere ev sahipliği yapıyor. Bu nedenle, bu romanın analizi, burada incelenen diğer iki romandan daha karmaşık bir yaklaşım izlemektedir ve burada tartışma her bir boyut ve karakter üzerine ayrı ayrı konumlandırılmaya çalışılmaktadır.

Beşinci Bölüm, yine yukarıda bahsedilenlere benzer analitik araçlarla, ancak mektup yazarak insan ilişkilerine daha fazla odaklanarak Gurnah'nın *Çakıl Yürek* (2017) adlı romanı analiz eder. Bu tezde incelenen üç roman, ailevi ve toplumsal ilişkileri, eşit olmayan güç ilişkilerinin ve bu ilişkilerdeki konukseverliğin bu müzakerelerin

başarısını/başarısızlığını belirlediği, kimlik ve eylemlilik müzakereleri için bir alan olarak sunar. Bu mekanlarda ve ilişkilerde üretilen anlatıların, konuksever ortamlarda iletildikleri takdirde, klişe algıları sürdüren ve diğer söylemleri marjinalleştiren güçlü kurumsal bilgi söylemlerine meydan okuyabileceği ve hatta onları alt edebileceği ileri sürülmektedir.

Son olarak Altıncı Bölüm, önceki tüm bölümlerde yapılan tartışmaları sonuçlandırır ve Gurnah'nın kurgusuna ve anlatıları, özellikle de madun konumundan kaynaklanan hikayeleri ele alışına yeni bakış açıları açma umuduyla ileri sürülen argümanları kapatır. Bu tez, söz konusu metinleri incelemek için uygulanan teorik perspektifler aracılığıyla, karakterlerin söylemlerini ve anlatılarını paylaşarak kimliklerini inşa etme ve müzakere etmede muhatapların misafirperverliğini gerektiren etkileşimli iletişimin önemini ortaya koymaktadır. Dolayısıyla bu tez, Gurnah'nın sömürge, sömürge sonrası, yeni sömürge ve göç alan ve durumlarında insanların deneyimlerinin çokluğunu, çoğulluğunu ve ilişkiselliğini tasvir etme girişimine izin verecek ve ışık tutacaktır.

## **2. Sosyopolitik Referanslar ve Konukseverlik**

Her üç romanda, Gurnah kurgusunda politik açıdan bilinçli temaları ve analitik perspektifleri tanıtmak ve iletmek için sosyopolitik referanslar kullanır. Tina Steiner ile yaptığı bir röportajda, edebi metinlerarasılıklarının yorumbilgisel olarak nasıl işlediğini gördüğünü tartışıyor:

Metinlerarasılıkların tanınması bir dereceye kadar bizi okuyucular olarak yeniden tanıştırır. Aynı şeyi okuyoruz ve bu ortak bir metinsellik hissi veriyor ve bence bu kendi içinde sevindirici. Ama elbette başka bir şekilde, tekerleği yeniden icat etmek zorunda kalmamanız için çok uygun bir yankı veya rezonans sağlarlar. Bu ortak metinsellik olduğu için, başka bir metne doğru hareket edebileceğiniz anlamına gelir ve bu bunu zenginleştirir, ama aynı zamanda, bence, okuyucunun orada neler olup bittiğine dair anlayışını zenginleştirir. Ve sanırım burada birkaç şey yapabilirsin, tüm bunları gizleyebilirsin, böylece paralellikleri bulmak için uygun bir bilim ve edebi dedektif çalışması gerekir; ya da onu, önerdiğim gibi bariz bir yankı ya da isterseniz rezonans ya da yanılısama olmayacak şekilde belirli bir şekilde yerinden edilmiş gibi olacak şekilde yeniden icat ederek ilginç hale getirebilirsiniz. (Gurnah, Steiner ile Röportaj 166)

Gurnah'nın buradaki amacı, bağlamsal ve metinsel arasında paralellik yaratma anlamında kurgusunda bol miktarda bulunan sosyal ve politik referansları içerecek şekilde genişletilebilir. Derrida'nın konukseverlik kavramının ışığında, sosyopolitik referansların ve imaların ve edebi metinlerarasılıkların dahil edilmesinin, konukseverliği ve karakterlerin kendi aralarındaki ilişkilerini, devlet ve toplumla ilişkilerini (ev ve ev sahibi ülkede), ve ilişkilerini etkileyen güç hiyerarşilerindeki nüansları nasıl ortaya koyduğunu gösterilmiştir. Bu teknikler aracılığıyla gösterilen romanın, mevcut güç dinamiklerinin yukarıda bahsedilen ilişkilerde içirme ve dışlama (konukseverlik) siyasetini nasıl etkilediğini, anlatı eylemliği ve kimliği müzakerelerini nasıl engellediğini veya desteklediğini ve güçlü söylemlere karşı direnişi gösterdiğini gördük. Bu tür direnişler, bu etkileşimlerin gerçekleşmesi için toplumsal etkileşimler ve konuksever alanlar ve ortamlar gerektirir. Bu bölüm, romanların Zanzibar, diğer (eski)-sömürge ülkeler ve İngiltere'ye yönelik sosyopolitik referanslarına değinerek konukseverlik politikasına odaklanmıştır.

Gurnah, kurgusal yapıtında, genellikle İngiliz sömürgeciliğinden bağımsızlığının en istikrarsız yıllarında (1963) ve sonraki devrim yılında (1964) kendi ve kurgusal karakterlerinin çoğunun anavatanı olan Zanzibar ile ilgili sosyal ve politik sorunları (vatandaşlarının hayatlarını büyük ölçüde değiştiren) her zaman dahil etmiştir. Erik Falk, Gurnah'nın “sömürge sonrası Tanzania ulusunu, Afrika milliyetçiliğini ve Pan-Afrika duyarlılığını sürekli olarak hicveden ve alaya alan edebi yazılarında [...] egemen olan milliyetçilik karşıtı görüşün” (Falk, “‘Bu Küçük Yer’” 157). Bu bağlamda Gurnah, Chinua Achebe ve Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o gibi yazarların yazılarında Afrika milliyetçiliğini kutlayan ve bunlara yer veren, kendi görüşüne göre Afrika uluslarındaki heterojenlikleri, kolonileşme öncesi Afrika devletleri, sömürge yönetimi öncesi pastoral ve kurgusal bir tarihe, düzleştiren ve çeşitli ülkelerdeki tutum ve uygulamaların çeşitliliğini azaltan kurgularını eleştirir. Gurnah, bu kurguların “birçok durumda yan yana yaşamak için istikrarsız toplumlar için yapılması gereken müzakerelerin gerçek karmaşıklığını ve zorluklarını basitleştirdiğini” belirtiyor. Ve büyüdüğüm Doğu Afrika kıyılarından daha karmaşık bir şey olamaz” (Nasta ile Röportaj 359). Sömürgecilik (Avrupa sömürgeciliğinden bile önce), ticaret ve Hint Okyanusu'ndaki halk hareketleri yoluyla kıyasal bağlantıların tarihi ile Doğu Afrika

kıyıları, Gurnah'nın romanlarının birçok insanla zengin ilişkileri için kullandığı dinamik olarak çok kültürlü ve heterojen bir alan ve keşfettikleri temalardan biri olmuştur. Bununla ilgili olarak Datta, Hint Okyanusu kıyısının “bir ulus ve kıtaya sıkı sıkıya bağlı kalmaktan kopmuş kimlikleri teşvik eden, [...] aynı zamanda okyanus boyunca alternatif topluluklar inşa etmeye çalışan bir düşünce tarzı olarak görülebileceğini belirtiyor.” ve “onun ortak alanı [...], okyanus boyunca geçişler, hareketler ve akışlarla dolu, kimliksiz ve dinamik bir ızgaradır” (3). Buna karşın, Zanzibar'ın dekolonizasyonu ve ardından gelen devrim sırasında yaygın olan Afrika milliyetçiliği söylemi ve Afrika ırkının arındırılması gerekliliğini destekleyen söylemler, birçok insanın aidiyet ve hatta vatandaşlık duygusunu tehdit etmiş ve bu yönde eylemlere, haksız infazlar ve ülkeden ihraçlara yol açmıştır (Gurnah, Nasta ile Röportaj 360).

Bağımsızlık ve devrim öncesi ve sonrasındaki bu tür konukseverliklerin ve dışlayıcı faaliyetlerin bir sonucu olarak, Arap ve Umman kökenli Zanzibar vatandaşlarının çoğunluğu ya sınır dışı edildi ya da kaçtı ve bu olaylar, ve haklı sakinler olarak kabul edilen Afrika ırkını reforme etmek saflaştırmadan bahseden Afrika milliyetçi söylemi tarafından kısıktıldı, takip edildi ve desteklendi. Gurnah, devrimden sonra hüküm süren terörü maddi evsizlik ve boyun eğdirme kavramlarıyla göstererek, vatanın konukseverliğini sorunsallaştırır. Bu üç roman, sessiz ve boyun eğdirilmiş insanları, تنها evleri ve sokakları ve gerçek sosyopolitik olayları temsil ederek, anavatanın konuksever bir alan olduğu fikrinden ayrılıyor. Temsil edildiği gibi, yurttaşlarının çoğunun işten ve ülkeden kovulduğu ve siyasi, ekonomik ve sosyal istikrarsızlıklara ve zorluklara katlanmak zorunda olduğu göz önüne alındığında, vatanın konukseverliği her türlü direnişi engeller ve Gurnah'nın kurgusunu dolduran karakterler için sade bir mekanın ilk izlenimlerini kötü etkiler.

### **3. Metinlerarasılıkları Konukseverlik**

Gurnah, bu üç romanda, misafirperverliği vatan ve ev sahibi ülkenin sosyopolitik bağlamlarına göndermeler yaparak göstermenin yanı sıra, edebi metinlerarasılıkları kullanarak konukseverliği ve ona karşı gösterilen direnişleri, bu metinleri diğer edebi eserlerle yan yana getirerek “yazmaya dirençli” hale getiren edebi metinlerarasılıkları

kullanır. (Boehmer, *Postkolonyal Poetika* 52). Bu ara metinleri, anlatılarının okuyucularıyla ortak bir envantere dair ipucu vermek için hermeneutik bir prosedür olarak da uygular. Bu nedenle, Gurnah'nın romanlarının diğer edebi metinlere yapılan göndermeleri poetik olarak kullanması, onun anlatıları ile bu metinler arasında bir paralellik yaratır, bazen romanlarının okuma sürecini kolaylaştırmak için çerçeveleme araçları olarak kullanılır. Bu romanlarda karakterlerin edebiyat eğitimi almaları ve/veya kitaplarla yakın ilişkileri birçok edebi metne imada bulunmayı mümkün kılmaktadır.

Gurnah'nın konukseverlik göstermede ve karakterlerin hikayelerini çözmede edebi metinlerarasılıkları ve sosyopolitik imaları ve anlatı nesnelere birleştirmeye yönelik biçimsel teknikleri incelenir, yani bu tekniklerin Gurnah'nın karakterleri olarak kimlik ve anlatı eylemliği müzakerelerine nasıl yardımcı olduğu/engellediğine odaklanılır. Örneğin, anlatı nesnelere dahil edilmesi yoluyla anlatıdaki analepsis ve prolepsis ve hikaye anlatımının doğrusal olmayan ve çok sesli alayı, Stuart Hall'a göre, yaşamın "yeniden keşfini" ve "yeniden hayal edilmesini" canlandıran özdeşleşme sürecinin karmaşıklığını gösterir ("Eski ve Yeni Kimlikler" 79) ve böylece konuksever (iç) mekanlarda kişinin öykülerinin anlatımı. Ayrıca Gurnah, "ilişkileri kuran veya bozan" (News 297), bu ilişkilerde konukseverliğe neden olan anlatı nesnelere uygular.

#### **4. Ailevi ve Kişilerarası Toplumsal İlişkilerde Konukseverlik**

Karakterlerin ve mekanların tasvirinde ve bunların karışıklıklarında ve ilişkilerinde temsil edildiği gibi, konukseverlik, ailevi ve kişilerarası toplumsal ilişkiler yoluyla kimlik ve anlatı eylemliği müzakerelerinin yanı sıra madun direniş faaliyetlerini görmek için analiz edilir. Tanımlama süreci, öncelikle ilgili tarafların konukseverliğini talep eden özneler arası ailesel ve toplumsal ilişkilere dayanmaktadır. Sunulan konukseverlik, karakterler için iletişim alanları yaratır ve hikayeler aracılığıyla kimliklerini belirleme süreçlerine yardımcı olur. İletişim bölgelerindeki konukseverlik düşmanlığa dönüştüğünde, karakterler daha önce "madun duyulamaz" (Spivak 1995) tartışmasının da kanıtladığı gibi, seslerinin susturulduğunu ve hikayelerinin ve söylemlerinin duyulmadığını görür. Ev sahibi ve konuk arasındaki güç ilişkilerinde, madun'un konumu devrilemez ve eğer madun'a, yani anlatı aracısına konuşma ve

ilgilenme fırsatı verilmezse, baskın anlatılara direnilemez ve meydan okunamaz. Aynı şekilde, *Deniz Kenarı*, *Son Hediye* ve *Çakıl Yürek*'teki karakterler arasındaki iletişim bölgeleri, mevcut eşitsiz güç ilişkilerini ve oradaki konukseverlikleri betimlemek için anlatılır. Vatandan sürgün edilen, *Deniz Kenarı*, *Son Hediye* ve *Çakıl Yürek*'in karakterleri, kişiler arası ve toplumsal ilişkilerinde konukseverlik ve bir ev sahibi ülkede ve diasporik alanda dahil olma veya dışlama üzerinde pazarlık eder. Her üç romandaki karakterlerin ve mekanların ve ilişkilerinin temsili, karakterlerin anlatsal eylemlerini ve kimliklerini müzakere etme ve güçlü (stereotipik) söylemlere/(bilgiye ilişkin) direnme konusundaki yetersizliklerini betimleyen, genellikle konuksever olmayan ve kasvetli bir tablo çiziyor. Gurnah, temel olarak karakterlerin hikâyesi ve onların ailevi ve toplumsal ilişkileri aracılığıyla, bağımsız karakterleri – ister ilişkisel, ister fiziksel veya her ikisi birden – konuksever alanlar arayan ve hikayeleri için dinleyiciler arayan karakterleri tasvir ediyor.

Yukarıda tartışıldığı gibi, aile ilişkilerindeki sessizlikler ve etkileşim eksikliğinin getirdiği şaşkınlık ve yabancılaşma ve köklerinden koparılmışlık duyguları karşısında, Gurnah bu ilişkilerdeki konukseverliği karakterlerin bireyselliklerini müzakere etmeleri için tek olası yol olarak belirler. Bu bağlamda, Bakhtin'den alıntı yaparak Maxwell, “insanın (hem içsel hem de dışsal) varlığının derin bir iletişim olduğunu belirtir. Olmak, iletişim kurmak anlamına gelir [...]” (Maxwell 217). Her üç romanda da karakterlerin sessizlik konusundaki görüşlerini ve kimliklerini betimleyerek bilmenin önemli etkisini vurguladığı söylenebilir. Romanlarda Salih, Abbas ve Mesud'un geçmişinin ortaya çıkmasından sonra olaylar dizisi ve daha konuksever tutum ve ilişkilere geçiş, bu tür bilgilerin daha sağlam bir kimlik duygusu ve ilerlemek için bilinen kökenlerde bir temel sağlayabileceğini göstermektedir. Gurnah'nın kurgusal karakterleri için, geçmişin hikayeleri, yani karakterlerin kimliklerinin anlatıları, ev sahibi ülkede konukseverlik ve melez kimliklerini müzakere etmenin tek yolu haline gelir. Gerek aile içinde gerekse çekirdek aile dışındaki diğer insan gruplarıyla kurulan ilişkilerde (iç) konukseverlik ve dahil etme/dışlama müzakereleri, kişinin kimlik tanımında bir çeviri, melezlik ve heterojenlik yaratır. Bu melezlik ve heterojenlik aynı zamanda sürekli değişen ve müzakere edilen konumlandırmalar yaratır. Karakterler, farklı bağlamlarda öznelliklerini tanımlamanın içerdiği nüanslara

uyum sağlar ve onları özcü çerçeveler içinde tanımlayan dışlayıcı ve basmakalıp söylemlere direnir.

## 5. Kadınlar ve Konukseverlik

Bu üç romanda, konukseverliğin kısmen şekillendirilmiş ilişkiler ve paylaşılan hikayeler yoluyla temsili, öncelikle baskın basmakalıp ve ataerkil görüntülere ve kadın karakterlerin marjinalleştirilmesine dayanır. Gurnah, anlatıcı karakterlerin anlatımları aracılığıyla yabancı düşmanlığına dayalı misafirperverliğin genel ikili inançlarını baltalıyor olsa da, anlatının toplumsal cinsiyet ve sosyal statünün kesiştiği noktada okunması, ataerkil ve emperyal söylemlerin ve uygulamaların yerinde baskın olduğunu gösteriyor. İmparatorluk anlatılarını sürdüren bu güçlü erkek söylemleri, romandaki kadın karakterleri kurnazlıkları, bedenleri ve cinsellikleri, aile içi rolleri ve bazen de saflıklarıyla basmakalıp biçimlerde tanımlayarak dışlama ve şiddet uygular. Bu tür temsiller, genel olarak Gurnah'nın romanlarının ve özel olarak da bu üç roman'nın anlatılarının kadın karakterler tarafından ve onlar hakkında üretilen anlatılara karşı konuksever olmadığı argümanına yer açar. Gurnah'nın kurgusunda kadınların kurnazlıkları, bedenleri ve cinsellikleri, ev içi rolleri ve saflıklarıyla temsil edildiği söylenebilir. Ayrıca kadın anlatıları, baskın ataerkil söylemler tarafından marjinalleştirilir ve eğer duyulursa, ancak bu motifler aracılığıyla olur. Gurnah'nın on romanından yalnızca *Dottie* (1990) bir kadın anlatıcının bakış açısıyla anlatılıyor. Hal böyle olunca da kadın karakterlerin sesi, erkek anlatıları desteklemek için feda ediliyor. Gurnah'nın kadın karakterlere yönelik anlatısının konukseverliği, onları sessiz bir madun konumuna getirir. Biri anlatıdaki rolleri diğeri de paylaştıkları hikayelerle ilgili kadın karakterlerin bu şekilde temsil edilmesi, Gurnah'nın romanlarında kadın karakterlere tanınan eylemliği (kapsamını) sorgular.

Fedwa Malti-Douglas, *Kadının Bedeni, Kadının Sözleri* (1991) adlı kitabında, anlatıların en dikkate değer olanında kadının cinselliğinin rolüne işaret eder; bunlardan biri *Binbir Gece Masalları* (15-28) ve diğeri peri masallarıdır *Deniz Kenarı* (230) adlı romanda ima edilen hikayelerdir. *Son Hediye*'de kadın karakterlerin erkek karakterlerin zıt kutuplarında resmedilmesi, kadın karakterlerin tasvirinde tarafsızlığın olmadığı bir göstergesidir ve bu da romanın kadın temsilinde sömürgeci söylemin

izlerini gözler önüne serer. *Çakıl Yürek*'te Masud, Saida ve Salim'in hayatlarını işgal eden ve gölgeleyen tüm hikaye, Saida'nın hayatlarına trajedi sokan ve tüm ilişkilerini etkileyen bir erkek karakter olan Hakim'e cinsel olarak boyun eğmesiyle tetiklenir. Gurnah'nın anlatısal romanları, aşırı cinsel imalar yoluyla, kadın karakterlerin nesneleştirilmesini önerir. *Deniz Kenarı*, *Son Hediye* ve *Çakıl Yürek*, siyasi olayların güçlü mekanizmasındaki rollerini cinsel nesneye indirgeyerek, kadınları aynı anda farklı konumlarda temsil etmemekte ve diğer olası kimlik perspektifleri üzerinden müzakere etmelerine izin vermemektedir. Bu cinsellik, kadınların iktidar ilişkilerinde kimliklerini dile getirebildikleri tek konumdur.

Mark Ruberto ile yaptığı bir röportajda Gurnah, yazarlık pratiğinde ve kadın tasvirinde "benim [Gurnah]'nın başından geçen deneyimlerden geçen bir kadını hayal etmeye çalıştığımı belirtiyor, bu gerçekten bir hayal etme meselesiydi, nasıl olabileceğini hayal etmeye çalışıyor" (287-8). Gurnah sonra şöyle devam ediyor: "Ngũgĩ, Soyinka ve birçok Afrikalı yazar gibi insanlar, kadınları, özellikle Müslüman kadınları görmezden geldiler ya da eğer oradalarsa, ya klişe ya da klişeleşmiş, marjinalleştirilmiş, eylemsiz olarak klişeleşmişler" (288-9). Bu tanıma rağmen, Gurnah'nın roman anlatısı merkezi kadın karakterleri kullanmaz (onlar madun karakterler olarak tasvir edilirler), ne de kadın karakterlerine eylemde ya da anlatılarında, onları tanımlayan klişeleşmiş rollerin ötesine geçmek için eylemlik verilmez. Daha önce tartışıldığı gibi, durum hakkında daha fazla bilinçliliğe sahip olmadıkça, farklılığın kesişme noktalarındaki vatandaşların kendilerini temsil etmek için gerekli anlatılarla donatılabildiği durumlarda maduniyet devrilemez – veya en azından meydan okunamaz. Bununla birlikte, Gurnah'nın kurgusundaki kadınlar – bazen bilinçli olarak, ancak çoğunlukla değil – sesleri kendileri tarafından temsil edilemeyen madunlar haline gelir. Gurnah'nın anlatılarında yukarıda bahsedilen yönlerden kadınları temsil etmenin, Zanzibar'ın ataerkil ve misafirperver olmayan toplumunda kadınlara uygulanan vahşeti gösterdiği iddia edilebilse de, onlara ataerkil ve dini kuralların kesinliklerine meydan okuma olanağı vermez. Sonunda, madun figürler olarak, kadınların mekân müzakeresi bu üç roman boyunca çarpıcı biçimde kısıtlanmıştır ve kadınlar kendi ev topluluklarında ve Gurnah'nın anlatısında konukseverlikten uzaktır. Kadın anlatı seslerine ve hikayelerine karşı konukseverlik ve bunları yukarıda tartışıldığı gibi bazı

konuksever olmayan söylemlerle tasvir etmek, Gurnah'nın yazarlık iddiasının ön saflarında yer alan seslerin çok kültürlülüğünü ve kurgusunun çok sesliliğini baltalamaktadır.

Bu tartışmalara dayanarak, kadın karakterlerin anlatılarından ve eylemlerinden yoksun, madunlar (ve göçmen kökenli karakterler söz konusu olduğunda iki kat madun) olarak resmedildiği ve anlatılarının erkek akranlarınıninkiyle örtüştüğü ileri sürülebilir. Dolayısıyla bu tür temsiller, anlatının ve bazı karakterlerin, kimlik müzakerelerini ve güçlü erkek söylemlerine karşı direnişlerini engelleyen kadın karakterlerine ve anlatılarına karşı konuksever olmadığını kanıtlayabilir.

## 6. Sonuç

Sürgündeki bir yazar tarafından yazılan Gurnah'nın romanları, evlerinden ve anavatanlarından ayrılan, farklı ortamlarda misafirperver ilişkiler ve alanlar arayan karakterleri takip ediyor. Bu tez, Gurnah'nın *Deniz Kenarında* (2001), *Son Hediye* (2011) ve *Çakıl Yürek* (2017) romanlarındaki güçlü söylemlere karşı konukseverlik, kimlik, öznellik ve anlatı eylemliği müzakerelerini inceledi. Romanlar Jacques Derrida'nın konukseverlik, Stuart Hall'un çok kültürlülük(ler) kavramı ve Foucault'nun Güç/Bilgi kavramı üzerinden analiz edilmiştir. Birinci Bölüm'de tartışıldığı gibi, bu teoriler ve felsefeler, birbirleriyle karşılaştırmaya izin verecek şekilde ayarlandığında, yalnızca söz konusu metinlerin çözümlenmesini sağlamakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda incelenen romanlar ışığında bu teoriler arasındaki karışıklıkları da gösterir ve onların okumalarına alan açar. Stuart Hall'un çok kültürlülük eleştirisi doğrultusunda “çokkültürlü sürüklenmeye” dikkat çekmektedir. Başka bir deyişle, tutarsız görüneler ve benzer öncülleri tartışmalar da, konukseverlik ve çok kültürlülük teorilerinin bağlantılı olduğu gösterilmiştir. Bu iki kavram farklı felsefi bakış açılarından ortaya çıksa da, Gurnah'nın kurgusunun analizleri, bu kavramların birbiriyle bağlantılı olduğunu ve birlikte tartışılması gerektiğini kuvvetle önerir. İkinci Bölüm'de de tartışıldığı gibi, çok kültürlülük konsepti konukseverlik olmadan var olamaz: çok kültürlülüğün tanımları konukseverlik pratiği üzerine kurulur; konukseverlik olmadan, çok kültürlülük doktrininin tamamı sorgulanır. Başka bir deyişle, çok kültürlülük konukseverlik değerlendirmelerini dışlayamaz –

konukseverlik çok kültürlülüğün ayrılmaz bir faktörüdür. İnsanların ve devletlerin çok kültürlülüğü uygulamaları ve çok kültürlü olduklarını iddia etmeleri için konukseverlik hayati bir ön koşul olarak hizmet eder. Bu anlamda, Gurnah'nın romanları, konukseverliğin farklı etnik, ırksal, ulusal, sınıf, cinsiyet ve cinsellik geçmişlerinden gelen insanlar tarafından ve bu farklı grupların iç içe geçmesi ve iletişimsel etkileşimleri yoluyla paylaşıldığında (ki bu, kimlik ve öznellik müzakerelerine, anlatıların paylaşılması yoluya, yardımcı olur) çok kültürlülük olası bir sonuç haline gelir. Ancak romanları, bu tür konuksever alanların nadir olduğunu öne sürüyor.

Konukseverliğin reddedilmesi, ulusal aidiyetlerin ve kimliğin tek ve münhasır tanımlarına dayalı dışlamaları kışkırtır, dolayısıyla çok kültürlülüğün yok olmasına sebep olur. Böyle bir ret, çeşitliliği dışlar ve çok kültürlülük kavramının yapı taşları olan heterojenlikleri homojenleştirir. Bu gibi durumlarda, anlatı araçları konuksever olmayan ortamlarda ve mekanlarda engellendiğinden, karakterlerin kimlik müzakereleri engellenir. Dolayısıyla bu karakterler, konuksever olmayan basmakalıp ve homojenleştirici anlatılar ve söylemler üreten ve sürdüren güçlü ve baskın söylemlere direnemeyeceklerdir.

Gurnah'nın romanları, konuksever alanların ve ilişkilerin eksikliğini betimleyerek çok kültürlü mekanlarda ve ortamlarda uygulanan çok kültürlülüğü baltalar ve olumsuz örneklerle yukarıda tartışılan konukseverlik ve çok kültürlülük arasındaki karşılıklı ilişkiyi gösterir. Romanlar, ilişkilerin ve güç ilişkilerinin tasvirinde konukseverliğin önemini gösterir ve müzakere karakterleri, iletişim ve anlatıları paylaşma yoluyla girişimde bulunur. Bu tez ışığında, bu tez, Gurnah'nın kurgusal karakterlerinin özdeşleşme ve egemen söylemlere direnme süreçlerini açığa çıkarmaya, göçmen, mülteci, sığınmacı ve (öz)-sürgün karakterlerini ortaya çıkarmak için genellikle madun konuma getirilen karakterleri analiz etmeye çalışmıştır. Bu analizler asimetric ve (konuksever olmayan) güç ilişkileri içinde ve bu ilişkiler aracılığıyla konukseverlik, kimlik, ve maduniyet müzakereleri edilebileceği ortamlarda yapılmıştır.

Bu tez, Gurnah'nın göç konularını ve göçmenlerin yaşamlarını ele alan anlatılarını (yayınlanma tarihleri nedeniyle) yeni milenyumun gözünden ve göçmen yaşamını

etkileyen sosyopolitik olayları incelemiştir. Bu yirmi birinci yüzyıl romanları – daha fazla araştırma gerektirse de – Gurnah'nın yukarıda bahsedilen sorunları ele alış biçimini, *Hacı Yolu* (1988), *Dottie* (1990) ve *Sessizliğe Hayranlık* (1996) gibi önceki romanlarından farklı şekillerde gösterebilir. Gurnah, karakterleri ve onların ilişkilerini bu çok kültürlü mekanlarda eşit olmayan güç yapıları içinde temsil ederek, karakterlerin kimlik ve anlatı eylemliği müzakerelerinde ve hikaye anlatımı yoluyla maduniyete meydan okumasında bu ilişkilerdeki konukseverliğin önemine işaret ediyor. Bu anlamda, ailevi ilişkileri heterojen bir küçük örnek olarak düşünülebilir, ancak romanlarda resmedilen çok kültürlü toplumlardaki toplumsal ilişkilerinin ve güç hiyerarşilerinin bir alegorisi değil. Bu bağlamda, bu romanlar toplumun yapısında okunabilir ve karakterlerle ilgili ima ettikleri sorunlar, Stuart Hall'un açıkladığı gibi “çok kültürlü sürüklenme” kavramı üzerinden okunabilir.

Bu tezin söylemlere ve anlatılara konukseverliği incelediği yollardan biri, Gurnah'nın romanlarındaki sosyopolitik referansları ve imaları gün yüzüne çıkarmaktır. Zanzibar'ın bağımsızlığına ve devrimine, göçmen gruplarıyla ilgili İngiliz siyasetine ve 11 Eylül sonrasındaki hayata yapılan atıflar, kurgusal yaşamları gerçek hayattaki olaylara ve bunların karakterlerin göçmenler veya yurttaşlar olarak ev sahibi ve anavatan ortamlarındaki günlük deneyimlerine etkilerini gömüyor. Bununla birlikte, bağlamın karakterlerin yaşamları üzerindeki etkisine ek olarak, bu bağlamsallaştırma, Gurnah'nın insanların anavatanlarındaki veya göç ettikleri topraklardaki yaşamlarını etkilemiş olabilecek bazı gerçek yaşam referanslarına dikkatini ve bunları dahil etmesini açıkça ortaya koymaktadır. Aynı şey romanın edebi metinlerarasılıkları için de geçerlidir. Bu tür metinlerarasılıklar, sosyopolitik referanslara benzer bir işleve sahip olmasa da, Gurnah'nın romanlarını diğer birçok edebi eserle zıtlık içinde okumaya alan açarlar. Bu tez, incelenen romanlardaki diğer edebi eserlere işaret ederek onların konukseverliğe yaklaşımlarını görmeye ve bu metinler arasındaki paralellikleri incelemeye çalışmıştır. Ayrıca, belirli edebi eserlerin ve belirli yazarlara yapılan göndermelerin Gurnah'nın kurgusuna para-metin düzeyinde dahil edilmesi, yazarın yazarlık pratiğinde bu metinlere ve yazarlara karşı misafirperverliğini ortaya koymaktadır. Ancak bu son nokta, teori ve metodolojideki eklektizm nedeniyle bu tezde araştırılmamıştır ve bu nedenle daha fazla araştırma gerektirmektedir.

Gurnah'nın romanlarını toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifinden incelemek, bu tezin, eserlerinin ortaya çıkarabileceği farklı bir anlam katmanına ışık tutmasını sağlamıştır. Kadın karakterlerle ilgili olarak anlatı eylemliği müzakereleri, yalnızca diğer karakterlerin bazı veya tüm kadınlara anlatı düzeyindeki konukseverliğini göstermekle kalmaz, aynı zamanda analizi, yazar konukseverliğinin de araştırıldığı üst anlatı düzeyine taşır. Gurnah'nın kurgusal yapıtları üzerine yapılan araştırmalarda, romanlarında toplumsal cinsiyetin ele alınışı ve içerimleri gibi analitik bakış açıları nadiren ele alındığından, romanlarının bu kadar önemli bir yönü üzerinde daha fazla çalışma yapılması önerilmektedir, çünkü bunlar cinsiyet hiyerarşileri dışında olmadığını örneklemektedir. Bu tez, toplumsal cinsiyeti ancak konukseverlik ve çok kültürlülük tasviriyle, yani bazı kadın karakterlerle ilgili olduğu ölçüde ele alabilmiştir. Bununla birlikte, bu tezin bulguları onun kurgusunda toplumsal cinsiyetin önemini güçlü bir şekilde gösterdiğinden, Gurnah'nın romanlarının bu açıdan daha kapsamlı bir şekilde araştırılmasının verimli olacağı ileri sürülmektedir.

Bu tezin, romanlarda tasvir edilen ilişkilerde konukseverlik ve çok kültürlülüğü incelemek için Gurnah'nın romanlarında ilgili analitik bakış açılarını biriktirdiği ve romanların çok kültürlü ortamlarda tasvir edilen madun kimlik ve anlatı eylemliği müzakerelerinde bu kavramların önemini ortaya koyduğu umulmaktadır. Üstelik bu tez, Gurnah'nın romanlarının sömürge sonrası poetikasını gün yüzüne çıkararak, onun romanlarını, kurumsal bilgi ve klişeleşmiş anlayışların baskın ve güçlü söylemlerine meydan okuyan – yerel düzeyde bile olsa – dirençli edebiyat örnekleri olarak göstermeyi amaçlamıştır.

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**TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS** (**İngilizce** / English): HOSPITALITY, MULTICULTURALISM AND NARRATIVE AGENCY IN ABDULRAZAK GURNAH'S *BY THE SEA, THE LAST GIFT* AND *GRAVEL HEART*

**TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE:** **Yüksek Lisans** / Master  **Doktora** / PhD

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