

Exclusion motif in the novels of Ananda Devi and Shenaz Patel

Summary

The main purpose of this work is to analyze the phenomenon of exclusion as a motif present in certain novels written by Shenaz Patel and Ananda Devi, and located in specific geographical space (namely, the writer's home island and the areas administratively and historically associated with it). The following paper is not a sociological essay, as the research material comes from works of fiction. The island described in the novels is not a real place; it only constitutes its various depictions created by the characters. The home island of the writers, as they both unanimously indicate, is only their inspiration.

Basing on the sociological interpretation of exclusion, I analyze the representations of this phenomenon in literature, specifically, in the plot, narration, creation of characters, language and stylistic means. I highlight the interdisciplinary nature of the phenomenon and the multilevelness of its analysis, especially its usefulness in literature - in particular, its correlation with theories of space. Exclusion is one of the central points around which the novels of Ananda Devi and Shenaz Patel are built.

Basing on the theory of geocriticism, I juxtapose and examine different approaches to the same space presented at different moments in time, from the perspective of the protagonists residing there (both alive and dead ones - ghosts). What is important is that the writers privilege a specific type of a character who, due to their deficiencies (imperfections), does not fit in with the norms and standards of society, and is perceived as *different*. The point of view of this different person, and therefore the excluded person, is paramount in the novels of Ananda Devi and Shenaz Patel; it is yet not the only presented position. Under the assumptions of geopoetics, I also analyze the impact of the space, which limits the life of the character, on their *modus vivendi*, and the perspectives that the place of residence can offer them. The history of the place where the writers and most of the characters in their novels were brought up is not without significance for this dissertation; by means of its various parts, i.e. elements, animals, plants - place and space are the driving force for their texts. I observe in great depth the relationship between the characters of the novel with the place to which they were reduced, and often in which they were locked up. Both, the place and the man mutually shape each other. By affecting each other, one acquires the features

assigned to the other. This is why, when juxtaposed with each other, different faces of insular spaces are an echo of human fears and dark instincts.

This dissertation analyzes various representations of the island and its space, as well as the relationship between an excluded character and the space, being two major carriers of exclusion in the novels of Ananda Devi and Shenaz Patel.

Key words: Ananda Devi, Shenaz Patel, *Le Portrait Chamarel*, *Sensitive*, *Le Silence des Chagos*, *Moi, l'interdite*, *La vie de Joséphin le fou*, *Soupir*, geopoetics, geocriticism, exclusion, other people (different people), space, place, island, Mauritius.