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صفحاتی را که مشاهده می فرمائید، گزیده ای محدود از یک سند پژوهشی طولانی است که شامل:



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University of Kurdistan
Faculty of Language and Literature
Department of English Literature and Linguistics

A Thesis

**Submitted to the Postgraduate Studies Office in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of M.A. in English Literature**

Title:

**Space, Subjectivity and Gender in Gina B. Nahai' s
*Caspian Rain, Moonlight in The Avenue of Faith and
Sunday' s Silence***

By:

Sara Naghshbandi

Supervisor:

Dr. Erfan Rajabi

February, 2022



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The above thesis was evaluated and approved by the following members of
 the thesis committee with Very Good quality on February 19, 2022.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Title and name</u>	<u>Signature</u>
1. Supervisor	Assist. Prof. Erfan Rajabi	
2. External examiner	Assist. Prof. Vahid Gholami	
3. Internal Examiner	Assist. Prof. Vali Gholami	

Head of Department
 Dr. Jalil Fathi



Faculty Graduate Coordinator,
 Dr. Masoud Dehghan



Abstract

The present study aims to explore Gina Nahai's *Caspain Rain* (2007), *Moonlight in The Avenue of Faith* (1999), and *Sunday's Silence* (2001) in terms of geographical concepts of space, place, and gender. Gina Nahai, in her novels, demonstrates the life of low-class Jewish people especially female characters and their relationships. In the selected novels, she also uses the social and economic differences to describe the characters of the novels in various places and spaces. Hence, the three novels can be studied through the lens of Linda McDowell and Doreen Massey's concepts. They argue that there is a dialectical relation between space and gender, in such a way that not only gender relations produce space but also space constructs gender. Judith Butler presents performative gender that is constructed rather than being biological sex. The concept of gendered space, in particular, does not indicate that space has a gender, but there is a system in which gender is constructed. Doreen Massey in her book *Space, Place and Gender* claims that geography affects cultural forms, genders and their relations in different ways. She points out that social, economic and physical factors in a specific space and place have a significant impact on the formation of gender; moreover, identity is constructed in these interactions and relations for making gender issues. Space and place, the key terms of this research, are produced and constructed through the local place and political and economic situations in these novels.

Key words: Feminist Geography, Gina B. Nahai, Gender Identity, Place, Space, Doreen Massey

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Chapter one: Introduction

1.1. General Overview

Gina B. Nahai is a gifted Jewish writer that drew international attention of the critics and readers to her novels with *Cry of the Peacock* (1991), and particularly with *Moonlight on the Avenue of Faith* (1999). Although she was born in Iran, she immediately left the country before the Islamic Revolution. In her three outstanding novels, she focuses on the Jewish families and their conditions and obstacles. Nahai's novels are useful for gender and cartographical studies; moreover, they depict the terrible situations of women in society and how the geography shapes their subjectivity and gender.

The novel *Caspian Rain* (2007) relates the female characters' lives, including the central characters and novel's narrator, Yaas and her mother Bahar. Yaas was born and grew up in a Jewish family before Islamic Revolution. She suffered from difficulties in society and her family. Her mother, Bahar, was from a low-income family in the ghetto in the south of Tehran, and she never was accepted by Omid, her husband, who was from a wealthy family. For calling Omid's family's attentions, she left all of her desires for education and her dreams to become a teacher. In Omid's opinion, the role of a wife is defined as a housekeeper, mother and the one who is responsible for taking care of the children.

After they got married, Bahar went to her former school to continue her study. However, when the headmaster understood that Bahar is married, they did not allow her to study. Then she went to a typing institute, but when her identity was recognized by the manager, he called Omid's family and they expelled her. Bahar attempted to quell the female needs and behaviors in her daughter's soul. Therefore, she

does not engage in superficial issues and achieve her mother's unattainable ambitions. It is worth mentioning that both female characters do not have a stable identity, and their subjectivities change according to their spatial conditions. Yaas, after tolerating all of the boundaries and troubles, lost her hearing and became a disappointed girl whom her father left to fly to America with his new mistress.

In another novel, *Moonlight on the Avenue of Faith* (1999), the female narrator Lili tells the story of her mother's life. When Lili was five years old, she saw the traumatic incident of attempting suicide by her mother. Roxanna Angle, without any explanation, threw herself down from the balcony of their home in Tehran. This novel depicts the life of a significant character, Roxanna, who was famous as a bad omen girl in her childhood. Therefore, all the time, she was treated differently from her siblings. When she was a child, a smallpox disease spread in Tehran and among her family; consequently, Roxanna was blamed as the cause of this catastrophic event by her grandmother.

After getting married she attempted to commit suicide, because of the problematic and mischievous behaviors of her mother-in-law and her own betrayal. Meanwhile, her family began to look for her, but there was no sign. After passing 13 years of her disappearance, Lili decided to search for her miserable mother, whether she is alive or dead. When she arrived in Istanbul, she was alone, hopeless, and in a miserable condition; therefore, she went to a brothel for making some money. Finally, she moved from Turkey to Los Angle, and there she joined Lili. Another important character in the novel is Alexandra, who is spending her exile time in Iran.

In her celebrated novel *Sunday's Silence* (2001), Gina B. Nahia demonstrates Adam and Blue's lives as two central characters in the novel. Blue is a Jewish Kurd girl, who retells her life to Adam. Meanwhile Adam is looking for his father's murderer. In the novel that portrays the life of Blue, the place in which Blue's family are living in a mountain between Iran and Iraq. After her migration, she is accepted by the Appalachian sect. While she is a very young girl, she has to marry Adam's father, who is a professor at Knoxville University. In this multicultural novel, we have the combination of the east and west space.

Doreen Massey, was born in (1944-2016). She was a critic and professor of geography, Marxist and feminist; her works have profoundly influenced the field of feminist of geography. She mainly

focuses on the questions about why and how geography matters affect the relations about social, economic, and political issues. In her works, she has argued about the Marxist Political Economic, Post-Structural Geography and Feminist Theory; her ideas go beyond the mentioned domain. No one can deny the significance of her opinions in the field of Geography Feminism, since her notions “From the 1970s onwards, her writings on space, place and power inspired generations of geographers and many others, including creative artists and trade unionists” (Guardian20). In this research, the main characters of the novels will be analyzed through the concepts of space, place and subjectivity. In this regard, the researcher will utilize Doreen Massey’s theory and thoughts.

1.2. Statement of Problem

The importance of geography and consequently the space, in literary studies has attracted much attention in recent decades. Spatial settings are located in the following literary studies: one of them is narratology of space in literature, and the other one examines space and place in literature from the perspective of anthropology, Marxism, phenomenology, and sociology. Paying attention to space and place is highly significant in literature, as story’s events take place in space and place. For instance, sometimes, a whole species of literature is characterized by its geographic features.

Feminism Geography as an interdisciplinary approach has rapidly developed. Despite existing different methods and principles, central construction in Feminist Geography is the issue of space and place. Feminist geographers study the relationships between individuals, subjectivity, spaces and powers. Moreover, they investigate the processes in which suppression and inequality are associated within a particular space. Among the geographers in this field Doreen Massey (1944-2016) is important for this research. Massey was an intellectual force in geography and the wider academic community, not just in Britain but across the globe. Her works as an academic study in geography have been the path of studies in recent decades. She argues about how geography matters are concerned with the understanding of the performance of social, economic, and political relations. Her mental trajectory has surpassed the Marxist political economy, geopolitical geography, and feminist theory. Her theories have also been discussed in articles, books and academic literature. In her

opinion, spatial and economic elements play a significant role in space construction. She argues in her book *Space, Place and Gender* (1994) that space in its definition is a social construction, and we need to analyze economy and society to understand it. The communication approach of Doreen Massey in understanding space and place is built around a set of relevant concepts. Global sense of place is one of the most significant concepts in this field. She argues that:

One way of thinking of social space is in terms of the articulation of social relations which necessarily have a spatial form in their interactions with one another. If this notion is accepted, then one way of thinking about place is as particular moments in such intersecting social relations, nets of which have over time been constructed, laid down, interacted with one another, decayed and renewed. Some of these relations will be, as it were, contained within the place; others will stretch beyond it, tying any particular locality into wider relations and processes in which other places are implicated too. (Massey, 1994, 120)

Another major concept is power geometry and a progressive sense of place in which Doreen Massey describes the sense of space and its interrelated social relationship that have changed during the passing time:

Thinking of places in this way implies that they are not so much bounded areas as open and porous networks of social relations. It implies that their 'identities' are constructed through the specificity of their interaction with other places rather than by counter to them... [and] those identities will be multiple (since the various social groups in a place will be differently located in relation to the overall complexity of social relations and since their reading of those relations and what they make of them will also be distinct. And this in turn implies that what is to be the dominant image of any place will be a matter of contestation and will change over time. (Massey, 1991b, 121)

Liz Bondi has some studies in feminism, post-structuralism, and psychological theory which is related to gender relations; the processes that people are produced and reproduced in urban communities. In her article *Gender and the Reality Cities*, she considers three types of gender analysis of urban life, "which approach gender through embodied identities, social relations, and performativity respectively" (Bondi, 2005, p.3).

relationship and other concepts such as political and economic spaces and their effects can be theorized on male characters too.

5.3. Suggestions for Further Research

Doreen Massey's spatial relationships could be practical on Khaled Hosseini's novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007). This novel would be a great target to apply Massey's notion and another geographical point of view particularly about the definition of place and lack of place. Another novel that can be analyzed through the perspectives of Massey is *The Last Girl* (2017) by Nadia Murad who stands for Yazidi women and calls for justice, she was born in Kocho in large family. She also lost her brothers in a day that ISIS rounded up her village and killed all men, raped and sold Yazidis women and girls. The next novel is Gina B. Nahai's *The Luminous Heart of Jonah S.* (2014) which is about Iranian Jews in exile in America. The next novel of Nahai *Cry of The Peacock* (1991) also has the same theme and setting that narrates the story of a Jewish woman caught in the turmoil of the twentieth century in Iran.

The Caspian Rain, *The Moonlight in The Avenue of faith*, and *Sunday's Silence* demonstrate the identity and subjectivity of characters. Therefore, those novels could be studied regarding some other critical approaches such as the psychoanalytical approach, particularly Lacan's concepts of lack, other, and desire. As geography studies are intertextual with other schools including post-colonialism, Marxism, and structuralism. Therefore, these novels could be analyzed through the lens of Homi K. Bhabha and his concepts of identity construction, and power relations. Moreover, they could be investigated through the lens of determinism to scrutinize whether the faith and fate of character has been determined from their childhood or not, in *The Moonlight in The Avenue of faith* almost all character tried to change and escape from their predestined life albeit the more they tried the more they failed. In the two other novels *Caspian Rain* and *Sunday's Silence* there are some clues such as snakes symbol in *Sunday's Silence* and Lili's deafness that had been occurred and existed in their families could indicate that novels are used some elements of determinism theme.

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چکیده

پژوهش حاضر بر آن است تا رمان‌های منتخب جینا نهایی مهتاب در کوچه/ایمان (۱۹۹۹)، سکوت یکشنبه (۲۰۰۱) و باران در کنار دریای خزر (۲۰۰۷) را بر اساس مفاهیم و اندیشه‌های دورین مسی، لیندا مک‌داول و جودیت باتلر بررسی کند و همچنین به خوانش رابطه دیالکتیک بین فضا، سوژکتیویته و جنسیت بپردازد. جینا نهایی در رمان‌های خود زندگی یهودیان طبقه پایین جامعه، به ویژه شخصیت‌های زن و روابط آنها را به تصویر می‌کشد. در این سه رمان منتخب، وی از تفاوت‌های اجتماعی و اقتصادی برای توصیف شخصیت‌های رمان در فضاها و مکان‌های مختلف بهره می‌گیرد. به عنوان مثال، در رمان مهتاب در کوچه/ایمان به زندگی زنی به نام رکسانا و تاثیر شرایط فضای تهران در زندگی او و فرارش به ترکیه و سپس به لس آنجلس پرداخته است. در دو رمان سکوت یکشنبه و باران در کنار دریای خزر نیز به چگونگی تاثیر شرایط زندگی بر شخصیت‌های رمان، بویژه به بررسی فضای حاکم بر تهران قبل از انقلاب می‌پردازد. همچنین چگونگی شکل‌گیری هویت زن‌هایی همانند بهار در رمان باران در کنار دریای خزر و بلو در سکوت یکشنبه را نشان داده است. جغرافی‌دانان فمینیست بر این باورند که بین فضا و روابط جنسیتی نوعی رابطه دیالکتیک برقرار است به گونه‌ای که مناسبات جنسیتی فضا را تولید می‌کنند و از طرف دیگر، فضا هم بر سازنده مناسبات جنسیتی است. دورین مسی، یکی از جغرافی‌دانان فمینیست، در کتاب فضا، مکان و جنسیت (۱۹۹۴) به طور خاص به این موضوع می‌پردازد که جغرافیا به طرق مختلف بر شکل‌گیری فرهنگی جنسیت‌ها و روابط آنها تأثیر می‌گذارد. وی خاطر نشان می‌کند که عوامل اجتماعی، اقتصادی و فیزیکی در یک مکان و فضای خاص در شکل‌گیری جنسیت تأثیر بسزایی دارند و هویت در ضمن این روابط اجتماعی شکل گرفته و موضوع جنسیت را به وجود می‌آورند. شالوده تمام اندیشه‌های او در باب فضا و مکان عقیده‌ی فضا و زمان است که در آن فضا نسبت به زمان در درجه‌ی دوم قرار ندارد و نمود ایستایی نیست، بلکه به شکلی تنگاتنگ و به صورتی پویا با زمان درهم تنیده است. عملکرد جنسیتی بنابر نظریه جودیت باتلر نه تنها یک تفاوت بیولوژیکی نیست بلکه در برخورد با دیگران ساخته می‌شود. فضا و مکان، اصطلاحات کلیدی این پژوهش، از طریق مکان محلی و موقعیت‌های سیاسی و اقتصادی در این رمان‌ها تولید و ساخته می‌شود.

کلید واژه‌ها: جغرافیای فمینیستی، فضا، مکان، سوژکتیویته، هویت، جینا نهایی، دورین



دانشگاه کردستان

دانشکده زبان و ادبیات

گروه زبان و ادبیات انگلیسی و زبان شناسی

پایان نامه ارائه شده به عنوان بخشی از فعالیت های تحصیلی لازم جهت اخذ درجه کارشناسی ارشد در رشته زبان و ادبیات انگلیسی گرایش ادبیات انگلیسی

عنوان:

فضا، سوپژکتیویته و جنسیت در رمان های باران در کنار خزر، مهتاب در کوچه ی امید و سکوت یکشنبه نوشته ی جینا بی. نهایی

پژوهشگر:

سارا نقشبندی

در تاریخ ۱۴۰۰/۱۱/۳۰ توسط کمیته تخصصی و هیات داوران زیر مورد بررسی قرار گرفت و با درجه خیلی خوب به تصویب رسید.

امضاء	مرتبۀ علمی	نام و نام خانوادگی	هیات داوران
	استادیار	دکتر عرفان رجبی	۱- استاد راهنما
	استادیار	دکتر وحید غلامی	۲- استاد داور خارجی
	استادیار	دکتر ولی غلامی	۳- استاد داور داخلی

مهر و امضاء معاون آموزشی و تحصیلات تکمیلی دانشکده

دکتر مسعود دهقان



مهر و امضاء مدیر گروه

دکتر جلیل فتحی





دانشگاه کردستان

دانشکده‌ی زبان و ادبیات

گروه زبان و ادبیات انگلیسی و زبان‌شناسی

پایان نامه‌ی ارائه شده به عنوان بخشی از فعالیت‌های تحصیلی لازم
جهت اخذ درجه‌ی کارشناسی‌ارشد (MA) در رشته‌ی زبان و ادبیات انگلیسی

عنوان:

فضا، سوژکتیویته و جنسیت در رمان‌های باران در کنار خزر،
مهتاب در کوچی امید و سکوت یکشنبه نوشته‌ی جینا بی.

نهایی

پژوهشگر

سارا نقشبندی

استاد راهنما

دکتر عرفان رجبی

بهمن ۱۴۰۰



دانشگاه کردستان
دانشکده‌ی زبان و ادبیات
گروه زبان و ادبیات انگلیسی و زبان‌شناسی

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جهت اخذ درجه‌ی کارشناسی ارشد (M.A) در رشته‌ی زبان و ادبیات انگلیسی

عنوان:

فضا، سوژکتیویته و جنسیت در رمان‌های باران در کنار خزر، مهتاب
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پژوهشگر:

سارا نقشبندی

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