Voices

Voices:
Postgraduate Perspectives
on Inter-disciplinarity

Edited by

Kathryn Vincent and Juan Fernando Botero-Garcia

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FOREWORD

PROFESSOR CLAIRE WALLACE

The compendium of papers collected from the University of Aberdeen "Moving Forward Post-Graduate Conference" is a collection of voices from young scholars. The young academics included represent a wide range of research expertise and there is a vast geographical space from which the voices emerge. It is encouraging that it was possible for such a variety of different perspectives to be able to encounter one another and to communicate across the diversity of interests. It is a remarkable achievement for the editors to have managed to orchestrate these different voices so that they can at least sing from the same hymn sheet. The voices form a chorus rather than a cacophony.

The editors have arranged the volume around consonant themes, each with their own sub-editor and linking tropes. The dominant conceit is one of "voices", their volume and their resonance and the various arguments they put across. From Rwanda to Romania, from Jezebel to GBH and from dogs to doctors, the views of disparate (sometimes submerged) subjects are given voice along with the aspiring scholars who write about them.

The post-graduate conference is a place where scholars at the start of their careers can present their work to their peers and this publication provides a vehicle for the wider circulation of their ideas. Therefore both the conference and the publication are formative experiences. The authors represented here will form the new generation of people to populate our academic communities. I hope that they will continue to communicate with one another and share knowledge to take this venture further forward still, both now and in the future.

It is a great pleasure to have been involved in hosting this conference and I hope that readers will enjoy reading this book as much as I have.

Professor Wallace is the Director of Research for the College of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Aberdeen.

EDITORS' INTRODUCTIONS

Everything has a voice, be it the dominant voice of the state apparatus or the voice of the individual. The whimper of the voiceless is just as integral to the greater narrative in which it is embedded, as that of the powerful. Thus this work covers a wide range of voices from a variety of disciplines and perspectives. Our aim is to explore how diverse voices are being brought to the front academic research and how through this specialized framework they can be disentangled from the dominant worldview and express the particularities of the human experience. Throughout the years, the main objective of the University of Aberdeen's Moving Forward Post-graduate Conference has been the development of research students' careers. The 2009 conference was built around the importance of interdisciplinary research as a useful methodology to examine the complexities of our disciplines. The concept of voice was chosen as the theme for this publication, because it provides a window to understand the manifold of perspectives, practices and worldviews that people utilise to interact and make sense of the world.

The University of Aberdeen's Moving Forward Post-Graduate Conference developed from a small Law conference in 2000 with only twenty Law and Social Science presenters to an international event in 2009, with 125 presenters representing all six schools within the College of Arts and Social Sciences. In a break from previous years, the school of Law no longer held separate plenary sessions, as speakers were invited to speak on broader topics which would apply to early career scholars of all arts and social sciences disciplines. In previous years, parallel sessions of post-graduate presenters tended to be grouped along College or school lines, but 2009 saw a more inter-disciplinary division of speakers. Core topics were used to merge speakers from various disciplines. This set-up allowed the presenters to speak on their subject from their own theoretical perspectives, but at the same time, force them to make it accessible to their peers from other subjects. The purpose was to broaden their understanding of the topic as well as provide new ideas and perspectives through their interactions with their audiences that would not otherwise be available.

Developing the researcher and the researched

Following the tradition of previous years, presentations were not grouped in accordance to a subject matter; instead, the theme of each section was created out of the similarities of the different works. Post-graduate presenters were encouraged to develop papers based upon whichever section of their research they are particularly working on at the time of the conference. Thus, individual sessions could consist of methodological discussions, early results of fieldwork, as well as final theoretical presentations of a soon to be submitted theses. These different stages of work, combined with the variety of disciplines created an interesting creative dilemma for the editors. After examining the papers which participants wished to submit, two themes became apparent, though stronger in some papers than others.

First, there was the voice of the academic. Each contributing author approaches their topic within a particular frame of reference which is shaped by their experience and training within a specific discipline. Most of the papers submitted work with issues around the human experience and how individuals communicate them to their peers. Thus, the voices portray, in the various works in this book, come from the interaction between the theoretical framework of the authors and the realities that they encounter during their research. This relationship is crucial to any academic work. Each author is confronted with the boundaries of their discipline and are obligated to manage them, with the purpose of making the voices that emanate from their research comprehensible within the discipline as well as an external audience.

Second, there is the voice of the subject. Though the authors are attempting to observe, describe and analytically discuss their chosen subject, they all appear to understand a core aspect of their study that separates them from the other disciplines – particularly those of the physical sciences – our subjects are created by people, and of people. Our subjects have voices, and despite the scientific, logical and rational approach to academic study, those voices must be presented in order to give the most accurate view of the topic. In this book, we seek to hear these voices, not just the voices of the authors, scientists and philosophers, but the undertones of individuals, human structures, and dominant movements within the Arts and Social Sciences.

The scream or the whisper?

This book has been structured into sections containing two or three essays gathered along thematic lines, and types of voices.

The first chapter, entitled Alternative Voices and edited by Kathryn Vincent, is an attempt to break the reader from any pre-conceived ideas about who creates a voice, or where it might be found. It begins with an essay on the dismissal of the experiences of women and animals in literature (Sriratana). This is followed by work on an author's experience through non-sequential time periods (West). It is concluded with an anthropological look at the methods of religious protelizing in virtual reality (Gomez- Flores).

Dominant Voices, the second chapter, edited by Khalid Bashir, is a reflection upon the incapacity to understanding political or social realities when dominant voices do not represent the people. In the first paper, Hsu compares and contrasts the Asiatic imagery in the works of De Quincy and Dickinson to reveal their anxiety towards the western definition of modernity in the nineteenth-century. Szarkowski's work follows with a discussion of the failings of United States military policy in Pakistan as flawed due to a lack of understanding of the cultural and historical context.

Laura Siragusa edits Chapter Three: The Methods of Voice. Martel-Reny discusses how she discovered a need for qualitative interview methods by accident while she was researching educational preferences of young people in Quebec; the students' voices shed light on previously unknown factors in school choice. English language proficiency is discussed by Ngo in her paper on the influence of L1 upon Vietnamese students. In the final paper for this chapter, Glomm discusses 1970s Nordic artists' rejection of European integration.

The Voices of the Author are discussed in the fourth chapter, edited by Lloyd Dodd. The first author, Ewell, discusses how the romantic ideas of Byron are translated into the characterization of the BBC's Doctor Who. Leong's paper focuses upon discourses within the Hebrew bible against an idolatrous queen, depicting her as the goddesses (Astarte and Asherah) whose cults she patronises. The chapter closes with Hafez's essay exploring Margaret Walker's journey to find her literary voice while expressing the spirit of the Harlem Renaissance.

Juan F. Botero-Garcia presents The Scream in Chapter Five, discussing three papers which touch upon various sides in armed conflict. It begins with Maloney's paper on the inefficiency of Spanish government's decisions to limit the political clout of the Batasuana party, and how this leads to more violent means of expression. International law's perspective upon humanitarian intervention is the focus of Bashir's essay. Calazans' work on the moral responsibilities of private military companies finishes this chapter.

In the sixth chapter: Voice of the Voiceless, edited by Bo Yin, authors examine the voices of individuals who find themselves drowned out by the legal system. In the first paper, Ellison examines how the Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) rule in English law appears to convict individuals of murder without regard to circumstances. It is followed by Cheung's work about how Hong Kong sex workers perceive danger in their lives, contrasted with assumptions commonly made about what they should fear.

Chapter seven: Voice of the Spirit, is edited by Juan F. Botero-Garcia and includes papers discussing how art can be crucial to experience and learn about the world. In this section, the authors show the importance of music and theology to strengthen people's inner voices. It begins with Crother's description of Neuhaus' use of philosophy to explain and teach the spiritual connection in piano playing. Potter continues along this line with a historical narrative of the importance of Pseudo-Dionysian hierarchy of angels as a device to make religious scriptures accessible to a broader audience. Hutchings' work concludes the chapter with a discussion of emotional responses to Shostakovich's 5th Symphony.

The book concludes with Women's Voices in Education, edited by Kathryn Vincent. It begins with Popescu's work how Romanian women discuss their ability to take on the roles of school heads while balancing their roles as mothers and wives. The other two papers, authored by Nzabonimpa and Tukahabwa, examine the dialogues influencing young Rwandan women's choices to enter science and technology courses at high school and University levels.

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From the University of Aberdeen: thanks to Heather Morgan (Doctoral Candidate, Department of Sociology) and Lindsay Milligan (Doctoral Graduate from University of Aberdeen, Department of Language and Literature) for their work coordinating this conference. To Nathalie Schmit (Doctoral Candidate, Department of Language and Literature) for her extensive help and support during the editing of the book. Also, to Prof. Claire Wallace (Director of Research for College of Arts and Social Sciences) for her support and facilitation of both the conference and this publication.

And externally: thanks to Ala Yaghi (Department of English Literature, University of Jordan) and Mohammad Abdulqader.

The editorial team would also like to thank the section editors and in turn each other. As well as other members of the coordination committee for the Moving Forward 2009 Post-Graduate Conference.

SECTION ONE:

ALTERNATIVE VOICES

INTRODUCTION

KATHRYN VINCENT
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

This initial chapter attempts to alter pre-conceptions held by the reader about the definition and construction of the voice. Rather than allowing the voice to be pigeon-holed as either the movement of air through tightened human vocal cords, or an academic method of writing, the following paper selections show how the voice is any expression of a point of view, whether it is gendered, non-human or the collected voices of an institution. Alternative voices are independent of the four basic dimensions of Cartesian geometry; instead they exist in multiple facets of temporal, physical and personal fluidity.

In her paper "'Unleashing the Underdog': Technology of Place in Virginia Woolf's *Flush*", Verita Sriratana (University of St. Andrews) explains how understanding the term technology as it was originally developed: speech of the arts. She then applies it to the physical and psycho-social surroundings enabling the reader to better absorb the perceptions of multiple silent or invisible groups of people. She examines how Virginia Woolf's uses the point of view of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's pet dog as a farcical narrative of place.

In this piece, the voice of the dog represents the status of women in Victorian England as a type of underclass within the family– children or pets are protected and controlled. Sriratana examines how Woolf reaches back in time through literature to expose this complex structure, each representing the silent clamours of the disadvantaged. She discusses how this story is an exceptional piece of feminist work, left to rot by "serious" scholars who have dismissed the voice of a dog as easily as that of a woman.

Upon arriving in London, Flush encounters multiple new social barriers, instilled in him by the restraining leash. This is then countered by the juxtaposition of his life after Miss Browning marries and moves with him to Italy. Sriratana examines how women in the households are in the

hierarchy, represented as closer to the status of the pets and the corresponding "leashes" upon them (in the forms of bath chairs and escorts) which are released upon arrival in Italy. By using the observations of the dog, Woolf expresses socio-political decay through a satirical whisper which is far more drawing than the demanding shout of a protester on the street.

Mark West (University of Glasgow) uses his paper "The Problem of the Contemporary: The Altermodern and Joseph O'Neill's *Netherland*" to describe how we no longer live in a post-modern world. He explores the potential of the new voice of the globalised era as altermodern, the creation of human experiences through the act of wandering. The paper goes on to contrast the revelations of the altermodern through visual artwork in a studio against the nomadic and temporally discontinuous flashbacks of the protagonist in the 2009 novel *Netherland*.

Finally, Lilia Gomez Flores (Glasgow School of Art) explores the vocalization of organized religion in a virtual space in her paper "Virtual Communities in Internet: A Cross-Cultural Study through Religion". Gomez Flores demonstrates how participants in the online world of Second Life (SL) use their keyboards to express and respond to God's existence in a physically non-existent world. She distinguishes between religion online as the dissemination of information about the real world (voice of the church) and online religion as the active participation in ceremonies while taking on the identity of an avatar (the voice of the individual as they take part in religion). Open invitations by religious institutions to all participants in SL encourages increased vocalization of spiritual questions which would be blocked by either physical difficulties (distance to houses of worship) or cultural sanctions (unwillingness to approach a member of clergy in person) in real life (RL).

By setting her exploration within a virtual world, where participation is voluntary and an individual's physical survival does not depend upon acknowledgment of specific rules, Gomez Flores has opened an interesting conversation about the Durkheimian function of religion. Participants have already found social cohesion through the reflection of real life culture upon their creations. However, the lack, or at least lessening, of organic solidarity re-ignites the need for the development of shared value systems and religious practices. Each of the three churches involved in the study, as well as the plethora of other forms of religious worship available in SL, currently have the opportunity to recruit in what was until recently a structural vacuum.

"UNLEASHING THE UNDERDOG": TECHNOLOGY OF PLACE IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *FLUSH*

VERITA SRIRATANA
UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

Introduction

"Technology", as both technical and common term, is often associated with scientific and industrial tools, techniques, and procedures. However, this paper propounds that the term in its etymological roots epitomises not only the objectivity of science but also the subjectivity of arts. The concept of technology oscillates between binary poles of the concrete and the abstract and, by so doing, merges and disrupts those seemingly fixed oppositions. The dynamism of technology manifests itself most clearly in our understanding of place. "Technology of Place," the means by which an individual comes to understand place, embodies not only the concrete "architectural textures" perceived through sensory reception, but also the abstract ideas or "textual architectures" which form understandings of, and feelings towards, a particular place. Since it is made up of both tangible and intangible layers of texts, place can be "read" and approached as a text. Through the literature of place, one is able to read through its surface and interrogate its embedded discourse of power and technology of production. The hypothesis and conclusion of this essay will be attested and illustrated in a close analysis of Virginia Woolf's *Flush*, her underdog text which depicts the life story of two social underdogs: the Victorian poetess Elizabeth Barrett Browning and her pet. Published in 1933, this biography of a cocker spaniel investigates how dogs and women perceive the world and how they come to understand their places in it.

What is Technology?

When we hear the word "technology," especially when placed side by side with the word science as in "science and technology," we tend to conjure up images of machines and scientific innovation ranging from

mobile phones and desktop computers to satellites and spacecraft. Technology tends to summon up images of raw materials being processed and manufactured into utilities for our comfort. However, it is interesting to note that the term which now seems to be inseparable from science, was, in fact, first used in the arts. Its etymological root is composed of two Greek words: *téknē*, meaning art or craft, and the suffix *logíā*, meaning speech or discourse. Why, one should ask, is technology so important? The most popular answer can be found in Kranzberg and Pursell's essay *The Importance of Technology in Human Affairs* (1967), in which they bring to attention humanity's underlying urge to overcome nature for survival reasons:

> We have come to think of technology as something mechanical, yet the fact remains that all technical processes and products are the result of the creative imagination and manipulative skills of human effort. The story of how man has utilized technology in mastering environment is part of the great drama of man fighting against the unknown. (ibid.: 10)

It can be inferred from the extract that human beings set up and utilise technology as a scheme or tool to fulfil their basic needs. Also, the term technology can be fluid and dynamic since it oscillates between the borders of science and arts, between the concrete and the abstract. "Technology," assert Kranzberg and Pursell, "is much more than tools and artefacts, machines and processes. It deals with *human work*, with man's attempts to satisfy his wants by human action on physical objects" (ibid.: 6). This tension between the urge to create mechanical systems and the creativity of the human mind gives the term "technology" an ambivalent tone as it sustains and at the same time questions the fixity of the tangible-intangible dyad.

The term "technology" is used not only among scientists and historians but also among philosophers. Michel Foucault, in *Technologies of the Self*, categorises these "technologies" into four different types: technologies of production, technologies of sign systems, technologies of power, and technologies of the self (2003: 146). Despite the seemingly clear-cut differences between these four categories, Foucault nevertheless stresses that they are all intertwined, linked together through their shared mission to fashion and monitor an individual's judgement and conduct. Technology, therefore, can also refer to the ways in which people form their knowledge of themselves and of the world.

One of the clearest examples of Foucault's "technologies of the self" is the act of writing. The traditions of letter writing and keeping diaries are important to the shaping of one's "self". To elaborate, as we write on a piece of paper or in our diaries, we also "write ourselves" as writing reflects our attempt to sum up and contemplate our thoughts and actions: "A relation developed between writing and vigilance. Attention was paid to nuances of life, mood, and reading, and the experience of self was intensified and widened by virtue of this act of writing. A whole field of experience opened which earlier was absent" (ibid.: 153).

What is Technology of Place?

The term "technology of place" was originally coined by Irvin C. Schick in his book *The Erotic Margin*: "I suggest using the term *technology of place* to describe the discursive instruments and strategies by means of which space is constituted as place, that is, place is socially constructed and reconstructed" (1999: 9). However, the essay proposes that "technology of place" refers not only to the constructedness of place, but also to the tools and methods which shape an individual's understanding of it. Technology of place is a negotiation between "concrete place," places perceived through sensory reception, and "abstract place," places imagined from fragments of memories and visual representations which tend to leave their imprints on the mind.

In the next section this essay turns to Virginia Woolf's work *Flush*, in order to illustrate the proposed argument by means of textual analysis.

Technology of Place in Virginia Woolf's *Flush*

Virginia Woolf's real life events since the year 1917, sixteen years before the novel's actual publication, can be marked as the crucial kernel which evolved in time into an outline of the *Flush* we read today. In October 1917, she had been given a cocker spaniel named Tinker, "a stout, active, bold brute, brown & white, with large luminous eyes" (Bell 1979: 59). Tinker instantly became the subject of Virginia Woolf's fascination. Her diary entry dated Monday 15 October, 1917 reveals a keen observation on her pet's character and behaviour:

> The chief fact today I think is the development & discovery of Tinker's character – all in the right direction. He was taken a long walk by the river the avenue & the Park; his spirit is great, but almost under control. He fell

> into the river twice; jumped out again; circled madly with a black poodle, & investigated several garden gates, which seem to have a fascination for him. He is a human dog, aloof from other dogs. (ibid.: 60)

Virginia Woolf's profound interest in the unfettered spirit and inquisitive nature of her pet can be found in her biography of Flush, another "human dog". The blurring of the line which divides human beings and animals is reflected in her playful entry on Thursday 18 October, 1917:

> L. [Leonard Woolf] out until 5 at his conference: & the telephone rang constantly (…). A dull life without him! Even Tinker's restless mind did not make up. One's right hand becomes quite cramped holding his chain. Let loose he is very random, but on the whole obedient.*
>
> *This, I must say, applies to Tinker, not to L. (ibid.: 62)

This humorous passage contains a serious undertone. One of the main issues which Virginia Woolf would later explore in *Flush* is the notion that animals and humans are no different from each other in that they are both chained to certain "man-made" laws. Animals are subjected to chains, confinement, and commodification because of the belief that they do not possess a soul and therefore are situated in the lower rung of the chains of being. Humans, on the other hand, are subjected to the social norms and convention. Women, in particular, are also subjected to confinement and commodification because of the patriarchal notion that they are inferior to men. It is these chains, both literal and metaphorical ones, both physical and mental ones, which ironically bind animals and human beings together.

Virginia Woolf's comical tone in her works tend to cast a dark shadow over her critical comments on society. *Flush* is no exception. It is often regarded as a "light" text, a diversion from the much "heavier" landmark novels: "After working a tough modernist work like *To the Lighthouse* or *The Waves*, so the conventional wisdom goes, Woolf needed to unwind with something frivolous, like *Orlando* or *Flush*" (Caughie 1991: 52). Though the text can be read as a spoof biography, equivalent to *Orlando*, it is often dismissed as being less political in its comments on the traditions of biographical writing and linear narrative. Some critics view it as a playful scribble, a bestseller to boost sales and nothing more. Craig Smith, in "Across the Widest Gulf: Nonhuman Subjectivity in Virginia Woolf's *Flush*," points out the parallel between the critical neglect of the text and that of women's lives and experiences:

> Most studies of Woolf do not mention *Flush*. With perhaps a dozen exceptions in the vast Woolf literature, those studies that do acknowledge the book's existence grant it only a paragraph, a sentence, a clause, or a descriptive adjective. These persistently recurring adjectives—'sentimental', 'minor', 'trivial'—are disturbingly redolent of the terms by which womens' writing were once dismissed as suitable subjects for critical study, and by which women's lives were dismissed as suitable subjects for biography (2002: 357-358).

However, there is more to this "underdog" text than the deceptively simple plot and the simplistic notion that this is just another story about a canine.

Written from the point of view of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's cocker spaniel, *Flush* can be regarded as an exploration of the world of the senses and as an investigation of how dogs as well as human beings perceive the world and come to understand their places in it. In terms of the analysis of place as a concept and in terms of technology of place, this particular work is most interesting as it can be read as a further illustration of the term "technology of place" propounded earlier in this paper. The juxtaposition and amalgamation of one's ideas and sensory perception of place and the clash between the discourses embedded within spatial construction challenge the boundaries between binary oppositions by which we tend to construct our own understanding of place: abstract/concrete, the mind/sensory faculties, and spatial structure/spatial usage. These points will be explored in three separate sections.

Place: The Abstract and the Concrete

Flush is Miss Mitford's gift to her friend Miss Barrett. He has been brought from a cottage near Reading to a house on Wimpole Street, London. 50 Wimpole Street, where Miss Barrett's back bedroom is located, is one among the symmetrically built and laid out residences of that street. This sense of proportion and conformity exuding from standardised architecture and urban planning are the trademarks of Wimpole Street:

> Even now perhaps nobody rings the bell of a house in Wimpole Street without trepidation. It is the most august of London streets, the most impersonal. Indeed, when the world seems tumbling to ruin, and civilization rocks on its foundations, one has only to go to Wimpole Street; to pace that avenue; to survey those houses; to consider their uniformity; to marvel at the window curtains and their consistency; to admire the brass

> knockers and their regularity; to observe butchers tendering joints and cooks receiving them; to reckon the incomes of the inhabitants and infer their consequent submission to the laws of God and man— (Woolf 1998: 13-14).

The concrete form and elements which constitute a place like Wimpole Street can be seen in the homogeneity of house style which proclaims the inhabitant's social and economic status, the brass knocker which awaits visitors on each door, and working-class people like cooks and butchers who labour to prepare meals for their employers. Such physical elements contribute to the creation of the abstract idea of Wimpole Street as metaphor for middle-class stability and symbol of English urban culture. It is here, in Wimpole Street, that the "laws of God and man", be they laws of social hierarchy or of religious institution, are most strictly adhered to. However, the seemingly solid and stable Wimpole Street is not so solid and stable as it looks. To unearth the technology of place is to see through the symmetry of houses with brass knockers, and to follow the cooks and butchers to their quarters. The point of view and the extremely sensitive perception of a dog can be deemed essential in this respect. It takes the eyes, the ears, the paws, and the dog's nose to challenge the received notion of fixed stereotypes of a place:

> Surrendering human self-consciousness to animal consciousness allowed her [Virginia Woolf] to express an authentic connection with the land, to avoid the beaten track of the tourist for the receptive eye of the traveller. *Flush*, though ostensibly a "joke," had serious implications for her style and point of view… *Flush* achieves an undeniable if ironic authenticity in its choice of a dog's perspective. (McNees 2005: 114)

The animal's perspective also points out the possibility that Wimpole Street also needs its so-called opposite to distinguish itself from other places. This can be seen in the following extract. Here, in his first summer in London, a city often depicted as and believed to be "the heart of civilization" (ibid.: 20), Flush accompanies Miss Barrett up and down Wimpole Street:

> For the first time he heard his nails click upon the hard paving-stones of London. For the first time the whole battery of a London street on a hot summer's day assaulted his nostrils. He smelt the swooning smells that lie in the gutters; the bitter smells that corrode iron railings; the fuming, heady smells that rise from basements—smells more complex, corrupt, violently contrasted and compounded than any he had smelt in the fields near

> Reading; smells that lay far beyond the range of the human nose... (Woolf 1998: 21)

Sensing what is "far beyond the range of human nose" and sensory faculties, Flush noses his way around only to discover the darker side of Wimpole Street and London. Underneath the stability of buildings and elegant iron railings, underneath the abstract ideas of civilisation, empire and the glory of capital cities, Flush is able to detect corroding smells of decay. The putrefaction of wastes in gutters is a metonymy for the putrefied living conditions of the people in slums, the gutters of London. Slum areas, in particular, are spaces designated for the poor, the social misfits and the marginalised. The idea of slums as dangerous territories, as a whole different world from the well-proportioned residences in cities, is part of the technology by which one comes to understand one's place and identity. Here, places like Wimpole Street can never function or maintain their equilibrium without the idea that somewhere there is a place completely different and alien, completely "other":

> A dense mass of aged buildings in St Giles's was 'wellnigh a penal settlement, a pauper metropolis in itself'. Aptly enough, where the poor conglomerated thus, the settlement was called a Rookery. For there human beings swarmed on top of each other as rooks swarm and blacken tree-tops. (Woolf 1998: 53)

The juxtaposition of London and its slum is clear. Whereas the people in Wimpole Street are able to hire cooks and butchers who work their best to satisfy their palates, the people in Whitechapel or St Giles's steal food. They scurry away after having swooped down and snatched whatever they can, just like rooks. Whereas the architectural structure of Wimpole Street is consistent and well-balanced, the buildings of Whitechapel or St Giles's are "hardly any longer buildings", a complete chaos, a filthy rookery. Rooms in Wimpole Street are juxtaposed with "cells of brick" in Whitechapel or St Giles's with its criminological connotations. The idea of "penal settlement" and "pauper metropolis" festered with "half-dressed human beings" might perhaps remind us of colonial settlement, penal colonies, colonial metropolises which often label indigenous people as "half-dressed human beings". It is interesting to note that, as London needs its slums to define what it means to be the capital of England, an empire also needs its colonies, its exotic other, to define what it means to be an empire, the seat of civilisation. Such is the working of the technology of place with its parallelism in both the level of metropolis and the level of countries and empire.

However, as Flush noses his way around London and unveils the decadence behind the seemingly stable and clear-cut binary oppositions, one is moved to ask: Are these two places really different? Are they truly separate? Here, the proximity of ghettos to the well-groomed neighbourhood challenges the reader's ingrained sense of difference and problematic boundary lines between the complacent urban culture and its corrupted "other": "Splendid buildings raised themselves in Westminster, yet just behind them were ruined sheds in which human beings lived herded together above herds of cows" (Woolf 1998: 52). Slums are demarcated as off-limits particularly to aristocratic dogs and aristocratic women alike. The need to protect, to confine, to put chains on both dogs and women is intensified and, at the same time, mocked by the fact that those dangerous areas are located just under one's nose: "Behind Miss Barrett's bedroom, for instance, was one of the worst slums in London. Mixed up with that respectability was this squalor" (Woolf 1998: 53). The tension between the abstract notions of "respectability" and "squalor," therefore, are interrogated by the physicality of place.

When Flush is kidnapped by "dog-fanciers" or dog-stealers of Whitechapel while he accompanies Miss Barrett on her shopping expedition, he is suddenly taken away from the colourful shops of Wimpole Street to a dark and claustrophobic dungeon where he is confined. Such a displacement significantly overturns his understanding of place and, therefore, marks the ambivalence of the technology of place:

> This was now the truth—this room, these ruffians, these whining, snapping, tightly tethered dogs, this murk, this dampness. Could it be true that he had been in a shop, with ladies, among ribbons, only yesterday? Was there such a place as Wimpole Street? Was there a room where fresh water sparkled in a purple jar; had he lain on cushions; had he been given a chicken's wing nicely roasted; and had he been torn with rage and jealousy and bitten a man with yellow gloves? The whole of that life and its emotions floated away, dissolved, became unreal. (Woolf 1998: 57)

The physical existence of Wimpole Street and Miss Barrett's bedroom is immediately put into question. The memories of those places slowly evaporate into thin air as Flush experiences, with all of his senses, the suffocating dampness, the horrible voices, and the ultimate terror of his prison.

Flush's technology of place which combines both abstract and concrete aspects of place finally deconstructs itself. The world of the senses shapes

and reshapes the world of reality, and *vice versa*. This is further illustrated when Flush is returned back to his mistress after the ransom has been paid. At the moment he enters the bedroom, he immediately fulfils his physical needs, that is, thirst for clean water. When he looks around, the sense of security which the room used to render has disappeared. His displacement and the traumatic experiences which ensued transformed the way he perceives the room:

> Now as he lay on cushions once more, cold water was the only thing that seemed to have any substance, any reality. He drank continually. The old gods of the bedroom—the bookcase, the wardrobe, the busts—seemed to have lost their substance. This room was no longer the whole world; it was only a shelter. It was only a dell arched over by one trembling dock-leaf in a forest where wild beasts prowled and venomous snakes collided; where behind every tree lurked a murderer ready to pounce. (Woolf 1998: 67)

For Flush, the room's substance and reality fade away. Its essence becomes dismantled. However, technology of place is a continuous and complicating process and, therefore, we can see how it is constantly at work. Flush merges his own fear and trauma into the shaping of new images and understanding of the back bedroom. Now, for him, the room has become a barbaric land filled with savages and deadly animals. Flush's traumatic experiences are projected on to the idea he has of the back bedroom. Edward Casey comments in his book *Getting Back into Place*:

> The desolate physiognomy of wilderness is doubtless felt most poignantly in circumstances of isolation. Indeed, a vicious circle of isolation and desolation may ensue. The more I feel myself to be isolated (not only geographically but also socially, culturally, linguistically, etc.), the more I will tend to find my surroundings desolate; and the more I perceive these surroundings in various ways. And if I am displaced at the same time—as is often the case—any escape from this circle of the desolated-isolated self will be only that much more difficult to achieve, leaving the entrapped self discouraged and disconsolate. (1993: 197)

Such disillusionment of place as a result of being dislocated brings us to the next topic on the tension between discourse and disillusionment.

Place: Discourse and Disillusionment

As explored earlier, the agenda behind the construction of place, behind the pattern and architectural structure of a building, produces and

propagates the discourse of power in a particular historical time and context. Place is often defined by rules and regulations which are issued to sustain conventional values of a dominating group of people. Public parks, as mentioned earlier, are controlled spaces, artificial forests for show. According to Edward Casey (1993), they have the "capacity to exhibit a range of relations between the naturally given and the intentionally cultivated" (ibid.: 168). Amalgamation of the natural and the artificial manifests itself most clearly in parks and gardens.

Parks promote the social intercourse in the urban scene with, for instance, the culture of promenading. They offer socialising spaces where women can walk about with parasols and chat among themselves, where men can sit on the bench and read or discuss politics. Flush, familiar only with the natural forests in Three Mile Cross, is taken aback by the man-made laws and etiquette of Regent's Park:

> At last, with every nerve throbbing and every sense singing, he reached Regent's Park. And then when he saw once more, after years of absence it seemed, grass, flowers and trees, the old hunting cry of the fields hallooed in his ears and he dashed forward to run as he had run in the fields at home. But now a heavy weight jerked at his throat; he was thrown back on his haunches. Were there not trees and grass? He asked. Were these not the signals of freedom? (Woolf 1998: 22)

Trees and grass, for Flush, used to be signals of freedom during his time in the countryside. Now, however, his concept of place is transformed by Victorian cultural order as exemplified by sayings such as "cleanliness is next to Godliness". The juxtaposition of "here" and "there", the problematic park and the natural fields and forests he used to roam, can be seen in Flush's musings: "Here, he observed, the flowers were massed far more thickly than at home; they stood, plant by plant, rigidly in narrow plots. The plots were intersected by hard black paths" (Woolf 1998: 22). Such contrast is further intensified by the decree that "dogs must be led on chains" when they are in public parks:

> Men in shiny top-hats marched ominously up and down the paths. At the sight of them he shuddered closer to the chair. He gladly accepted the protection of the chain. Thus before many of these walks were over a new conception had entered his brain. Setting one thing beside another, he had arrived at a conclusion. Where there are flower-beds there are asphalt paths and men in shiny top-hats, dogs must be led on chains. Without being able to decipher a word of the placard at the Gate, he had learnt his lesson—in Regent's Park dogs must be led on chains. (Woolf 1998: 22)

Gradually, Flush begins to formulate his new understanding of place. Experience has taught him that whenever he sees the physical elements which make up a public park, be they "flower-beds", "asphalt paths", or "men in shiny top-hats", he has to conform to the rules and gladly accept the chain on his neck. Technology of place here modifies Flush's mindset and, at the same time, is itself modified by Flush's own experience. Discourse, which is part of the technology of place, successfully manipulates Flush's thoughts and actions.

However, the validity and universality of discourse can be questioned when one experiences other places with a different set of rules or without any rules and regulations at all. This can be seen when Flush accompanies his mistress and Mr Browning in their elopement to Italy. In Florence, where there are no "flower-beds", no "asphalt paths", and no "men in shiny top-hats", Flush soon realises that the rules are played differently here. This new experience leads to his disillusionment of the stern prohibitions of Regent's Park:

> As he raced over the grass 'like emeralds' with 'the pheasants all alive and flying', Flush suddenly bethought him of Regent's Park and its proclamation: Dogs must be led on chains. Where was 'must' now? Where were chains now? Where were park-keepers and truncheons? Gone, with the dog-stealers and Kennel Clubs and Spaniel Clubs of a corrupt aristocracy! Gone with four-wheelers and hansom cabs! With Whitechapel and Shoreditch! He ran, he raced; his coat flashed; his eyes blazed. He was the friend of all the world now. All dogs were his brothers. He had no need of a chain in this new world; he had no need of protection. (Woolf 1998: 77)

Flush learns that the imperative "must" is a context-bound word. Its demanding existence is not at all universal but constructed. A chain does not naturally belong on his neck as he has understood. Here, both the abstract idea that dogs must be led on chains, and concrete objects like chains and truncheons merge into a technology of place which construes his images and understanding of not only Regent's Park but also what he thinks is England.

Flush is certainly not the only one whose change of place and climate leads to disillusionment of authoritative power. Miss Barrett, now Mrs Browning, also opens up her eyes and widens her horizons in this new place:

> She was always comparing Pisa with London and saying how much she preferred Pisa. In the streets of Pisa pretty women could walk alone; great ladies first emptied their own slops and then went to Court 'in a blaze of undeniable glory'. Pisa with all its bells, its mongrels, its camels, its pine woods, was infinitely preferable to Wimpole Street and its mahogany doors and its shoulders of mutton. So Mrs Browning every day, as she tossed off her Cianti and broke another orange from the branch, praised Italy and lamented poor, dull, damp, sunless, joyless, expensive, conventional England. (Woolf 1998: 76)

The juxtaposition is clear. There, in London, where slums and purse-snatchers proliferate, women are not allowed to wander in the streets. Here, in Pisa, women are free to explore the town. Women are not pushed around in bath-chairs as if they are invalid. The colour of pinewood, the taste and smell of Italian wine, the touch of an orange freshly plucked from its branch, all serve to deconstruct the fixity of England as the centre of Mrs Browning's world.

The constant shaping and reshaping of a technology of place is also seen illustrated in the following extract. Here, as soon as Flush and his mistress finally return to London, they realize that they are obliged to abide by the "must" and play by the social rules and conventions of the place. Pisa and Florence, where the sun shines bright and clear and where women and dogs can casually and carelessly stroll down the streets, is juxtaposed with London, with Welbeck Street, where mist hangs about in the air, where women must be chaperoned when walking outdoors lest they get into danger and where dogs are put on chains lest they get stolen:

> Houses spread to right and left in sharp avenues of regular brick. The pavement was cold and hard beneath his feet. And there, issuing from a mahogany door with a brass knocker, was a lady bountifully apparelled in flowing robes of purple plush. A light wreath starred with flowers rested on her hair. Gathering her draperies about her, she glanced disdainfully up and down the street while a footman, stooping, let down the step of the barouche landau. All Welbeck Street—for Welbeck Street it was—was wrapped in a splendour of red light—a light not clear and fierce like the Italian light, but tawny and troubled with the dust of a million wheels, with the trampling of a million hooves. (Woolf 1998: 91)

Mrs Browning is not the only one who is woken up by the reality that she must resume and relive the old chapter of her life. Flush also smells the fear which this place brings, the fear which creeps back into his skin: "And then a sinister figure issued from the public-house at the corner. A

man leered. With one spring Flush bolted indoors" (Woolf 1998: 91). His homecoming does not give him the comfort of being in a familiar place, hearing familiar sounds and seeing familiar faces. On the contrary, it gives him the sense of alienation.

Disillusionment is a process of the mind. In terms of a more concrete level, transformation of technology of place can be seen in its practical usage. The last section, therefore, will explain how appropriation of place can physically challenge the discourse of power behind a spatial construct.

Place: Discourse and Appropriation

The description of Wimpole Street reveals that strict adherence to the allocation of place is one of the important commandments needed to uphold the concept of Victorian masculinity. Emphasis on order and discipline is one of the main factors which make up the idea of masculinity in the Victorian period and it can be reflected in many cultural productions ranging from the Victorian garden patterns to the ideas of family and domesticity. Here, the strict allocation of spaces or rooms in the Barretts' house mirrors the strict designation of social status according to the social hierarchy:

> The Barretts never left London. Mr Barrett, the seven brothers, the two sisters, the butler, Wilson and the maids, Catiline, Folly, Miss Barrett and Flush all went on living at 50 Wimpole Street, eating in the dining-room, sleeping in the bedrooms, smoking in the study, cooking in the kitchen, carrying hot-water cans and emptying the slops from January to December. The chair-covers became slightly soiled; the carpets slightly worn; coal dust, mud, soot, fog, vapours of cigar smoke and wine and meat accumulated in crevices, in cracks, in fabrics, on the tops of picture-frames, in the scrolls of carvings. And the ivy that hung over Miss Barrett's bedroom window flourished; its green curtain became thicker and thicker; and in summer the nasturtiums and the scarlet runners rioted together in the window-box. (Woolf 1998: 34)

The extract starts with the family's patriarch, Mr Barrett, then goes on to mention the brothers, then those on the lower levels of the hierarchy: the women of the family, maids, Miss Barrett the invalid, and pet dogs, respectively. The constant rhythm of routine life upheld by the people in this household manifests itself in their being extremely faithful to the discourse behind the production of each room: the dining-room is for all except dogs and maids to dine in, the bedroom is for all to sleep in, the