

A Geocritical Study Of Sam Shepard's Fool For Love

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Abstract

This paper highlights the physical setting in Sam Shepard's *Fool For Love* according to the theoretical framework of Geocriticism. It examines its fictional and real spaces and the relationship between the physical space that exists in nature and the mental space in the minds of the characters. This study argues that the spatial perspective is so dominant in the postmodern society that its individuals suffer from loneliness, anxiety, fragmentation, detachment, and displacement. This postmodern geocritical method of analysis is applied to Shepard's *Fool For Love* as a play that discusses many elements relevant to the main precepts of geocriticism like transgression, place, space, social boundaries, movement, and settlement. These elements show how characters are moving throughout the play and how Shepard uses them to structure his play. This study argues that the role of space and place in the analysis of literary texts is as important as other critical categories such as gender, sex, and psychoanalysis. It shows how the critical studies ignore space and place and their role as parts of the setting of the play and as important elements in the development of actions..

Keywords: Geocriticism, Sam Shepard, Fool For Love, Postmodernism, Spatial representation.

دراسة نقدية جغرافية لمسرحية سام شيبيرد "أحمق من أجل الحب"

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الملخص

تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على البيئة المادية في مسرحية سام شيبيرد "أحمق من أجل الحب" وفق الإطار النظري للجغرافية النقدية . أنها تتناول فضاءاتها الخيالية والحقيقية والعلاقة بين الفضاء المادي الموجود في الطبيعة والفضاء الموجود في عقول الشخصيات . وترى هذه الدراسة أن المنظور المكاني هو المنظور السائد في مجتمع ما بعد الحداثة الذي يعاني أفرادها من الوحدة والقلق والتشردم والانفصال والتشرد . تم تطبيق طريقة التحليل الجغرافي النقدي على مسرحية شيبيرد "أحمق من أجل الحب" باعتبارها مسرحية تناقش العديد من العناصر المرتبطة بالمبادئ الرئيسية للجغرافية النقدية مثل التعدي والمكان والفضاء والحدود الاجتماعية والحركة والاستيطان . توضح هذه العناصر كيف تتحرك الشخصيات خلال المسرحية وكيف يستخدمها شيبيرد لتنظيم مسرحيته . وترى هذه الدراسة أن دور الفضاء والمكان في تحليل النصوص الأدبية مهم مثل دور الفئات النقدية الأخرى مثل الجنس والعرق والتحليل النفسي . وتبين كيف تتجاهل الدراسات النقدية دراسة المكان ودوره كجزء من بيئة المسرحية وكعنصر مهم في تطور افعال الشخصيات في النصوص الأدبية.

كلمات مفتاحية: جغرافية نقدية ، سام شيبيرد ، احمق من أجل الحب ، مابعد الحداثة ، التمثيل المكاني

Geocriticism: Introduction

Historically, geocriticism is an analytical tool that could be traced back to the time of Aristotle because it covers one of the most important questions in literary theory which is: Where the literary text takes place? Over the years, this question ties the actions that happen in literary texts with the place and space in which they occur. Besides, place and space are considered main concepts that shape any literary text. Place and space help to establish the general meaning to a literary text especially in the postmodern era where the place and space reflect what is going on in society and how individuals suffer from fragmentation and displacement (Michael J, Flusty: 2002,p.34).

In geocriticism, place and space have an important role and can be regarded as a critical category as gender, class, and race. As a literary theoretical apparatus, geocriticism provides a new way of analysing, reading, critiquing literary texts. It raises one of the main questions in the geocritical studies which is: what does geography add to the literary theory? This question addresses the concept of place inside the text. According to geocritics like Robert Tally and Bertrand Westphal, the main aim of geocriticism, which has been an important tool in critical investigation from the mid of nineties, is to distinguish between real and fictional spaces in literary texts. Edward Soja, a geographical and urban theorist introduced the concept of the “spatial turn” for the first time in 1989 and from that time on, many studies have started to give significance to the place in the literary theory (Hones: 2018, 147).

According to geocriticism, the critic or the reader should examine the situation in which the geographical landscape and incidents are portrayed and how the characters and the authors explore the fictional space inside the text. In other words, geocriticism focuses on how the author explores the fictional space in the text and to what extent the text reflects the real spaces and how characters interact with this reflection. Geocriticism studies the representation of place in the texts and differentiates between place and space as two important concepts. One of the founders of geocriticism is Bertrand Westphal, a French scholar whose book on geocriticism was translated to English under the title *Geocriticism: Real and Fictional spaces*. This book is a manifesto of geocriticism as a theory in which Westphal gives two definitions of place and space. He writes that space is a term that covers the universe and it is “oriented toward the infinitely large or reduced to the infinitely small, which is itself infinitely and infinitesimally vast” (Westphal 4). Space is an area that highlights actions and physical movement and is considered the physical area in which a story happens (Abdullah: 2016, 2). On the other hand, place is the area where the eye of the observer stops when it sees a general scene, therefore,

it is 'a point of rest' (p. 4). In other words, it is where the observer pauses, stops, and rests so that the person "becomes familiar with a space, it becomes a place" (Abdullah:2016,p.2).

According to geography, concepts of space and place differ from each other. Space is a concept that refers to the abstract, and to the thing without its physical existence while place refers to the ways that people or individuals occupy this space for a particular purpose which could be a psychological purpose (Agnew: 2004, p.4). In literary theory, there are differences between these two concepts as well (Hones: 2018, 149). According to poststructuralism, theorists like Foucault, Lefebvre and Soja use the concept of space in their analysis rather than the concept of place. In his theory of "heterotopia", Foucault focuses on the three concepts of "textual, fictional, and imaginary" spaces. He uses these three concepts to give a geocritical reading of texts that depend on space. "Heterotopia" according to Foucault is a type of space that has many sub-types which might be real or fictional (cited in Gaston:1969,20).

Literary theorists have started to pay attention to space since the 1980s, and has become one of the important factors in literary theory (Michael Flusty , 2002). In his book *Spatiality*, Robert Tally indicates that this "spatial interest " paved the way later to geocriticism to appear as a literary theory (Tally, 2013). The writings of Michael Foucault, Fredric Jameson, and Edward Soja reinforced geocriticism because they deal with the concepts of rootlessness, fragmentation, borders, and alienation in their writings. Geocriticism emphasizes the study of "territoriality" which focuses on the spaces and places in the text with a special interest in how the writer presents the relationship between these places and the characters. In consequence, Geocriticism highlights the relationship between the place and the events happening in this place.

Geocriticism does not highlight the place in the abstract but rather it investigates the representation of that place in the text (Julian , 2004). Literature provides us with the "possible worlds" that connect the real world with the literary text and define the link between the referent and its representation as Robert Westphal writes:

the first premise of geocritical theory states that time and space share a common plan, subject to an entirely oscillatory logic whereby the fragmentary ceases to be oriented to a coherent whole. Postmodern Temporality is characterized by isotropy, which is the scientific name of this Systemic indeterminacy, and this isotropy is then extended to the spatial Representation. The second premise of geocriticism is that the relationship between the representation of space and real space is Indeterminate Indeterminate. Rather than considering a spatial or spatiotemporally Representation as not "real,"we view every representation (whether literary, iconographic, etc.) as referring to a broadly imagined reality that, in and through its extreme extension, is subject to a weak ontology. From these Two premises, we understand that space cannot be understood except in its heterogeneity (Westphal, 37) .

A Geocritical Study Of Sam Shepard's Fool For Love

According to Westphal, geocriticism is founded on three basic theoretical notions which are: spatio temporality, transgressivity, and referentiality. These notions summarize Westphal's interest in the literary representation of place and space. Westphal demonstrates that spatio temporality comes from modern physics in which space and time represent a continuum. But in literary theory, the analysis of geocriticism focuses on spatial data and therefore, geocriticism has a connection with architecture and urban studies. Also, the relationship between geography and literature is transgressive, which means that geocriticism as a theory goes beyond place in its literal meaning. Westphal argues that all places are known especially in postmodern era but we should look beyond these spaces and places to discover their dimensions. He states that the main aim of geocriticism is not the place itself, but rather the representation of that place. He highlights the referential relationship between the world and the text as one of the most important theoretical notions of geocriticism. He argues that there is a referentiality between the world and the text or between the referent and its representation . Westphal explains this notion in that as we understand the fictional or imaginary places by absorbing the levels of these places, they become a member of our real world as we realize it.

The geocritic, according to Westphal, is the one who understands this relationship between these two worlds and is fully aware that this referentiality is continuous and it is what makes geocriticism a field worth studying. Westphal opines that in regard to imaginary texts, there should be real places that these texts point to. He states “the referentiality of fiction allows it to point to a recognizable place, real or imaginary or a bit of both at once, while also transforming that place, making it part of a fictional world” (Westphal: 2011, 83)

Robert Tally develops the role of spatiality in the study of literature. In his book *Spatiality* (2013), Tally argues that the relationship between geography and cartography starts from the links between space in literary texts and the spatial mapping. He thinks that there should be a shift in cultural and social studies and in the representation of space inside these texts. According to Tally, the cartography of space mapping should be involved in the study of these texts to “undermine the dominance of the temporal paradigm in social and philosophical theories” (Tally, 2013: 3).

Tally thinks that “we might add the reader's literary geography. The critical reader becomes a kind of geographer who actively interprets the literary map in such a way as to present new, sometimes hitherto unforeseen mappings” (Tally, 2014: 79). Later, in his book *Literary Cartographies: Spatiality, Representation, and Narrative* (2014), Tally succeeded in applying his theory of cartography by combining narrative and the

mapping. He writes that this combination “surveys a broad expanse of literary historical territories, including romance and realism, modernism and imperialism, and the postmodern play of spaces in the era of globalization” (2014: 33).

Furthermore, Tally refers to the role of the author in shaping these mapping, and writes “spatiality explores the ways authors use both strictly mimetic and more fantastic means to figure forth what Edward Soja called the ‘real-and-imagined’ spaces of their respective Worlds”(2014: 4). So, geocriticism according to Tally is an interpretive tool that reflects the social and cultural aspects of place in literary contexts. In his book *Topophrenia: Place, Narrative, and the Spatial Imagination*, which is a collection of essays that explore the connection between space, place, literary texts, and mapping, Tally states that the era that we live in is “an age of enhanced spatiality” in which “we are always mapping, whether we are aware of it or not” (Tally, 2019: 3). Tally differentiates between three categories: which are spatial cartography, geocriticism, and literary cartography as a mediator between the place and its representation in the text (2019: 38).

In his essays, Tally focuses on the framework of spatial theory and develops the theoretical aspects of geocriticism. The title of the first chapter of the book is “Topophrenia”, which is a concept that Tally explains from where he borrowed and why he uses it here. Topophrenia is a term based on topophilia which is used by the Chinese American geographer Yi-Fu Tuan. Unlike Yi-Fu Tuan who defines Topophrenia as “joyous” (Tally, 2019: 20), Tally defines it as “a certain identifiable place-mindedness that informs our activities and thinking” (2019: 23). Tally is known for his development of the terms and according to him topophilia should resonate with topophobia. He highlights the “spatial anxiety” as a part of human experience, saying that “the pervasive place-mindedness infusing our subjective experience in and apprehension of the world is characterized by a profound sense of unease, anxiety or discontent” and “even when we are ‘at home’, we maintain our awareness of the unfamiliar, the unheimlich, and a subtle, yet visceral feeling of a spatial anxiety subtends our thought and action.” (2019: 23)

In his essay “Geocriticism and classic American Literature”, Tally indicates that the narrative maps of American writing “make sense and give form to the world in a recognizable way” and the function of the critic is to “make sense of the ways we make sense of the world”(2019: 3). Through the notion of “spatial anxiety”, Tally refers to how people feel when they read the literature of the postmodern era. He indicates that the author conveys his feeling of the unstable social and economic status of that era to his readers. In his book *Spatiality* (2013) Tally highlights the

changes in social and economic conditions in postmodern era and how they affect and deconstruct one's conventions. One reason is "man's lack of sociological imagination that allows him to understand his own experience" (2013: 8). Man cannot realize his chances in life unless he visualizes himself in other's lives or as Wright Mills states unless he calculates "his own fate by situating himself within his period". For example, when the protagonist in a text embarks on a journey into Canada or Alaska, the author presents him as the one who can deal with the harsh climate of these places. Tally concludes his essay about "spatial anxiety" and "cartography" by highlighting the importance of the connection or the relationship between history, geography and their connection with society. In order to make these three fields complete, Tally views geography as a factor that connects between history and society.

Fool For Love

In the context of geocriticism, everyone or everything is influenced by the place or space they live in or occupy. In theatre, characters are highly tied to their place. In *Fool For Love* (1983), Shepard presents one of the main questions that he often raises in his plays: which is how could the place affect the concept of love? Through this question, Shepard highlights one of the most difficult concepts in his plays which is love along with the place that determines how two lovers accept the way they live in their geographical background. The first time that the protagonist Eddie sees his beloved, he tells her that "why couldn't you just stay. You knew I was comin' back to get you" (Shepard, 1983: 6). In Eddie's view, May should basically just sit around and wait for him while he runs out on her for long stretches, even though it makes her feel abandoned and alone. This geographical background "matters, not for the simplistic and overly used reason that everything happens in space, but because where things happen is critical to knowing how and why they happen" (Warf and Arias, 2009: 1).

In *Fool For Love*, Shepard presents a play that is related to place and space and in so doing, he emphasizes the physical environment of the characters. He also presents a play where the characters have a metaphysical relationship with their place because it is a haven to them. May tells Eddie that he always does the same thing and abandons her over and over again. They both seem to have the same urge to change

A Geocritical Study Of Sam Shepard's Fool For Love

their places and look for a new one that provides a sense of peace to them as clear in the excerpt below:

MAY: It'll be the same thing over and over again. We'll be together for a little while and then you'll be gone.

EDDIE: I'll be gone. (9)

From a Geocritical perspective, place is not only a physical space that the characters live in, but it also provides “intimacy” that appears in characters’ actions. In other words, place and space in any literary work do not only determine the actions of characters and their relationship with their places, but also affect the psychological dimension and their relationships. *Fool For Love* is set on the edge of western United States and its setting is isolated, abandoned, and desolate, since no families live there. In this isolated territory, the events take place in a motel on the edge of the Mojave Desert in California. Shepard chooses these places to highlight the concepts of wilderness and toughness through which the environment can be recognized as unfit for living. The setting of the play gives a sense of hostility and illustrates how the characters have lost their relationship with the norms of society.

On the first page of the play, the stage direction highlights the general atmosphere of the play starting from the room which is pretty battered, gloomy, and very old. The green walls, blue chenille bedspread, and door to the outside are described as “faded,” and the tabletop is “well-worn Formica” (*Fool for Love* page). It seems that there is no shining colors in the decorations, a matter that creates a kind of gloomy and depressing atmosphere and reflects the characters’s inner psyche (Bottoms, 1998: 35).

From the beginning of the play, May and Eddie struggle with the problem of place which showcases “geopathology” according to which characters’ relationship with the place determines their health and stability. From the first statement in the play, Eddie seems to have a “geopathic disorder” which leads to his special displacement experience. In this seedy Mojave desert motel, Eddie tries to convince May to live with him again in a trailer on a farm in Wyoming. He has always dreamt that one day he will buy this farm and live there with May. On the other hand, May also seems to have a “geopathic disorder” which makes her experience displacement. From the first line, she rejects Eddie’s dreams and plans although she is in love with him. She expresses her rejection of the place that Eddie proposes and says that she has “no interest” to live with him under these “circumstances”, and she has a new job and can live a better life than the one she lived before (*Fool for Love* page). So, from the beginning of the play, Eddie and May seem to have their personal problems

A Geocritical Study Of Sam Shepard's Fool For Love

with their place as a representative of their way of living. They openly express their fear of and anxiety about their way of living in this oppressive world.

In order to explore the place, Shepard highlights the visual space in the play by determining the visual dimension of theatre. In other words, he divides the theatre into spots that characters occupy as the action progresses. The main and only place in the play is a motel room in which Eddie and May stay. They share the same physical place although they experience it in different ways because they wish they had a better life in another place. This visual theatrical space is determined through the room that characters occupy throughout the play.

As in most of Shepard's plays, the room is in an isolated motel at the heart of the desert. Shepard presents this setting and atmosphere of the play to indicate that this physical and isolated room is not only a place that characters live in, but also a possible world that exists in characters' minds and memories which later lead them to their isolated life and separated identity. In geocriticism, the place defines or shapes the characters or even develops them. In the play, May appears as sitting in silence and divided between meeting Eddie and her wish to leave and live a better life. In the middle of this confusion, Eddie is also confused. He is not satisfied with the current place that he lives in and he plans to return to his old farm to live with May. As they both occupy the same place, the identity of the place is fixed and determined because the play takes place in the world of "heterotopia" or "thirdspace" which is according to the theory of geocriticism, a combination between real and imaginary spaces.

From the beginning of the play, the setting gives a sense of fragmentation, alienation, and loneliness that is reflected in the characters's language. They stay in a room that gives them a sense of shelter or residence and replaces the abstract spaces in their minds which destruct them and give them a sense of void. *Fool for Love* occurs in a "thirdspace" because most of its events happen in the memories of characters and their previous places. From the beginning of the play, the old man discovers Eddie's and May's families by referring to their past, he says :

Amazing thing is, neither one a' you look a bit familiar to me. Can't figure that one out. I don't recognize myself in either one a' you. Never did. 'Course your mothers both put their stamp on ya'. That's plan to see. But my whole side a' the issue is absent, in my opinion. Totally unrecognizable. You could be anybody's. Probably are. I can't even remember the original circumstances. Been so long. Probably a lot a' things I forgot. Good thing I got out when I did though. Best thing I ever did (*Fool for Love* 24).

Shepard focuses on the memories of the past that are narrated by the character of the Old Man to deliver the history of Eddie's and May's families. The play is "more expressionistic work toward an almost hyper-realism that zooms in on the

A Geocritical Study Of Sam Shepard's Fool For Love

idiosyncratic lives of ordinary people struggling with extraordinary conflicts” (Johnson, 2010: 167).

The “thirdspace” that Eddie and May live in transfers them through their memories, wishes or through images that exist in their minds and by doing so, the same “thirdspace” makes them go back to the reality of the physical world. Shepard presents the dingy room that Eddie and May live in an isolated motel in a desert as this “thirdspace” that exists in their minds along with memories or recollections from the unconscious. Physically, they live in this separated, isolated, dingy room. But, their minds and memories go back fifteen years ago where they were in love with their previous places which are totally different from their current room. Eddie expresses his determination to stay in this room until May believes and trusts him again. He says “i’m not goin’ any where. See? I’m right here ” (*Fool for Love* 8). On the other hand, May was unsure whether or not she should believe him and forgive his betrayal or start a new life away from him.

Throughout their first conversation, Shepard wants to establish the spatial dimension of the play and how it affects the life of Eddie and May as both represent the real world. In other words, Eddie and May live in this place which is small, isolated, fragmented, and in the desert, but they mentally do not belong in it as they live their life in ‘heterotopia’. This is the core of geocriticism as an analytical tool that encourages the reader to connect between what is real and imaginary in literary texts. The job of the writer is to refer to them by pushing spatial dimensions. *Fool For Love* tells a lot about the single room in a motel in Mojave desert. Eddie and May seem to have a special sense of the place that they have lived in before and now. Eddie expresses his love to his old farm and hopes to buy it again. On the other hand, May never wants to forgive his betrayal and wants to start a new life.

Shepard uses the journey of May as a motif. She has come to the motel following Eddie who has left her before and she has spent an hour on the way to see him. May is divided between believing and forgiving Eddie. Shepard uses such information regarding what happened before the start of the play to support the story. He depends on foregrounding space and place where characters live rather than time.

This is the reason why the reader might have found a similarity between Eddie and May and Shepard’s other characters from other dramas. They are repetitive characters that often appear in his plays. They are lovers for over fifteen years and Shepard has described them as “absolutely still and they maintain their attitude until they speak”(*Fool for Love* 1). Moreover, Shepard describes specifically the status of Eddie and May to establish the general atmosphere and setting of the play.

A Geocritical Study Of Sam Shepard's Fool For Love

From the first sentence, Shepard presents the characters of May and Eddie as they are coming from a long journey. They feel tired, confused and disgusted because of the room, and sit facing the audience. Moreover, Shepard depicts meticulously specific details about the physical characters of the place in which May and Eddie start the play, one of which is the presence of the character of the Old Man who “exists in their minds only” (*Fool for Love* 1) as Shepard refers to him. As geocriticism tries to discover the “intrinsic and extrinsic” sides or dimensions of human life throughout the connection between space that characters occupy and other things around, characters and objects exist in the same place or space to reflect the psychological sides that space provides to help to understand characters’ actions (McHale, 1987: 32) .

This change in space-time is related to the changes that happen in the postmodern world. It may prompt individuals to change their social and spatial status and measure their lives by what happens in literature in general which gives them a conceptual or imaginary geography. The Old Man, alone, isolated and separated from other characters forms an observer who sits in a corner speaking and interacting with May and Eddie. Shepard describes him as the one who exists in the minds of characters only. His presence as a ghost gives the impression that he has a great influence on the characters. Throughout the spaces that the Old Man occupies, he has an influence on the extrinsic and intrinsic aspects of Eddie and May. In other words, the character of the Old Man forms a psychological judgment that occupies a space in the theatre and reflects his presence on other characters’ memories. One of the critics opines that “Central to the dreamlike and disturbing quality of *Fool for Love* is the presence of the old man, a father figure who seems to exist simultaneous to, but in a dimension removed from, the action of the play. He is both a surreal specter and a reinforcement of Shepard’s continuing obsession with his own personal heritage and his father” (DeRose, 1993: 114). So, the character of the Old Man serves psychological purposes and copies what happens in the real world. In all his writings, Robert Tally stresses that the geocritic should make sense of what happens in the real world, which is connected with the social and economic status of postmodernism.

Since *Fool For Love* is set in a particular place, which is a room in a motel, Shepard seeks to bridge the distance between reality and fiction throughout the geographical aspects in the play. Throughout the descriptions of the place and characters, Shepard emphasizes the importance of the place inside the play. He keeps describing the complexity of the place as an imaginative construct. He combines the description of the cruel desert and the gloom of the motel as it is isolated from the city to stress the brutal landscape of Mojave desert.

A Geocritical Study Of Sam Shepard's Fool For Love

The play capitalizes on overlapping territories of actual physical geography like the desert of Mojave and the fictional places like the motel in the middle of this desert to enter the mental map of the characters . Eddie and May go through a process of self-discovery, and evaluate their history and their existence in the room. Both of them are newcomers who arrive recently in this room after their experiences in their previous lives. They undergo “transgression”, the process of movement and motive as Westphal (2011) calls it. They both transgress the boundaries until they meet in this isolated room (Wade, 1997).

While the Old Man speaks, the two main characters recall bad memories about their families. May overlooks Eddie’s betrayal and arrives to see him although she is unsure whether or not to trust him. On the other hand, Eddie overlooks his affair with the countess and goes on a long journey to be with May again. They both appear in the life of each other at the time when they thought that they would never meet again. May lives in another city and believes that she is past Eddie although she finds him in her life again. They are both haunted by their past which prompts them to transgress in spite of the pain that they might face in their current place.

They share the same experiences throughout the play and what they both lack is “social imagination” which is something related to the ability of their minds to use knowledge to understand things that happen around them. According to geocriticism, what really characters struggle with is their separation from the society and this is what the single place or room in most of Shepard plays means. Eddie and May struggle with their “social imagination” because they know and are aware of the struggle that they face when they are staying in a relationship especially after the Old Man tells them that they are relatives and cannot be in this relationship any more which is something that they did not know before. May knows that Eddie was in a relationship with the contessa although she cannot make up her mind to leave him and start a new life. She told him “You keep comin’ up here with this same country dream life with chickens and vegetables and I can’t stand any of it.” (*Fool for Love* 11). She has tried this life with Eddie before and it never rises to Eddie’s expectations although she can not leave him. On the other hand, Eddie always pretends that he is going outside the room, but he goes back and insists that he wants to be with May again. The Old Man describes him as “I thought you were supposed to be a fantasist, right? Isn’t that basically the deal with you? You dream things up. Isn’t that true?” (*Fool for Love* 13).

This circle of abandonment and return is an example of their lack of “social imagination” which is something that society provides to individuals. In the context of the play, Eddie and May are isolated and separated from society living in a single room in the middle of the desert. Moreover, Shepard provides many incidents to

A Geocritical Study Of Sam Shepard's Fool For Love

prove that they are confused and unable to make decisions, a matter that leads them to their end. They face what Tally (2013: 1) calls “cartographic anxiety or spatial perplexity”, which reflects their abandonment to each other and return later. They repeat their families’ history by staying with a partner that they know would continue to leave and cheat on them. May knows that she allows herself to be again in a situation that will repeat itself. If the Eddie and May are based on his life, “Rather than condemn, Shepard tried to understand his parent’s pain and isolation; in the process he would learn much about himself and his own tendencies toward social withdrawal and alienation” (Wade, 1997: 8). So, one of the results of their lack of sociological imagination is their “cartographic anxiety” and inability to take decisions. So, they remain prisoners in the room and unable to understand their experience. Eddie and May are the representatives of postmodern American individuals as they suffer from social and economic burdens that lead them to their alienation. Their long journey symbolizes the need of radical changes in their life.

Moreover, Shepard gives his readers the geography of the play which reflects characters’ psychological and social situation . He establishes a series of events, objects, and characters that exist outside the room and affect what is going on inside the room. While Eddie and May are sitting discussing the future of their relationship, someone arrives outside the room and draws their attention. Shepard uses outside incidents that guide the mental map of Eddie and May who exist in the room. This character who arrives outside is the Countess that Eddie has a relationship with her. She busted the windshield of Eddie’s truck. The geography of the play gives a sense of the psychological conflicts that Eddie and May have faced throughout their lives. Eddie is a multi-dimensional character who believes in the American west and hopes to live an idyllic life as a cowboy in the countryside. He faces three basic problems throughout the play. One is his complex character because of his relationship with his family and his lovers. He has a complex identity because of his past which pushes him to change his way of living and places to find what he is looking for. He sells his old farm and later dreams to have it back to live in with his love May. He has an unsettled character because of the places that he changes and which lead him to his end.

His chaotic life forces him to have a relationship with the countess because he needs to feel that he is in control. On the other hand, May is described as a strong and vulnerable character at the same time. She lives alone and rejects the relationship with Eddie, but at the same time, she longs for him. Her way of living in this single room in the outskirts of Mojave desert represents her isolated, separated character although her feelings are revived after Eddie’s return. She always looks for a life that makes her feel stable and settled. She wants to stay in this room and start a new life.

A Geocritical Study Of Sam Shepard's Fool For Love

But, when she sees Eddie, she packs her bag and prepares to leave. Her previous relationship with Eddie makes her struggle and feel torn between her dreams, memories, and ambitions to find peace in this single room.

They both walk deep and complex psychological paths. They abandon their relatives to find peace and achieve their dreams in places which affect their identity. In the middle of their psychological sufferings, the character of the Old Man takes control over most of the play. He represents the observer who provides them with information about their history, families, and especially their mental maps. When May starts to deviate from the correct story about her mother's suicide, he corrects her information :

THE OLD MAN. Now, wait a second! Wait a second. Just a goddamn Second here. This story doesn't hold water. You're not gonna' let Her off the hook with that one are ya'? That's the dumbest version I ever heard in my whole life. She never blew her brains out. Nobody Ever told me that. Where the hell did that come from? Stand up! Get on your feet now goddamn it! I wanna' hear the male side a' this Thing. You gotta' represent me now. Speak on my behalf There's No one to speak for me now! Stand up! Now tell her the way it happened. We've got a pact. Don't forget that.

EDDIE. It was your shotgun. Same one we used to duck hunt with. Browning. She never fired a gun before in her life. That was her first time.

THE OLD MAN. Nobody told me any a' that. I was left completely in the dark.
EDDIE. You were gone. (*Fool for Love* 38) .

In this final scene, Shepard's meticulous descriptions of what is happening inside and outside the room allow the reader to create a mental map and image of the spaces Eddie and May occupy and the spaces that exist outside the room. Shepard adopts a spatial arrangement in his description of objects and events. He depicts actions as they appear to the senses (up, down, right, left). In the description of the play, Shepard refers to the dimensions that depict actions as they are registered in the senses. He refers to how the room is set in a way that reflects characters' actions "the table is set extremely down left", while "chairs are set upstage and down right of table" and the "bathroom door up right of the stage Right" (p.7)

Shepard highlights the characters' experiences by relying on how the body is located in the space. In geocriticism, "the most basic human experience consists of perceiving oneself as a body located in space" (Eldiasty, 2018: 3) or as Westphal (2011: 64) indicates that space depends on the body just like the body depends on the space and what the body gives to the space is the "spatio temporal consistency" that makes it a measure of what happens in the real world and helps to apply in the representation of the play in theatre.

A Geocritical Study Of Sam Shepard's Fool For Love

In the description of the play, Shepard uses words like “back” and “front” to organize the space and the body of a character becomes a reference to those words. Another emphasis on spatial experience is achieved by the use of sounds. Shepard highlights the sounds that Eddie and May have heard in the last scene of the play. They cannot see the sources of these sounds like the fire in Eddie’s track or when something breaks outside the room to dramatize the spatial experience of characters. Shepard uses the sensory organs of characters to establish a new relation with the space that exists inside and outside the room. As such, characters learn to absorb the mental map of the place without seeing it. In other words, they internalize their places and locations and therefore, they know their mental maps which lead them to recognize the spaces that exist outside their current location.

Moreover, the loneliness of the motel in Mojave desert and the vastness of this desert appear to extend endlessly toward an undefined horizon indicating a vague future to characters. They are far away from society, so, Eddie and May always refer to their past and try to remind themselves that one day they had people around them and they lived and settled in one place with their lovers.

Conclusion

Throughout the spatial representation in the play, Sam Shepard highlights the peculiarities of the era that he lives in. *Fool For Love* is a play that reflects the spatial anxieties of the age itself. It depicts the social and economic situations in the postmodern society which Shepard highlights through the characters of Eddie and May and through their spatial abilities. Sam Shepard gives his readers a picture of life through his characters by highlighting the disparity between represented places and spaces in the real world and the fictional spaces that the characters create in their thirdspace. Throughout the framework of geocriticism, this study highlights the geographical and space-oriented incidents in *Fool For Love* and concludes that these incidents reflect the status of postmodern human who seems alienated, separated, and displaced. This study focuses on how Shepard’s plays and *Fool For Love*, in particular, help to rediscover what is going on in the real world. It provides a kind of reflection through the characters of Eddie and May who embody the situation of a postmodern individual who feels lost and displaced. Throughout the general setting of the play, Shepard gives the readers an accurate representation that provides them with a frame and mental image of the place which helps them to connect the world of the play with their real world and by doing so, they will understand their real world throughout the depicted spaces in the play which is the main function of geocriticism.

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