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Mapping the Anomalous in Caryl Phillips's "Heartland"

Abstract

All narratives of Caryl Phillips present prolific ground for research in spatial literary studies. Phillips's "Heartland," the focus of this paper, deals with the mechanics of Britain's enslaving past. The narrator is an anomalous character who stands at the borderline between two multiplicities and takes part in the social deterritorialization process of the absolute anomalous or, to say, a perpetual outsider, the slave, who loiters without a safe anchorage. The process of social deterritorialization necessitates the eradication of all beacons of geographical, familial, tribal, linguistic, and cultural belonging. This then requires a more stratified understanding and evaluation of the slave-making process as well as a critical reading of narratives of slavery such as "Heartland." This paper, therefore, aims to construct a multifocal mapping of some of the micro spaces used in the process of social deterritorialization and the anomalous bodies as narrated in Caryl Phillips's "Heartland." The paper also aims to use the method of geocritical multifocalization, which highlights the need for a diversification of perspectives in the analysis of any given space, real or fictional.

Keywords: geocriticism, dehumanization, "Heartland," Caryl Phillips, slavery, anomalous, multifocalization, social deterritorialization

1. Introduction

In his writing, Caryl Phillips time and again explicates Britain's historical involvement in the transatlantic slave trade as well as its immediate and far-reaching aftermath. "I watch the Atlantic Ocean breaking over rocks some twenty yards away. I contemplate the long, painful journeys that

the slave ships made across the Atlantic from this very shore," writes Phillips in A New World Order (6). With this, he points to the direction of his intricate narrative quest: (de)humanizing passages across the Atlantic. One of Phillips's earliest novels, Higher Ground (1989), consists of three stories that reflect upon the mechanics of Britain's enslaving past and its traumatic aftermath: "Heartland," "Cargo Rap," and the book's namesake, "Higher Ground."

The first story "Heartland," which is the focus of this paper, takes place at a British outpost, the Fort as it is called in the narrative, located on the west coast of Africa before the abolition of the slave trade, and features an unnamed native collaborator as the narrator, 'the linguist,'[1] who helps British officers and soldiers in the infamous plunder and commodification of captive Africans. The linguist narrates his moral dilemmas, his internal conflicts with himself, and his external conflicts with the locals and the slavers. The narrative also gives the reader a glimpse of how a European outpost functioned as a machine of dehumanization in the Atlantic slave trade. "Heartland" begins in media res with the linguist halfheartedly taking the new Governor around the Fort and familiarizing him with the outpost. The linguist is a meticulous observer who describes how the enterprise of slavery, in his words "a game of high stakes" (Phillips, "Heartland" 11), takes hold of any newcomer, European or African, and transforms him through a system of dehumanization, which I call, in the context of this geocritical paper, 'the process of social deterritorialization.' In support of this, the narrator speaks of the new governor, who sounds enthusiastic about his new post: "Whenever a new arrival sets foot in the Fort there is a period of taunting discomfort, until discomfort eventually begins to smile with the sadistic glee of one that knows a casual victory is guaranteed" (Phillips, "Heartland" 11). When the story ends, the narrator, now a slave after having endured the Middle Passage, is on a platform in shackles to be sold: "I stand on the platform and look down. I am an old man. The yoking together is over. My present has finally fractured; the past has fled over the horizon and out of sight" (60).

2. Multifocalization

The paper aims to bring the anomalous micro spaces used and produced during and after the social deterritorialization process and anomalous experiences into dialogue with various spatial theories through the geocritical multifocalization method. In Geocriticism: Real and Fictional

Spaces (2011), Bertrand Westphal highlights the need for the diversification of perspectives in the analysis of any given space. The single scrutinizing gaze of an individual will always be subjective and resist objective results (Westphal 122). Westphal also urges avoidance of the bipolar gaze, which comprises the self (the gazer) and the other (the gazed-upon), as this, which was "the gaze of the colonizer," may come to assume a higher status for the gazer and an inferior one for the gazed-upon (122).

Multifocalization, therefore, emphasizes the application of as many and varied viewpoints to the interpretation of a place as possible to avoid bias, favoritism, and stereotyping as well as generalization. Unlike the "imagological" or "ego-centered" subjectivity of an artist or a writer, a geocritical text is supposed to incorporate a network of various perspectives (Westphal 126). Westphal also emphasizes that the geocritic should approach any given space from an interdisciplinary perspective. "From the postmodern perspective, the border between genres conveying a given spatial representation remains unclear," states Westphal and adds: "Human space corresponds to the versatile ensemble of representations that are constructed and reconstructed, regardless of the nature of their genres" (119). A geocritic, then, can incorporate multiple disciplines and genres into the research, whether it be cinematic or photographic representations, travelogues, fictional works, paintings, computer graphics, or disciplines such as geography, sociology, anthropology, psychology, and philosophy. In short, geocriticism favors a "multifocal dynamic" and "a multiplicity of heterogeneous points of view" (Westphal 122).

However, as Westphal underlines, this raises the question of the volume of the corpus that should be merged into a study; Westphal argues that the research must aim to achieve a clear enough distance from stereotyping and adds: "The calculation of this threshold of "representativeness" is obviously aleatory; it is not an objective arithmetic" (126). The research has to find its voice somewhere "between the prestige of the observed or represented space and the number and variety of observers needed to cross this minimal threshold" (Westphal 126). Therefore, depending on the specific case, "the threshold of representativeness" can be set at the liberty of the researcher (Westphal 127).

This paper aims to construct a multifocal mapping of the fictional micro spaces which entail anomaly such as the Fort in Caryl Phillips's "Heartland." The Fort stands out as a representative

anomaly of the Atlantic slave trade, although there certainly exist various other micro spaces used in the trade, such as slave pens, cells, ships, ship holds, and more. The paper also focuses on the anomalous experiences of the fictional characters in "Heartland," for, as Robert T. Tally Jr. indicates in Spatiality (2013), bodies in space become parts of the space (28).

3. Dynamics of the Anomalous

Orlando Patterson states that slaves were considered "socially dead" as they could not claim any communal ties outside their master's circle of authority (38). Despite being considered "socially dead," Patterson recognizes that slaves were given a new state, a new "liminal incorporation," which he calls "institutionalized marginality" or "the liminal state of social death," a limbo state which stripped captives powerless so that the master's claims of power could be laid upon them (45-46). Arpad Szakolczai, on the other hand, offers the concept of "permanent liminality" as an alternative perspective in liminality studies. As liminality exists between the suspension of a previous order and the reassertion of a new order of things, he suggests, permanent liminality is used for those who, being unable to achieve a new stage, get stuck in limbo (Szakolczai 211). Saidiya Hartman also identifies the concept of metaphorical death as an inherent element of this marginality: "Seized from home, sold in the market, and severed from kin, the slave was for all intents and purposes dead, no less so than had he been killed in combat. No less so than had she never belonged to the world" (67-68). Victor Turner recognizes liminality, or the interstate structure, as a state of metaphorical death and social invisibility. "The passenger [becomes] ambiguous [or] structurally, if not physically, invisible," states Turner (47). Patterson further connects the concept of institutionalized marginality, the state of quasi-existence, to the mechanics of slave-making – a two-phased process of dehumanization as proposed by Claude Meillassoux:

> *The slave is violently uprooted from his milieu. He is desocialized and depersonalized. This process of social negation constitutes the first, essentially external, phase of enslavement. The next phase involves the introduction of the slave into the community of his master, but it involves the paradox of introducing him as a nonbeing. (38)*

Patterson recognizes the position of the slave as the "liminal status of the institutionalized outsider" somewhere between the tenets of marginality and integration (46). The slave's liminality was of utmost importance to the master as then, he or she did not pose any threat to social and moral norms and this status created the least anomaly within the social structure (Patterson 46). Two characters in "Heartland," the linguist and the girl, stand out as institutionalized outsiders, who experience the anomaly of displacement and homelessness like captives of the system. "I have cut myself off from these villagers to such extent that I have actually become their enemy," confirms the linguist (Phillips, "Heartland" 27). The Fort is the only anomalous place he can identify with: "Within the confines of the Fort my position is secure, if low and often unbearable. I now find it difficult to conceive of a life either before or after this place. I need to feel safe" (Phillips, "Heartland" 19). The linguist, as an outcast beyond the social space of the village, stands at the borderline, the Fort, and becomes a part of the borderline, an anomaly. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari suggest that the borderline is "the enveloping line or farthest dimension, as a function of which it is possible to count the others, all those lines or dimensions constitute the pack" (245). Both locals and invaders regard him as a deviant character beyond whom another multiplicity exists. This nameless character[2] therefore forms a borderline between two social multiplicities: that of the slavers and of the local Africans. In Deleuzoguattarian terms, the linguist is "a loner" against "the pack," his is "a preferential alliance" against "mass contagion," and he is "the exceptional individual" against "pure multiplicity," and again, his is a "predestined choice" against "the aleatory aggregate" (244).

Although not a slave yet, this character faces social bondage as the anomalous. This becomes obvious when he accompanies Price, one of the ranking officers at the outpost and a seasoned slaver, on his expedition to the village to bring in the girl. His words provide important details regarding his condition: "We are led across the village by the Elder who serviced the horses. We enter a smaller and more modest hut. Once there Price informs me that I will have to remain outside and guard him. I had expected nothing different from this man. I sit outside and wait" (Phillips, "Heartland" 24). In this incident, Price makes it obvious that he does not belong to the slavers' pack. When he attempts to connect with the locals, he faces the villagers' blatant hatred. One of the Elders threatens him and spits in his face. He protests: "Why do they seem intent upon

blaming me? Have I, unlike their Head Man, ever made profit for myself? I merely survive, and if survival is a crime then I am guilty. I have no material goods, no fine hut in which to dwell, nobody to wait on me" (Phillips, "Heartland" 24).

Deleuze and Guattari recognize the anomalous, or the outsider, at the edge, not as an individual or a species, but rather as "a phenomenon of bordering" (245). The linguist also belongs to the multiplicity of slavers in the eyes of the locals: "I am despised by my own for my treachery," (Phillips, "Heartland" 57). He lives in the Fort—the space of the slavers' multiplicity, yet he is never to be trusted, which means that he is regarded as the anomalous other in the Fort. In the words of Georg Simmel, who speaks of the outsider in "The Stranger," he is the perfect stranger, physically close, yet socially distant (143-50). The girl, too, similarly becomes the anomalous stranger with the transgressive passage she has undergone with the linguist and Price, which is confirmed by the villagers: "The girl has been ruined. She is no longer of us" (Phillips, "Heartland" 40). The girl also knows that she has become an outsider for the villagers, even though she is the daughter of the Head Man. Her words confirm this fact and make the linguist face this state: "As soon as the man chose me I was tainted. My father had to disown me. Have you already forgotten the ways of your own people?" (Phillips, "Heartland" 44).

The Fort in "Heartland" similarly forms a spatial anomaly, a borderline on the threshold of two different multiplicities: the social entity of the slavers, and the vacant space of Africa. Between the desolate African hinterland and the smooth Atlantic Ocean, the Fort, with its vertical structure and the slave pens and dark, dank cells within, signifies the compliance of the slave bodies; as Lefebvre suggests "horizontal space symbolizes submission, vertical space power, and subterranean space death" (236). Bonta and Protevi, drawing upon Deleuzoguattarian borderline concept, comment that the safe-unsafe analogy forms the borderline; the unsafe zone is avoided. This zone, exterior to or outside the space where the anomalous resides, is occupied by patrolling forces that hold the multiplicity crowded and active (65).

4. Dehumanizing Spatiality of Slavery

Social deterritorialization is a multilayered spatial process of utmost complexity. Slave-making, for instance, necessitated certain places such as forts, dungeons, and ship-holds, all of which

correspond to the first part of the two-phased method of dehumanization. Through this phase the African captives were turned into commodities of the Atlantic slave trade. These spaces were devised to sever the African's belonging to a place, kin, family, language, and culture. The process of social deterritorialization then incorporates the eradication of all beacons of geographical, familial, tribal, linguistic, and cultural belonging, which adds more strata to the spatial understanding and evaluation of slave-making as well as the critical reading of narratives of slavery. Hartman, in Lose Your Mother (2007), defines the slave as "the bought-and-sold person [who] comes and goes by way of the transactions of the market" (7). The slave is always located outside any domain in her definition: "The slave is always the stranger who resides in one place and belongs to another. The slave is always the one missing from home" (Hartman 7). Loitering without a safe anchorage, the slave becomes the absolute outsider—the anomalous.

In "Heartland," Phillips sets up a liminal penumbra where the social interaction is superficial, the language is agitated, the setting is claustrophobic, devoid of meaning and destructive.



Figure 1. The Freedom Statue, the Island of Gorée, Senegal, 2012. (Photo by I. Murat Öner)

"Sea spray corrodes everything here, including the human spirit," says the linguist (Phillips, "Heartland" 14). The narrator sees that each place is marked by sheer desolation and ominosity. Of the slaver's outpost, he says: "There is such excess of space that it is possible to wander for hours without happening upon another soul" (Phillips, "Heartland" 36). In another place, he observes the grim world outside of the Fort and says: "The plains stretch away for miles and give no clue of human or animal life. I look for birds but, there are none. Price does not appear to notice how ominous this is" (Phillips, "Heartland" 21-22). The village which the linguist and Price visit to pick up the girl is also a desolate waste land with a few elders and some young slaves-to-be: "The village is denuded. It contains mainly women and old men, with a few children (seedlings) running wild. They will soon blossom into young exportable goods of this trading continent" (Phillips, "Heartland" 22). Hartman describes the desolation she sees in the present-day Africa with the words of the Ghanaian poet Kwadwo Opoku-Agyeman, which are also suggestive of this image of Africa as a barren graveyard whose sons and daughters were torn apart and buried elsewhere: "Africa was a land of graves without bodies" (70).

The desolation and emptiness that Hartman sees while tracking the slave route in Ghana bears a certain spatial resemblance to that in "Heartland," and she tries to find some traces of life in the land: "It is said that when you spot a cluster of baobab trees it's the sign a village once existed in that spot. I counted at least thirteen clusters on the way to Gwolu, but all the other signs of life had perished" (Hartman 219). In her journey to the town of Gwolu in Ghana, Hartman observes a significant topographical change in the terrain because of the Atlantic slave trade. The locals attempted to fend off the invading slavers by building a wall around the town. In Hartman's description, the wall stands as a monument showing how resolute the villagers were against the raiders, evident in the elaborate design and the architecture of both the wall and the town. People decided to fight off invaders with such constructions—walls around towns, town gates, and elaborate structures (Hartman 220-21). Hartman's observation not only points to the contained structure of the wall that segregates the spaces of the invaders from those of the local populace but also to the stratigraphic vision the wall creates between the space outside and within: "The rampart divided the world between friend and foe, ally and enemy" (Hartman 220; emphases added). Westphal highlights the importance of the stratigraphic understanding of spaces in

geocritical scrutiny. Historical experiences of a place create various strata; each person or group carries his or her own "temporal regime," and there may exist multiple "parallel regimes" simultaneously, as Westphal further states: "The diversity of temporalities that we perceive synchronously in several different spaces, even in a single space, is also expressed in diachrony" (137). Hartman congests different temporalities into two spatial edifices, "an old storehouse" and "the house," and creates a remarkable diachrony as proposed by Westphal: "An old storehouse built by white men had everything to do with who I was in the world…" (44; emphasis added), and "The self-forgetfulness of belonging would never be mine. No matter where I went, I'd always be a stranger lurking outside the house" (46; emphases added). Here, Hartman merges two different temporalities, slave-making in the past and her quest for her roots in the present, into two singular micro spaces. Hartman mentions other spaces of multiple temporal regimes, for instance, "the rampart" (220). She cherishes it as another spatial edifice commemorating the lost souls in the Atlantic slave trade in the past and her own lost identity in the present and focuses on the stratigraphic juxtaposition of "the rampart" with the hinterland – "a wild, uninhabitable realm" (Hartman 220). She further comments, "[the rampart] separated the homestead and the bush and demarcated the zones of tenuous safety and great peril. Strangers, bandits, and the raiders emerged from the bush" (Hartman 220).

Like Hartman's travel narrative, Phillips also creates a fictional village in "Heartland," where the villagers, unlike those in Hartman's story, cannot craft a safety zone against the captors, personified in the notorious Price character, nor do they have any protective ramparts. They obey Price and grant him his wishes in quiet submission. If Price wants a girl from the villagers, they simply give in to his will since they know any aggressive reaction to Price will be destructive. The linguist confirms that "any hostile act would almost certainly bring about the destruction of this village" (Phillips, "Heartland" 23). Phillips similarly created a fictional rampart, the walls of the Fort, in "Heartland." Unlike the protective rampart in Gwolu, the walls of the Fort veil the atrocities committed within as a space of, in Hartman's words, "a wild, uninhabitable realm" where "the ghosts, predatory spirits, and malevolent forces" inflict chaos (220). For Henri Lefebvre, "walls, enclosures and façades" describe both "a scene" and "an obscene area" where a crime has to stay hidden (36). The fictional walls of the Fort in "Heartland" and the real walls of the forts, castles and

garrisons on the African coast of the Atlantic veil the sight of the degradations, rapes, beatings, and murders of captives.

The Island of Gorée (see fig.



Figure 2. The Fort on the Island of Gorée, Senegal, 2012. (Photo by I. Murat Öner)

2) which stands a few miles off the coast of Dakar, Senegal, is rightfully one of UNESCO's world heritage sites. This image of what was once one of the busiest slave ports on the western coast of Africa carries an undeniable historical message. It is hard to imagine the horrors and atrocities of the Atlantic slave trade. Many fell captive to the tyrannical slave system while being torn from whatever they held dear, or worse, seeing their beloved ones torn apart.

The process of social deterritorialization de-socialized the social realm of Africa through the deprivation and dispossession of the local populace as a reversal process of what Lefebvre calls the socialization of an empty space as "a not-yet-social realm" (190). Lefebvre states that space is formed as a "lived experience [by] a social subject," and that space "is governed by determinants which may be practical (work, play) or bio-social (young people, children, women, active people) in character" (190). Thus, the desolation of the African hinterland in Phillips's "Heartland" and Hartman's Lose Your Mother signifies the catastrophic transformation that the society experienced. Lefebvre indicates: "whenever a society undergoes a transformation, the materials used in the

process derive from another, historically (or developmentally) anterior social practice" (190). The social practice in this case is the process of social deterritorialization.

In the Atlantic slave trade, the presence of fifty forts, castles, and slave pens in Africa enabled the transaction to run smoothly; after being captured with the help of collaborators, captives had to face a long and dangerous journey to the coast to meet their fate in all forms of enslaving machines: "dungeons, prisons, and slave pens [and] tight dark cells buried underground, barred cavernous cells, narrow cylindrical cells, dank cells, makeshift cells" (Hartman 36). Phillips, in his travelogue The Atlantic Sound (2000), has spared a chapter to narrate the history of Elmina and the Elmina Castle, the biggest slave trading post in Ghana, and the construction process of this fort. He highlights how Elmina Castle provided an architectural blueprint and design for the social ordering of other trading posts on the western coast of Africa: "Organized along the lines of a feudal household, with the governor at the head, this community provided the model for other European trading outposts that were soon developed on the West African coast, although none were ever as large or as efficient as Elmina Castle" (Phillips, The Atlantic Sound 166). Elmina and all other outposts were crafted by the system and played an important role in generating many different forms of social spaces in the future lives of the captives. It is no wonder Hartman traces back her present dilemmas to a storehouse built by the Europeans centuries ago. Hartman's observation whilst visiting castles and forts such as Elmina, Cape Coast, and St. Jago also indicates how spaces of slavery were designed to manifest power and how elaborate the commodification process was:

> *The arched ceiling of the vault and the tubular shape of the connecting cells resembled a large intestine. Walking from one end of the dungeon to the other, I did feel as though the castle were ingesting me, as though I were itching my way along the entrails of power. The belly of the beast no longer seemed a figure of speech but rather a precise description of this place. What was it about eating that so aptly captured the dynamics of power? The gluttony of the ruling classes was proverbial. (112-13)*

As one of these European outposts, the House of Slaves (see fig.



Figure 3. The House of Slaves on the Island of Gorée, Senegal, 2012. (Photo by I. Murat Öner)

3), a slave trade heritage site on the Island of Gorée, Senegal, could take up to 200 slaves, and captives had to wait in the cells for up to three months with their hands and legs chained the entire time (Araujo 58-59). The House of Slaves on the Island of Gorée resembles a monster with open mouth intent on digesting human flesh, just as Hartman described the slave vaults in Ghana. Slaves almost always thought that they would be cannibalized; as the mouth represented power in the eyes of Africans; in war, Africans threatened their enemies with eating them (Hartman 112-13). At the far end of the slave house stands the gate of no return, after which slaves were "born."

Upon arrival at the outposts, captives were carefully separated and chained to others of different tribes and languages to prevent any occurrence of mutiny during the journey, which meant the destruction of a captive's social and linguistic belonging to a group (Smallwood 102-09; Rediker 212). The primary mission of the linguist in "Heartland" is to listen to the captives and reorganize them in linguistically heterogeneous groups. The severance of communication was indeed one of

the first steps in the social deterritorialization after capturing the captives. The linguist describes his mission:

> *My task is now simple: to help arrange the shackling of one man to another man of a different tribe and language or dialect, in order that difficulties of communication might further induce isolation and prevent the planning of communal rebellion. I must listen and act, and listen and report, and point out those who might destroy the imagined harmony of our commercial household. (Phillips, "Heartland" 57)*

The events in "Heartland" take place in and around the Fort, which functions as a cog in the machine of social deterritorialization. As other agents are incorporated into its complex mechanism, such as Price, Lewis, and the Governor as the outsiders, and the linguist and the Head Man as the local collaborators, the Fort starts functioning as a zone of social deterritorialization where both captors and captives are simultaneously dehumanized.

The linguist describes the social space of the Fort as "closed" and "unforgiving" (Phillips, "Heartland" 48), and "Heartland" portrays the physical and spiritual corrosion of the captors as well as the captives. In this closed and unforgiving multiplicity, the linguist observes a white boy called Lewis whom he loathes and pities at once. Lewis starts showing signs of physical deterioration from "a slender young man with features as yet unmarked by the coast" (17) to a boy who "smiles a gappy grin, a tooth having fallen out since the last time …" (49). In another case, he implies the harsh realities of this multiplicity, and suggests that "a governor who survives ten years without disease and with annual turn of profit has nothing further to prove; his immortality is guaranteed" (12). Sexual abuse of young soldiers by officers like Price is also a common occurrence (37). Torturing animals like lizards "is an occupation that helps the soldiers to pass time" (16-17). As for the captives who arrive after the expeditions, the ordeal is much worse. The slave bodies are destroyed under the "picturesque" "grandeur" of such places (Hartman 69). In the Fort, the men "relieve their sexual boredom in whatever base and private ways they can devise," and when the captives come to the Fort, they simply "pluck and plunder [female captives] until their disease-ridden bodies can neither take nor give any more" (Phillips, "Heartland" 30).

The system creates a parallel social ordering within the confines of the Fort, where normal codes of conduct are distorted, and a new set of rules are applied.



Figure 4. (JEUNES FILLES) The Cell for Young Girls, the House of Slaves. The Island of Gorée, Senegal, 2012. (Photo by I. Murat Öner)

This new social ordering is reflected in Price's statements when the linguist and Price bring the girl from the village. Price, confronted by the new Governor, says that they are "at the edge of the world" and "the rules that bind normal men have no place in this land" (Phillips, "Heartland" 31). This remark, from a geocritical viewpoint, is reminiscent of Hetherington's alternative reading of the Marquis de Sade's castle in One Hundred and Twenty Days of Sodom. Hetherington brings in a different aspect of Foucault's heterotopias and recognizes the social spaces in the abovementioned novel as "sites of alternate ordering" (39). He suggests that de Sade's castle is a good example of such a heterotopia, a site of alternate ordering initiated by "unlimited individual freedom, a freedom that pays no heed to moral sanctions over one's sexual conduct, a freedom that endlessly has to outdo itself in its severity and absolutism," and this freedom is carried out through controlling the victims (Hetherington 39). There exists a crucial relationship between de Sade's castle and Phillips's Fort. Both spaces offer absolute freedom from moral constraints for the perpetrators, while the victims endure emotional and psychological isolation as well as physical confinement. Hence, the real-and-imagined spaces of social deterritorialization in the Atlantic slave trade are indeed heterotopias where an alternate social ordering is carried out, and where the perpetrators feel unbound by any code of social conduct, unlike places of social order in a society.

After enduring different forms of social deterritorialization in the belly of the enslaving machines, such as garrisons, forts, slave pens and dungeons, the captive is discharged from this space (see fig.



Figure 5. The Gate of No Return, the House of Slaves and the Atlantic Ocean. The Island of Gorée, Senegal, 2012. (Photo by I. Murat Öner)

5) to face other machines of slavery for the remainder of his or her life. After the slave has passed the gate and is 'born,' he or she faces the other cog of the machine, the slave ship and ship hold, another transformative micro space in the Atlantic slave trade. Ships and ship holds, too, create a spatial anomaly in the process.

5. The Anomaly of the Floating Striation

Stephanie E. Smallwood points to the significance of shores in the commodification process: "The process began at the littoral, the border where the African landscape disappeared into the sea. It was here that captives came face to face with the market in human beings" (35). The sea shore is the natural borderline of the human habitat beyond which one has to use innovative skills to transgress. Michel Foucault therefore recognizes the invention of the ship as a utopian fulfillment which appeals to one's sense of dream and adventure (22).

Rediker writes that the slave trading system functioned in two forms on the coast. "Fort trade" was one of them, in which Europeans resided in the forts, captives would be brought to these outposts in coffles, and they would be segregated and imprisoned in the dungeons and slave holds until a slave ship would take them to their destination. The second form was called "boat trade," which was carried out in the waiting ships (Rediker 78). Once the ships were packed with slaves, they would start the journey notoriously known as the Middle Passage. The stench from these places was intolerable, so much so that it could be perceived as far as five miles off the coast (Hartman 53). Sailing sealed the first phase of the social deterritorialization and marked the second phase in the system, where quasi-existent slaves would meet their masters (Patterson 38).

The slave ship has a specific spatial body unlike any other enslaving machine; Foucault considers the ship a "heterotopia par excellence" and "a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is self-enclosed and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea" (22). The confined structure of the ship carried its alternate codes of social conduct like slave forts and outposts. Yet, unlike forts and castles, the slave ship ensured the absolute severance of the

captive's attachment to his motherland and the remaining hopes to return to it one day. Deleuze and Guattari recognize the sea as "a smooth space par excellence" (479).

Deleuzoguattarian striating can be detected on two levels in the space of slave ships, one of which comes in physical structures, such as the segmented parts of the hold, chains, bars, and shackles, in short, the divisive space of the hold; the second level of striation, as a post-product of the whole process of enslaving machines, comes in the form of socio-spatiality; the captives are segregated in terms of their tribe, language and gender. However, the space of the ship as a mobile body on a smooth space manifests paradoxical features in that the state apparatus coerces striation in all levels of existence and requires immobility, as we can also see in slavery and the striation of the ship's hold. However, as Bonta and Protevi postulate that mobility "pose[s] grave threats to striated space" (154), it may then be assumed that the slave ship's mobility, as a striated space, is justified by its operation as an instrument of continuous striation, control, and immobility for the slaves. The linguist confirms this, saying, "[t]he yoking together is over" after the Middle Passage in the belly of the beast (Phillips, "Heartland" 60). The ship's physical body also contains "subterranean spaces" wherein "death" in physical, social and psychological forms co-exists (Lefebvre 236). Rediker speaks of a female captive who, when forced into the confined hold below the deck of a slave ship, senses death: "As she descended the rungs of a ladder into the lower deck, a horrific stench assaulted her nostrils and suddenly made her dizzy, weak, queasy. She knew it as the smell of awawo, death" (4).

Ships and ship holds as anomalous micro spaces are associated with the notion of death in "Heartland," too. In the story, we hear the linguist's narrative voice as he travels to the new continent, now a new victim of the system on the trading ship, and his hysterical words are an echo of his imminent departure from his land and the disruption of his hopes and dreams in the form of death: "My life is ended. ('Yours for life, for your son's life, and your son's sons's life') I am now resigned to the permanence of our separation. Neither my long-forgotten wife, nor my disregarded son, discovered a way to minister to my cold heart" (Phillips, "Heartland" 60).

6. Conclusion

Phillips's "Heartland" offers a fictional representation of the mechanics of the Atlantic slave trade. The trade itself comprised multiple dehumanizing machines and micro spaces such as slave outposts, ships, and ship hold as crucial cogs of the process. The paper aimed to explicate how these real-and-fictional micro spaces were anomalies and created anomalous experiences for the victims as well as the perpetrators. The linguist, for instance, became an anomalous cog and fell victim to this system at the end of the story. The paper also attempted to portray how the process of social deterritorialization in the Atlantic slave trade eradicated all beacons of belonging, leaving the victims and perpetrators as anomalous strangers. The paper attempted to bring the diverse perspectives in the analysis into a conversation since a "multifocal dynamic" necessitates "a multiplicity of heterogeneous points of view" (Westphal 122).

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[1] I prefer to call this nameless character 'the linguist,' as he refers to his replacement at the end of the story as the new linguist: "Price stands with the new 'linguist,' a young man who barks orders at us in our language and then turns and converses with them in theirs. I pity him" (Phillips, "Heartland" 59).

[2] Benedicte Ledent states that "(un)naming [in "Heartland"] is a sign of primary displacement … through absence" (57).



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