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Cognitive Mapping and Class Consciousness: A Comparative Analysis of Saba Imtiaz's *Karachi, You're Killing Me!* and Kamila Shamsie's *Kartography*

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ABSTRACT

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This research explores the concept of cognitive mapping and underlines the challenge of class consciousness and its effects on the mental maps. Nuanced with subjective mappings, literature lacks comprehensive depictions of lived and navigated space. This study examines two Pakistani novels, Saba Imtiaz's *Karachi, You're Killing Me!* and Kamila Shamsie's *Kartography*, by using the theoretical framework of cognitive mapping proposed by Frederick Jameson. The comparative analysis reveals the subjective implications of the protagonists' social statuses in both texts. It highlights how different class structures map the same space and location in accordance with their respective social contexts. It also analyses the subjectivity of the depictions and the erroneous nature of city maps depicted in literary works in a way that not every faction of the society can relate to it.

Keywords*: Literary Cartography, Cognitive Mapping, Class Consciousness,* two-dimensional maps, representation

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> *Maps weren't about going from point A to point B; they were about helping someone hear the heartbeat of a place… 'Seems to me like we're Strabo and Eratosthenes. I want to pay attention to the stories that define Karachi, and you want to know what the name of the road connecting Gizri to Zamzama is…*' (Shamsie, *Kartography*, p. 107)

Literary cartography delineates the transcending boundaries of geographical and topographical representations of maps in the works of literature (Tally Jr., 1996, p. 2). These blurring boundaries of what were conceived to be separate fields of study have effectively seeped into Literature. Pakistani writers embraced this spatial turn and incorporated in their fiction the concept of cognitive mapping, i.e. visual representation of a place and space as opposed to mere physical representations. As described by Lynch (1960), the "legibility" of any space is dependent upon its ability to form a "mental image" (p. 9). Herzog and Leverich (2003) have elaborated upon this legibility as the characteristics of space that help form mental images and, thus, metaphoric mapping, the "cognitive mapping", comes into play to help delve into spatial representations (p. 459). To map a place in the mind of the reader, visual representations and mental diagrams are important. Yet cognitive mapping posits challenges defined by Jameson (1992), as the "dilemma of representation itself" (pp. 188-89). Tally Jr. (1996) elaborates upon the dilemma highlighted by Jameson by underlining the fact that social totality is not representable (p. 9).

This study aims at examining problematic depictions of locations inhabited and space traversed by various class structures and highlighting the need for a more objective visual portrayal of cities in literary works. To help meet the objectives, the study answers two questions: What immediate repercussions does the social status of the protagonists in *Karachi, You're Killing Me!* and *Kartography* have on the representation of Karachi? How do the mental maps of these characters demonstrate the necessity of an objective representation of the city?

Most contemporary writers exploring literary cartography as a genre help surface pertinent issues related to representations of masses. Thus, Cartography has become a voice for the misrepresented and suppressed. Pakistani literature explores the effects of physical demarcations of boundaries and the traumas associated with them. Authors like Sidhwa, Singh, and Ali, among others, write about independence and how the new borders alter lives. Nonetheless, some, like Shamsie, examine Cartography from a unique angle. Her 2002 novel *Kartography* not only examines the hardship of East-Pakistani women, but also the inability of citizens to map areas and people outside their own social circles. Imtiaz adopts a new perspective by discussing the spaces inhabited and the locations travelled using subjective cognitive mapping. Her 1995 novel, *Karachi, You're Killing Me*!, is probably not intended to be a cartographic novel, it, nevertheless, maps Karachi through the

protagonist's experiences without considering the physical and geographical boundaries of cartography. Analysing Imtiaz's spatial text through the lens of cognitive mapping in literary cartography, along with Shamsie's *Kartography*, helps in highlighting how the same territory can be mapped differently.

According to Jameson in *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991), cognitive mapping holds an "oxymoronic value" (p. 416) as it is suspended between "situational representation", "abstract conceptions of the geographic totality", and/or "supra individual totality of class structures" (pp. 51-52). Owing to the definition provided by Jameson, the visual maps are deemed to be faulty because they do not provide a holistic image. While the concept of cognitive mapping and the ambiguities it presents as a metaphor to be read as a concrete theoretical framework are still the subject of debate and evolution, the complexity it offers flourishes in literary works, particularly in Pakistani fiction. It would be instructive to explain the controlling terms that regulate the scope of this study. Some of those terms are 'literary cartography,' 'cognitive mapping,' and 'class-consciousness' expounded in the forthcoming three paragraphs. That helps contextualise this study.

Literary cartography differs from literary geography in that the latter is a vast field of study while the former is a sub-discipline that focuses solely on literary texts. According to Piatti (2009), literary cartography is "able to provide one possible method, more precisely, tools in order to explore and analyse the particular geography of literature" (p. 3). Therefore, it functions more as an analytical lens for discourses. This concept provides background for research done in this paper and offers the groundwork for extending the actual mapping of literature to a more sophisticated cognitive mapping.

Cognitive mapping is defined as mental representations and codes of numerous categories that assist in the decoding of any environment or location in literature. Rossetto (2013) defines maps as "continually remade every time someone engages with them" (p. 32). This, in turn, confirms the idea that cognitive maps, unlike cartographic physical maps, are "always in motion" (Hommel and Klippel, p. 5). Thus, Caquard (2014) embraces cognitive mapping as a metaphor (p. 1). This metaphor must be recognised as one that differs from individual to individual.

Class consciousness, which has its origins in Marxist philosophy, can be characterised as self-awareness as a member of a social structure. De-Felipe-Redondo (2015) defines class consciousness as a "sense of class belonging that adopts different shapes in specific times and places" (p. 739). Owing to the stratification of society, Jameson (1992) has highlighted the dilemma of the representation of social totality (p. 189). Class consciousness underlines this dilemma in terms of representation where one class is unable to represent another.

The three terms discussed above may be properly appropriated by coming back to the argument of the essay. Representations of cities appear to be affected by subjective perceptions of spaces inhabited, leaving segments of society underrepresented or othered within their own community. Fiction about cities creates images in the imaginations of readers that appear comprehensive but are subjective to the protagonists' social surroundings. Consequently, this study emphasizes the necessity of a comprehensive, all-encompassing geographical and physical description of the city under investigation, regardless of the social positions of individuals. This study helps highlight how cognitive mapping in contemporary novels such as *Karachi, You're Killing Me!* and *Kartography* is not a complete representation of Karachi. Thus, like its parent framework of literary cartography, it is lacking as far as holistic representation is concerned. This study helps underline the need of including characters belonging to different factions of the society within one text in a way that they cognitively map the same geographical space. Thus, they present a more holistic view of places navigated.

This research adheres to the interpretivist ideology, adopts an inductive method, and employs qualitative research techniques for analysis. The two novels, *Karachi, You're Killing Me!* and *Kartography* have been selected for a comparative analysis. An in-depth study of the texts delineates the differences and similarities between the two. As this study delves into the theoretical notion of cognitive mapping derived from literary cartography and class consciousness derived from Marxism, Frederick Jameson's concept of cognitive mapping serves as the theoretical foundation. Jameson (1991), building upon Lynch's concept of legibility and Althusser's ideology, has defined cognitive mapping a concept that "can now be categorized as something of a synthesis between Althusser and Kevin Lynch" (p. 415). In his essay "Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," Jameson (1991) notes how cognitive mapping is "a code for [a new kind of] class consciousness" (p. 418). Thus, development and resolution of how class consciousness mentally maps the protagonists of both novels has been analysed. The controlling investigation terms have been addressed in a sequential manner and the arguments are supported by textual evidence from both texts. The study limits itself to exploring the effects of the social standings of protagonists of *Karachi, You're Killing Me!* and *Kartography* in terms of their mental maps of Karachi. The study has restricted itself to exploring the cognitive maps only as a direct ramification of class consciousness and, hence, ignoring all other factors that help shape mental maps. This study does not delve in a Marxist analysis and is limited to a comparative literary analysis of the protagonists of two different novels traversing the same city. A quick review of the existing scholarship in the same area is in order. It would be useful in finding out gaps and vindicating how this study nuances it.

While there is no dearth of material available related to topographical locations being cognitively mapped for a more comprehensive understanding of space, the misrepresentation of geographical space owing to Jameson's cognitive mapping of "supra individual class structures" is witnessed time and again in works of literature which, in turn, ushers the need for delving deep into notions of cognitive mapping and the physical maps it draws in the minds of the readers (Jameson 1991, p. 52).

In her essay, *Literary Geography* (1986), Virginia Woolf stated that "A writer's country is a territory within his own brain; and we run the risk of disillusionment if we try to turn such phantom cities into tangible brick and mortar . . . to insist that [a writer's city] has any counterpart in the cities of the Earth is to rob it half of its charm [. . .]" (p. 35). Even though what Woolf says is true till date, and all cities are cognitively mapped by the author's own subjective experiences, literature itself seems to deny this and follows what is known as the Joyce-line as far as literary cartography is concerned. Joyce disagreed with Woolf by stating that, "I want to give a picture of Dublin so complete that if the city one day suddenly disappeared from the Earth it could be reconstructed out of my book" (Budgen 1960, pp. 67-68). Thus, the fact that Joyce believed that a picture so complete can be put in words, became the Joyce-line of fiction representing cities. What went amiss though and created room for this study is the fact that whoever painted that *picture so complete* painted it only as he/she viewed the city himself/herself. The representations are tainted with subjective experiences and, thus, the *picture so complete* was in fact, quite incomplete.

Moreover, mapping the indigenous to hegemonize them has been the colonizers' practice for centuries, therefore, to term Cartography as a new field of study would be incorrect (Beimers 2022, p. 2). Maps and literature have a long history, yet what is new in this postcolonial, postmodern era is the renewed interest in their relation after the "spatialization" of literature and the "humanistic turn" Cartography has taken (Monmonier 2007, p. 371). Cognitive mapping seeped formally in literature in the 1960s when Lynch published his book, *The Image of The City* which examined the relationships of the city dwellers with the elements of the physical city. This cognitive mapping is the drawing of subjective information on top of physical maps. What this study explores is a more critical approach to mental mapping as a metaphor where the visual representation and subjective stories taint holistic pictures of a place.

Shamsie's novel, *Burnt Shadows* is one example of cartographic digression, where cognitive mapping comes into play. In their article on Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows,* Hashmat and Nadeem explore how the power structures hegemonize mental cartographies which in turn enables individuals to "give a return gaze, to

revamp the hegemonic cartographic discourse" (Hashmat and Nadeem 2015, p. 1118). In a book review of *Kartography*, Byrne (2004) theorized that the making of maps is not just an objective representation of different places and the physical distances between them (p. 1). Rather it involves how different places have very different meanings and associations to different people. This helps delineate how not only cognitive mapping is essential in the meaning-making process of city maps, but also these mental maps are subjective in nature. Because mapping their existence may not correspond with a nation's political map, Biswas and Tripathi debate the way female protagonists in *Kartography* create cartography based on their narratives of struggle. They explicate how mental diagrams differ based on ethnicities of individuals (Biwas and Tripathi 2020, p. 937, our paraphrase). It is important to highlight that even though Shamsie's novel has been explored through the lens of cognitive mapping, this study lays emphasis on how this cognitive mapping is informed by the social standings of the characters irrespective of their ethnicity. Furthermore, this essay investigates how class structures define mental maps.

While scrutinizing works relevant to this conceptual framework, it is important to note how the world of literary cartography is not oblivious to class consciousness shaping the mental maps of texts being explored. In his call for papers, David Racker explicitly states "different kinds of consciousness (class, race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality, religion) as a response to wider cultural or ideological representations" through cognitive mapping (Racker 2018, p. 1). What sets this study apart is the fact that the fictional works chosen for this study are yet to be analysed through this conceptual framework. According to Jameson (1991), there can be "no true maps" mapped geographically or cognitively (p. 74). He further elaborates how the Althusserian ideology allows the mental mapping of geographic places nuanced with the individuals' "social relationship to local, national and international class realities" (p. 75).

Literary cartography

Shamsie's *Kartography* is a novel replete with the notion of literary cartography in its truest essence. Not only does it map the physical and topographical locations of Karachi and its suburbs, but it has also been cognitively mapped by various characters that are part of the novel. Raheen and Karim, the two protagonists of the novel, belong to the elite class of society and, even in turbulent times, times of war and partition, they receive protection which many cannot even dream of. Outwardly, the novel is about the partition of East and West Pakistan and the *othering* of East Pakistanis by the West Pakistanis, yet an in-depth reading allows the novel to be analyzed with various lenses, Literary Cartography being one. *Karachi, You're Killing Me!*, on the other hand, is a novel that goes deeply in the

world of the protagonist, Ayesha. Belonging to the middle class and living on her wages, she cognitively maps Karachi and its streets as she views it. Being a journalist, she is a "city walker" and traverses places that most *Karachiites* do not (Kula 2018, p. 1). Her lack of luxurious provisions is highlighted time and again by her own words and, thus, *taints* her experiences with a subjectivity the middle class offers to her.

This research attempts a comparison of the experiences of the two female protagonists occasionally incorporating the cognitive mappings of other characters. Although the contexts of these two novels are poles apart, the trajectories of the protagonists are common in the sense that both Raheen and Ayesha cognitively map Karachi. Structurally, the two texts have nothing in common: where *Kartography* is based on two generations and their experiences decades apart, *Karachi, You're Killing Me!* revolves around a single eligible girl in search of a better job opportunities and a life partner. What is common in both texts, though, is the fact that the city, Karachi, where the action takes place, is the same. It is in this city that people from different walks of life are brought together in the texts seeking better life opportunities and hoping for brighter futures.

One parallel between the two novels, as far as the structure is concerned is the title of both works. *Kartography* is a title is suggestive in nature of place and space. Its variant spelling, *K* instead of *C*, connotes that the city being mapped is Karachi. On the other hand, *Karachi, You're Killing Me!* incorporates the name of the city being mapped in the title leaving no room for confusion of the place that is to be discussed. Moreover, this incorporation of the city name, in a manner ("You're Killing Me!") that the readers know, shows that the ills of the place will be brought into limelight. Thus, both titles are suggestive in nature. Where the first suggests the topographical location and mapping of the city, the latter relates the problems that prevail in the city.

Two-dimensional maps

Kartography, highlights the dilemma of a two-dimensional representation of a place on a map. Jameson (1991), while defining cognitive mapping as a synthesis of Lynch's city and Althusser's ideology, places visual mapping as a postmodern concept. Nonetheless Jameson probes the historic contexts of cartography to demonstrate that the images and maps defined in Lynch's definition of cognitive mapping are "diagrams organized around still subject-centered or existential journey of the traveler, along which various significant key features are marked" (pp. 51-52). This is problematic for him because Lynch brings into play the "coastal features" which were "noted for Mediterranean navigators who rarely ventured out into the open sea" (p. 52). Karim, Raheen's childhood friend and later lover, views

the town as an entity that can be mapped in two dimensions on a flat paper. For Karim, the cognitive map is much like what Lynch defined. He needs visible markers and key features more than stories lived. Raheen, on the other hand, believes maps are *soulless* and that places are known by lived experiences, stories linked, and people associated. For every place, there is a mental map that pours life in it or makes it bizarre. The novel unfolds as a dialogue between Raheen and Karim to explicate the two poles of mapping, lived experiences versus mapped grids.

Karachi, You're Killing Me! is a novel that explores the life of a modern metropolis in detail, with no explicit reference to cartography. The fact that the city has been cognitively mapped by Ayesha much like Raheen does it cannot be ignored. In his paper on Jameson's cognitive mapping, Tally Jr. (1996) explains that Althusser's ideology is the foundational concept with which Jameson contextualises cognitive mapping (p. 402). Tally Jr. goes on to explain how Jameson makes use of the basis of Althusser's subject representing his/her imaginary relationship to the real living conditions. That is "precisely what, in theory, the individual in the city is attempting to do when engaged in cognitive mapping" (p. 403). It can be noted in Imtiaz's novel that Ayesha's Karachi is a city full of stories, people and lived experiences. The only topographical representations come in the form of travel from one place to another and Ayesha's use of two dimensional google maps to get to a particular location. What she brings into play is her *imaginary relationship with her real living conditions.*

It is important to note the fact that even though the protagonists of both fictional texts present Karachi in a holistic manner instead of a two-dimensional map, both map it visually in an entirely subjective manner and, thus, in distinct ways. This difference has been analyzed in the current study as the difference of the social standings of the protagonists and can be understood by reflecting upon Jameson's (1991) definition of cognitive mapping. He elucidates that mental maps are "code words for class consciousness" (p. 418). Raheen belongs to a privileged faction of society whereas Ayesha is the mouthpiece of middle class. Karachi is love, is life for Raheen, and she resolves to letting go of the man she loves because she cannot agree to Karim's terms of not returning to Karachi. On the other hand, for Ayesha, Karachi is a "wasteland", a place that could bring her nothing good (Imtiaz 2014, p. 16). She further thinks that Karachi is a place where life and love come to die. It has nothing" (Imtiaz 2014, p. 139). Where Raheen longs to tread streets in Karachi and re-live her stories when living in the US, Ayesha is overjoyed to leave Karachi and goes around malls and streets in Dubai more happily than she ever did in Karachi.

The city enhanced or the city collapsed

Kartography presents subtle violent incidents that were becoming frequent in Karachi and how, the *City of Lights* was becoming a *City of Death and horror*. The narrative spans decades within the novel and focuses on two generations who have always lived in fear. The parents feared the spread of violence due to the partition of East and West Pakistan. The children fear the spread of violence due to increased number of dacoits, mugging, killings and lack of law and order due to political instability. Yet, for Raheen, Karachi is a city that she knew on her fingertips. It was bubbling with life. It held her childhood memories. It was *mapped* in her mind, much like Joyce's Dublin. It was her world, "[. . .] that in Karachi I felt my world was perfect" (Shamsie 2004, p. 68). Raheen provides a living model of what Jameson synthesizes from Althusser's ideology with Lynch's city to define cognitive mapping. She lives on with her "imaginary relationship" to the place she loved irrespective of the "real conditions of existence" (Tally Jr. 1996, p. 5).

Karachi, You're Killing Me! is replete with the ills that prevail in the society. *The City of Lights* has turned into a *City of Horrors*. The crime rate knows no bounds. Being mugged is as easy drinking water. Bomb blasts and rapes are common and, unlike Raheen, Ayesha is *sick* of Karachi. Where Raheen could not wait to get back to Karachi from the US, "[. . .] and I would head home to Karachi." (Shamsie 2004, p. 69), Ayesha wants an escape from the metropolis for good "[. . .] to getting the hell out of Karachi" (Imtiaz 2014, p. 15). This love-hate relationship that the two protagonists have with the city is, in fact, due to their subjective experiences in the city. When Jameson states that cognitive mapping is nothing more than a "new code" for "class consciousness", he highlights how mental diagrams are nuanced with the social reality of the character(s) (Jameson 1991, 430).

In the fiction selected for this study, the cognitive coding comes into play. Raheen belongs to the elite class and much of her lived experiences and memories are what her social standing in society has offered her. For her, Karachi is where people indulged in parties: "It wasn't a particularly large party, as Karachi parties go. Fifty people [. . .]" (Shamsie 2004, p. 44). There was always an elite on the move: "But, really, for Karachi high society, winter is all about envelopes" (Shamsie 2004, p. 42). Gossips, drinking, fun and it would be over, "[. . .] just as summer was ending, Karachi's evenings began to invite festivities again." (Shamsie 2004, p. 35). She never walked in Karachi:

> Too dangerous to walk around, and too humid to want to walk most of the time. Besides, walk to where? Life compressed into houses and cars and private clubs and school and gardens too small to properly hide in. (Shamsie 2004, p.20)

Raheen rolled around in cars, studied in the best of schools, never faced problems regarding pocket money: "[. . .] after school and after parties, scrounging through one another's purses and wallets to spend money on meals [. . .] " (Shamsie 2004, 1p. 79). She went abroad to complete her higher education and, thus, lived her life in the most comfortable of manners. Thus, for Raheen, Karachi was life. The visual mapping of Karachi that Shamsie has brought forth in the text has much to do with the character's elite lifestyle. Not walking around, using private cars, attending parties, enjoying gossiping, long drives, all without fear of money and hunger made Raheen map her city as she viewed it. Here, Raheen can be seen as the embodiment of what Jameson meant by synthesizing Althusser's ideology with Lynch's visible markers in his cognitive mapping: bringing into the story her relationship with her living conditions.

In contrast, Ayesha is no parallel of Raheen. Her relationship with her "social space" and how she lives as an individual mapping her "class realities" helps surface the struggles of a middle-class girl in a metropolis (Jameson 1991, p. 74). She has to face every possible struggle in her life to get along which Raheen had not faced. Ayesha belongs to middle class and even though she is a working woman, she is perpetually impoverished. One because her boss never pays her on time and two, she does not belong to a rich family:

> 'Really, Ayesha?' Kamran said, when I asked him last week about payday. 'You of all people shouldn't complain. After all, you don't have to pay rent or repay any debts. And how can you not have any money'? (Imtiaz 2014, p. 50)

The social milieu

The one persisting problem in Ayesha's life is her social standing. Her mental diagrams are encoded with the actuality of her class as Jameson put it. She hates attending parties because the elite would look down upon her, "And you Ayesha, so interesting looking in that jumpsuit!" (Imtiaz 2014, p. 13). For her, Karachi is full of snobs who love to look down upon others. In a similar vein, Raheen's mental maps encode the class reality she encounters and exemplifies Jameson's definition of cognitive coding. The snobs among whom Raheen has spent a lifetime, enjoying, and gossiping, are bothersome for Ayesha. The parties Raheen enjoys, are a source of embarrassment, a source of displeasure for Ayesha. Ayesha's experience with her rich boyfriend is the same. When she visits Hasan's home, his mother meets Ayesha with a cold aura about her and makes sure her son breaks up with her: "Actually, I took a rickshaw, I said, 'I don't have a car. She shot Hasan a look [. . .]" (Imtiaz 2014, p. 31). Ayesha further narrates: "Hasan sent me a text message later that night: 'I think we should break-up'" (Imtiaz 2014, p. 31). Unlike Raheen, Ayesha walks on streets: "As if we've committed some sort of crime walking instead of rolling around

in an SUV" (Imtiaz 2014, p. 26), and uses local transport to travel around because she does not own a car. The same Karachi that is exquisite for Raheen is disagreeable for Ayesha due to her subjective experiences in the city. Karachi is mapped as "hell" in Ayesha's life (Imtiaz 2014, p. 15). Right from the start to the end, Ayesha expresses her dislike for the city.

It may be noted that the Karachi presented by the characters in the selected novels is the Karachi they have lived and traversed personally and that their personal experience is defined by their own social standing. Tally Jr. (1996) reiterates Jameson's concerns on social totality by elucidating how the "real" will always "remain absent" due to the inadequacy in social representation (p. 9). Tally Jr. further elucidates how mapping the subalterns is also impossible because they resist representation (p. 407). When Raheen is stuck in a slum area with Karim and Zia, she feels scared because she thinks the people there are scary. She is oblivious to the existence of such an area in *her Karachi.* For her, that area of Karachi never existed and was a zone full of darkness lurking:

> I caught Zia's sleeve, my eyes begging *Let's get out of here.* The man caught my look. 'Why are you afraid of me? I have sisters. I'm not one of those uncivilized men. But I get frustrated. Don't you? You live in this city, after all.' (Shamsie 2004, p. 105)

It is this mention of *living* that is of utmost importance to this study. Raheen *did live* in Karachi but her class, her elite circle, had left her completely unaware of other factions of society. Thus, it is not only that the subalterns "resisted representation", as noted earlier, but also the fact that Raheen does not know they ever existed. Her bubbling life is so full of herself in her circle of friends and outings and parties that she is completely oblivious to the *Karachi* this [subaltern] man was referring to. Raheen is compelled to think that, for her, ethnicity is the last priority. Moreover, she is grateful that *her Karachi* is not *this Karachi.*

> There was nothing I could say to this man without it being condescension or a lie. Privilege erased the day-to-day struggles of ethnic politics, and however Karim might want me to feel about the matter I couldn't pretend I was sorry that I had been born on 'this side of Clifton Bridge' where class bound everyone together in an enveloping, suffocating embrace, with ethnicity only a secondary or even tertiary concern." (Shamsie 2004, p. 105)

Ayesha felt a similar fear when she walks around the slum areas, yet her fear is more of disgust than of unknown. She is a journalist by profession and has been to various areas of the city including railway stations and police stations. In contrast to Raheen, Ayesha is not oblivious to the slums that exist in Karachi. What

upsets Ayesha is not the fear of the unknown that might surround her in the underprivileged area of the city, but the dirt and lack of proper living conditions:

> I start walking through the narrow lane, lifting my dupatta to avoid it touching an overflowing gutter. . . . After about thirty minutes, I finally find one, promise the driver five hundred rupees if he can get me back to civilization and run into the office. (Imtiaz 2014, pp. 97-98)

This lack of knowledge on part of Raheen and the ease of the existence of such parts of city for Ayesha may be noticed as the direct ramifications of their social standings. Raheen belongs to a society that moves around in the elite areas of the city. Ayesha belongs to a middle-class society and even though she doesn't live in such areas, she is not oblivious to their existence. Moreover, her profession lets her know the city better. Ayesha works only due to financial constraints which once again highlights how the social standing of a character brings about different views about the same place. Raheen knows the city as love, as life. Ayesha knows the city as bread and butter. Raheen has no knowledge of slums and subalterns thriving there. Ayesha detests them in the hope of elevating her own social status.

For Ayesha, Karachi is not a place to spend her life in and, thus, whenever she walks the streets of Karachi, her actions and reactions show how much she wants to get out of the city. Time and again in the novel, Ayesha applies for jobs abroad. She wants to work with a foreign company not only to earn more but to have a chance to move out of Karachi. Her desire of leaving Karachi is such that even the boy she starts dating after breaking up with Hassan is a foreigner. Raheen, on the other hand, is offered jobs in the US, proposed in the US, yet she chooses to return to her haven, Karachi:

> I put my arm around her and thought of all my friends who weren't planning to return to Karachi after university. Zia was still trying to convince me that I, too, should stay in America. He had even called up one of his father's contacts who worked in a travel agency in New York and got him to agree to hire me. He meant well, so I didn't tell him it was the kind of thing his father would have done. (Shamsie 2004, p. 176)

Cognitive coding

When Raheen reads the physical map of Karachi, it may be noted that the two-dimensional representation of space inhabited by the protagonist is devoid of what Karachi means to her. Raheen's plight explicates what Jameson means when he relates about the "dilemma of the transfer of curved space to flat charts" (Shamsie 2004, 52). Tally Jr. (1991) further dwells upon Jameson's idea and says that there could no longer be "true maps" (p. 404). The stories, the lived experiences, the visual mapping is all amiss:

> On one side was a map of Karachi. A useless, partial map of Karachi, which I had brought with me to America to see if it would bring me any kind of comfort, any kind of pain, on the days when I was most homesick. The answer to that question I quickly found was no, and no again. (Shamsie 2004, p. 78)

Tally Jr. (1991), notes in his seminal work how Jameson defined cognitive mapping as a "crisis in representability" which, for Jameson, must be done by "comprehending and mapping the social totality" (p. 407). Tally Jr. has questioned this totality in representation. He does so because representation is in conundrums of who is representing who and who is being represented by whom. In the extract discussed above, Shamsie makes Raheen, an elite mouthpiece to represent the slums. The man Raheen is afraid of in the slums has a different world view. Similarly, when Ayesha represents the streets of Karachi owing to her own subjective experiences, the *social totality in representation*, that Jameson expects, is lost. Raheen's cribbing time and again about the two-dimensional representations in *Kartography* is not only problematic in the making of a grid map, but also problematic because it lacks totality in representation. Even if Raheen brings to life her lived experiences and Ayesha delineates stories of places traversed by her, the totality is amiss. This is because totality needs to be objective. The totality brought in works of literature is subjective to the characters. Thus, a holistic picture of place, Karachi in this case, has not been found in either of the texts being discussed:

> Streets leading to other streets, streets named, areas defined, places of interest clearly marked out. This map was Karachi's opposite. It could only exist through its disdain for the reality of the city: the jumble, the illogic, the self-definition, the quicksilver of the place. As usual, the map did nothing but irritate me. (Shamsie 2004, p. 79)

Cognitive mapping adds life and meaning to the place inhabited. No logic can be made for the citizens who have spent their entire lives in a place without visual representations. Where street names are bizarre, and roundabouts are known by memories made. Where distances are counted in minutes from one acquaintances house to another's and directions are given not by maps but by words of mouth: "[G]o straight straight straight straight straight and turn right [. . .]" (Shamsie 2004, p. 99). Raheen finds no solace in the printed maps. The printed names of streets and more streets make her sick. The Karachi she knows was the Karachi she had lived in. For her there are no names, only visuals and memories associated to places. Ayesha, on the contrary, does not like the place she lives in, and her city gives her little good memories. Her social standing does not let life be as comfortable as it is for Raheen. For Ayesha, the stories are sad and bad. Her experiences do not make her nostalgic. To move out and around, she is at ease using

the two-dimensional maps because her maps lack stories, "Google map reassures me that we're on the right path" (Imtiaz 2014, p. 112). Yet this ease is filled with fear of being mugged and raped:

> [A]s we drive on dirt roads through fields that I can't even focus on because I'm so scared. I wrap my dupatta tightly around myself and run through curse words in my head. . . . I am convinced this is how I am going to die. He is going to rape me and leave me for dead [. . .]. (Imtiaz 2014, p. 113)

This fear that Ayesha lives with is quite contrary to what Raheen feels when she is on the roads of Karachi: "There was no one else at the beach. All mine" (Shamsie 2004, p. 136).

Here, having delved deep in the sample texts, it has been noted that the picture of Karachi painted by Raheen and Ayesha is poles apart because they have not been able to let go of the Joyce-line. The representation of *their city* is tainted by *their own subjective experiences* and, therefore, they have not been able to bring forth *a Karachi* holistically represented irrespective of their own social standings. Even when Karim suggests to Raheen that they will make an interactive map where people will have stories to tell about the streets named on the maps, what concerns this paper is the totality in representation which is hard to achieve.

> You start with a basic street map, OK, but everywhere there are links. Click here you get sound files of Karachiites telling stories of what it's like to live in different parts of the town. Click there, you get a visual of any particular street. (Shamsie 2004, p. 191)

On the face, it seems that an interactive map might be the solution to a holistic representation of the city mapped. Yet, delving deep, it is known that not every story can be voiced and not every experience mapped. After analysing the selected novels, *Kartography* and *Karachi, You're Killing Me!*, this study has found a gap where cognitive mapping had not been explored as direct consequences of class awareness. The study reveals how social standings imbricate the brain maps of individuals in the examined texts and, thus, showcase solely subjective opinions. The wholeness in representations that Jameson's cognitive mapping emphasizes is missing in the fiction discussed.

Even though the study reaches non-generalizable conclusions of representations, it spells out the need for more objective representations shunning the legacy of controlled portrayal of territories. The concept of class consciousness has been examined as one that is internalised at birth time and focuses on the actions and perceptions of the protagonists who have different perspectives on the same geographical location. This research proposes the combination of such social stratification inside a single text to map a location and assist the reader in achieving

a more objective perspective of cities cognitively. Characters belonging to various factions of the society who cognitively map the same location within the same text may aid in presenting a holistic portrayal of locales inhabited and space travelled for the global community.

Notes

[1] *Disgrace* was originally published in 1999. However, we have used the 2000 edition for our analysis and citation across this paper.

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