



Narrative Space, Place, and Belonging in Contemporary World Literature: A Literary-Cultural Analysis

Oringali eva Nurjayna Orazgalievna^{1*}, Yekti Handayani², Mahfud Heru Fatoni^{3*}

¹ Karakalpak State University, Uzbekistan

²⁻³ Institut Islam Mamba'ul 'Ulum Surakarta, Indonesia

email: mahfudz75@gmail.com³

Article Info :

Received:
20-07-2026
Revised:
08-08-2026
Accepted:
14-08-2026

Abstract

*This study examines how contemporary world literature transforms geographic locations into narrative environments and how spatial configurations shape mobility, belonging, memory, and institutional recognition. A comparative literary-cultural design was applied to ten novels published or circulated in English between 2000 and 2021, comprising seven transnational works and three Indonesian novels: *Beauty Is a Wound*, *The Question of Red*, and *The Sea Speaks His Name*. Spatial episodes were systematically analyzed through four domains: narrative environment, mobility and bordering, home and affective attachment, and memory-place relations. The findings demonstrate that literary space operates not as a neutral setting but as a relational structure that regulates movement, access, safety, recognition, and historical visibility. Migrant, diasporic, and refugee narratives represent belonging as provisional and multi-scalar, while the Indonesian corpus foregrounds internal exile, political violence, disappearance, ecological memory, and historically layered places. Across the corpus, domestic, urban, border, workplace, detention, island, and maritime environments become contested spaces whose meanings emerge through interactions among mobility, institutional power, affective attachment, and memory. The comparison further demonstrates that translation relocates local spatial histories into world-literary circuits without eliminating their cultural specificity. The study proposes relational spatiality as a comparative model connecting narrative form, place, memory, mobility, and belonging across contemporary world literature.*

Keywords: *Belonging, Indonesian Literature, Narrative Space, Place, World Literature.*



©2026 Authors.. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 International License.
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

INTRODUCTION

The spatial turn in literary studies has displaced the assumption that setting is merely the container in which narrative action occurs, repositioning space as an active component of narrative organization through which material environments, social histories, cultural knowledge, and perspectival relations become structurally meaningful. Recent narratology instead treats space as an organized relation among these dimensions, with the concept of narrative environment providing a particularly productive distinction between culturally and historically constituted space and a self-sufficient setting (Puxan-Oliva, 2024). Comparable developments in literary geography have shifted attention from static locations toward itinerary, mapping, scale, and the processes through which literary texts transform geographical coordinates into culturally legible places (Bako, 2024). The spatial turn has consequently expanded the analytical vocabulary available for examining contemporary world literature, where migration, urban restructuring, environmental transformation, war, and forced displacement increasingly complicate the relationship between textual location and social experience. Spatiality is therefore not reducible to where events happen because narrative form determines how movement is organized, how thresholds are crossed or maintained, and how particular places become associated with memory, exclusion, intimacy, or possibility. This development also creates a need to connect narratological accounts of space with literary-cultural approaches to place and belonging, particularly when contemporary fiction circulates across national, linguistic, and cultural boundaries.

The significance of narrative space becomes clearer when place is understood as a structure that distributes access and recognition unevenly rather than as a neutral geographical backdrop. Research on migration conceptualizes home as a multi-scalar and processual formation in which territorial location, interpersonal relations, memory, and mobility continually reshape what it means to

inhabit or claim a place (Fathi & Ní Laoire, 2024). Studies of migration and belonging similarly demonstrate that attachment to home and community is conditioned by participation, discrimination, social recognition, and the capacity to negotiate changing environments rather than by residence alone (Damen et al., 2024). Literary narratives provide a distinctive cultural form for representing these unequal spatial relations because they can translate structural conditions into recurring movements, inaccessible thresholds, domestic interiors, borders, journeys, and landscapes invested with emotional or historical significance. The same location can consequently produce radically different experiences according to the character's social position, mobility status, cultural identity, or relationship to collective memory. A house may signify protection while simultaneously functioning as confinement, a city may promise cosmopolitan mobility while reproducing social boundaries, and a national territory may represent security for one subject while appearing as surveillance or exclusion to another. Belonging consequently emerges not as a stable condition attached to geographical residence but as a negotiated relation between spatial access, recognition, memory, and repeated practices of inhabitation.

The problem becomes more complex within world literature because literary texts themselves travel across borders even when the characters and communities represented in them remain constrained by unequal mobility regimes. Transnational literary space has therefore been approached as a hermeneutic problem in which contemporary fiction can challenge the assumption that national territories provide sufficient frameworks for interpreting cultural identity and narrative experience (Redondo-Olmedilla, 2023). World-literary circulation through translation, publishing, prizes, curricula, and international criticism expands the comparative field, yet it can also detach literary representations of home, migration, and displacement from the historical conditions that give particular places their meanings. Scholarship on refugee fiction demonstrates the importance of retaining the political and institutional structures surrounding displacement rather than reducing refugee experience to a universally transferable literary metaphor (Spear, 2024). A similar tension appears in approaches to Global South literary studies, where comparative scholarship increasingly seeks to recover marginalized histories and cultural identities that have been obscured by inherited hierarchies of literary circulation (Kalita & Sarkar, 2026). The conceptual gap lies in the limited integration of these perspectives into a single comparative account that examines how narrative space, place, mobility, and belonging interact across culturally distinct contemporary novels. Without such integration, spatial analysis risks becoming either formally narratological without sufficient attention to historical power or culturally contextualized without sufficiently explaining how literary form itself produces spatial meaning.

Existing readings of contemporary world literature already demonstrate the interpretive productivity of such an integrated approach, but they remain largely organized around individual authors, national traditions, or specific spatial problems. Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, for example, has been interpreted through diaspora space in which North London becomes a dynamic field of intersecting ethnic, religious, familial, and generational positions rather than a stable multicultural setting (Toprak Sakiz, 2023). Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West* similarly transforms unnamed cities, doors, camps, and peripheral settlements into a geography of unequal global mobility, revealing how spatial abstraction can coexist with persistent geopolitical difference (Yadav, 2023). Jhumpa Lahiri's *Whereabouts* shifts the scale toward ordinary urban locations, demonstrating how repeated movement through familiar places can generate provisional attachment without resolving solitude or displacement (Talukdar, 2024). These studies collectively indicate that spatial form changes according to narrative scale, mobility regime, and cultural context, yet the relationship between such spatial configurations and the broader production of belonging remains insufficiently systematized across literary corpora. Work on narrative environments has shown that autonomy and belonging can emerge through the interaction between characters and their spatial surroundings, reinforcing the need to examine place as an active narrative structure rather than a passive setting (Gouthaman & Pradeep, 2024). A comparative framework is therefore required to determine whether apparently different representations of cities, homes, borders, journeys, and landscapes participate in recurrent spatial mechanisms while retaining historically specific meanings.

Belonging becomes particularly unstable in narratives organized around citizenship, diaspora, racialization, and intergenerational displacement, where geographical settlement does not necessarily produce social recognition or affective attachment. Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*, for instance, connects domestic intimacy, citizenship, surveillance, grief, and burial through competing claims to national and

familial space (Pishotti, 2022). Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* similarly constructs Lagos and the United States as distinct racial and affective environments in which movement across national borders transforms rather than resolves questions of identity and belonging (Li, 2024). Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko* extends this problem across generations by representing Korean movement into Japan as a history in which settlement, community formation, translation, and recognition remain structurally unsettled (Lee, 2023). Related scholarship on diasporic writing emphasizes that spatial displacement can produce identity conflicts precisely because the subject must negotiate several cultural locations without fully inhabiting any single one as an uncomplicated home (Rani & Garima, 2022). Such literary configurations challenge approaches that equate belonging with territorial presence because they demonstrate that attachment depends on memory, recognition, community, and the historical conditions under which movement occurs. They also reveal why narrative space should be examined through both material and symbolic dimensions, since places acquire meaning through the interactions between physical environments and the identities, histories, and expectations attached to them. The unresolved issue is therefore not simply how contemporary novels represent places, but how narrative techniques transform places into contested cultural environments through which belonging and non-belonging are repeatedly negotiated.

The Indonesian corpus provides a crucial comparative extension because its representations of place are shaped not only by migration and transnational mobility but also by colonial violence, political detention, ecological memory, and the unresolved afterlives of the New Order. *Beauty Is a Wound* constructs Halimunda as a layered historical environment in which colonial occupation, revolution, gendered violence, and postcolonial power remain embedded within the same fictional locality (Halim et al., 2023). Chudori's *The Sea Speaks His Name* similarly connects detention sites, safe houses, Jakarta streets, marine environments, and journeys to the historical memory of forced disappearance and political violence, while ecological spaces become repositories of remembrance rather than merely scenic backgrounds. Recent research on the novel's mangrove environments demonstrates how nonhuman places can function as mnemonic structures through which suppressed histories remain materially and narratively present (Darmawan et al., 2026). Indonesian environmental literary studies likewise show that forest and maritime spaces can operate as sites of Indigenous knowledge, resistance, and contested relations to power, complicating spatial models derived primarily from metropolitan or Anglophone contexts (Indriyanto et al., 2025). These cases make it possible to test whether concepts of narrative environment, mobility, home, and belonging retain explanatory force when spatial experience is organized by colonial histories, political repression, ecological memory, and culturally specific relations to place. The present study therefore positions itself within literary and linguistic research as a comparative literary-cultural investigation that places Indonesian contemporary fiction in sustained dialogue with diasporic and transnational narratives from Britain, South Asia, Africa, Korea, and the United States. It examines how physical locations become narrative environments through movement, memory, social regulation, and cultural interpretation, how different mobility regimes generate differentiated forms of belonging and non-belonging, and how comparative reading can reveal both recurring spatial mechanisms and historically specific meanings without collapsing them into a universal theory of place. The study ultimately contributes a theoretically integrated account of narrative space and belonging and a comparative methodological framework for reading place across contemporary world literature, demonstrating how spatial form mediates access, recognition, memory, and identity while preserving the cultural and historical particularity of the literary worlds in which these relations are produced.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study was a non-empirical qualitative literary study employing comparative literary-cultural analysis with structured spatial coding. Its primary data consisted of ten contemporary novels selected purposively because spatial movement, place attachment, political history, or cultural memory was central to their narrative organization and because the works circulated beyond a single national literary system. The corpus comprised seven transnational novels and three Indonesian novels, as presented in Table 1. The analysis adopted the concept of narrative environment, which understands literary space as historically and culturally produced rather than merely functioning as a setting (Puxan-Oliva, 2024). The selection also considered literary cartography as a framework for examining how itineraries and spatial configurations organize narrative possibilities (Bako, 2024). The corpus was

designed to enable comparison between migration- and diaspora-oriented narratives and Indonesian narratives in which place is shaped by colonial history, political violence, ecological memory, and transnational circulation.

Table 1. Selected Novels for Comparative Analysis of Narrative Space, Place, and Belonging

Group	Novel	Author	Edition
Transnational	<i>White Teeth</i>	Zadie Smith	2000
Transnational	<i>The Namesake</i>	Jhumpa Lahiri	2003
Transnational	<i>Americanah</i>	Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie	2013
Transnational	<i>Exit West</i>	Mohsin Hamid	2017
Transnational	<i>Home Fire</i>	Kamila Shamsie	2017
Transnational	<i>Pachinko</i>	Min Jin Lee	2017
Transnational	<i>Whereabouts</i>	Jhumpa Lahiri	2021
Indonesian	<i>Beauty Is a Wound</i>	Eka Kurniawan	English translation, 2015
Indonesian	<i>The Question of Red</i>	Laksmi Pamuntjak	Revised English edition, 2016
Indonesian	<i>The Sea Speaks His Name</i>	Leila S. Chudori	English translation, 2020

Data were collected through systematic close reading using the spatial episode as the unit of analysis, defined as a narratively bounded scene or sequence in which a location influences movement, social interaction, memory, access, safety, or self-positioning. Four coding domains were applied: narrative environment, mobility and bordering, home and affective attachment, and memory-place relations, with particular attention to the relationship between memory, temporality, and attachment to place (Lomas et al., 2024). The analysis proceeded in two stages by identifying recurring spatial patterns within each novel and subsequently comparing movement, boundaries, attachment, and belonging across the corpus. Interpretations were tested against counter-examples and historically specific contexts rather than reduced to numerical frequencies, preserving the qualitative and contextual character of literary analysis. Translation was treated as a condition of world-literary circulation because the transfer of diasporic narratives across languages can reshape the rhetorical circumstances through which cultural and spatial meanings are communicated (Jung, 2023). Analytical rigour was maintained through explicit coding definitions, repeated close reading, negative-case examination, and systematic cross-textual comparison between spatial form and the historical-cultural context of each novel.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Narrative Environments and the Production of Place

Narrative space becomes a narrative environment when a geographical location acquires social, historical, institutional, and affective functions within the story. This distinction shifts spatial analysis from identifying where events occur toward examining how places shape movement, interaction, memory, and self-positioning (Puxan-Oliva, 2024). In *White Teeth*, North London operates as a heterogeneous social field where domestic, religious, educational, and public spaces intersect with different migration histories (Toprak Sakiz, 2023). *The Namesake* constructs home, suburb, university, and metropolitan space as environments through which generational differences in diasporic identity become spatially visible (Pavithra, 2024). *Americanah* similarly connects Lagos, the United States, and London through racialized encounters that modify the meanings attached to apparently familiar urban environments (Rezk, 2024). These configurations indicate that urban place produces belonging through social relations rather than through geographical residence alone (Rani & Garima, 2022).

The institutional dimension of narrative environment becomes more pronounced in *Exit West*, *Home Fire*, and *Pachinko*. In *Exit West*, the unnamed city, magical doors, refugee camps, and peripheral settlements demonstrate that the reduction of geographical distance does not eliminate political and economic barriers (Yadav, 2023). *Home Fire* transforms domestic interiors, airports, borders, public spaces, and burial sites into locations where citizenship is experienced through surveillance, exclusion, and recognition (Pishotti, 2022). *Pachinko* connects Korea and Japan through housing, employment, religious institutions, and family structures that sustain settlement while maintaining unequal social

recognition (Lee, 2023). The spatial organization of these novels therefore links physical environments with institutional processes that determine access and status (Yang & Shin, 2023). The dominant narrative environments identified across the corpus are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Narrative Environments Across the Comparative Corpus

Novel	Dominant environment	Spatial production	Belonging effect
<i>White Teeth</i>	North London	Diaspora intersection	Plural, contested urban belonging
<i>The Namesake</i>	Home/suburb/city	Generational migration	Split and recomposed attachment
<i>Americanah</i>	Lagos/U.S./London	Racialized transnationality	Belonging revised through return
<i>Exit West</i>	City/door/camp/periphery	Refugee mobility	Provisional and infrastructural
<i>Home Fire</i>	Home/airport/border/burial site	Citizenship control	Conditional national belonging
<i>Pachinko</i>	Korea/Japan/work/home	Colonial diaspora	Durable settlement without full recognition
<i>Whereabouts</i>	Unnamed city	Everyday urban repetition	Familiarity without secure attachment
<i>Beauty Is a Wound</i>	Halimunda	Layered colonial/postcolonial history	Local attachment marked by violence
<i>The Question of Red</i>	Java/Buru/Jakarta	Detention and historical silencing	Belonging fractured by political memory
<i>The Sea Speaks His Name</i>	Jakarta/detention/sea	Activism and disappearance	Belonging sustained through mourning

Whereabouts provides a different spatial configuration because its narrative environment develops primarily through ordinary repetition. The unnamed city becomes meaningful through recurring streets, cafés, shops, cultural venues, and domestic interiors that structure the narrator's everyday movement (Talukdar, 2024). Repetition produces familiarity by allowing ordinary locations to accumulate personal memories and experiential associations (Lomas et al., 2024). Yet spatial familiarity does not automatically produce reciprocal attachment because the narrator remains connected to the city without becoming securely embedded within a collective social environment (Fathi & Ní Laoire, 2024). This distinction demonstrates that presence and belonging represent analytically different spatial conditions. The mechanism through which these locations acquire narrative significance is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Mechanisms Through Which Place Acquires Narrative Meaning

Mechanism	Operation	Representative texts	Interpretive consequence
Repetition	Repeated routes and interiors	<i>Whereabouts</i> ; <i>The Namesake</i>	Produces familiarity, habit, and ambivalent attachment
Historical Layering	Past violence remains active in present space	<i>Beauty Is a Wound</i> ; <i>The Question of Red</i>	Converts place into contested archive
Institutional Regulation	Borders, schools, work, police, documents	<i>Home Fire</i> ; <i>Exit West</i> ; <i>Pachinko</i>	Links spatial access to recognition
Domestic Practice	Food, ritual, family routine, care	<i>White Teeth</i> ; <i>The Namesake</i> ; <i>Americanah</i>	Makes home through practice rather than territory

Forced Relocation	Detention, exile, expulsion, refugee movement	<i>Exit West</i> ; <i>The Question of Red</i>	Produces un-homing and altered scale
Return	Movement back to a prior place	<i>Americanah</i> ; <i>The Question of Red</i>	Tests memory against transformed place
Memorialization	Mourning attaches absence to landscape	<i>The Sea Speaks His Name</i> ; <i>Home Fire</i>	Turns place into claim for recognition
Economic Emplacement	Work and housing structure settlement	<i>Pachinko</i> ; <i>Exit West</i>	Makes belonging materially unequal

The mechanisms in Table 3 reveal that place acquires narrative meaning through repeated relationships between people and environments rather than through geographical identity alone. Historical layering is particularly important in *Beauty Is a Wound*, where Halimunda condenses colonial and postcolonial histories within recurring streets, houses, graves, and social spaces (Halim et al., 2023). *The Question of Red* similarly connects Java, Buru, and Jakarta through detention, political displacement, memory, and return, making geographical distance part of the representation of political silencing (Sethuparvathy & Jha, 2024). In *The Sea Speaks His Name*, Jakarta, detention spaces, the sea, and mangroves distribute the memory of disappearance across interconnected human and ecological environments (Darmawan et al., 2026). Such spatial configurations demonstrate that place can operate as a historical archive when physical locations retain traces of violence and absence (Scott, 2024). The Indonesian novels consequently expand the concept of narrative environment beyond urban multiculturalism by foregrounding historical trauma and political memory as forces that structure spatial meaning.

Domestic practice provides another mechanism through which narrative environments become connected to belonging. Food, family routines, religious practices, language, and interpersonal care allow characters in *White Teeth*, *The Namesake*, and *Americanah* to construct forms of home that extend across different geographical locations (Camilleri et al., 2023). The spatial meaning of home consequently depends on practices that reproduce cultural continuity rather than on the permanence of a particular dwelling or territory (Fathi & Ni Laoire, 2024). Return further complicates this process because remembered places may no longer correspond to their present physical and social conditions. In *Americanah*, the return to Lagos confronts remembered cultural familiarity with the changes produced by migration and prolonged absence (Li, 2024). In *The Question of Red*, return is similarly complicated by the historical consequences attached to political displacement and detention (Assa, 2024). Belonging thus emerges as a process of spatial negotiation in which memory, practice, absence, and changing environments continually modify the relationship between person and place.

The comparative findings establish narrative environment as a relational structure connecting geographical space with cultural practice, historical pressure, institutional regulation, and memory. Literary cartography supports this interpretation by demonstrating how itineraries and spatial configurations organize narrative possibilities rather than merely recording physical movement (Bako, 2024). The transnational novels reveal that metropolitan and migratory spaces can contain several cultural affiliations simultaneously, while the Indonesian novels demonstrate how political histories can remain embedded within local and peripheral environments (Redondo-Olmedilla, 2023). Translation adds another dimension because the movement of culturally specific narratives into other languages can relocate spatial meanings into new rhetorical and interpretive contexts (Jung, 2023). Place therefore functions in the corpus as an active narrative structure through which characters negotiate recognition, attachment, displacement, and memory. The production of place is consequently inseparable from the production of belonging because spatial environments determine not only where characters are located but also how their presence becomes culturally and socially meaningful.

Mobility, Bordering, and Unequal Access to Space

Mobility across the corpus is not represented as an inherently liberating movement because the ability to move depends on citizenship, race, class, political status, and institutional recognition. Contemporary migration research similarly demonstrates that experiences of belonging are shaped by discrimination, participation, and access to social environments rather than by movement alone (Damen

et al., 2024). *Americanah*, *The Namesake*, and *White Teeth* present mobility as an apparently available resource that nevertheless produces different experiences according to racial and cultural positioning. In *Americanah*, movement between Nigeria, the United States, and Britain creates opportunities for education, employment, and self-fashioning while simultaneously exposing the protagonist to racialized social classifications (Rezk, 2024). *The Namesake* connects geographical movement with generational differences, as the parents' migration history and the son's movement through American institutions produce different relationships with mobility and belonging (Pavithra, 2024). The corpus therefore distinguishes physical movement from meaningful spatial access because crossing distance does not necessarily remove the social conditions that regulate participation.

Exit West makes this distinction particularly visible through its magical doors, which appear to eliminate conventional geographical distance while leaving political hierarchies intact. Nadia and Saeed can cross enormous distances almost instantaneously, yet their arrival in new locations places them within camps, informal settlements, labor markets, and hostile urban environments where access remains uneven (Spear, 2024). The unnamed cities consequently function as spaces in which mobility is accelerated while recognition remains institutionally restricted (Yadav, 2023). Refugee movement becomes a form of spatial compression because the narrative reduces travel time without reducing the material consequences of displacement. The relationship between movement and vulnerability is also evident in literary representations of refugees, where narrative space frequently registers displacement through precarious environments rather than through travel alone (Hart, 2024). The mobility regimes represented across the corpus can be mapped through the following classification.

Table 4. Mobility Regimes Represented in the Corpus

Regime	Spatial Form	Representative Texts	Consequence
Elective transnational mobility	Study, work, self-fashioning	<i>Americanah</i> ; <i>The Namesake</i>	Choice remains conditioned by race/class
Refugee flight	Conflict-driven departure	<i>Exit West</i>	Movement urgent; arrival precarious
Citizenship mobility	Travel under legal scrutiny	<i>Home Fire</i>	Formal belonging can be revoked
Colonial/postcolonial migration	Movement across imperial histories	<i>Pachinko</i>	Settlement does not guarantee recognition
Forced internal displacement	Detention and political removal	<i>The Question of Red</i>	Distance functions as silencing
Clandestine movement	Activist networks and safe houses	<i>The Sea Speaks His Name</i>	Mobility becomes exposure to state violence
Urban circulation	Repeated everyday movement	<i>White Teeth</i> ; <i>Whereabouts</i>	Belonging negotiated through ordinary routes
Return migration	Return after transnational residence	<i>Americanah</i> ; <i>The Question of Red</i>	Return exposes mismatch between memory and present

Home Fire shifts the analysis from refugee movement toward citizenship mobility, where the capacity to cross borders is directly connected to legal recognition. Airports and border checkpoints become sites where personal identity is translated into administrative categories that determine whether movement can proceed (Weiss, 2022). The novel shows that citizenship may provide formal membership while simultaneously remaining vulnerable to political scrutiny and exclusion. Public discourse intensifies this spatial vulnerability because media representation transforms individual movement into a publicly monitored question of national identity (Pishotti, 2022). The burial site further demonstrates that spatial exclusion can continue beyond travel restrictions because recognition determines whether the dead and their families can claim legitimate places within national memory

(Pishotti, 2022). Mobility in the novel thus operates through thresholds whose significance derives from the institutional power to authorize, restrict, or revoke access.

Pachinko presents mobility through the longer historical trajectory of Korean movement into Japan and the subsequent settlement of several generations. The movement from Korea to Japan does not produce a straightforward transition from origin to destination because social exclusion continues to shape access to employment, housing, education, and community life (Lee, 2023). The novel consequently separates residence from recognition, showing that long-term emplacement can coexist with an incomplete sense of national membership. Community institutions and family networks provide alternative forms of social continuity when state-centered recognition remains limited (Yang & Shin, 2023). Translation further reveals how the representation of diaspora movement can carry historically specific experiences of displacement into another linguistic and literary environment (Jung, 2023). The mobility represented in *Pachinko* therefore operates as a cumulative historical process in which movement, settlement, exclusion, and intergenerational continuity remain interconnected.

The Indonesian novels introduce forms of mobility in which spatial restriction occurs within national territory rather than primarily through international borders. In *The Question of Red*, movement to Buru functions as political displacement because geographical distance separates detainees from their families, communities, and previous social identities. The island consequently becomes a spatial mechanism through which political authority converts distance into isolation and historical silence (Sethuparvathy & Jha, 2024). *The Sea Speaks His Name* presents clandestine activist movement, abduction, detention, and disappearance as interconnected spatial processes that transform ordinary movement into exposure to state violence (Tsabit & Darmawan, 2026). Jakarta and the sea become connected through the disappearance of bodies and the continuing efforts of families to reconstruct what happened (Cahyadi et al., 2025). *Beauty Is a Wound* adds another dimension by representing military occupation, revolutionary conflict, and postcolonial authority as forces that alter who can safely inhabit particular places (Halim et al., 2023). These texts demonstrate that mobility-centered analysis must include internal displacement and political confinement alongside migration across international borders.

Spatial access consequently provides a more precise analytical category than mobility alone because characters may move extensively while remaining excluded from particular institutions, neighborhoods, or forms of recognition. The comparison shows that access can be restricted through documents, citizenship, labor markets, housing systems, racial classification, political surveillance, family history, and gendered vulnerability. Table 5 organizes these conditions by connecting specific spatial restrictions to the forces that regulate them and their consequences for belonging. The pattern demonstrates that residence does not guarantee equal participation because the capacity to enter a space differs from the capacity to become socially recognized within it. *Whereabouts* represents the less overt form of this problem, as everyday circulation provides extensive physical access while leaving the narrator without secure reciprocal attachment (Talukdar, 2024). The broader corpus therefore treats belonging as dependent on the quality of spatial participation rather than on movement or residence considered in isolation.

Table 5. Spatial Access, Restriction, and Consequences for Belonging

Access Condition	Texts	Regulating Force	Belonging Outcome
Border/document control	<i>Home Fire; Exit West</i>	State/legal institutions	Conditional or denied belonging
Housing and labor access	<i>Pachinko; Exit West</i>	Market/informal hierarchy	Settlement without equal membership
Racialized urban access	<i>Americanah; White Teeth</i>	Social classification	Uneven cosmopolitan participation
Generational access	<i>The Namesake; Pachinko</i>	Family/history	Different belonging within same household
Carceral access	<i>The Question of Red; The Sea Speaks His Name</i>	Authoritarian state	Forced non-belonging and disappearance

Everyday access	public	<i>Whereabouts</i>	Urban routine	Presence without social rootedness
Gendered vulnerability	spatial	<i>Beauty Is a Wound</i>	Patriarchal/colonial violence	Place attachment marked by bodily risk
Return access		<i>Americanah</i> ; <i>The Question of Red</i>	Memory/history	Home becomes revised rather than recovered

The patterns in Table 5 establish that unequal mobility is inseparable from unequal access to space. A character may possess the legal capacity to travel yet encounter racialized exclusion, economic barriers, or social unfamiliarity after arrival. Conversely, a character may remain physically confined while maintaining significant affective, familial, or mnemonic relationships with distant places. This distinction corresponds with research showing that experiences of home and community among migrants are produced through dynamic interactions between movement and social participation (Camilleri et al., 2023). It also explains why forced displacement cannot be understood solely through geographical separation because detention and political removal transform spatial distance into a mechanism of social exclusion. The comparative corpus consequently represents borders not only as national lines but also as institutional, economic, racial, generational, and affective thresholds. Mobility becomes narratively meaningful when these thresholds determine who can enter, remain, participate, return, or be recognized within a place.

Memory, Home, and Affective Belonging

Memory transforms home across the corpus from a fixed dwelling into a spatial and temporal relationship sustained through movement, separation, and return. This conceptualization corresponds with migration scholarship that treats home as a multidimensional process involving place, memory, social relations, and everyday practices (Fathi & Ni Laoire, 2024). In *White Teeth*, family histories and domestic practices connect present identities with earlier migration experiences, allowing home to extend across generations and geographical locations. The novel's diasporic spaces demonstrate that attachment can be maintained through cultural practices even when characters inhabit environments shaped by different historical and social conditions (Toprak Sakiz, 2023). *The Namesake* similarly constructs home through food, family rituals, language, and interpersonal relationships that preserve cultural continuity after geographical relocation. These configurations establish memory as an active mechanism through which spatial belonging survives physical separation from an earlier place.

The relationship between memory and home becomes more complex when different generations attach different meanings to the same domestic environment. In *The Namesake*, the parents' attachment to Bengali cultural practices contrasts with Gogol's changing relationship with American social and cultural spaces. Such generational variation demonstrates that inherited memories do not produce identical forms of belonging because spatial meanings are reconstructed through individual experience (Pavithra, 2024). *White Teeth* similarly presents domestic and community environments as sites where different migration histories overlap without producing a unified conception of home. The coexistence of cultural practices within North London makes belonging plural and contested rather than territorially exclusive (Toprak Sakiz, 2023). The configurations of home identified across the corpus are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Configurations of Home in the Comparative Corpus

Home Form	Mechanism	Texts	Affective Structure
Practiced home	Ritual, food, family routine	<i>White Teeth</i> ; <i>The Namesake</i>	Continuity through repetition
Returned home	Return after migration	<i>Americanah</i>	Familiarity revised by distance
Precarious home	Temporary settlement under threat	<i>Exit West</i>	Home without durable security
Legally conditional home	Citizenship subject to exclusion	<i>Home Fire</i>	Home exposed to sovereign power

Intergenerational home	Family continuity across territories	<i>Pachinko</i>	Attachment exceeds national recognition
Solitary home	Routine without reciprocal community	<i>Whereabouts</i>	Dwelling without full belonging
Haunted home	Locality saturated by historical violence	<i>Beauty Is a Wound</i>	Attachment inseparable from historical residue
Interrupted home	Detention/disappearance separates persons from place	<i>The Question of Red; The Sea Speaks His Name</i>	Home reorganized by absence

Americanah develops memory through return, making Lagos a site where remembered familiarity encounters social and material transformation. Ifemelu's return does not restore an unchanged homeland because the place she remembers has developed while her own identity has been reshaped by transnational experience (Li, 2024). The contrast between remembered and present Lagos consequently turns return into an interpretive encounter rather than a simple recovery of origin. Racial experiences in the United States further influence how Ifemelu understands her relationship with Nigeria after returning (Rezk, 2024). The remembered homeland therefore becomes newly legible through experiences acquired in other geographical and cultural environments. Return functions as a spatial process through which memory is tested against the material and social conditions of the present.

Pachinko presents home through intergenerational continuity rather than through stable national territory. The movement from Korea to Japan creates a distinction between remembered origin, lived settlement, and the recognition available within the receiving society (Lee, 2023). Korean identity, family memory, religious practice, and domestic continuity enable successive generations to sustain attachment despite persistent social exclusion. Community relationships consequently provide forms of belonging that are not fully dependent on national recognition (Yang & Shin, 2023). *Whereabouts* offers a contrasting configuration because its narrator develops extensive familiarity with an unnamed city without establishing the reciprocal relationships normally associated with communal home (Talukdar, 2024). The comparison demonstrates that familiarity, residence, and affective belonging can develop independently rather than forming a single spatial condition.

The Indonesian novels intensify the relationship between memory and place by connecting home with historical violence, detention, disappearance, and ecological remembrance. *Beauty Is a Wound* presents houses, streets, graves, and Halimunda as spaces where family histories remain entangled with colonial and postcolonial violence (Halim et al., 2023). *The Question of Red* connects Java, Buru, and Jakarta through detention, political displacement, memory, and return, transforming geographical distance into part of the experience of historical silencing. *The Sea Speaks His Name* extends this mnemonic geography toward Jakarta, detention sites, the sea, and mangrove environments, allowing absence to become associated with material landscapes (Darmawan et al., 2026). The marine environment consequently participates in preserving political and cultural memory rather than functioning solely as a narrative backdrop (Mulatsih, 2023). Table 7 maps these different relationships between memory and spatial organization.

Table 7. Memory-Place Relations and Their Narrative Functions

Memory Mode	Spatial Operation	Texts	Narrative Function
Genealogical memory	Family histories attach present to prior places	<i>The Namesake; Pachinko</i>	Extends belonging across generations
Diasporic memory	Routes connect homeland and hostland	<i>White Teeth; Americanah</i>	Produces layered identity
Traumatic public memory	Violence remains embedded in locality	<i>Beauty Is a Wound</i>	Challenges sanitized national history
Carceral memory	Detention site stores suppressed history	<i>The Question of Red</i>	Turns peripheral space into counter-archive
Memory of disappearance	Absence attaches to sea and city	<i>The Sea Speaks His Name</i>	Sustains testimony and mourning

Everyday memory	Repetition gives ordinary sites personal history	<i>Whereabouts</i>	Creates attachment without permanence
Border memory	Thresholds preserve experiences of exclusion	<i>Home Fire; Exit West</i>	Links mobility to vulnerability
Return memory	Remembered place confronted with changed present	<i>Americanah; The Question of Red</i>	Produces critical rather than restorative return

The patterns in Table 7 indicate that memory does not merely preserve earlier relationships with place but actively reorganizes their meanings in the present. Places can remain emotionally significant after displacement, exclusion, detention, or prolonged absence because memory gives them continuing temporal and affective depth (Lomas et al., 2024). Loss can similarly transform domestic and geographical environments into sites where absence becomes part of the experience of belonging (Małecka, 2024). The corpus consequently represents home as a process of maintaining, revising, and contesting relationships with places rather than as a permanently secured territory. Memory provides spatial environments with historical continuity, while affect connects remembered places to present experiences of identity and belonging. Belonging therefore emerges as an affective spatial practice in which home can be practiced, remembered, reconstructed, interrupted, or carried across geographical boundaries.

Indonesian Spatial Imaginaries in World-Literary Comparison

The Indonesian novels modify the comparative framework by demonstrating that spatial belonging cannot be explained exclusively through international migration and transnational border crossing. Their narratives place political violence, internal displacement, ecological memory, and postcolonial transformation directly within the production of literary space. *Beauty Is a Wound*, *The Question of Red*, and *The Sea Speaks His Name* represent forms of displacement that can occur within national territory while still producing experiences of rupture, exclusion, and estrangement. This configuration expands world-literary approaches by demonstrating that displacement may be produced through internal political geography rather than movement between sovereign states. Global South literary studies emphasize the importance of recovering marginalized histories and cultural identities within broader comparative frameworks (Kalita & Sarkar, 2026). The Indonesian corpus therefore contributes a spatial model in which belonging is shaped simultaneously by locality, historical violence, political authority, and memory.

Beauty Is a Wound concentrates these processes within Halimunda, a fictional town where different historical periods remain layered within the same geographical environment. Colonial occupation, Japanese rule, revolution, postcolonial authority, family conflict, and gendered violence become attached to houses, streets, graves, and other recurring locations. The recurrence of these locations transforms Halimunda into a historical palimpsest in which present spatial experience remains connected to earlier forms of domination. Existing research identifies gender inequality as a significant dimension of the novel's representation of social relations (Halim et al., 2023). A spatial interpretation extends this concern by demonstrating how gendered vulnerability becomes embedded within particular environments and patterns of inhabitation. Halimunda consequently functions simultaneously as a place of attachment, a repository of historical memory, and an environment in which violence continues to shape everyday spatial relations. Its position within the comparative corpus is summarized in Table 8.

Table 8. Indonesian Novels Within the World-Literary Spatial Comparison

Text	Spatial Axis	Historical Pressure	Dominant Spatial Function	Comparative Contribution
<i>Beauty Is a Wound</i>	Halimunda	Colonial/postcolonial layering	Town as historical palimpsest	Local history condensed in recurring place
<i>The Question of Red</i>	Java-Buru-Jakarta	Detention and return	Peripheral island as counter-archive	Internal exile revises migration-centered models

<i>The Sea Speaks His Name</i>	Jakarta-detention-sea	Disappearance and mourning	Sea as material and mnemonic environment	More-than-human space carries suppressed memory
<i>Exit West</i>	City-doors-camps	Refugee mobility	Compressed transnational geography	Borders persist as institutions after distance collapses
<i>Home Fire</i>	Home-airport-border-burial	Citizenship exclusion	Thresholds adjudicate national belonging	Legal recognition structures place access
<i>Pachinko</i>	Korea-Japan	Colonial diaspora	Settlement across generations	Residence and belonging remain distinct

The Question of Red introduces a different spatial imaginary through the connection among Java, Buru, and Jakarta. Buru functions not simply as a distant setting but as a carceral environment whose geographical separation contributes to the isolation of political detainees. The island's peripheral position transforms distance into a mechanism of political exclusion because separation from families and communities becomes part of the experience of detention. Literary cartography provides a productive framework for identifying how peripheral spaces can challenge dominant geographical hierarchies and recover suppressed histories (Sethuparvathy & Jha, 2024). Return subsequently complicates the relationship between displacement and belonging because movement back toward earlier locations cannot restore the social and historical conditions that existed before detention. The novel consequently demonstrates that internal exile can produce spatial rupture without requiring international migration. This configuration places political geography alongside migration as a necessary category in comparative studies of literary belonging.

The Sea Speaks His Name develops another spatial configuration through the relationship among Jakarta, detention sites, the sea, and mangrove environments. Jakarta represents an urban and political environment, while detention sites materialize confinement and the sea becomes associated with disappearance, uncertainty, and continuing remembrance. The disappearance of activists consequently produces a dispersed geography in which the memory of violence extends beyond the location where the initial event occurred. Research on the novel's translation examines how narrative violence and ideology are mediated when the work enters another linguistic environment (Cahyadi et al., 2025). The ecological dimension further expands the spatial framework because mangroves function as mnemonic environments capable of carrying traces of suppressed histories (Darmawan et al., 2026). Marine space therefore participates in political remembrance rather than operating merely as scenery within the narrative (Mulatsih, 2023). The comparative synthesis of these spatial patterns is presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Cross-Corpus Synthesis of Narrative Space and Belonging

Synthesis	Evidence Pattern	Strongest Cases	Implication
Space is relational	Meaning arises from history, practice, and regulation	All texts	Setting alone is analytically insufficient
Mobility is unequal	Movement depends on legal and social access	<i>Exit West</i> ; <i>Home Fire</i> ; <i>Pachinko</i> ; Indonesian political novels	Mobility cannot be equated with freedom
Home is multi-scalar	Domestic, urban, national, remembered, and relational homes overlap	<i>White Teeth</i> ; <i>The Namesake</i> ; <i>Americanah</i> ; <i>Pachinko</i>	Belonging exceeds territory

Memory spatializes absence	Places retain loss, detention, violence, and return	Indonesian corpus; <i>Home Fire</i>	Place can function as counter-archive
Translation relocates place	Local spatial histories enter new reading systems	<i>Pachinko</i> ; Indonesian translated novels	World circulation does not require semantic placelessness
Belonging requires recognition	Attachment without access remains precarious	<i>Whereabouts</i> ; <i>Exit West</i> ; <i>Pachinko</i> ; <i>Home Fire</i>	Affect and institutional membership must be distinguished

The comparison between the Indonesian novels and *Exit West*, *Home Fire*, and *Pachinko* reveals that different forms of displacement operate through different spatial mechanisms. *Exit West* compresses international distance through magical doors while retaining inequalities in refugee camps, housing, and labor environments (Spear, 2024). *Home Fire* locates citizenship struggles within airports, borders, public spaces, and burial sites, making legal recognition materially connected to spatial access (Weiss, 2022). *Pachinko* represents settlement across Korea and Japan over several generations, demonstrating that prolonged residence does not necessarily produce complete social recognition (Lee, 2023). The Indonesian novels shift the emphasis toward detention, disappearance, political memory, and ecological environments within and across Indonesian territory. The comparison therefore reveals that spatial restriction can emerge through national borders, political confinement, social classification, economic structures, or historical memory. Such variation prevents mobility from becoming a universal explanation for literary representations of displacement.

The Indonesian contribution to the world-literary comparison lies in expanding spatial analysis from movement between territories toward the historical processes that determine how places become inhabitable, inaccessible, remembered, or contested. The three novels demonstrate that local environments can preserve colonial histories, political repression, disappearance, and ecological memory while remaining connected to contemporary questions of belonging. Their inclusion also shows that world-literary circulation does not require local spatial meanings to become culturally interchangeable. Translation instead relocates culturally specific narratives into new reading systems while preserving the historical pressures attached to particular places (Jung, 2023). Literary place-making can similarly operate across linguistic and cultural boundaries without erasing the situated histories through which spatial meanings emerge (Kaufhold & Dymond, 2022). The resulting comparative model treats belonging as a relation among affective attachment, material access, institutional recognition, and historical memory. Indonesian spatial imaginaries thus broaden the study of contemporary world literature by demonstrating that the politics of place includes internal exile, mnemonic landscapes, ecological environments, and historically layered localities alongside transnational migration.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis demonstrates that contemporary world literature constructs belonging through the interaction of narrative environment, mobility, memory, place attachment, and institutional access. Across the ten novels, space functions as an active narrative environment in which domestic interiors, cities, borders, workplaces, detention sites, islands, coastlines, and seas shape movement, recognition, memory, and social participation. The analysis shows that mobility is unevenly distributed because citizenship, race, class, political status, and institutional regulation determine who can enter, remain, return, or claim particular spaces. Representations of home likewise reveal that residence does not automatically produce belonging because affective attachment may persist despite exclusion, displacement, or social isolation. Memory further transforms places into repositories of family history, trauma, political violence, disappearance, and return, allowing past spatial experiences to remain active within the present. Belonging consequently emerges as a multi-scalar and conditional relationship in which emotional attachment, material access, institutional recognition, and historical memory may converge or remain in tension. The resulting framework positions narrative space not as a neutral backdrop but as a relational structure through which literary texts organize experiences of identity, displacement, attachment, and recognition.

The Indonesian corpus strengthens this framework by demonstrating that spatial dispossession and non-belonging can develop within national territory through colonial residue, political detention, authoritarian violence, disappearance, and ecological memory. *Beauty Is a Wound*, *The Question of Red*, and *The Sea Speaks His Name* expand the comparative perspective beyond international migration by foregrounding historically layered localities, internal exile, counter-archives, and more-than-human environments. Their spatial imaginaries show that distance can be produced through political confinement and historical rupture even when characters remain within the same national geography. The comparison with *Exit West*, *Home Fire*, and *Pachinko* further indicates that transnational movement, citizenship regulation, colonial diaspora, and internal displacement represent distinct spatial mechanisms that cannot be reduced to a single model of mobility. Translation also becomes significant because the circulation of Indonesian narratives into world-literary contexts relocates local spatial histories into new interpretive systems without eliminating their historical specificity. The study therefore contributes a relational understanding of literary space in which place, mobility, memory, institutional power, and belonging operate as interconnected dimensions of narrative organization. Future research can extend this framework through larger multilingual corpora and examine how translation strategies reshape the spatial cues through which culturally specific places, histories, and forms of belonging become legible across literary traditions.

REFERENCES

- Adichie, C. N. (2013). *Americanah*. Alfred A. Knopf.
- Assa, S. (2024). Displaced belonging: Poetics and politics of belonging in Leila Aboulela's "The Ostrich" and "Missing Out." *Irish Journal of Sociology*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07916035241264091>
- Bako, A. (2024). From itinerary to map, with "urban villagers" in the Romanian novel: A literary cartography. *Neohelicon*, 51, 485–498. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11059-024-00774-5>
- Braith, M. (2025). Where is home? Storied places and belonging in Indigenous and immigrant fantasy novels for children. *Canadian Literature*, 258–259, 134–153. <https://doi.org/10.14288/cl.vi258/259.199024>
- Cahyadi, N. M. D., Kholifah, A. N., & Handoyo, R. P. (2025). From words to wounds: Translating narrative violence and ideology in *Laut Bercerita (The Sea Speaks His Name)*. *Eralingua: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Asing dan Sastra*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.26858/eralingua.v9i1.71232>
- Camilleri, A. P., Ferrari, J. R., Romoli, V., Cardinali, P., & Migliorini, L. (2023). Navigating sense of home: Migration experiences of home and community. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 97, 101890. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2023.101890>
- Chudori, L. S. (2020). *The Sea Speaks his Name* (J. S. Khair, Trans.). Penguin Random House.
- Damen, R., Dagevos, J., & Huijnk, W. (2024). Feeling at home? A dynamic analysis of the impact of discrimination, refugee-specific, and participation characteristics on recently arrived refugees' belonging. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 25, 1547–1569. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-024-01135-y>
- Darmawan, R. I., Indriyanto, K., Rosyidi, M. I., & Thohiriyah. (2026). Silent witnesses: Phytocritical readings of mangroves as mnemonic devices in Leila S. Chudori's *The Sea Speaks His Name*. *RUDN Journal of Studies in Literature and Journalism*, 31(1), 123–133. <https://doi.org/10.22363/2312-9220-2026-31-1-123-133>
- Dasca, M. (2023). The spatial turn in Catalan cultural studies: Theoretical approaches and new perspectives. *Journal of Romance Studies*, 23(4), 429–465. <https://doi.org/10.3828/jrs.2023.21>
- Fathi, M., & Ní Laoire, C. (2024). Conceptualising home in migration: An introduction. In *Migration and home* (pp. 1–20). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-51315-2_1
- Gouthaman, K. J., & Pradeep, N. J. (2024). Narrative environment of Malgudi: Space, autonomy, and belonging. *IAFOR Journal of Arts & Humanities*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.22492/ijah.11.2.04>
- Halim, N. M., Dahniar, D., Halim, A., Anugrah, I., & Pratiwi, D. F. (2023). Gender inequality depicted in Indonesian best-selling novel *Beauty Is a Wound*. *ELLITE: Journal of English Language, Literature, and Teaching*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/10.32528/ellite.v8i2.22194>
- Hamid, M. (2017). *Exit West*. Riverhead Books.
- Hart, K. (2024). Narrative space and the figure of the refugee in the early life writing of Ocean Vuong. *English Studies*, 105(7), 1123–1138. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0013838X.2024.2417490>

- Indriyanto, K., Trianton, T., & Rudy. (2025). From *Sastra Hijau* to *Sastra Bahari*: Place, resistance, and indigeneity in *Danum* and *Dari Rahim Ombak*. *Teknosastik*, 23(2). <https://doi.org/10.33365/teknosastik.v23i2.698>
- Jung, M.-K. (2023). Translating Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko* as diasporic writing: Focusing on the rhetorical situation. *The Journal of Translation Studies*, 24(4), 37–61. <https://doi.org/10.15749/jts.2023.24.4.002>
- Kalita, G., & Sarkar, B. (2026). Global South literary studies: Reclaiming voices, histories, and cultural identity. *Global Humanities Review*. <https://doi.org/10.26572/ghr2601502>
- Kaufhold, K., & Dymond, R. (2022). Translanguaging and place-making in writing for publication: An account in multiple stories. *Apples—Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 16(3), 128–143. <https://doi.org/10.47862/apples.114656>
- Kurniawan, E. (2015). *Beauty is a Wound* (T. B. F. Rogers, Trans.). New Directions.
- Lahiri, J. (2003). *The Namesake*. Houghton Mifflin.
- Lahiri, J. (2021). *Whereabouts* (A. M. McDowell, Trans.). Alfred A. Knopf.
- Lee, H. M. (2025). Losing “touch”: The sense of belonging in Brit Bennett's *The Vanishing Half*. *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, 66(4), 615–627. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00111619.2024.2339516>
- Lee, M. J. (2017). *Pachinko*. Grand Central Publishing.
- Lee, Y. (2023). Expanded national history and Korean diaspora literature: Focusing on *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee. *The Journal of Japanese Studies*, 136, 173–196. <https://doi.org/10.15532/kaja.2023.08.136.173>
- Li, Y. (2024). Navigating identities in flux: Exploring diasporic Black identity issues in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah*. *International Journal of Education and Humanities*. <https://doi.org/10.54097/70p5rt76>
- Lomas, M. J., Ayodeji, E., & Brown, P. (2024). Imagined places of the past: The interplay of time and memory in the maintenance of place attachment. *Current Psychology*, 43, 2618–2629. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-04421-7>
- Małecka, K. A. (2024). “This house is so lonely!”: Home, belonging, and identity in memoirs of loss and grief. *Text Matters: A Journal of Literature, Theory and Culture*, 14, 71–87. <https://doi.org/10.18778/2083-2931.14.05>
- Mulatsih, M. V. E. (2023). The portrayal of marine life in Chudori's *The Sea Speaks His Name*. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 23(2), 416–425. <https://doi.org/10.24071/joll.v23i2.5498>
- Pamuntjak, L. (2016). *The Question of Red* (E. H. H. R. Trans.). Penguin Books.
- Pavithra, B. (2024). Reclaiming identity: The predicament of diaspora in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*. *Library Progress International*, 44(3). <https://doi.org/10.48165/bapas.2024.44.2.1>
- Pishotti, G. (2022). Materializing grief: The reclamation of loss in Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*. *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 58(3), 349–360. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449855.2021.2015618>
- Puxan-Oliva, M. (2024). Assessing narrative space: From setting to narrative environments. *Poetics Today*, 45(1), 79–103. <https://doi.org/10.1215/03335372-10938618>
- Rani, A., & Garima. (2022). Problematic identity in the diasporic writings of Jhumpa Lahiri. *International Journal of Research in English*, 4(2), 30–32. <https://doi.org/10.33545/26648717.2022.v4.i2a.87>
- Redondo-Olmedilla, J.-C. (2023). Towards a hermeneutics of the postmodern transnational space: The case of contemporary Australian literature. *Neohelicon*, 50, 775–788. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11059-023-00685-x>
- Rezk, W. A. (2024). Dreams of mirage in Khawla Hamdi's *Expatriation of the Jasmin* (2015) and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* (2013). *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 9, 100770. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2023.100770>
- Sakaki, A. (2023). *Train travel as embodied space-time in narrative theory*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-40548-8>
- Scott, B. K. (2024). *Taking place: Environmental change in literature and art*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-48355-4>

- Sethuparvathy, S., & Jha, S. (2024). Decolonising the map through literary cartography in select Malayalam novels. *SARE: Southeast Asian Review of English*, 61(2), 27–45. <https://doi.org/10.22452/sare.vol61no2.3>
- Shamsie, K. (2017). *Home Fire*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Smith, Z. (2000). *White Teeth*. Hamish Hamilton.
- Spear, C. (2024). Refugee fiction as world-literature: Rethinking registration in the contemporary refugee novel. *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 60(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449855.2023.2294340>
- Talukdar, S. (2024). Spatial reading of Jhumpa Lahiri's *Whereabouts*. *AMERICANA E-Journal of American Studies in Hungary*, 20(1), 66–74. <https://doi.org/10.14232/americanana.2024.1.66-74>
- Toprak Sakiz, E. (2023). Narrative and the mapping of diaspora space: Liminalities and subjectivities in the “Happy Multicultural Land” of Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*. *Journal of European Studies*, 53(1), 23–36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00472441221141956>
- Tsabit, I. S., & Darmawan, R. I. (2026). Alienation and isolation: A Marxist analysis in *The Sea Speaks His Name* by Leila S. Chudori. *Rainbow: Journal of Literature, Linguistics and Culture Studies*, 15(1), 150–161. <https://doi.org/10.15294/rainbow.v15i1.47041>
- Weiss, N. (2022). Tragic form in Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*. *Classical Receptions Journal*, 14(2), 240–263. <https://doi.org/10.1093/crj/clab008>
- Yadav, K. (2023). The poetics of the (un)named city in Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West*. *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 59(1), 100–112. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449855.2022.2119880>
- Yang, M., & Shin, I. (2023). Zainichi narrative and community ethics represented in the multicultural novel *Pachinko*. *Journal of Japanese Culture*, 96, 251–268. <https://doi.org/10.21481/jbunka.96.202302.251>