

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF USE OF SPACE IN HARDY'S "SATIRES OF CIRCUMSTANCES: IN FIFTEEN GLIMPSES": A CHANGE FROM THE PUBLIC SPACE TO PRIVATE AND VICE VERSA

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Abstract: "Satires of Circumstances" which is a part of a poetry collection by Thomas Hardy consists of fifteen poems which produce a moral question and a scenery of a daily life of people. The settings of these poems are ordinary places ranging from a living room, bride's room, in a restaurant, in a store, outdoors, and in the cemetery. There are three poems which take place in the cemetery: "By Her Aunt's Grave", "In the Cemetery", and "In the Moonlight". These poems are of importance to discuss in terms of cemetery's dynamism as a both public and a private space are designated through the relations and activities of the people. The cemetery in the three poems as a dynamic area is discussed in terms of public and private space and the dynamism in between drawing on the notions of public space put forward by Mike Devereux and David Littlefield, and definitions of private space by. (154 words)

Key Words: cemetery, public space, private space, dynamism.

THOMAS HARDY'NİN VAZİYETLER ÜZERİNE HİCİVLER: "ON BEŞ BAKIŞTA" ADLI ÇALIŞMASINDAKİ MEKÂN KULLANIMININ DEVİNGENLİĞİ: KAMU ALANININ ÖZEL ALANA VE ÖZEL ALANIN KAMU ALANINA DÖNÜŞÜMÜ

Öz: Thomas Hardy'nin *Satires of Circumstance with Lyrics and Reveries with Miscellaneous Pieces* adlı şiir koleksiyonunun parçası olan "Vaziyetlere Hiciv" ("Satires of Circumstance") adlı çalışması her biri ahlaki bir soru yöneltten ve insanların gündelik hayatlarından bir sahne sunan on beş şiirden oluşmaktadır. Bu şiirlerin mekanları sıradan yerler olup bir oturması odasından tutun, gelin odasına, yatak odasına, bir restorana, bir dükkana, dış mekana ve mezarlığa uzanacak şekilde çeşitlidir. Şiir koleksiyonunun bu kısmında mezarlıkta yer alan üç şiir bulunmaktadır: "Teyzesinin Mezarında", "Mezarlıkta", ve "Ay Işığında". Şiirlerde hem ilişkiler hem de insanların gerçekleştirdikleri eylemler yoluyla tayin edilen mekan algısı hem kamu hem de özel mekân olarak değişken bir özellik taşıdığından, bunun tartışılması önem arz etmektedir. Mike Devereux and David Littlefield tarafından ortaya koyulan kamu alanı tanımı ve Daniel J. Solove'nin yapmış olduğu özel alan tariflerinden yola çıkarak bu üç şiirdeki mekânı oluşturan mezarlık, kamu alanı, özel alan ve bunların arasındaki değişkenlikler bakımından devingen bir mekân olarak tartışılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: mezarlık, kamu alanı, özel alan, devingenlik

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Article Text

In his *Satires of Circumstance with Lyrics and Reveries with Miscellaneous Pieces* poetry collection, Thomas Hardy discusses philosophical and moral questions to portray conflicts about human nature. Along with the universal issues discussed, Hardy does not cling to one form of poetry which makes the poems rich in form and which frees the speakers of the poems from any possible limitation caused by form. Hardy touches upon numerous issues on human nature leaving the reader with questions, without providing a didactic message. The collection consists of six parts namely “Lyrics and Reveries”, “Satires of Circumstance”, “Lyrics and Reveries (continued)”, “Poems of 1912-13”, “Miscellaneous Pieces”, and “Postscript”. The second part “Satire of Circumstance” which is also subtitled as “In Fifteen Glimpses” has fifteen poems. In each poem, there is a scene portraying or dealing with a moral question. The poems represent a grasp of ordinary moments taking place in various places including the cemetery. Three poems, “By Her Aunt’s Grave”, “In the Cemetery”, and “In the Moonlight” reveal a dynamism in the cemetery as both a public and a private space through the spatial activities of people. Thus, the paper aims to discuss how different usages of the cemetery in Hardy’s poems create a dynamism between public and private space allowing reciprocal changes to show the usage as an instrument to define the spaces drawing on public space definitions by Mike Devereux and David Littlefield and private area discussions by Daniel J. Solove.

Cemetery might be thought of not only as a public area but also a private space. According to Kevin Lynch, public area means “all those regions in the environment which are open to [...] people” (254-255). Everyone is welcome in public areas as in the cemeteries. In addition to Lynch’s general definition of public space, to narrow down the definition Sendi and Marusic put forward that “public space is [...] a place outside the boundaries of individual or small-group control, used for a variety of often-overlapping functional and symbolic purposes. Accordingly, people have access to spaces, activities, information, and resources.” The cemetery is a symbolic place in which people visit their dead, talk to them, remember them, and believe that they are in a better place, rather than under the soil. Hence, the cemetery setting in the three poems creates a public environment by gathering people in one area. On the other hand, in cemeteries there are certain designated areas for each person who is dead. These separated areas create a private property for them, and for those who visit them. Those who visit their dead go directly to a certain area to pay their remarks, and share their feelings, not to the other graves because each grave creates a sense of privacy around it, and they are private in that sense because there is a specific person to be visited and to be remembered in a grave. To

elaborate on the discussion, the notion of “ownership” which was suggested by Devereux and Littlefield while defining private space is employed. Thus, graves can be thought of as private areas owned by certain people. The public space / cemetery and the private areas / graves in it create a dynamic environment in which the relationship might change. According to Solove “[p]rivacy involves one's relationship to society; in a world without others, claiming that one has privacy doesn't make much sense,” (1104). The privacy in the poems is created through either the visitors' spatial practices in relation with the dead, or it is violated or recreated through communication with a third party. In the three poems the usage of the space changes the texture of the nature of the space by making it public or private.

To start with the third poem of “In Fifteen Glimpses,” “By Her Aunt's Grave,” the privacy of the space is discussed through the lack of a grave stone and its implications as well as the visitors' relation to the dead, and also the disruption of the privacy through an observer. The poem starts near a grave, with two people, a woman and a man. The title gives the relationship of the woman to the dead. When Solove's definition of privacy is employed, the grave could be named as a private area from the beginning because of the relationship between the woman and the dead. The reason why the woman and the man are there is not given, but it could be just for a visit, which is also a private event. This private event is observed by a speaker, who sees and hears the conversation between the woman and the man, conveying it to the reader. Not only in accordance with the notion of ownership which is suggested by Devereux and Littlefield in private space because of the ownership of the grave by the dead aunt, but also applying the relationship of the woman to the aunt in line with Solove's privacy definition, the dead aunt's grave could be referred as a private area. In the first six lines, the girl makes a confession of how her aunt trusted her with the headstone money, and how she hasn't fixed it yet. The poem directly starts with the mention of the money:

“Sixpence a week,” says the girl to her lover,
 “Aunt used to bring me, for she could confide
 In me alone, she vowed. 'Twas to cover
 The cost of her headstone when she died.
 And that was a year ago last June;
 I've not yet fixed it. But I must soon.” (Hardy 1919)

The woman's speech reveals the owner of the grave, the aunt, and consequently makes it a private area. On the other hand, the reason why the woman might have needed to explain it could be the absence of the headstone which undermines the privacy of the aunt's grave. Without the headstone, only the

ones who know the certain place might go there to visit the aunt, but the other people might not know who lies there. For the others, the grave is an ordinary one. In addition to that, the secret shared by the woman disrupts the privacy between the aunt and the woman as she reveals it to a third party. Solove explains this with the notion of secrecy as an element of privacy, and he states that unveiling of the secrecy might result in a loss in privacy (1103). On the other hand, Solove also explains privacy with relations among people, and the relation between the woman and the man could allow the sharing of the secret. In a way, the shared secret on the gravestone disrupts the privacy between the aunt and the woman affecting the private area, however, it builds up a new one between woman and the man, which is an alternative space, not in line with the aunt's grave. However, the reaction of the man disrupts the created alternative private area as he says:

“And where is the money now, my dear?” (Hardy 1919)

The man takes the topic of the conversation, which started with the mention of the money and developed into a confession, back to the money issue as if the confession did not matter. Since he ignores the private issue, and since the privacy is created through relations, his attitude disrupts it. By ignoring the fact about the gravestone which is a tool to designate the area, he disregards the privacy of the grave. The answer of the woman helps the disappearance of the privacy and private place as she continues:

“O, snug in my purse . . . Aunt was *so* slow
 In saving it—eighty weeks, or near.” . . .
 “Let’s spend it,” he hints. “For she won’t know.
 There’s a dance to-night at the Load of Hay.”
 She passively nods. And they go that way. (Hardy 1919)

The wording of the woman hints the disappearance of the private area as the noun form of snug might be used while referring to public areas. According to Oxford Language Dictionary, the first meaning of snug as an adjective is “comfortable, warm, and cosy; well protected from the weather or cold.” On the other hand, the second meaning of the word as a noun form is related to public which might be a sign of the change in the nature of the space towards a public one since it means “a small, comfortable public room in a pub or inn.” After the location of the money is revealed, the man directly suggests spending it, supporting his offer with the fact that the dead aunt will be ignorant of it. His attitude towards the issue is totally materialistic, not caring about the morals, or responsibilities. He even finds a place to spend the money, and the woman who is related to the aunt and who was trusted with the money decides to spend it not on the headstone but on a dance with the man. After they make

sure of their plan, they leave the grave. While their visit to the grave, there is not one word or action addressed to the aunt, which contradicts with the woman's relation to the dead. Till the sixth line, the private issue about the headstone is revealed to the man, but the aunt who was the topic of their conversation is only addressed as a third person to mention the money issue. In her visit to the aunt, the woman's spatial activities are mostly on talking to the man and talking about money. It creates a conflict with her relation to the aunt. After the man's suggestion of spending the money on a dance, she "passively nods" accepting his offer instead of rejecting him - to protect the private area and to keep it by fixing the headstone. Her passivity helps break the privacy, and their leaving the grave means the headstone might never be fixed at all. Although the grave of the aunt is a private area through the ownership of the aunt, and through the relation of the visitor the aunt, it also gains a dynamic aspect via the conversations between the woman and the man, and their spatial activities, namely becoming a public area due to the failure to address the visited dead, and due to the absence of a headstone which would designate the space privately to the others.

In the sixth poem, "In the Cemetery", the cemetery as a public space changes into a private area not only through the mothers' visit to their deceased children, but also through the speaker's learning a secret about the nature of the grave. The children mentioned share a public grave, which creates an ambivalence in the sense of privacy as the word public challenges the sense of privacy whereas the word grave highlights a private area for the dead. According to Natural History Museum, graveyards in London were overcrowded in the 1800s. This situation "[...] meant relatively fresh graves were broken into while new ones were being dug, and corpses were dismembered in order to make room for more [...]." Hence, the children might be citizens who died at different times but who were buried in the same grave because of the "overcrowding of the dead" as it is given in the poem "[b]ut all their children were laid therein / [a]t different times, like sprats in a tin,". The records of the same institution also state that a cholera epidemic which occurred in 1848 caused the death of 60.000 people. This resulted in the closure of the graveyards in the city center and relocation of the deceased to areas outside the city. The children might be some of those who were relocated. Although how many children there were in the grave is not stated, it is a mass grave which could be regarded as a public space. However, the visit of the mothers changes its nature into a private area as each, except one of them, sees the grave as an entity only belonging to their children demarcating the area by saying "[...] mine lies here." It is also in accordance with Solove's privacy definition as he explains privacy through designations made by people because of their relationships. Thus, the women's

relation to the dead might be seen as an element which makes the space a private one. The mothers argue about where their children lie, and a removal of one's flowers on the grave, as each claim that the grave belongs to their child, except one:

One says in tears, 'Tis mine lies here!
 Another, 'Nay, mine, you Pharisee!
 Another, 'How dare you move my flowers
 And put your own on this grave of ours!' (Hardy 1919)

The first and the second mother claim the grave as their child's, but the third mother denounces the other mothers since they fail to acknowledge the fact that there are more than one child in the grave, and they moved away the her flowers and planted their own. The difference in their perspective also underlines the sense of privacy and its demonstration by the mothers. Although the first and the second mother see the grave as a private area, they do so only by regarding the fact that there are other children in the grave. The other children's existence in the grave might be a disruption of privacy for them. However, the third mother recognizes the presence of the other children in the grave since she calls the grave as "this grave of ours[.]" She seems to be able to keep her sense of privacy as well as acknowledging the existence of the others in the grave. The removal of the flowers, on the other hand, might be interpreted as a reaction as the first and the second mother. Thus, they change it by planting their own flowers inserting a sense of privacy in the grave. In this part of the poem, the area is bestowed with the characteristics of a private one due to the activities of the mothers. In line nine, on the other hand, a truth which is revealed by the man of the cemetery might change the nature of the grave:

"And then the main drain had to cross,
 And we moved the lot some nights ago,
 And packed them away in the general foss
 With hundreds more. But their folks don't know,
 And as well cry over a new-laid drain
 As anything else, to ease your pain!" (Hardy 1919)

The man of the cemetery reveals a secret to the speaker who thinks there are children in the grave like "sprats in a thin." On the other hand, the speaker's relation to the children is not known. He might be a relative of the dead or not. If he is a relative, then the sense of privacy of the space for him or her is lost. However, if he/she is a stranger to the children, there is no relation to create or disrupt his or her sense of privacy. On the other hand, the discourse of the man of the cemetery transforms the place into a public area as he describes their dismembering of the bodies from the grave "in [a] general foss." To turn back

the mothers, there is a valid question to be asked: Is it the nature of the place which makes it private or public, or is it the perspective and the actions of the people who form an idea of the space in their minds? Drawing on Solove's definition of the private space in terms of relations, it might be suggested here that the mother's relation to the space makes it private area even though in reality their children are not lying there. This reality is unknown to the mothers. For them, the area belongs to their children whereas for the man of the cemetery the area is a piece of soil under which a pipeline crosses. The cemetery plays a dynamic role in which it becomes a private one through the mothers, and it loses its characteristics of a private area through the man of the cemetery and his actions.

The fifteenth poem, "In the Moonlight" illustrates a dynamism in space creating a private area through the actions of a visitor and his addressing to the dead, and a disruption of this private area caused by and intervention, which might turn the space into a public area. The poem consists of a dramatic dialogue between two speakers one of which is visiting a grave, and another who starts the conversation addressing the visitor. Thus, they are called as the visitor and the observer. The visit of the first speaker to the grave is a spatial activity, and his being there near the grave creates a private area which might signal not to be disturbed. However, he is disturbed by the observer through his speech:

"O lonely workman, standing there
In a dream, why do you stare and stare
At her grave, as no other grave there were?"

By addressing the visitor, the second speaker disrupts the privacy of the visitor who is visiting the grave. Solove defines such issues as privacy problems as the private activity is disturbed by an intervening element (1088). With the intervention, the attention of the visitor turns from the grave to the observer. This results in a disconnection in the moment of privacy between the visitor and the dead. By interrupting privacy, and creating an interaction with the visitor, the observer transforms the space into a public one by using its dynamism. Their chatting, on the other hand, supports the privacy as the man gives details about his relationship to the dead. This creates a sharing of private information between the two men, and the space between them turns into a private one through their conversation. The second speaker comments on:

"If your great gaunt eyes so importune
Her soul by the shine of this corpse-cold moon,
Maybe you'll raise her phantom soon!" (Hardy 1919)

The observer ridicules the man's gaze on the grave as defining it to "importune" which means "to make repeated, forceful requests for something, usually in a way that is annoying or causing slight problems" (Cambridge Dictionary). He expresses the situation as if the first speaker is troubling the dead by staring at the grave. From this expression, it might be inferred that it is not the observer who disturbs the privacy of the grave, but it the visitor who "annoys" the dead by insistently staring at the grave. In that account, the cemetery gains a dynamism between these two people due to their spatial activities and their conversation. The visit brings about the private feature of the space, and the conversation turns it into a public one. The relationship between the visitor and the observer is not given. They might know each other, or they might not. However, the observer seems to be ignorant of the relationship that the visitor and the dead had had:

"Why, fool, it is what I would rather see
Than all the living folk there be;
But alas, there is no such joy for me!"

The visitor's answer to the observer might be illustrated as an evoking of the public feature of the space, allowing different people who might not know each other to be in the same locality, and maybe to communicate as in Lynch's public space definition. The topic which they talk about, on the other hand, is related to the dead and the visitor, and their relationship. Although the distance between these two men, which is not known in measure but which allows them to communicate, shows an aspect of a public space letting these people to be in the same locality. With the topic of their talk, the distance between them which protects the private area is overcome through their mention of the relationship which turns the space into a private one. From this point of view, the area shows both public and private space features. The conversation lets the observer to assume the relationship from the visitor's answer. Thus, he claims:

"Ah—she was one you loved, no doubt,
Through good and evil, through rain and drought,
And when she passed, all your sun went out?"

However, the claim is rebutted by the answer of the visitor as he explains the situation was the opposite:

"Nay: she was the woman I did not love,
Whom all the others were ranked above,
Whom during her life I thought nothing of."

Even the visitor's relation to the dead is challenged by his description of the woman as "the woman I did not love". However, from his utterance, it

could be revealed the situation was in the past, and now he loves or wants the woman as he says for her phantom's coming back "[w]hy, fool, it is what I would rather see / [t]han all the living folk there be". The place changes between a public and private area through the spatial activity of the visitor and intervention of the observer. However, the visitor reflects his relation to the dead and creates a private area not only with the dead, but also with the observer making use of the dynamism of the cemetery.

All in all, Hardy's three poems demonstrate how the usages and actions of people might create a dynamism in terms of space making it public and private. In the poems of the "In Fifteen Glimpses," namely "By Her Aunt's Grave," "In the Cemetery," and "In the Moonlight," the dynamism is made possible through utterances made by visitors, as well as the disruption of privacy through third parties. In the first poem discussed, "By Her Aunt's Grave," the grave is discussed as a private entity building upon the definitions on privacy made by Devereux and Littlefield as well as Solove. However, the absence of the gravestone creates a lack in the sense of privacy as the others will not know who they grave might belong to. Also, the conversations between the visitors might be seen as a disruption to the private area as they result in a decision on spending the headstone money. The observer, who is the speaker of the poem, also figuratively disintegrates the private area by conveying a private scene to the readers. The second poem in this paper, "In the Cemetery" presents how the perception of a space affects its sense of privacy. The mothers who pay a visit to their children's grave regard it as a private area. However, the place's privacy is threatened as the children do not actually lie there. Even though the mothers take the grave as a private area, the man of the cemetery disrupts this privacy not only by changing the location of the dead. In the last poem discussed, "In the Moonlight," the cemetery's dynamism is made possible through a private visit by a visitor to a grave, and its intervention by a third party. While the visit to the dead underlines the private characteristic of the area, the intervention by a third party emphasizes the public characteristic of it. Thus, it is not only the nature of the space which makes it private or public, but it is the perception of people, and actions of them which endow the space with such qualities.

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