International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences
Vol-10, Issue-6; Nov-Dec, 2025

Peer-Reviewed Journal
Journal Home Page Available: https://ijels.com/
Journal DOI: 10.22161/ijels

Narrating Ambiguity: Spatial and Spectral Politics in Mario Vargas Llosa's *The Green House*

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Received: 17 Nov 2025; Received in revised form: 14 Dec 2025; Accepted: 18 Dec 2025; Available online: 23 Dec 2025

Abstract— *This paper proposes that in Llosa's The Green House the "movement" of narratives map terrains of power-invested ideological and discursive spaces which are allegories of postcolonial Peru. However, the multiple fragments of narrative time-lines challenge any understanding of these spaces as seamless and cohesive. I argue that the rhizomatic narrative courses tease out the discrepancies and contradictions inherent in modernity as a historical and social project, serving the interests of a liberal market economy and neo liberal state. The generic linearity of spatial allegories with its dominant voices and discourses of progress, development, and humanistic ethics disintegrates through hauntings of diverse perspectives and narrative discourses that reveal the past's systemic excesses of violence, exploitation, exclusion, and normalization. By relating insights from spatial theories, specifically, literary cartography and geocriticism, to views of allegory as symbolic places of embodied movement infused with meaningful spatio-temporal memories and interactions of power, the idea of spatial allegories as discourse is employed to provide a critical frame for reading the text. Further, the concept of specters offers possibilities for understanding spaces as marked by tangible and intangible traces left by historical-political events and ideologies, which question the State's claims of democracy and justice. A spatial reading of the text also reveals an ambiguity in Llosa's portrayal of Latin American modernity, visible in the interpenetrative, dialectical spatial structures and geographies. This, I claim, is an artistic response of the novel to the challenges of adequately portraying the complexities of spaces and voices in postcolonial Peru.*

Keywords— ***Cartography, Spatial allegory, Spatial narratives, Spectres, Mario Vargas Llosa***

I. INTRODUCTION

Mario Vargas Llosa's *The Green House* (1968) is a monumental work of Latin American literature that delves into the socio-political realities of Peru, painting a vivid portrait of exploitation, power dynamics and cultural disintegration in the wake of neo-colonialism and emerging neo-liberal capitalism. The narrative shifts fluidly between the arid desert town of Piura, the lush Amazon jungles, and the jungle outpost of Santa Maria de Nieva. The story is narrated in a fluid non-chronological manner interweaving the past and the present through disjointed conversations from different time periods by characters who assume different personas, at various points of the narratives and phases of their lives, so that they inhabit several places simultaneously leading to a story that is complex and layered. This study argues that in Llosa's *The Green House* the "movement" of narratives map terrains of power-invested ideological and discursive spaces which are allegories of postcolonial Peru. The generic linearity of spatial allegories with its dominant voices and discourses of progress, development, and humanistic ethics disintegrates through hauntings of multiple perspectives and narrative discourses that reveal modernity's systemic excesses of violence, devaluation, exploitation, exclusion, and normalization. In addition, these tangible and spatially-defined geographies and structures reveal the ambiguous and contradictory nature of modernity in Latin America through a kind of interpenetrative, dialectical structure.

II. METHODOLOGY

The framework of this analysis weaves together theories of space and allegory, using Foucault's discourse analysis to read narrative 'movement,' and its spectral response to power. In literature, representations of places are not mere descriptions of real or imaginary spaces. They also capture, are permeated with the experiences of place and outside-of-place, the interrelatedness between lived experience and a more abstract or unrepresentable spatial network that subtly or directly shapes it (Tally, 2014, p. x) [1]. And then all descriptions take place in time, demanding a coherence between spatial description and temporal narration. In such literary spatio-temporal scapes, varying clusters of historical, political, economic and societal development, sequences, and periods give rise to discursive practices, materially and imaginatively experienced as text.

Henri Lefebvre (1991) [2] challenged the binary notions of real/concrete and imagined/abstract spaces by introducing the third term of lived space which incorporated the subjective and lived experiences of individuals within that space. Later, Edward Soja (1996) [3] introduced the concept of 'thirdspace,' a space of possibility, negotiation, transaction, and redefinition; a dynamic and fluid realm shaped by social, cultural, and personal experiences. In doing so, both of them, in their own way, argue that space is understood as physical, mental and social landscape of users in everyday life, which is imbued with meaning in place-bound social practices, influenced by wider economic and political processes, and which emerges through processes that operate over varying spatial and temporal scales.

However, it was Michel Foucault who viewed space as "fundamental in any exercise of power" (Gregory, 1994, pp. 62-63) [4]. His analysis of architectural and urban spaces in a surveillant society, in which sets of relations are exchanged and circulated are in fact attempts to chart historically-specific discursive transactions that generate meanings through the accumulation and centralization of particular forms of knowledge; significations that indicate established sites of power. This lent to space both metaphoric and material dimensions. And the transformation from metaphor to allegory is only one of an extended movement of indirection or abstraction

Ordered times that 'take place' and, distinct loci that represent both individual and collective notions of what is appropriate to remember are infused into the places of allegory. These loci facilitate movement and this "kinesis of allegory" is a necessary component of appropriating the symbolic meaning of an "object or event" (Clifford, 1974. p. 12) [5]. The symbolic significations are endowed with epistemological and cultural legitimacy through the way they treat the places as metaphors that order the social or political or religious landscape. So, allegories as forms of discourse create, plot, and define spaces imbued with power configurations, carrying complex ideas, emotions, and intentions, and shaping social interactions. Richard Angelo Bergen (2022) in a similar vein, identifies in medieval and early modern allegorical narratives a spatial trope in which several layers of temporality are self-consciously embodied in the movement of an allegorical world, spatially, externalizing ideas about individual and collective memory (p. 6) [6]. Both Clifford and Bergen emphasise embodied movement, that is, the progress of narrative through and in space, to create worlds. But their analyses are limited to the generic aspects and stylistic devices of allegory that tend to pose allegory and space in opposition to each other.

Walter Benjamin's apprehensions about a history in danger of disintegration and loss of purpose led him to theorize allegory as a narrative response in which physical things become symbolic signs of mortality and fragmented meaning (Cowan, 1981, p. 110) [7]. Subsequently, the past continues to persist as "remains" or shards, appearing in new contexts and imbuing physical objects, the process an expression of the inaccessibility of truth (Cowan, 1981, p. 110, 115) [7]. Benjamin's allegory images spaces as material objects that create a spatial-temporal interruption at once revelatory of the inherent contradiction of something (Wolf, 2025) [8]. Jacques Derrida (1994) builds upon and extends Benjamin's critique of historical continuity through the concept of the specter, in the context of Marxism persisting as a ghost haunting the "New World Order," global capitalism (p. viii) [9]. The specter for him is an assertion of the active presence and remnants of an unresolved past in the present as fragments and/or as inherited "injustices" (Derrida, 1994, p. 80) [9]. Derrida's specter is a ghostly presence that haunts both material and symbolic spaces, spatializing the past by inhabiting and destabilizing existing spaces, forcing a recognition of the present as a site of historical struggles and ethical obligations.

As forms of discourse, allegories bring worlds patterned by power interactions into existence. If the movement of the worlds, in and through them, embody layered temporalities of memories, values, and ideas spatialized as events, then it follows that the fragmentation of these allegorical spaces by discontinuities of (narrative) movements is nothing short of a Benjaminite "shock" (Benjamin as cited in Wolf, 2025) [8]. What ensues from this are revenants of memories, otherings, exclusions, and forgettings brought into the present through hauntings, a spectral language emerging out of the folds of fractured timelines and destabilized geo-spatialities, rendering impermanent any attempt at a cohesive vision.

III. ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

In *The Green House* the Amazonian jungles with their unpredictable rains, ghost trees, and 'savage' natives, the sand-raining deserts, and the undulating rivers interspersed with isolated seasonal islands, dominate the landscape. The trading outpost of Santa Maria de Nieva and the sandstorm beaten town of Piura which resist the encroaching wilderness have been deterministically read as binary oppositions to the untamed (De Castro, 2010) [10], a parodic depiction which amounts to "a hurtful laugh about the cultural enterprise of man in Modernity" (Rodrigo Cánovas as cited in Rogers, 2016, p. 10) [11]. However, I argue that these spaces are not notional juxtapositions of dichotomies of barbarism vs civilization, tradition vs modern, or colonial vs postcolonial, in conflict with each other. Rather, they infiltrate each other; the intractability of the land, and attempts to traverse and chart it is an aesthetic response to the inadequacy of narrating postcolonial Peru, and the unwieldiness of the framework of the novel to accommodate its diverse spaces and voices. This dilemma is cartographically charted by Don Aquilino and the fugitive Fushía's journey through the Marañón to the leper colony at San Pablo. Hiding from the soldiers, ducking low boughs of trees, lost among the channels of the Marañón through landscapes that are part of the narrative unfolding of the past, these memory pathways open up bits and pieces of conversations, confessions, monologues from different time frames, in different locales, varied perspectives that run onto each other, providing glimpses of the past and history of the region. The juxtaposition of narrators and narratives responding to the same event enlarges perspectival insights, complicating any understanding of it.

Narratives, like maps, are meaningful because they are always-already situated in some sort of spatiotemporal context (Tally 30) [1]. As spatial representations, they aid our attempts to give meaningful form to the world in which we live. The rhizomatic narrative routes Aquilino and Fushía's journey charts are intertwined with spaces infused with discourses of power and conflict. Here, the concept of 'rhizomatic' is used both in the sense of a non-linear narrative structure that can be entered into at any point to chart connections with other points (Stivale, 2005, p.150, 52) [12], as well as to refer to networks that establish "connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power and circumstances relative to…social struggles" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 5, 7) [13]. The social dimensions of space mapped by the heterogeneity of narratives in the context of Llosa's work is to be understood, as Massey puts it, in the sense of engagement within a multiplicity- spheres where diversity, subordination, conflicting interests are continuously produced and reproduced (Massey, 2008, p. 61) [14]. Santa Maria de Nieva is the military-cum-trading outpost from where the soldiers launch out from the Borja garrison into the jungles to carry out a variety of missions in the service of the State. It is a marshy desolate place, but a nerve centre so to say, where a liberal market economy overseeing the collection and distribution of Amazonian raw materials and peoples from the peripheral regions to the urban centres, overlap with 'winning souls for God" (Llosa. 2008, p. 103) [15], and suppressing dissent - a supplement of the surveillant political state, reproducing the structure of crony-state capitalism.

Despite the overriding display of power and social control, of linear progress and development, of arrivals and departures, the space is fraught with ruptures. The permanent edifices of power in Santa Maria de Nieva conceal the transitional nature of the space for humans and/as goods. There is a succession of Governors and army officers on 'transfer.' The place is one of the many staging areas for plundering Amazonian resources and inhabitants, not only by the State but also by "foreigners, some Englishmen," citing botanical research that had ruined the Amazon region (Llosa, 2008, p. 147) [15]. This transitional state of politics and economy infuses the spatial geography of the town. It is a counter-site, a simultaneous representation and inversion of the sites that it reflects and speaks about (Foucault, 1984, p. 3-4) [16].

Outside of the urban centres of power, yet legitimized by that same power, such a border heterotopia can only be a space of power's excesses and denial of the 'human' through exclusion. It is here that Jum is brought to after being assaulted and captured by an expedition of soldiers, his hair - a symbol of Aguaruna pride - shaved, tied to the flagpole in the square, whipped, and left hanging for hours as punishment for beating up a Corporal and refusing to sell rubber to the agents (Llosa, 2008, pp. 122-24; 145-47) [15]. The little girl with him is forcefully taken away to the Mission, a site where the soul, the mind, and the body are deracinated: "'They cut off his hair to get rid of the devil he had inside of him.' Sister Angelica said….in the case of the little Indian girls to get rid of the lice." (p. 77) [15]. Implicit are colonial and postcolonial discursive linking of filth with crime, concerns of order, and immorality important to the broader project of modernity (McFarlane, 2008) [17]. And to borrow McFarlane's argument, the biopolitics of hygiene is not just about fear over illness, disease, or savagery, but about facilitating the production of the Mission/town in tune with capitalism's impetus (p. 25) [17].

The hidden violence of discourse and its visible expressions often mistakenly associated with the historical discourse of conquest as territorial acquisition of a previously existing population (Urioste, 2000, p. 241) [18], overlooks the

spatialization of violence as an effect of more recent attempts by the State to subdue already existing populations unwilling to comply with the dominant national project. Taking a cue from Edwin Wilmsen (Massey, 2008, p. 67) [14], we can argue that a network of varying spatial configurations existed even before the arrival of the so-called 'modern' civilisation. Attempts to subdue the natives through violence are not very different from the continuing historical tensions, animosities and conflicts between the ethnic groups the Aguarunas, the Shapras and the Huambisas. The interconnections between the latter expose the lay of the land figuratively and literally in the ascriptions of isolation, and presupposed poverty of "garbage pupils" (Llosa, 2008, p. 37, 290) [15], as legacies, both discursive and material, of colonialism, carried forward by the postcolonial state. The categories of "savage" and "polycephalic animals" (p. 19) [15] to refer to native girls in the Mission are constructions carried over from colonialism's social and allied evolutionary discourses. The girls are interpellated by religion and capitalism as "heathens," "souls for God," "family servants" (p. 99, 103) [15]. And their intersection by the military in carrying out the project of modernity is marked by ethical ambiguity: "'It wasn't right to snatch…children like that'" …. "'It was for their own good…To teach them how to dress, read, and talk like Christians'" (p. 111) [15]. Implicit in these categories are conceptualisations of space and time that were central to the construction of a particular form of power/knowledge.

The multiple narrative trajectories criss-crossing this space introduce into it an 'excess' of dissonant narratives, a challenge to the geography of modernity. One such narrative is the discursive mode of confession which is intrinsically related to truth and power. The convent, which combines a "heterotopia of compensation" in attempting to create a space that is other, as perfect, as well-arranged in contrast to the outpost which is ill-constructed and unwieldy, as well as a space of "illusion" where this perfection is constantly exposed as illusory, is the site of the disciplinary confession ritual/technology (Foucault, 1984, p. 8) [16]. The governor of Nieva, Fabio Cuesta seeking an audience with the Mother Superior to request girls from the convent for Dr. Portillo's wife in Iquitos who would be made to "work like animals," hardly paid a cent, "felt he was in a confessional" (Llosa, 2008, p. 105) [15]. However, given the inherently paradoxical nature of this space, the discursive mode of confession which is the equivalent of the religious experience (Greenblatt, 205, p. 245) [19] can no longer maintain its claim to absolute integrity. It is instead invoked not as the formal auricular rite of penitence, nor as a generalised self-scrutiny with the aim of reconcilement with a [spiritual] community, but as a discursive game to expose the fabrications of power. Questioned about her role in the escape of the two Aguaruna girls from the Mission, Bonifacia's denial pre-empts the truth-and-submission objective of the confession through insistence on the unreliability of language as either lost language or "stories:"

> …And Bonifacia could barely understand them, Mother, because they spoke in such a strange way. Here they would have something to eat every day and *they we* want to leave, here they would be happy and *they we* want to leave, and she began to tell them stories about the Infant Jesus that the little Indians liked so much, Mother [emphasis mine].
>
> "That's what you're best at." The Mother Superior said. "Telling stories…. (Llosa. 2008. p. 75) [15]

Even as she affirms the purpose of the Mission she simultaneously refutes its apparent moral vision with the first and third person pronouns slipping into each other in a game of loss of language. At a deeper level it recalls a history of stolen origins and forced indigenous assimilation. The power structures inscribed in the confession rite which determine what is 'truth' are confronted by rendering confession into a performative utterance, its mimicry exposing authority's right to judge and diminish the confessant as hypocritical.

The confession mode is a connecting thread which links different spaces. In the jungles extending beyond the outpost, Aquilino calls himself Lalita's "confessor" (Llosa, 2008, p. 80) [15]. Their exchanges retrieved by the geo-memories plotted by Aquilino's and Fushía's fugitive journey on the river, evoke individual histories and those of their friendship, rhizome-like, filling the gaps in preceding narratives, offering multiple perspectival entry points into the story. Giving birth in the jungle with Aquilino as midwife, Lalita's breathless questions punctuated by birthing pains elicit a stream of fragmented memories and conversations (pp. 244-45) [15]. They serve as a form of commentary that uses the past to speak indirectly about the present, a quality typical to allegory. It adheres to what James Clifford, in the context of ethnography, argues about allegory as "a practice in which a narrative…continuously refers to another pattern of ideas or events" (pp. 99-100) [5]. Considering the extent to which these narrative representations are "convincing," they are "extended metaphors, patterns of associations that point to coherent (theoretical, aesthetic, moral) additional meanings" (p. 100) [5].

Piura, situated on the Malecon river, is surprisingly not part of the narrative waterways of Aquilno and Fushía's journey. A pioneering town, it is a place whose geocritical coordinates are mapped and policed by cultural codes of class, race and morality, by shared stories and rituals. Buffeted by winds and raining sand at dusk, isolated from

the rest of the country by lack of roads, the long trips on horseback, and bandit attacks (Llosa, 200, p. 27) [15], it is a space which carries the markers of modernity in its spatialization of economy, yet bounded by the templates of an earlier social and cultural ethos apparent in its pre-industrial-like urban layout.

It is into this ordered, entrenched universe lacking "women and nighttime" (Llosa, 2008, p. 27) [15], surrounded by the desert with its shifting sand dunes which seem to have a life of its own, that the mysterious Don Anselmo, capitalism's purveyor, arrives on an almost-dead mule and builds a brothel, the Green House, in the desert, on the other side of the river at the edge of Piura. Although the original Green House no longer exists in the present, in Mangache tales it was said to be situated near the other side of the Old Bridge, "growing, ripening" like a "living organism" (p. 88) [15], its green colour giving "the countryside a refreshing, a vegetable, an almost liquid note" creating the illusion of an oasis in the desert. This liminal space, with its inherent surreality is a distortion of the familiar moral and socio-cultural codes that sustain the ordered world of Piura. Charged with mystery and power, it is a heterotopic space of illusion (Foucault, 1984, p. 8) [16] catering to desires and fantasies, facilitating the consumption of female sexual bodies, companionship, validating masculinity and providing a temporary escape from societal norms. It also underscores the complex power dynamics in the constructedness of 'ordinary' life, with the site of the religious represented by Father Garcia who "stigmatized license with verses from the Bible" (p. 86) [15] coming into confrontation with the sites of law and governance represented by the Chief of Police and the Mayor. These sites are productive forces that shape material, social and mental spaces.

The Green House is also the threshold moment of the arrival of aggressive capitalism to Piura that shares a complicated relation with the aforementioned sites. As its clientele increase, Don Anselmo's prosperity is "translated into a horizontal and vertical expansion" of the brothel (Llosa, 2008, p. 88) [15], space measured, planned, and commodified for the purposes of capital accumulation. Capital reorders social framework, time and relationships. The brothel is a site of consumption where bodies, food and music sourced with meticulous care from both outside and within Piura serve to enhance an atmosphere of suspended reality that is characteristic of thresholds. Contributing to its sense of impermanence are the names of the inmates, 'Firefly,' 'Froggy,' 'Flower,' 'Butterfly,' an indication of the depersonalisation of identities in an economy built on desires and their reification as objects of commerce. Yet, as with all thresholds, it carries the paradoxical function of physically and symbolically connecting and separating spaces. The tower of the brothel in which Don Anselmo lives, access to which is prohibited to all, in a panopticon-like fashion allows him to survey "the parade of visitors through the desert… those hungry beasts" (p. 89) [15], and the distant expanse of the town. The all-permeating presence of the brothel creates a thriving economy of beggars, vendors, tramps and voyeurs around it. It simultaneously effects a transition in Piura which with the influx of outsiders changes the look of the city and makes the streets dangerous. The discourse of the brothel is built on those of moral anxiety and stigma, political and economic freedom and legality, and the conflicting portrayal of sex work as a form of exploitation and a consensual occupation.

Burnt down to the ground by a mob of angry Gallinazo women after the discovery of the dead, missing blind-mute child, Antonia, kidnapped away by Don Anselmo to the brothel, all physical and geographical traces of the Green House are erased. In avoiding the neighbourhoods near the river, it is "as if he had decided to live far from his memories and the desert" (Llosa, 2008, p. 223) [15], an indication of how space and movement are tied to the constitution and retrieval of memory. Blinded by age and reduced to penury, Don Anselmo becomes a harp player, a familiar figure frequenting chicha bars, and is eventually hired by Chunga, his daughter with Antonia, proprietor of the new Green House. When asked about his brothel, the harp player denies its existence: "there never was any fire, any Green House….People made it all up boys" (p. 209) [15]. The rapid urbanisation of Piura is predicated on a similar geocritical language of violence, forgetting and palimpsestic specters. Working class neighbourhoods disappear or mysteriously burn down overnight, supplanted by wealthy ones inhabited by whites, as locals are driven out by administrative and law and order authorities, With the exception of the Mangacheria district, there is a simultaneous reconfiguration of social and moral values. Along with the stores, hotels and residential neighbourhoods, brothels proliferate, as demoralised parish priests and ladies give up protesting. The changes in urban space are coterminous with an exacerbated commodification of sexual acts and bodies driven by gender, age-related and racial inequalities, and exploitation in a profit-oriented human flow of liberal capitalist economy.

The new Green House run by Chunga, behind the stadium at the edge of the city in a poor suburb, "rises up, singular and central, like a cathedral" (Llosa, 2008, p.126) [15]. However, the atmosphere it evokes is not just a comment on any latent discourse of morality and sexuality. The cannibalistic discourse of the brothel, in the description of Mulata Sandra with "her red gums, her gold teeth,"

suddenly falling on a young man "like a giant cat, kissing him avidly on the mouth," and he "struggling in her dark arms, a fly in a spider's web" and the champs holding him, "here he was Sandra, we give him to you, eat him up raw, she was kissing him, biting" (p. 170) [15], leading to a kind of convulsive enthusiasm invading the group, is an affect of the crisis in capitalism in the present. Don Anselmo's kidnapping and subsequent abuse of the blind-mute Antonia; Wildflower/ Bonifacia's journey from the jungles to the brothel; Lalita's forced reproductive labour despite not wanting any more children; indigenous children and Urakusa women abused by the military in the course of operations on indigenous villages; the soldiers sexually assaulting washerwomen and servant girls in the derelict spaces between the brothel and the Grau barracks, are not notations of random crises of inequality, precarity, social reproduction, migration, racialised violence, and militarism in Peru, but as Nancy Fraser would argue, a "crisis of the entire societal order in which all those calamities converge, exacerbating one another and threatening to swallow us whole" (Fraser, 2002, p. 17) [20]. It brings together in a single frame all the oppressions, contradictions, and conflicts of the present conjuncture, accumulated through history, underscoring how differing configurations of structural and systemic injustice remain entrenched over time. Class exploitation, gender domination and racial oppression are by-products as well as causal factors in a spatialised chain of events that enables cannibalistic capitalism.

The fragmented polyvocal narratives decontextualize events freeing them from their moorings into a state of flux so that they spread across different time-lines and spatialities, underscoring the unfinished business of history. Don Anselmo's reinstatement into society is facilitated by a change in the affective landscape of Piura accompanying the burning of the Green House and the discovery of the baby. However, the transformation of the urban landscape also brings about a change in situated ethics and in memory. This is reflected in Dr Zevallos recounting of the incident years later, after the death of Don Anselmo, to Father Garcia that he "came to feel sorrier for Anselmo than for Antonia….If you could have seen him, kicking and kissing my feet so I'd save the girl, you would have taken pity on him too" (Llosa, 2008, p. 392) [15]. The attempt at normalization through a discourse of humanistic ethics is however complicated by Don Anselmo's confessional soliloquy which manifests as a fractured memory of his abduction and seduction of Antonia: "Open your arms, receive her, see how her head leans on your shoulder…at the same time, careful…kiss her…don't be frightened…I love you, don't cry…her posture is docile again…And then steal her away…you will take care of her…she will be happy with you…." (p. 325) [15]. The use of 'you' in the self-reflective context indicates a subconscious effort to create emotional distance from what he knows is an ethical perversion. The projection of experience to make it seem universal attempts to create a sense of shared experience, but instead evokes horror and implicates him in this monstrous act.

Other specters of neglected injustices fracture the narrative: Lituma's seduction of Bonifacia in Santa Maria de Nieva, and Josefino's forced seduction of a pregnant Bonifacia are lingering memories of trauma that refuse to disappear. As ethical coordinates against erasure and forgetting, specters defer the exhaustion and expropriation of the past that tend to make current norms and power structures seem natural, continuous, and legitimate. Dr. Zevallos' attempt to read "love" and complicity into the relationship between Don Anselmo and Antonia, is countered by Father Garcia's "'Now you think it's normal?'" (Llosa, 2008, p. 394) [15], "He's discovered with age that there's nothing bad in the world" (p. 397) [15]. Ironically, the discourse of religious ethics appears to be the only counter to the supposedly 'secular' ethics of capitalism. But this reproval too dissipates as an aged Father Garcia at Angélica Mercedes' establishment in the Mangachería district, willingly offers to conduct the funeral of Don Anselmo despite his earlier moral outbursts. Meanwhile, Don Aquilino and Fushía's journey ends at the leper colony at San Pablo. With Aquilino's visits becoming fewer as the years pass, conversations become sparse and inconsistent, fragmented bits and pieces of memories of peoples and places. The final image of the ulcerous, disfigured Fushía, "curved, ovoid…purple, violet, iridescent" (p. 367) [15], and silent, captures the dehumanizing and enervating effects of cannibalistic modernity. Aquilino's "I keep on forgetting everything, I can't keep track of things. I'm old, man" (p. 365) [15], signals in a certain sense the narrative limits of restituting 'truth,' and the closure of spatio-temporal scapes as a commentary on power's attempt at stabilizing resistant discourses.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the multiple narrative trajectories in *The Green House* challenge the dominant discourses mirrored in the surface, linear geography of modernity. By spatialising voices located outside the accepted speaking-space of modernity it fractures the power-geometry of dominant discourses and helps expose and undermine their power/knowledge relations. Here, spatial discourses are grounded on a geocritical language of hidden or erased histories of conflict, suppression, and memory that force into view connections between past and present, changing

modernities and economies, and paradoxically, unchanging exploitation and deprivation.

The discursive nature of power evidenced as spatial allegories - the outpost of Santa Maria de Nieva, the jungle islands, Piura, or the Green House – directs generic linearity promoting dominant voices and discourses of the State. However, the rhizomatic narratives that intersect these spaces bring about a layering of different temporalities and multiple voices resulting in a certain coevalness that allow us to see the same event from different perspectives and time-lines. The simultaneous layering of multiple narrative voices and alternative perspectives enlarge insights, directing attention to the porosity of spaces. This bears on an understanding of differing forms of oppression as not isolated issues, but as interconnected elements within a historical and spatialised chain of events that perpetuate a predatory form of capitalism.

In the novel, places rather than being locations of coherence, become the loci of irrupting narrative time-lines that lay bare the inherent discrepancies and contradictions in modernity as a historical and social project. The presumed horizontality of space is but a product of many - acknowledged and supressed, remembered and forgotten - histories whose affects continue to shape the present. The past emerges through the hauntings of polyvalent discourses that fracture the narrative to reveal modernity's systemic excesses of violence and normalization. Memory revives forgotten peoples, events, and contests through confessional discourses using the allegorical form to allow for movement across different physical spaces and geographical contexts, as well as between different ways of knowing and understanding. Historically current neglected injustices return as specters to fracture the narrative making it an arena of possibilities. It spatialises the projects of postcolonial Peru as one lacking accommodation, advancing the cyclical exploitation of indigenous persons, women, and children, couched in the language of ethics and progress. The ambiguity of narrative structure is then an aesthetic response to the inadequacy of narrating postcolonial Peru, and the unwieldiness of the framework of the novel to accommodate its diverse spaces and voices.

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