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### RESEARCH ARTICLE

## RETURN: A MANIFESTO FOR PLACIAL HUMANITIES

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### Abstract

To imbue life with meaning is fundamental in an otherwise restless and anguished existence, where theorization often emerges as a perceived saviour. Yet, the crises facing our hyper-industrialized society—such as the misrecognition of micro-identities, climate change, global terrorism, artificial intelligence, the epidemic of misinformation, and the alienation of labor—have paradoxically become victims of over-theorization. This tendency has, in turn, overshadowed alternative avenues of knowledge such as experience, intuition, and narrative. The Humanities, or Human Sciences, are increasingly challenged not only in addressing these multifaceted crises but also in justifying their relevance in a world dominated by techno-rationalism and consumerism. This paper explores these urgent dilemmas of human identity and the status of the Humanities, and proposes the paradigm of Placial Humanities as a plausible and sustainable response. By investigating the dynamic relationship between people and place, this approach seeks to reground both Humans and the Humanities in their immediate environments. Drawing on the interdisciplinary strengths of Spatiality and Ecocriticism, the paper outlines a manifesto for Placial Humanities—an invitation to reclaim meaning, connection, and hope in an increasingly segmented world.

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### Introduction:-

#### The Condition of the Human and the Humanities today:-

The triumph of humans as the most dominant species on the planet spurred multitudes of intense avenues leading to serious discoordination on both intra and inter-species levels. Where, on the one hand, humans lost contact with their natural dwelling on the way to hyper-urbanization, they also threw upon themselves cut-throat competition and a system of nuclear families in total defiance to the core-essence of being—the interdependent and symbiotic milieu of existence. Besides the recent Corona pandemic, a global threat to humanity and a fallout of the ever-increasing intrusion into wildlife, deeper questions are revolving around the larger objective of the human race, its faulty model of vertical development, lack of clarity with regards to its micro identities and corrupt institutions of knowledge that have grown into business hubs and do not provide overall welfare. Therefore, it is imperative today to discuss these criticalities and bring forth some viable solutions for the sake of reinvention and sustenance of mankind. The corporatization (read commodification) of higher education is dangerously degrading. Martha C. Nussbaum describes the crisis befallen Humanities as “the silent crisis” like cancer which remains unnoticed for a short period but does much damage to societies worldwide in the longer run (Nussbaum 1-2). Talking of the real purpose of education in general and especially humanities, Fish suggests that the core activity of a university is contemplation—an activity which, like virtue, has no end beyond itself (Fish). But the larger question arises: Can we

remain immune to a world that insists on imposing an external yardstick to measure the value of humanities in terms of usability? That seems more like a rhetorical question since the answer is out there for everyone to see. We cannot “sell” humanities, Fish rightly argues, if by that we assume that it enjoys a unique place in the value chain.

Faced with such adversities, humanities are expanding its disciplinary horizon to fuse with other domains of knowledge. The exercises in research for interdisciplinarity, multidisciplinary, and transdisciplinarity in departments of Literature and others are pointers in the direction. Paul Jay calls this method of enhanced knowledge production and dissemination “engaged humanities” that wonderfully fuses distinct domains of knowledge to illuminate human life in ways that physical and even social sciences cannot (Jay 151). This discourse of “engaged humanities”, which we will refer to as “New Humanities”, exists in the space of the third culture that presents some radically new dimensions of understanding the physical, mental and emotional states of existence. It questions the basic assumptions of life and ways of thinking as well. The project of New Humanities that will be discussed in the paper does a two-fold job—critical and constructive. On the one hand, it describes the crisis of the times and then also provides some insightful prescriptions for revamping.

### **The Crisis in Human Condition:-**

Humans reinvent themselves more than any other species on the planet. Unlike other biological competitors, we have the longest span of learning, which suggests that in addition to our genetics, we are largely designed in terms of our cultural DNA. Berry suggests that the historical task of our times is to “reinvent the human”, with critical insights on species levels within the community of their dwelling “by means of story and shared dream experience” (Berry 159). And these challenges today appear to be beyond the capacity and competence of the existing paradigm of understanding, and therefore the latter needs a significant shift.

Berry’s crisp presentation of the goals we are to achieve is very inclusive. Firstly, he suggests that since humans are endowed with the power of reason to shape and reshape our being, we must step out of the current state of impasse and do something about it. This change must be worked through cultures as the problem of “disenchantment of the world” is a universal existential crisis. This reinvention of humans would then be in sync with the life systems along with the elixir, ‘hope’. And all these goals may be delivered well through narratives and imaginative works. This kind of participation in the dream project of earth deserves immediate attention.

To suggest certain lacks, human psyche appears to be a “cognitive miser”. With the least cognitive effort, it endeavors to negotiate the social world and define it. Labelling and stereotyping are some of the mind’s effort-saving strategies as to what does not fit into its classification is termed an aberration. This “ubiquitous blur” is the defining feature of our times which is due to the contradictory state of being—the cognitive miser has a world appetite—a desire to satisfy the intellectual thirst but fails bitterly due to the dynamicity of life that exceeds the limits of rationality often. However, to draw a roadmap for achieving the goals of reinvention of humans, we need to first identify and assess the crisis to be able to draw attention to the elephant in the room. Now let us explore in depth the zones of crisis paralyzing the modern man and woman.

### **Faulty Perception of the Self:**

Since long there has been a negative understanding of human nature prevailing in the society that human beings are inherently selfish and evil beneath a thin layer of civilization. Many great thinkers of the Western tradition presented their different versions of the veneer theory of civilization. Rutger Bregman through his latest book, *Humankind: A Hopeful History* (2020) challenges this nocebo theory through the critique of William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* (1951). Researching on real life *Lord of the Flies*—the shipwrecked boys from *Ata*, Burgman found that the boys civilized the terrain of their dwelling rather than turning themselves wild. But Since Golding’s book was published during the time of the second world war culminating in Auschwitz, where people were questing the inherent goodness of human beings, his work provided an answer so creatively that he won the Noble Prize for being a realist par excellence (Burgman 24). Reading or watching such works makes people more aggressive and violent, since the kind of stories we read has a great impact on our world views. So, it is a pressing time for us to tell a different story to the world to have a different effect.

### **Alienation and Logocentric Society:**

Almost a hundred years ago, Max Weber argued that too much rationalization in modern times has led to “disenchantment of the world”. The Enlightenment movement that dominated Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, centred around the idea of reason, rationality, and logic as the primary source of knowledge. However, Bregman questions and dismantles the popular understanding that we humans are supreme beings because of our brains and power of

intelligence. Since most of the skills we learn in life are from others and other animals like Chimpanzees and Orangutans are far better in spatial understanding and calculations. What makes us truly human is our “passion”. The enlightenment philosophy, therefore, appears to be limiting as it does not account for the essential feature of human — emotions. The concept of alienation discussed by Karl Marx is even more crucial to understand today as the majority of individuals feel estranged from one’s milieu, work or even self. And this estrangement is guided by either incomprehensibility or meaningless redundant activities of life. This lack of fulfilment in beings is also because of the faulty paradigm of their developmental model.

**Unconscious Micro Identities:**

Individuals can belong in concrete and abstract ways to a diverse group of things, from a specific group to the whole human species. Belongingness, however is not just about the construction of identities per se, but how these are valued and judged. The politics of belonging is “the dirty work of boundary maintenance” (N. Y. Davis 204). While on the one hand, identity does provide strength to character and pride, making us do things way beyond our self-centred lives for the people of “our” group, the elixir turns poisonous when directed towards the outsiders. The hope of peace in the contemporary world is indeed predicated on a clearer understanding of the pluralities of human identity and cultivating an appreciation of this fuzziness that works against a sharp distinction along one single hardened line of impenetrable division. Humankind as “consciousness of earth,” needs to establish a new paradigm of human relationship, intellectually and emotionally cutting across artificial borders as “neither the colourless vagueness of cosmopolitanism nor the fierce self-idolatry of nation-worship, is the goal of human history” (Tagore 5).

**Curtailed Existence—Lost Touch with Otherness:**

The American psychologist Gordon Allport researched on the condition of apartheid in South Africa and found that it was not the lack of contact between blacks and white rather their mechanical and limited contact which was the cause of “racial differences”. Allport’s student Pettigrew carried forward this study on contact on different locales and found that contact works but real contact. Too little contact on the other hand, is dangerous. A diversified neighborhood is not immune to xenophobia; quite the reverse, it is more prone to prejudices since little knowledge is a dangerous thing. In the globalized world of ours, connected with technology and social media, prejudices and half-truths are more likely to circulate, and we are witnessing its ramifications.

In addition to the need for cooperation and contact on the human level, our species being also needs to retrieve its contact with the nonhuman. The central flaw of our times, it seems, has been the creation of this rift between human and nonhuman modes of being that has led to desouling. It is a shift from an organic economy to an extractive economy where modern centers of technology and commerce have sucked out renewable and non-renewable sources of energy for material gains. This process was initiated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and continues till today, collapsing our modern economy. Out of the vast storehouse of knowledge of human culture, history, science, religion, and philosophy, we need to now comprehend the crisis of our times and the promise of a new chapter in earth’s history, of that of an Ecozoic era.

**The Crisis in Humanities:-**

The corporatization of higher education, however, seems to have endangered the humanities, which is measured on the yardstick of utility. The question then arises as to whether humanities are important because they foster valuable skills or because they constitute a body of knowledge to be preserved? Ikram Hili proposes that both are important. Since human beings need perspective as well as jobs (Hili 108). Humanities produce analytical skills, mastery of language, critical mind, aesthetic taste, and insights of history that might help to research in any field. It also helps to understand and engage with our society in a better way. But unfortunately, in today’s times, we have our planet filled with technically trained people who though know how to make a profit but not how to make someone smile. With obtuse imagination, they are neither in a condition to challenge or criticize the government for its faulty policies nor can they accept different ways of thinking, thereby turning intolerant of others. Therefore, I will now discuss the diverse causes of crises in the discipline of humanities with a special focus on Literature to be able to save our planet from further degradation.

**Flawed Understanding of Literature:**

Literature, as one of the most crucial disciplines of humanities, has its standalone position of being also the most misunderstood. There originated two rival traditions with regards to Literature and Poetry, specifically during the period of the Classic Greeks and continue till today. The Platonic tradition, with reference to Plato’s Republic (2007) considered Literature as a misinformed narrative that propagated false beliefs in people and made them

irrational, whereas the Neoplatonic tradition extended from the later dialogues of Plato like *Ion* (2020) and *Symposium* (2003), exalted the position of Literature for great spiritual value. Aristotle, Plato's student, founded the middle ground, which can be called the humanistic tradition that pays respect to Literature for providing insights into human life and experiences. For him, it is neither trivial nor spiritual. What it begets is "reflective understanding" that is derived through translucency and extra-conceptual use of language that creates avenues for the immense possibility of creativity (Sayeed 21). Viktor Shklovsky's 1917 essay "Art as Device" makes a crucial argument with regards to the faulty parameters associated with Literature concerning its utility that completely debunks its aesthetic function. Shklovsky instead suggests that Literature works through connotations and not communicative urgency (Shklovsky 12). It is like strolling in the backdrop of other running discourses, which provides a "philosophical pause" to meditate upon the known but lesser understood beings in and around us.

### **Gap between Theory and Praxis:**

Bell Hooks talks of the unfortunate condition of education institutes where there is a divorce between what we read and how we live. It makes the process of learning boring, less valuable, and not worthy. She instead suggests a revolutionary state of learning with regards to the classroom that remains "the most radical space of possibility in the academy" (Teaching to Transgress 12). But there are challenges in every field, including domination in the field of theory. Certain sections of work are given privilege over others that are dismissed as being naïve and unworthy of theorization. The privileged works are often jargonistic and difficult to read, with abstract ideas that remain useless in practical usage. The theory here appears to be instead a kind of hurdle, an elitist, narcissistic hurdle in bringing about change in society. Therefore, the gap between theory and praxis should be minimized to bring in the real potential of theories in the workings of the world. A text, after all, is not merely a spectacle but a catalyst that feeds on reader's imagination to bring positive changes in society. As Toni Cade Bambara, the Latin American author, writes that the job of the writer is to make the revolution irresistible (Bambara 18). Literature does not make revolution, but it can make revolution irresistible. By providing a world of make-belief with alternative models of existence that ensure liberty, equality and fraternity, it paves a wonderful way to practice freedom before it is actualized in the real world.

### **Postmodern Skepticism:**

The hermeneutics of suspicion that began with the sceptic movement of Postmodernism in diverse fields of knowledge soon turned nihilistic and visionless. The American philosopher William James instead proposed the epithet "The Will to Believe" as a corrective measure against Bertrand Russel's phrase "The Will to Doubt". Jean Francois Lyotard, in his work *The Postmodern Condition*, defines it as an "incredulity towards metanarrative" (Lyotard xxiv). But since we have crises of global order around us like climate change, and war crimes, that needs serious interventions, so we need to think in terms of metanarrative. The time is now ripe, therefore, to bring into focus this larger horizon again that seems to have eclipsed under the enormity of smaller concerns. And we need to ask ourselves whether we are ready to take a position beyond reality—within the realms of possibilities? We need to come out of this condition of postmodern vertigo to reorient our society.

### **Placial Humanities: A Post Theoretical Perspective: -**

One of the greatest challenges of the postmodern epoch is hyper-individuality and decline in the experience of community—an organic nexus of active relations. This absolutist discourse of individual identity seems to have forgotten the crucial link between different components of communion that is important for the formation of the self itself. Violence in the name of identity, as already discussed in the previous section, is a highly misunderstood phenomenon where sectarian activists want the targeted people to ignore all other linkages that could moderate their loyalty to a marked "herd" that is seen as inevitably unique and belligerent. The proliferation of identity-related violence all over the world is a dangerous example of this politicization of identities. However, it is not to question the role of identity or its uniqueness, but rather to expose the deterministic tone of cultural theories that leaves no room for heterogeneity. The Jain doctrine of Anekantavada is helpful here in understanding which suggests that ultimate truth and reality are complex and multifaceted, and no one side can describe the whole nature of existence. It is good to therefore begin with the belief that identity is not a closed category. And the best way to deal with identity politics is to dismantle its essentialist definition from within and provide alternative truths of differences. We need to differentiate here between two categories of identities: ideological and organic. Ideological identities, in short, are constructions based on rhetoric and ideation. For example, nation, gender, race, religion etc. The binaries created in these domains have outlived their usefulness, and we are now experiencing hyphenated identities. For example, androgyny, LGBTQ, colourful identities like African-American etc. Organic identities, on the other hand, are non-rhetorical that cannot be hyphenated as such, and will remain for longer. For example, planetary identity, cultural identity and placial identity—that is based on the mutual connection between people and their dwelling. It

should, however be acknowledged as provisional but progressive since it can help in building connections between people on a wider scale. For this study, we shall be using “Placial Identity” as strategic essentialism to expose the constructedness of politicized identities to propose solutions for major conflicts in the world. The goal of this paper is to propose the paradigm of Placial Humanities as crucial and progressive for approaching Literature and human identity.

#### **Redefining the Notion of Place:-**

In the *longue duree*, the place talk stood behind the *garb*, sometimes of space and sometimes of time. However, space and place are neither synonyms nor antonyms. Place includes the geometrical and topographical qualities of the space, and along with it, the experiential dimension is included as well. Place, therefore, is associatively thick in comparison to space which is thin. Buell writes: “World history is a history of space becoming place” (63). It is only through associations and experiences that a three-dimensional concrete space takes on an identity of its own and becomes a historic entity called the place.

The most proper way to approach the “place” is through the body—the situated being and not the generality of the space. But the problem with the modern and enlightenment philosophy, as already discussed, was that all aspects of life and experiences were considered subordinate to mind and intellect. The body was left out of this. For philosophers like Descartes, even sense perceptions became important only because of their value to the mind. Thus, thoughts were privileged over the body. In fact, what we are trying to bring to the fore is not something new through this paper but something which is the oldest of existence—the body that has been overlooked for so long in the understanding of place. There appears to be a special bond between bodies and place. As Casey suggests: “Sensible bodies are implaced entities” (Casey 204).

#### **The Placial Turn in the Domain of Spatiality:-**

During the heydays of modernism, the notion of time and history with teleological order was dominant. The temporal dimension was used as an instrument to understand the human psyche with works like *In Search of Lost Time* (1913) by Marcel Proust and Henri Bergson’s philosophy of time and memory. In the postmodern times, there was an increased interest in space not in spite of but in addition to time. Foucault wrote in his article “Of Other Spaces” (1984): “The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. . .” (Foucault 1). From the period between 1880 to 1960—scholars in the field of religion, history and psychology reflected on our nature as beings situated in space. This developing field essentially came due to the shift in public conversations regarding—civil engineering, urban planning and foresting etc. It was also a shift in the focus from elite groups to commoners—where spatial practices were an important part of their everyday life and community formation. Public intellectuals, legal scholars, philosophers, urban historians, journalists, and religious scholars combed through historical records, proposed theories of spatial experience, and promoted the terminologies like “commons,” “palimpsest,” and “pseudoenvironment,” attempting to coin a universal language for describing spatial experiences of communities. Following them, the literary scholars, art historians and social scientists drew on ethnographic data to chart the worldview of commoners regarding their relationship with the land.

#### **Scooping the Notion of Place through Ecocriticism:-**

In the 1980s, when environmental concerns occupied the center stage, they also took hold in the literary and cultural arena. The early pioneers of the movement understood the need to develop an alliance of the critics, writers, and activists to create environmental literacy and an overlapping discipline like Ecocriticism. One of the major differences between Ecocriticism and other theories like race, Feminism and sexuality studies was in the idea of agency. One can speak as an environmentalist but not as environment or nature endowed with a consciousness. Philosopher Thomas Nagel asked a similar rhetorical question in the context of a bat: “How do we know what it is like to be a bat?” (Nagel 439). But the matter of fact is we can’t. There are limitations to human understanding and the possibility of objectivism. We can, at best, speak of the environment from our understanding of it as a part of the “biotic community” and humans as ecologically embedded. And it is because of this agency issue that this domain remained neglected for a long time.

Though the term “ecocriticism” was first coined in the late 1970s by William Rueckert in his essay “Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism”, it has been in literary practice since the very beginning. In the US, at least in the modern landscape, it goes back to the 1920s when Norman Foerster’s *Nature in American Literature* (1923) inaugurated the new discipline in American literature. Some even argue that it goes back to Emerson’s *Nature* (1836), the first canonical work that “unfolds a theory of nature with special reference to poetics” (Buell 13). There are many books available in the field, but Buell points out two important ones—*The Machine and the Garden*

(1964) by Leo Marx and in British Studies, Raymond William's *The Country and the City* (1973). They both focused on the contrast between the native attitude towards nature versus those of capitalists/colonialists in urban or industrial spaces. Ecocriticism, therefore, developed itself as an interconnecting practice in diverse quarters of the world rather than a full-fledged project.

The first wave of this green movement focused more on scientific literature. It considered the scientific method as a corrective to subjective understanding of place, culture and natural laws. Thus, the boundaries between the disciplines of humanities and sciences, and by extension natural and man-made environment (culture) were largely maintained. William Howarth's "Some Principles of Ecocriticism" (1996) discusses the principles of operation of the ecocritical movement in its initial days. The second wave however blurred the clear-cut disciplinary boundary between sciences and humanities. Likewise, the two kinds of environment—natural and built were seen not as separate but intertwined. So, the greatest achievement of the second wave was the very fact that it no longer saw humans and the environment as adversaries but rather brought forth their interdependent and mutually constitutive states.

The paradigm of Placial Humanities proposed through this paper builds upon the wisdom of these existing domains of Spatiality. However, it is an appropriation of these theories and movements since it dwells on an advanced understanding of the metabolic connection between humans and the land: the farmer gives something to the land, develops it by toiling or building on it, and the land lends itself to them. This paper therefore, journeys towards a new chapter in Earth's history which I call as "Ecozoic era" (that focuses on the human wholeness, mind and the body and the development of the place and vice versa) after the current Cenozoic era (that focused on mind primarily). Finally let us discuss the relevance of Placial Humanities by considering its characteristics in some details.

#### **Place as a Repository of Culture:**

Culture seems to be largely place-bound in the sense that it is formed through the experiences of our surroundings—the weather, climatic conditions, population distribution, soil conditions, ancestral practices, communication processes, etc. Raymond Williams, in his work, *Resources of Hope* (1989) talks about the importance of culture and place in our lives. He states that for individuals, as we grow up in a certain society, we are bound by its rules and "these rules cut very deep" which presents us with a certain worldview of both looking at the world and decoding it (Williams 21-22). We all have made advances since our previous generations in terms of externalities mainly, but we do share their worldview. Stuart Hall, in his work "New Cultures for Old" (1997), however, argues against the motion, talking about the changing scenario of cultural understanding as increasingly untenable in the light of hypermobility. The onset of mobility and technological innovation has no doubt changed the history of cultural borrowings among civilizations. The process of acculturation is rapid. Yet there are some unique elements which are specific to each civilization. So, in the Global world, we find an increased demand for the preservation of the local culture.

#### **Useful Knowledge of the Indigenous Community:**

Indigenous communities are mindful of the surroundings they have been living in for thousands of years. It is different from the life of the city and those sites of non-places manufactured globally and away from the local cultures. The idea of using indigenous knowledge for the prosperity of a community is revolutionary since it has the potential to present an alternative model to the profit-driven economy, which is thoroughly people-centric. The indigenous population is the real commander of their resources. If this succeeds, it could be an important tool on the path of "environmental democracy", where we would have maximum participation of the indigenous community in the development of their surroundings. As Glissant writes: "The highest point of knowledge is always a poetics" (140). Placial Humanities, by opening the arena of knowledge beyond the fixed technical terminologies, might find something revolutionary and worthwhile for the development of a community. It appears to be a disguised blessing.

#### **Providing a Home to the Displaced:**

Bell Hooks defines the "culture of belonging" as an intimate connection with one's land along with an empathetic relationship with flora and fauna, animals and birds and all expressions of life around. In our century of restlessness, we yearn to find our place in this world: "to have a sense of homecoming, a sense of being wedded to a place" (Belonging 2). Gaston Bachelard, in his work *The Poetics of Space* (1964), shows us how the house—being a geometrical object first of angles and planes, is also a space of intimacy for its inhabitants. He is perhaps the first one to discover the humanness in the hallways of one's dwelling: "our house is our corner of the world" (Bachelard 4). It is indeed our first universe in every sense of the word. No matter how affluent or meagre this space is. If one is

willing to dream, a house is a beautiful and enriching experience. He argues that human imagination has the capacity to set limits to one's shelter. Whenever there is an abode, imagination encloses itself within the four walls and creates the illusion of comfort and security. Thus, the house is experienced both in terms of its materiality and imagination. And these motionless memories comfort us in times of crisis, and we relive those "memories of protection" (Bachelard 6). Analyzing a lot of poetic houses presented by dreamy writers, Bachelard suggests that a house, more than a landscape, is also a "psychic state" (72). In fact, when children first dream over their canvas, it is the image of a house that comes to them and then the landscape around them. It is so because the house is the first universe of the child, and he has developed the greatest intimacy with it. Every child, no matter in what corner of the world, always draws a home first. In a world where displacement is rampant, Placial Humanities is helpful in providing a sense of home and comfort to the displaced. It also makes us more sensitive to appreciate the value of a home and not deny it to anyone since it is the basis for violence and conflicts in the world.

#### **Placial Identity as a Source of Resistance:**

Deleuze and Guattari, in "Treatise on Nomadology—The War Machine" (1987), present a sharp distinction between the state apparatus and the war machine. To them, the war machine is the nomadic or primitive people, closer to nature, who are often unorganized yet highly capable in their capacities: "Pack, bands, are groups of the rhizome type, as opposed to the arborescent type that centers around organs of power" (Deleuze and Guattari 358). Unlike the state that divides into a sharp binary, the governor and the governed, thereby bifurcating the powerful and the powerless, the war machine has no such well-defined categories. Power is maintained through deed and faith in the chieftain that keeps on changing. Moreover, the nomadic space is a space of experimentation. No one model is formalized because they want to remain closer to nature, which is dynamic. The connection of nomads to the land is direct, with no mediation through state apparatuses. Thus, their indigeneity in terms of their placial identity is a countermeasure to the controls of state power. It is not to deny the importance of state power or its usefulness but rather to remind it of human values and remain sensitive towards nature because what is happening in the name of blind patriotism is that instead of the state serving the people, the people are worshipping it and the nation has turned into a fetish into the hands of power mongers.

#### **Placial Humanities for Conflict Resolution and Peace Making:**

Regarding the relation between cultures, Glissant writes in *Poetics of Relation* (1997): "A culture is what remains after states have passed away or what precedes them of necessity. Cultures can be shared when states have been in confrontation. The limits—the frontiers of a state can be grasped, but a cultures cannot" (Glissant 165). Often in any kind of peace agreement, one needs to address the collective identity of people, rising above their divisions into smaller groups based on rhetorical and ideational identities like national identity, race or gender identity. Placial identity derives from the organic source of land and nature and therefore is non-discriminating and inclusive. It can help bring geographically closer cultures together. As Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the late Indian Prime Minister, once said with regards to India and Pakistan: "You can change history, but not geography. You can change friends, but not neighbours" ("You Can Change Friends").

#### **Conclusion:-**

Finally, to conclude, in an era marred by placelessness, Placial Humanities constitute some kind of a map, where they create mental images of the places they describe, tell stories that takes place in them, sculpt characters associated with them and thereby give those places life and meaning. As the paper demonstrated, place, an experiential terrain of belonging, is important in the construction of organic human identity. Since there exists a symbiotic relationship between the human body and place, wherein the body gives meaning to the place by working on it even as it derives its selfhood through the process of internalization, which becomes an important site for the creation of the home itself. The paper outlines a manifesto of Placial Humanities, taking into account the wisdom of two distinct but interdependent domains of knowledge—Spatiality and Ecocriticism. Where the former suggests the need to include place to make time-centered history more intelligible and wholesome, and the latter establishes a crucial link between humans and ecology. The home was seen as the most nuanced of human creations, since in addition to the materiality, it was also accessed on the emotional and psychological levels. We see how therapeutic it is in the sense that it provides a person with a sense of belonging and security. It is our corner of the world, our first universe. And it does not matter how affluent or meagre a house is, as we create an illusion of comfort and security. Home is important for humans since it keeps a person integrated, protecting them from all difficult situations in life, as Bachelard calls it, a "large cradle," which is essential for a person's protective growth (Bachelard 7). We, therefore, need to grow more sensitive towards the refugees who have been robbed of their homes, towards an understanding that it should not be denied to anyone since it is the root cause of a lot of violence in the world.

Finally, as already mentioned regarding the role of literature, Anton Chekhov, the Russian writer, once said that a solution to a problem and the correct way of posing a problem are two separate things. And sometimes, the way we perceive a problem is itself part of the problem (qtd. in “The Politics of Fiction” 14:28-15:15). The role of literature or humanities is not so much to give solutions as to pose the problem in a correct way, which is often a powerful way of hinting at the solution itself. What I have already tried doing through this paper is addressing the paradigm and building a new one—Placial Humanities for our purpose.

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