

Anxiety as Constituting the Experience of Home as an Absence in Tirtsa Atar's Poetry

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The cultural and psychological meanings of the term "home" often address it as a space which provides a sense of security and belonging. However, homes might not always provide the needed security and stability to those who grow up in them. Even when the actual experience does not reach abusive extremes, there still exists a possibility that an unstable internal experience of the domestic space will develop.

Such anxieties that may erode and destabilize the inner space to the extent that "home" is experienced as a threatening space are primal anxieties of annihilation, fragmentation and death. These anxieties can dissipate by the presence of a containing good object. But when such an object is experienced as absent or, alternatively, takes over the subject's psychic space, dissipating these anxieties becomes impossible. The inner "hole" created due to the object's absence will then substantiate and anchor an experience of absence, constituting the domestic space as a space of absence and threat.

In Tirtsa Atar's poetry, home is a core theme. Her own home as being reflected in her poetry does not provide her with a sufficient degree of security and protection, but rather evokes a sense of threat .

This essay aims to discuss the experience of home in Tirtsa Atar's poetry as a "case study" of an experience of the domestic space as a space of absence established as a result of uncontained primary anxieties.

The discussion is based on a thorough discussion of psychoanalytic theories including Melanie Klein, Wilfred Bion, Donald W. Winnicott, Margaret Little, Didier Anzieu, Esther Bick, Thomas H. Ogden and Frances Tustin.

Keywords: Tirtsa Atar, anxiety, home, absence, threat, primary anxieties, death, object relations, transitional space, Psychoanalysis, Melanie Klein, Donald W. Winnicott, Wilfred Bion, Didier Anzieu, self, window.

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