

## Silence as a Trope that Individualizes and Equalizes Characters in Selected Works of Abdulrazak Gurnah

Seraphine Chepkosgei, PhD<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Communication, Languages and Literature, School of Arts and Human Development, University of Eldoret, P. O. Box 1125-30100, Eldoret, Kenya

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36347/sjahss.2025.v13i02.004>

| Received: 17.12.2024 | Accepted: 21.01.2025 | Published: 22.02.2025

\*Corresponding author: Seraphine Chepkosgei

Department of Communication, Languages and Literature, School of Arts and Human Development, University of Eldoret, P. O. Box 1125-30100, Eldoret, Kenya

### Abstract

### Original Research Article

Silence, as a narrative strategy, plays a socio-political role by conveying the personal paralysis and helplessness that discriminated groups suffer in their attempt to evoke the truths about their traumatic pasts. It also propels individuals into seeking solace away from the familiar spaces of 'home' as they know it, which results in sojourns that may be adventurous. This paper critically examines how silence as a trope individualizes and equalizes characters in selected novels of Abdulrazak Gurnah. The study focused on four novels selected purposively. The paper examines silence as it manifests in the form of distortion, marginalization, exclusion from the public domain, voicing (and lack of it), trivialization, racism, 'ethnicization', and other forms of discrimination that speak to the traumas that accompany the identity of the Zanzibari Arab community depicted in the selected novels. From the analysis, it is concluded that silences foreground those identities that result from the interaction between the Zanzibari Arabs and the world. Hence, an examination of silence as a narrative trope in Gurnah's novels helps to precisely track the traumas that are responsible for the characters' adventures.

**Keywords:** Silences, Trauma, Marginalization, Adventure Identity.

Copyright © 2025 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.

## INTRODUCTION

In fiction, what is spoken or written is as important as what is unspoken, unwritten, excluded, or silenced. Silence in fiction serves as a profound narrative strategy, influencing both the structure and meaning of a text. It is the absence of spoken or written words that serves to convey deeper emotional and thematic significance in a text. Silence is thus a powerful literary trope and narrative strategy. There are many functions of silence within a narrative. According to Yaremko, Dyakiv and Petrashchuk (2023), silence creates tension and ambiguity in a literary text. Khelifa (2016) also posits that silence reflects a character's internal struggles and emotional states. It foregrounds the unspoken desires and anxieties within a character, which speak to the larger oppression within their environment. Silence also contributes to the intermediacy of meaning within a narrative. Psychoanalysts such as Jacques Lacan and Julia Kristeva affirm that silence is used to represent repressed desires and unconscious thoughts (Khelifa, 2016).

This paper examines silence as a trope that individualizes and equalizes characters in selected works of Abdulrazak Gurnah. The paper is guided by Macherey's (1978) ideas on silence in a work of fiction. Macherey argues that the silence of a work of fiction "is not the sole meaning, but that which endows meaning with a meaning: It is this silence ... which informs us of the precise conditions for the appearance of an utterance and thus its limits, giving it real significance" (p. 86). In other words, to Macherey, silence in literature is not merely an absence of meaning but rather a crucial component that contextualizes and enhances the significance of utterances within a text. Silence sets the stage for what is expressed; it creates the conditions under which speech occurs, so that speech and silence are not binary but part of the same continuum.

On the other hand, Trouillot (1995) argues that "silence [is] an active and transitive process ... and active dialectical counterparts of which history is the synthesis" (p. 48). This means that silence is not passive but rather dynamic, engaging with historical narratives

and social contexts. To Trouillot, therefore, silence can serve as a counterpoint to dominant narratives, implying that it plays a role in shaping history itself. Trouillot's views highlight how silence can shape discourses and reveal marginalized voices.

Abdulrazak Gurnah is a British novelist, originally born in Tanzania. His novels revolve around themes of colonialism, identity, displacement, trauma, diaspora, and refugee experiences. Gurnah's life experiences seem to parallel much of the themes he tackles in his text. This is so considering he lived in his homeland of Zanzibar for only 20 years since birth. In 1968, he fled to England to escape the Zanzibar Revolution that targeted mainly the Arab elites of the island. Gurnah's novels include *Memory of Departure* (1987), *Paradise* (1994), *Admiring Silence* (1996), *By the Sea* (2001), *Desertion* (2005), *The Last Gift* (2011), and *Afterlives* (2020).

## METHODOLOGY

The study selected and analyzed Abdulrazak Gurnah's *Paradise* (1994), *Admiring Silence* (1996), *Desertion* (2005) and *By the Sea* (2001) to determine how silence as a trope individualizes and equalizes characters. These novels were selected purposively since they were deemed relevant to the objective of the study. Previous studies have underscored the importance of silence in these particular novels. For instance, Omwenga (2017) posits that, in Gurnah's *Paradise* (1994) and *Desertion* (2005), silence is utilized as a strategy for expressing trauma. Characters often experience muteness as a result of their traumatic pasts, which can be linked to their experiences of migration and racial differences. This silence reflects their inability to articulate their suffering, thus becoming a powerful narrative device that conveys their emotional states without overt expression. Kuvondik and Akhrorovna (2024) also observe that, in Gurnah's *By the Sea*, silence as a narrative technique is pivotal in exploring themes of exile, memory, and the psychological impacts of colonialism. For instance, the pauses in dialogue between the characters of Saleh and Latif serve to deepen their characterization, revealing how their pasts intertwine yet diverge, emphasizing their unique responses to shared experiences of displacement. Therefore, for this paper, data was collected through a close textual reading and analysis of the three selected novels.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the texts examined, there is a paradoxical silencing of the women, racism, religious discrimination, ethnicity as well as homosexuality, and these compelled the researcher to discern a deeper meaning into their traumatic experiences that have resulted in their silences. These traumas generate gaps in the history of the successes and failures of the Indian Ocean trade and those of colonialism. They also attend to the negative

impacts of the aforementioned factors in the oppression of men and women and speak to the muting of their voices. By using silence, Gurnah's selected works bolster up such memories by addressing some truth about the double marginalization that such gendered reading offers which would otherwise have been irrecoverable.

Whether migration is triggered by a search for education, trade or asylum, the Zanzibari Arabs depicted in Abdulrazak Gurnah's novels are often isolated and tend to suffer a limited interaction with their hosts. The African migrant, though in the company of other migrants, is reduced to an anonymous entity. This is demonstrated in the way Rashid in *Desertion* (Gurnah, 2005) and his fellow foreign student friends, who were immigrants in the midst of white society, are treated as invisible:

It was not easy to get near the English students, even ones in the same class. The feeling of resistance was there from the beginning, a feeling I sensed but was not sure of ... I sensed it in the slightness of the smiles I was given in return to my beaming ones. So at first I sensed this feeling of resistance, then I heard the embarrassed sniggers and saw the looks of surprise and irritation in anonymous faces in the corridors and in the streets and in time I came to hear their vexation and dislike (Gurnah, 2005, p. 213-14).

While still in Zanzibar, Rashid imagines Britain as a "place full of niceties, courtesies, but on arrival he realizes that it is full of deception and immigrants are perceived as an exotic curiosity and an intruder" (p. 123). Rashid's self-perception changes accordingly. The disillusionment with the dreams of departure and the oddities of being rejected by the host society leads him to sink into loneliness and helplessness.

Silences also occur in situations where information on certain aspects of a character privileges some events over others. Latif Mahmud, for example, is a scholar of no mean repute but has been 'objectified' by his host society. He is called a 'black amoor' (Gurnah, 2001, p. 97) in the street. As such, his academic superiority as a university professor is literally obliterated; his immigrant status instead silences his prominence as a university professor. In *By the Sea* (Gurnah, 2001), Omar Saleh arrives in Britain as an asylum seeker but chooses not to speak in English to the immigration officers his reasons being that he had been instructed not to speak by whoever sold him the air ticket:

I had been told not to say anything, to pretend I could not speak any English. I was not sure why, but I knew I would do as I was told because the advice had a crafty ring to it, the kind of resourceful ruse the powerless would know (Gurnah, 2001, p. 6).

Saleh Omar's refugee status is complicated by his deliberate refusal to speak in English and this hinders any progress towards Saleh Omar getting his Asylum documentation processed by Rachel, the representative at the social security department because the two cannot communicate meaningfully:

"Anyway, I thought we would get further if we had an interpreter" ... "But I am afraid ... It's not hopeless, because someone I approached returned my call this morning. He seems willing to do it, but I'll confirm and let you know how we're going to get anything done" ... "I don't think I need an interpreter," I said. I was silently gleeful as I said this, of course. Even when you get to my age you can't resist such petty triumphs and, at that moment, my glee was no different from that I had felt as a child or the hundreds of other times later when I had been sensationally and unexpectedly knowledgeable. I no longer cared what injury the ticket-seller had been trying to save me from with his canny advice, and I was beginning to think that his canniness was something to do with the paranoia of the powerless (Gurnah, 2001, p. 64).

This poses an exceptional challenge to the host society and the question of the authority of the refugee in getting his way through silence is amplified. Silence compels the social security department to get an interpreter from the university who is said to speak 'that language'.

Gurnah employs silence as a means of dealing with issues of gender and the paradox that is associated with Islam as a religion: while Islam preaches equality among humanity, it paradoxically suppresses the women. Gurnah's fiction counters the perception that the home front secludes and excludes the women from interacting and socializing with the outside world. Instead, the home front becomes a site for the women to demonstrate their dominance and the actualization of self-freedom. In *Paradise* (Gurnah, 1994), women take advantage of Yusuf's hostage status to make sexual propositions:

They (women) sent the younger girls over with small gifts and propositions ... come and see me this afternoon while my husband is taking his nap. Do you want a hand-bath? Have you got an itch you'd like me to scratch? Sometimes they shouted at him, and one of the old women blew kisses and wiggled her bottom whenever she passed by. (p. 167).

These women prove that they do not need to move into a public arena to exercise their 'power' of seduction: in fact, they need a semblance of complacency to flirt about with their guests. The voicing of seductive statements and bodily dispositions can be read as acts of empowerment. These acts elicit new frameworks

founded on the countering of the cultural and social expectations on women.

Gurnah uses the female gender, with Rehana as an example, to address the silenced role of women in shaping new identities that are both irksome, yet awed in the dominantly Muslim society. Rehana represents how female characters have appropriated the idea of submissive silence to question and refute the imposition of male-defined attitudes on matters of love and marriage that are common in a pre-dominantly patriarchal society. She engages intimately with Martin Pearce, an 'outsider' and even elopes with him to Mombasa. This is done in spite of her brother Hassanali who, earlier on, had compelled Rehana to marry Azad, the Indian merchant:

... Did the affair result in a quarrel between Rehana and Hassanali? It must have done. He must have berated her for losing all sense of what is proper or bearable. He must have ranted at her for the embarrassment she had brought upon him... What I know... is that it did happen, that Rehana Zakariya and Martin Pearce became lovers, that Martin Pearce left for Mombasa, and that a short while later, under pretext of going to visit relatives, Rehana followed him there. She lived with him in an apartment he rented in the leafy district... Martin and Rehana lived openly together, for a while, until he left to return home (Gurnah, 2005, p. 119).

This is a kind of revenge on Hassanali; a way of venting Rehana's pain of being jilted by Azad, "a man she had little regard for but had been compelled to marry to save Hassanali any embarrassment" (Gurnah, 2005, p. 72). Rehana also demonstrates how women use their sexuality and energy to give prominence to their pain.

In *Desertion* (Gurnah, 2005), Jamila takes the initiative in seducing Amin (p. 159) while, at the same time, [she] maintains a romantic relationship with a politician (p. 185) yet she is also said to be a divorcee (p. 165) and no one understands her many travels between Zanzibar and Mombasa. Her actions are perceived as being extremely banal and daring and do not fit in well with her status as a woman in a conservative society. Hence, Jamila's character becomes a kind of dissidence, a kind of marginality that diasporic identities attempt to resist by forcing its way into the limelight. Amin's silence is complicated by the nature of his crime: He loves Jamila, a half-caste that is so demonized that she does not evoke any sympathy and Amin's parents do not listen to his explanation. Even when Jamila and Amin's relationship and actions are framed in terms of adventure and courtly romance, the 'ethnicist' in Amin's parents paints a picture laced with moral superiority and hatred. This silences Amin's desire for true affection and is, therefore, fixated for life. By literally demonizing Jamila, Amin's parents complicate the relationship between

Jamila and Amin by fanning the society's pernicious, ethnic violence that resulted in migration.

Jamila, like Rehana Zakariya in *Desertion* (Gurnah, 2005), represents the non-complacent, independent-minded Muslim women who have broken ranks with their passive, lackluster women in the text who play second fiddle to their male folk. Women seem determined to subvert the *status quo* in this male dominated community by following after their personal pleasures, at the expense of Muslim religious ethos on sexuality and morality. This is demonstrated in the way Latif Mhamud's mother in Gurnah's *By the Sea* (2001) engages in an illicit love relationship with a government minister within the purview of her husband, children and society.

Indeed, their physical appeal empowers these women to negotiate for a better life for themselves and their families as is the case with Latif Mahmud whose scholarship to go to the German Democratic Republic to study dentistry is courtesy of the love relationship between his mother and the government minister. It also becomes a chance for Latif's mother to avenge herself on behalf of her family against Omar Saleh and the subsequent repossession of the house (Gurnah, 2001, p. 213). This can be contrasted with those women who end up with mental break-downs due to extreme oppression by their merchant husbands. The author employs the trope of madness to represent the extremity of misery and oppression that the women characters suffer in the homes of their rich merchant husbands in which they are locked up as is the case in *The Last Gift* (Gurnah, 2011 p. 256) wherein Ibrahim's mother is said to have lost her mind:

Ibrahim's mother's situation (that breaks into occasional monologues due to madness) is symbolic of a woman whose silences have generated from extreme boredom and private exclusion. Despite her husband's absence, she feels suffocated by his 'perceived' domination and, for her, this madness is a statement that demands for freedom. For Zulekha, her marriage to Seyyid Aziz is "full of emptiness and bitterness and defeat" (Gurnah, 1994, p. 229). For these two women, silence is imaginatively situated in an empty space that resounds with tears and they are a disguise for the suppressed anger due to their marginalization and dehumanization.

The fact that Zulekha can unveil her head within the confines of their compound is a metaphor for the kind of resistance to self-effacement and this allows her a degree of social confidence that enables her negotiate her identity. By showing him the purple wound on her left cheek (Gurnah, 1994, p. 226), a metaphor for unfulfilled sexual life (p. 214), she is silently advancing an unarticulated cry that exceeds hearing and understanding. For Zulekha, it has generated a void which, if left unattended, deprives her of a definitive

meaning of who she is and the value of existence is suspended.

In all of Gurnah's works, one reads an apparent refusal by the Zanzibari Arab Muslims to articulate a connection between their religion and practice *vis-à-vis* the treatment of their African hosts/subjects. In *Paradise* (Gurnah, 1994, p. 145), Yusuf is repulsed by the smell on Seyyid Aziz's hand when asked to greet him. This repulsion shows a silent hatred that Yusuf has suppressed over the years. His action becomes the 'eye' with which we read and see through the veiled humanity that has been suppressed in pursuit of material wealth. Yusuf fails to turn his emotional hurt into a version of reality that can be communicably understood in order to explain what pain and humiliation he has had to bear as a slave. Instead, he chooses to walk away and follow the German's potters.

The silences as embodied by Yusuf highlight and, simultaneously, challenge the assumptions that we make about cultural differences between the Zanzibari Arabs and their African hosts/subjects. We realize that the humiliation that Seyyid Aziz and his caravan is subjected to in Chatu's kingdom is a kind of resistance to the oppression to which the Arabs had subjected the Africans. As such, it becomes a subversion of the power positions and challenges the established norms by raising the Africans to the position of transparency. It also transgresses the boundaries of the use of Islam as a marker of the civilized, which is contrasted with the status of the 'unIslamised' Africans in the interior who have been tagged as the *shenzi* (Akinola, 1972).

This becomes, a necessary platform for the text to individualize and equalize the subjects. By making the silence speak, it becomes possible to illuminate the fears and concerns of these subjects whose narratives would otherwise have been unheard. Among the contesting histories evoked by these encounters are the moral uncertainties that Islam, as a religion, plays in the forging of trade as well as human relationships between the Zanzibari Arab traders and the rest of the world and the use of Islam as a tool for 'othering' the Zanzibari African as a lesser player in both trade and religion.

In *Paradise* (Gurnah, 1994), Seyyid Aziz epitomizes people that are socially and morally torn between historical systems of values and social structures that are evidenced in his practiced religious piety. Although he engages in the observation of Islamic prayers, he does not forgive his debtors; instead, he takes their children in as 'slaves' who are pawned away to work for him until the debt is settled. For Seyyid Aziz, his self-representation is seen to perform an intersection of what it means to be an ardent Muslim as well as an astute trader. He ably interweaves patience and eminence in the face of adversity as captured in the way he responds to Chatu's mistreatment (Gurnah, 1994, p. 162).



Seyyid Aziz present Islam as multi-faceted, with challenges, ruptures, divergences and, sometimes, as a threat to self-preservation at another, it represents wealth and prosperity as presented in Seyyid Aziz's mode of dressing (Gurnah, 1994, p. 18).

This ironic and ambivalent embrace of Islam by Seyyid Aziz works in a way that seems natural to the text; as if it unravels the mystic and the social codes in his kind of a secular world that is marked by a trading adventure in the interior of Zanzibar. When he is dispossessed of his material wares of trade and is sent away by Chatu, he invokes the role of God in punishing those who are evil (Gurnah, 1994, p. 162).

The presence of gays is a silent way of subverting the conventional codes of religion and morality as dictated by the pre-colonial African societies. It also challenges the dictates of Islam as a religion, yet it is permitted among the Ibadi community of the Omani Arabs. This is validated by Wilkinson's (1981) argument that "the Ibadi community permitted licentious behavior, homosexuality among others" (p. 278). Hence, for Seyyid, this was not untoward but, among the African potters, their perversion was a salient statement of protestation against the merchant who has suppressed them and subjected them into inhumanity in pursuit of personal wealth (Gurnah, 1994, p. 47).

Their situation of social apathy has rendered them sexually powerless and this can be blamed on Seyyid who is financially superior and who has dominated the trade. At an individual level, these incidences represent the way materialism supersedes the spiritual so that even if Islam represented the moral and the ideal, those merchants with higher economic power take advantage of Islam as the faith that represents order and the Ideal to access and exploit their repressed sexual desires. At a more symbolic level, this sexual apathy represents the clash of values and a rebellion against the *status quo*. It dismantles the hegemony of the African culture and the codes of religious uprightness that are sacrificed at the altar of economic self-aggrandizement.

Gurnah's fiction can be read as attempting to displace the ethnic boundaries between the Zanzibari Arabs and the Zanzibari Africans by enforcing Islam as a marker of equality. This works by silencing the social hierarchies but, in a counter-productive way, it makes the Zanzibari Arab community become more entrenched as the oppressive ethnic group while presenting the people of the East African coast as trusting. This is captured in the dialogue between Nyundo and Chatu when they are seeking entry into Chatu's kingdom in order to engage in trade (Gurnah, 1994, p. 160). Chatu points out the fact that the Arab merchants have abused their privileged status and, hence, the Africans cannot trust and are suspicious of the Arab merchants.

Silence is also employed as a communicative strategy against racial oppression. In *Admiring Silence* (Gurnah, 1996), Emma defies the racial boundaries and moves in with the narrator and end up bearing a child out of wedlock (Gurnah, 1996, p. 24). For the narrator and Emma, their outlook on life enables them realize that their 'alieness' was something heroic because they face up to their actions and "provocations unperturbed and clear-headed rather than feeble and unnerved" (Gurnah, 1996, p. 61). The allusion to the narrator's difference can be read as a means of positioning him as a husband to Emma, a father to Amelia and, hence, an entrenched part of the normalcy of the British nation. In Gurnah's *Admiring Silence* (1996), the narrator's love story is an entrapment, exploitation and silent resistance. His personal story reveals a life full of cynicism and loss of direction in the urban landscape of the contemporary world in which interracial love and alienation disturbingly overlaps with Emma's own life.

In effect, the silencing of the racial difference, as seen in the way Mr. and Mrs. Willoughby react to this new couple and their child, speaks to the possibility of liberating humanity from the bondages of racism as a maker of identity and as such, it gives space for diasporic identities to prosper. As the narrator interacts with Emma's family, we are presented with a man whose sense of identity is constantly deformed by his inability to reconcile his present actions of "living in sin" (Gurnah, 1996, p. 85) with a white woman with his past as a child raised up to live by the Islamic rules of piety and moral uprightness (Gurnah, 1996, p. 89).

For him, this silence is motivated by an inner ambivalence between a moral past and his present situation of indecisiveness which opens up a window into the narrator's mind enabling us to see a clear distinction between the experiencing self and the narrating self and this leads us to the conclusion that the narrator is suffering from a deep sense of 'otherness'.

## CONCLUSION

Gurnah's fiction has employed silence as a trope that works to individualize and equalize the characters in the texts analyzed. By making silence speak, it becomes possible to illuminate the fears and concerns of the characters whose narratives would otherwise have been omitted. Among the contesting histories evoked by these encounters are the moral uncertainties that Islam (as a religion) plays in the forging of trade as well as human relationships between the Zanzibari Arab traders and the rest of the world. There is also the use of Islam as a tool for 'othering' the Zanzibari African as a 'lesser player' in both trade and religion.

Silence has also been used as way of displacing the ethnic boundaries between the Zanzibari Arabs and the Zanzibari Africans by imploring Islam as a marker of

equality. This works by silencing the social hierarchies but in a counter-productive way. It makes the Zanzibari Arab community more conspicuous as the oppressive ethnic group while presenting the people of the East African coast as trusting. Silence, being motivated by an inner ambivalence between a moral past and a present situation of indecisiveness in the life of a character, opens a window into the character's mind, enabling us to see a clear distinction between the experiencing self and the narrating self. This has the effect of bringing out a sense of insufficiency in the characters that manifest as a form of 'otherness'.

Silence has been used to demonstrate the characters' situation of social apathy that has rendered them sexually powerless. At an individual level, these incidences represent the way materialism supersedes the spiritual so that even if Islam represented the moral and the ideal, those merchants with higher economic power take advantage of Islam as the faith that represents order and 'the ideal' to access and exploit their repressed sexual desires. At a more symbolic level, this sexual apathy represents the clash of values and a rebellion against the *status quo*. It dismantles the hegemony of the African culture and the codes of religious uprightness that are sacrificed at the altar of economic self-aggrandizement.

Silence is also employed as a communicative strategy against racial oppression. The silencing of the racial difference, as seen in the way Mr. and Mrs. Willoughby react to this new couple and their child, speaks to the possibility of liberating humanity from the bondages of racism as a maker of identity and, as such, it gives space for diasporic identities to prosper.

## REFERENCES

- Akinola, G. A. (1972). Slavery and slave revolts in the Sultanate of Zanzibar in the nineteenth century. *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 6(2), 215-228.
- Gurnah, A. (1994). *Paradise*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Gurnah, A. (1996). *Admiring Silence*. New York: New Press.
- Gurnah, A. (2001). *By the Sea*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Gurnah, A. (2005). *Desertion*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Gurnah, A. (2011). *The Last Gift*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Khelifa, M. (2016). *Problematic Silence and Sense in Modern Narrative Fiction*. GRIN Verlag.
- Kuvondik, N. S., & Akhrovovna, U. L. (2024). Intertextuality in the Novel "By the Sea" of Abdulrazak Gurnah. *International Journal of Progressive Sciences and Technologies (IJPSAT)*, 45(2), 613-617.
- Macherey, P. (1978). *A theory of literary production* (G. Wall, Trans.). London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Omwenga, A. O. (2017). *Silence as a strategy for trauma enunciation in selected fiction of Abdulrazak Gurnah: Paradise (1994) and Desertion (2005)* (Doctoral dissertation, Kenyatta University).
- Trouillot, M. R. (1995). *Silencing the past: Power and the production of history*. Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press.
- Wilkinson, J. C. (1981). Oman and East Africa: new light on early Kilwan history from the Omani sources. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 14(2), 272-305.
- Yaremko, M., Dyakiv, K., & Petrashchuk, N. (2023). Silence as a Narrative Strategy in Robert Walser's Berlin Novels. *Studien zur deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, 49, 169-199.