

Behind the Backs of Borders: Diaspora Microspace in Imtiaz Dharker's Poetry

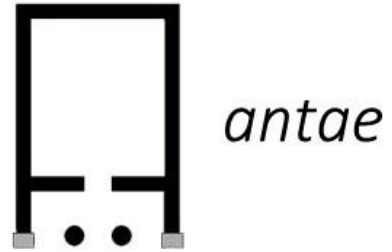
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Behind the Backs of Borders: Diaspora Microspace in Imtiaz Dharker's Poetry

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[...] from where we are

it doesn't look like a country,

it's more like the cracks

that grow between borders

behind their backs.

That's where I live.¹

These closing lines to Imtiaz Dharker's poem, 'They'll say, "She must be from another country"', are just a few of the many emphatic declarations of identity present within her larger poetry collections. A self-described Scottish Muslim Calvinist, Dharker was born in Pakistan, grew up in Glasgow, and currently divides her time between Mumbai and Wales. Her self-attributed existence of living 'between borders' is evident in her poetry's vivid depictions of everyday life as both profoundly South Asian and profoundly British, alternating between the comforts and complications that come from that hybrid diaspora identity. This most markedly occurs within her two collections, *I Speak for the Devil* (2001) and *The Terrorist at My Table* (2006).

As Gaston Bachelard states in *Poetics of Space*, 'an image is not received in the same way every day. Psychically speaking, it is never objective. Other commentaries renew it'.² For Bachelard, the representations of space are never entirely fixed, but constantly refigured in accordance to the individual's imagination. It only makes sense, then, for Imtiaz Dharker, an author of diaspora, to view her life's spaces as marked by in-betweenness. Poetically, her works are all too aware of the societal binaries she lives sandwiched between: that of both Other and indigene, of her

¹ Imtiaz Dharker, 'They'll say, "She must be from another country"', in *I Speak for the Devil* (Tarsset: Bloodaxe Books, 2001), pp. 38-9, lns. 62-67.

² Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. by Maria Jolas (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1994), p. 227.

private identity and the public reception of it. Comparing imagery of space and, consequently, identity within the world of Dharker's poetry, a world shaded by existence within what Homi Bhabha refers to as Third Space or the 'inter', we see that sociopolitical climates and attitudes toward those deemed Other by the West, heightened in the aftermath of 9/11, act as Bachelardian "commentaries" that affect Dharker's poetry.³ Spaces once known as home, thresholds once easy to cross in *I Speak for the Devil* become tenuous and dangerous, riddled with anxiety and insecurity in post-9/11's *The Terrorist at My Table*. Rooms are locked in 'The Password', where 'walls are paper' made of 'new maps',⁴ and cities become 'face[s]...once | imagined, but imagined | incomplete' in 'Almost'.⁵ The binary between Other/indigene and public/private realms becomes smudged, as she references in 'Dot': 'the walls we built/ to hold the world | are only made | of light and shade' where 'everything can change | again, and shift'.⁶

Avtar Brah in her book *Cartographies of Diaspora* coins the term 'diaspora space' as a space concerned with 'the entanglement of genealogies', these 'not only [of] diasporic subjects but equally [of] those who are constructed and represented as "indigenous"'.⁷ However, the majority of Brah's 'cartographies of diaspora' look chiefly at the collective experience of diasporic populations and do not allow for in-depth examinations of experiences within the everyday, instead focusing on acts of arriving, leaving, and defining home across borders on the literal level. Brah's diaspora space examines experiences in continents, cities, communities. She seeks to understand the commonalities of those who are "Othered" in diaspora as a whole, only lightly touching on the individualised narrative of everyday living as diasporic. Diaspora space is an answer to understanding the crossing of thresholds on a macro scale, charting diasporic narratives as a collective experience; the autobiographical mode of the individual becomes secondary to the form and structure of 'this narrative of political moments and events [...] [that] relies heavily upon the hope that [...] individual narration is meaningful primarily as collective re-memory'.⁸

But how can one understand the macro without the micro? I argue not against Brah, but as a further challenge to acknowledging the context she speaks for, one may claim that, by relegating the term 'diaspora space' to the sole context of these larger global, collective movements, one cannot discount the personal, local nuance of diasporic experience in favour of the dramatic and drastic acts of exodus and immigration. What about the quotidian thresholds that impact everyday life, the Third Spaces that Homi Bhabha claims allow for 'the temporality of negotiation and translation'?⁹ What I propose as diaspora microspace will step back from "we", "us", and "them" of cultural identity, instead focusing on the "I" as another mode of understanding of personal and individual creation rather than a solely collective reiteration.

³ See Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994).

⁴ Imtiaz Dharker, 'The Password', in *The Terrorist at My Table* (Tarset: Bloodaxe Books, 2006), p. 51, lns. 1, 21.

⁵ Dharker, 'Almost', in *The Terrorist*, p. 29, lns. 15-7.

⁶ Dharker, 'Dot', in *The Terrorist*, pp. 48-9, lns. 51-4, 56-7.

⁷ Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 16.

⁸ Brah, p. 10.

⁹ Bhabha, p. 10.

Diaspora experience sprawls beyond textbook migration patterns, deeply interwoven in the veins of everyday experience; similarly, the diasporic everyday is not complete without an understanding of the larger diaspora. Stuart Hall affirms that cultural identity can ‘reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as “one people”, with stable, unchanging, and continuous frames of references and meaning’, but also adds that there must be another layer of accounting for cultural identity’s ‘other side [...] the matter of “becoming” as well as of “being” [...] like everything which is historical, [cultural identities] undergo constant transformation [...] subject to the continuous play of history, culture, and power’.¹⁰ As the identities of diasporic populations shift with these daily changes, especially the shift of ‘power’, it is only logical that these projected identities inform their individual experiences of space. Thus, for diasporic populations, sociopolitical events act as Bachelardian commentaries that can upset the balance of agency over their own representation. These upsets affect the degree to which diasporic populations are societally “allowed” to identify as in-between, sometimes instead determining citizens of the diaspora not as hybrid or indigene, but as distinctly and completely Other.

Though these changes are reflected in Brah’s diaspora space, diaspora microspace will examine the manifestations of diaspora narrative in everyday spaces of identity—the personal accounts that, as Homi Bhabha says, give ‘a sign that history is happening [...] within the systems and structures we construct to figure the passage of the historical’.¹¹ Extending Brah’s argument, these proposed “diaspora microspaces” reach into this ‘within’ of Bhabha’s Third Space or ‘inter’. By examining how collapsed borders echo through quotidian spaces and how negotiations of mis/translation occur in everyday life, I will be able to better unpack the shifting nature of cultural identity ‘between borders’ in the two poetry collections mentioned above.

Additionally, the diaspora microspace will default under the definition of Bhabha’s Third Space, a space of enunciation between two spaces of “I” and “you”, which becomes an ‘inter’—the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the inbetween space—that carries the burden of the meaning of culture’.¹² Like a larger diaspora, a diaspora microspace is positioned between two spaces, where the mundane must perform important cultural tasks after empire, taking its cue from what James Procter describes as ‘the postcolonial everyday’.¹³ The images of the microspaces within the indigene mundane, and how these spaces shift for Dharker as an individual of diaspora, fluctuate with the political current to become arenas of positive translation or detrimental mistranslation. The inter becomes composed ‘of dissonance where a counter-discourse might emerge that refuses the equivalence of belonging with stasis’; keeping in mind 2001 through to 2006’s changing cultural representation of Muslims and people of

¹⁰ Stuart Hall, ‘Cultural Identity and Diaspora’, in *Theorizing Diaspora: A Reader*, ed. by Jana Evans Braziel and Anita Mannur (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), pp. 233-46, p. 236.

¹¹ Bhabha, p. 37.

¹² Bhabha, p. 56.

¹³ See James Procter, ‘The Postcolonial Everyday’, *New Formations*, 58, (2006), 62-80, p. 64.

colour in 'the West', these microspaces, consistently in flux, position Dharker's poetry at the intersection where 'this space of dissonance is heightened'.¹⁴

We must precedent our examination of microspace imagery in Dharker's poetry with an acceptance of poetry itself as a microspace, where existence within the Third Space and within translation is allowed to occur. Cultural identity is not something that is fixed—'not an essence, but a positioning'; it is not a straightforward narrative thread, but rather fragmented episodes that shift and alter depending on context.¹⁵ Dharker's poems, when considered formally, are in Bachelard's words 'brief, isolated, rapid actions' with 'the poetic act itself, the sudden image, the flare-up of being in the imagination' acting as 'at once a becoming of expression, and a becoming of [her] being'.¹⁶ When we consider poetry as an enunciation space for cultural identity—of a Third Space existing somewhere between page and imagination, between Dharker's written experience and our experience of her experience—then it is natural for her poetry's imagery of physical space to echo this through almost meta-depictions of diasporic cultural identity. Quotidian microspaces in Dharker are Third Spaces within a Third Space: spaces of enunciation within the larger space of enunciation, poetry itself. This too points to the fragmented nature of living within an inter of cultural identity, the shifting syntax of identity undergoing constant transformation.¹⁷

To enter this inter requires an intimacy achieved by what Bachelard calls 'a state of suspended reading [...] [f]or it is not until [the reader's] eyes have left the page that recollections of [another's life] can become a threshold of oneirism for [the reader]'.¹⁸ Understanding someone considered Other requires the reader meet the Other's words within the Third Space of poetry. Brah, Hall, and Bachelard all uphold that identity is formed with reiterations of memory, and as Dharker's poems function as memories or re-memories of the everyday in the in-between, her poems become microspaces of the inter that compose her identity 'on the threshold of being'.¹⁹ Depending on the sociopolitical climate, this being may or may not be physically allowed to exist in undisturbed hybridity and then re-categorised as a singular side of the binary; the being, a dependent identity, is always determined by interaction with a public, outside world. When reading the diasporic citizen's poetry, however, the reader must willingly take part in the realm constructed by the Other within the indigene, thus accepting both sides of the binary to inform a singular experience, and confirming their representation of memory and experience to be valid, real, and living.

One of the physical manifestations of diasporic microspace is that of food, dinner tables, and kitchens, used as an act of culinary diplomacy, a way to bridge elements of Other and indigene.

¹⁴ Irene Gedalof, 'Taking (a) Place: Female Embodiment and the ReGrounding of Community', in *Uprootings—Regroundings: Questions of Home and Migration*, ed. by Sara Ahmed (Oxford: Berg, 2003), pp. 91–112, p. 101.

¹⁵ Hall, p. 237.

¹⁶ Bachelard, pp. xvii, xxiii.

¹⁷ See Hall, p. 236.

¹⁸ Bachelard, p. 14.

¹⁹ Bachelard, p. xvi.

In the poem ‘Crab-apples’, Dharker’s mother uses crab apples from Glasgow, transformed into green chutney, as a way to reshape the indigene and feelings of dis/location into the familiar on one of the most intimate levels: a kitchen bowl, a spoon, a mouth. This corresponds to John Stilgoe’s response to Bachelard: ‘If the house is [...] the first cosmos, how does its space shape all subsequent knowledge of other space, of any larger cosmos?’²⁰ If Pakistan is her mother’s “first home”, then it becomes natural for her to try to project that home onto realms beyond her as a form of control and understanding. The presence of crab apples as fruits indigenous to Britain and not Pakistan reaffirms the mother’s Otherness, and the subversion and transformation of the indigene into Other resonates, essentially, as a summation of Dharker’s diasporic experience: that Dharker can create a home out of things unfamiliar, but it will still not be entirely her own. When the two realms come together—chillies and crab apples to make chutney—they create a Third Space of enunciation. Chutney becomes a vehicle where homesickness can become an added ingredient.

Though Dharker herself does not necessarily consider Pakistan ‘home’ (again, she is a woman ‘between borders’), she still uses the rituals of homemaking to establish familiarity outside of the home, bringing intimacy into the outside realm of the indigene. This is precisely what happens with the diaspora microspace of the dinner table in the poem ‘At the Lahore Karhai’: ‘So we’ve arrived at this table | [...] | bound together by the bread we break, | sharing out our continent’.²¹

In the poem, Dharker uses diaspora microspace—here a dinner table at a Pakistani restaurant in Glasgow—to create her own Third Space, one where she has the agency to solidify her identity and communicate it with the intimacy of food. In this way she shares the lived experience of home across a quotidian threshold of a plate. Cultures, ideas, and histories in the form of food arrive and must be either refused or accepted, like a border zone. If this food and its metaphorical meanings are accepted and eaten, they figuratively and physically become an intimate part of the other party within the space. Here the food is accepted, and along with it the narratives of their interwoven past of the diaspora members they represent, ‘a whole family of dishes’: ‘The tarka dal is Auntie Hameeda, | the karhai ghosht is Khala Ameena, | the gajjar halva is Appa Rasheeda’.²² As a result, Dharker notes that the space around her transforms into a place of understanding; the entire restaurant seems connected and at peace.

These images of the dinner tables and plates, while optimistic, are in turn ephemeral and fleeting; they are diaspora microspaces that fluctuate and shift, as Dharker illustrates poem by poem, and, as Hall notes, they function as ‘unstable points of identification’ that define and then disappear.²³ Even though she is able to facilitate understanding through food as translator, she is mainly only able to reach other members of diaspora—a Sindhi refugee with a Hindu wife, young girls from

²⁰ John Stilgoe, ‘Foreword’, in *The Poetics of Space*, pp. vii-x, p. viii.

²¹ Dharker, ‘At the Lahore Karhai’, in *I Speak*, pp. 34-5, lns. 26, 54-5.

²² Dharker, ‘At the Lahore Karhai’, lns. 42-45.

²³ Hall, p. 237

Mumbai.²⁴ The Englishman markedly is generations removed from colonial legacy of the British Raj. The dinner table and the hospitality of food offer one route out of oppression—that of understanding—but a closer look underneath the temporary happiness still reveals that the people involved with the microspaces must be complicit in being Other, and must come to that space willingly.

As Vicki Squire notes in an examination of British nationalism post-9/11 and London bombings, 'the migrant, as "supplementary other" to an essentialist conception of the nation, becomes divided into its harmless or necessary (wanted) and threatening (unwanted) varieties'.²⁵ Within Dharker's poetry, a political switch occurs in the eyes of the indigene Britain towards diasporic populations, who views her not as someone merely outside the group of the included, but as someone who is a threat to the indigene. Harkening back to Hall, Dharker's poetry is a prime example of how sociopolitical appraisal of the larger diasporic population directly affects the micro-level experiences of individual space, negatively enforcing a harsher binary to combat a hybrid existence within the inter. Dharker's poems from her 2006 collection *The Terrorist at My Table* become increasingly more conscious of her identity as 'unwanted'. Home, as referenced in *I Speak For the Devil*, is a place of safety, but in her latter collection it becomes invaded by elements of the indigene. Usually in the form of media outlets, the invasive indigene reifies Dharker's Otherness as dangerous, enters the home, and strips her of her liminal category of inter—unmolested on the fringes of the inclusion/exclusion binary—so as to reposition her as Other, someone who must be actively excluded and prohibited.

Because the sanctuary status of the home is disrupted, food and kitchens as microspaces become increasingly more complicated in this environment within *The Terrorist at My Table*. Although poetic instances of conviviality do occur occasionally in this later collection—'Campsie Fells' gives us a glimpse of a picnic populated with Scottish-Pakistani culinary marriages, with 'boiled eggs and sandwiches' alongside 'kebabs and tikka with chutney' and British tea-turned-chai 'all made up with sugar and milk'—the microspaces involving culinary diplomacy are not as hopeful as in the previous collection.²⁶ In the titular poem of this collection, where Dharker is slicing onions to prepare a meal, the terrorist is here the news blaring through the television on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The home, kitchen, and table become spaces fraught with worry, and dinner becomes a larger and more problematic signifier than the easy Lahore Karhai scene. Stories can vary, truth has to be peeled away in layers, and the news permeates every inch of her home. The simple act of cooking nowadays, she seems to say, involves deciding upon the acceptance of borderlines and narratives, of choosing which truth to internalise: Here are the facts, fine | as onion rings. | The same ones can come chopped | or sliced'. Just as truth can come

²⁴ See 'At the Lahore Karhai', lns. 27-36.

²⁵ Vicki Squire, "'Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain': New Labour on Nationality, Immigration and Asylum", *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 10(1), (2005), 51-74, p. 59.

²⁶ Dharker, 'Campsie Fells', in *The Terrorist*, p. 30-1, lns. 22-25.

in two ways, Israel or Palestine, and Gaza becomes ‘a spreading watermark’ on her dining room table. The tablecloth turns ‘to fire’.²⁷

In the contrast between this poetry collection and the former, Dharker illustrates that the home can be a method for creating positive Third Spaces in the outside world, but that the outside world as a framework does not necessarily work in as equivocal a way inside the home. As the border between inside and outside, indigene/Other, you/I, collapses, the kitchen and the home become diaspora microspaces that are battlegrounds of representation, Third Spaces for negotiating her identity against the media. Extending Bhabha’s example of the mistranslation of the Hindi vowel “अ” (pronounced “er”)—in which he uses lines from Adil Jussawalla’s poem ‘Missing Person’ where “अ”, the first letter of the Hindi alphabet, gets translated in the West as the British “er”, signifying a stammer or cough—the home becomes riddled with microspaces of mistranslation. When the home is projected on the outside, as in the Lahore Karhai, it is an amplification of Bhabha’s practice of ‘placing the violent sign within the threat of political violation,’ one that aids in understanding of hybridity’. But when the practice is reversed, and ‘the [indigene] threat of political violation’ is placed within a context of the Other—when the outside world is imposed on the domain of the home—the microspaces become ones concerned with struggle and dominance, spaces of neo-colonialism, rather than arenas of true hybridity guided by understanding.²⁸

The outside world in *The Terrorist at My Table* is primarily manifest through the media as indigene, as an intruder assaulting her identity with an alternative definition. Through news, ‘the Other is forever the exegetical horizon of difference, never the active agent of articulation [...]. [C]ited, quoted, framed [...] the other loses its power to signify, to negate, to initiate’.²⁹ The media’s successful collapse of private/public by its infiltration of the private sphere frustrates Dharker. She feels an inability to define her own cultural identity when she is constantly assailed by the media’s assumptions of her:

I was in a clean, warm house

nowhere near that war.

But in my fist the paper

²⁷ Dharker, ‘The Terrorist at My Table’, in *The Terrorist*, pp. 22-3, lns. 20-5, 37.

²⁸ Bhabha, p. 58.

²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 56.

crumples to embrace

the photograph. The woman

laughing for the camera,

pointing at my face.³⁰

Post-9/11, Dharker experiences a resurgence and acute awareness of her Otherness even within the inter of Third Space that used to be comfortable to her. As shifts in sociopolitical control re-categorise her identity as distinctly Other, outside of a possible Third Space, she finds herself 'inside | your cage of coverage',³¹ her identity becomes the victim of 'an eraser as big as a house' that 'rubbed | out [her] truth, and they left in [her] lies'.³² The existence of hybrid identity is thus directly correlated to the experience of space. The home is no longer a true Third Space, as her narrative is rewritten entirely and not allowed to exist in hybridity. It is still a microspace of diaspora experience and everyday life, but not one of exchange akin to those in Dharker's previous collection; it is now a microspace invaded, of persecution and fear.

Pre-9/11, the idea of thresholds as diaspora microspace are those of translation rather than the post-9/11 mistranslation. In 'Front Door', Dharker describes a moment of crossing not only a physical threshold of a doorjamb, but also moving from a place of the Other into the indigene. Every time Dharker walks out of the front door, it 'means crossing over | to a foreign country'.³³ Her body goes through a physical act of translation: she switches languages, changes clothes, adopts customs. This oft-relayed trope of cultural adaptation, usually depicted as an alienating marker, subverts in this poem to become a thrilling 'high'; Dharker admits that she is 'high on the rush | of daily displacement, | speeding to a different time zone, | heading into altered weather, | landing as another person'.³⁴

This quotidian act of leaving the house is the quintessential diaspora microspace: it harkens back to Brah's diaspora space in the language of migration and applies it to the personal level, as if Dharker becomes a vessel bringing herself to another land. There are two beings in a doorway, Bachelard says—one of coming and one of going—and Dharker relishes these moments that are spent in 'the majesty of threshold within [herself]' as a power of translation she holds as Other within her inter.³⁵ 'For the door is an entire cosmos of the Half-open', Bachelard goes on, and if

³⁰ Dharker, 'Still', in *The Terrorist*, p. 40, lns. 14-20.

³¹ Dharker, 'These are the times we live in II', in *The Terrorist*, p. 47, lns. 12-13.

³² Dharker, 'These are the times we live in III', in *The Terrorist*, p. 49, lns. 1-6.

³³ Dharker, 'Front Door', in *I Speak for the Devil*, p. 26, lns. 4-5.

³⁴ *ibid.*, lns. 16-20.

³⁵ Bachelard, p. 223.

Dharker belongs to anywhere, it is to the country of the Half-Open that allows a Third Space to be formed.³⁶ The microspace of the doorway is an important space of enunciation for Dharker because it allows her to position and renegotiate her cultural identity as coming or going.

Perhaps the most poignant difference between pre-9/11 and post-9/11 Dharker is the use of a fully open door. In *I Speak For the Devil*, before the intrusion of media, Dharker proclaims that: ‘Worse than leaving a country | is walking out of a door | that will stand open | because you have told all | your secrets, and there is nothing | left to steal’.³⁷ But in her poem ‘Open’, in the latter collection post-9/11, she is forced to surrender to the blurred line of public and private realms:

I don’t mind.

I’m opening up the public spaces.

There are no intruders.

They own this place as much as you,
as much as me.

[...]

Lately, I’ve fallen into a new habit,

Leaving my life unlocked.³⁸

Because of the intrusion of the indigene into her own private space, the implications of an open door in ‘Open’ are that Dharker not only lacks ownership over herself and her home, but also her own cultural identity. Though Bachelard, ruminations stem from ideas of childhood homes as frames for our understanding of the world, and while Dharker’s ‘house’ is obviously not her childhood home, the house in her work still exists as a ‘psychic state’ that ‘bespeaks intimacy’.³⁹ This restructuring of the home is a response to the daily reinforcement that ‘everyday discourse has been stripped from Muslim and, by extension, South Asian representation in both Europe and the US’.⁴⁰ Dharker cannot even give thought to the possibility of a half-open door that allows two beings; she knows that leaving room for negotiation ends more often now in mistranslation.

The only agency she can have in this invaded microspace is to magnify her responses to the accusations made against her, to make her home transparent as she does in ‘Glass House’: ‘The room I choose to live in | is full of glass. | I look out. People look in’.⁴¹ The stripping down of barriers between public and private space, between Dharker and the outside world, becomes the

³⁶ Bachelard, p. 57.

³⁷ Dharker, ‘Front Door’, in *I Speak for the Devil*, p. 26, lns. 12-17.

³⁸ Dharker, ‘Open’, in *The Terrorist*, p. 50, lns. 6-10, 13-4.

³⁹ Bachelard, p. 72.

⁴⁰ Procter, p. 66.

⁴¹ Dharker, ‘Glass House’, in *The Terrorist*, p. 121, lns. 1-3.

poetess's way of enunciating her cultural identity. Since the indigene found a way to intrude the private sphere, stripping her of the agency to identify as existing in hybridity, Dharker attempts to redefine the terms of her representation and take advantage of her political situation's hyperobsession with visibility and surveillance of the now-Others, especially Muslims, to self-impose invisibility—'Here. Look through me'.⁴² She has given into 'the temptation to open up the ultimate depths of being'⁴³ as a way to respond to the fact that Britain's Asian communities, in this political moment, have become less likely to navigate as mundane and 'more likely to be the subjects of a nervous second glance, or lingering CCTV surveillance'.⁴⁴

The binary of private and public thus collapsed, the media's presence forces Dharker to live in a diaspora microspace of mistranslation even in her own home. The inter of Other/indigene Dharker inhabits remains intact, but constantly in the flux of mis/translation. By the end of *The Terrorist at My Table*, these microspaces have constructed an inter that challenges the comfort she previously found in the in-betweens and introduces complications that lessen her power. Rather than creating a Third Space where hybridity is accepted as a valid identity, meetings of Other and indigene instead begin resembling invasions, mirroring to some extent British colonial invasions of the Indian subcontinent. 'Even if we had doors', she says in 'Ends of the Earth', 'nothing would keep | the other out. | The world is with us | too much'.⁴⁵

Despite all this, however, Dharker does not end her collection on a pessimistic note. At the end of her collection, the poetry cycle 'The World Rickshaw Ride' takes her on an imaginary world tour with a flying rickshaw driver (the fact that she interacts with members of the South Asian diaspora, Others to the West themselves, is of note). From within the dream realm, itself an inter between realities, Dharker longs for the nostalgia of her comfort in the inter, attempting to find her footing in the in-between yet again in her poem 'Halfway', closing with the lines:

Halfway home or halfway gone,

we have grown accustomed now

to travelling on the faultline

of daily miracles.⁴⁶

⁴² *ibid.*, ln. 19.

⁴³ Bachelard, p. 222.

⁴⁴ Procter, p. 69.

⁴⁵ Dharker, 'Ends of the Earth', in *The Terrorist*, p. 136, lns. 9-13.

⁴⁶ Dharker, 'Halfway', in *The Terrorist*, p. 158, lns. 24-27.

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