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RESEARCH PAPER

Narrative Mobility of Optics from Panopticon to Synopticon in *Don't Forget Us Here: Lost and Found at Guantánamo* by Mansoor Adayfi

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ABSTRACT

This study examines Mansoor Adayfi's memoir, *Don't Forget Us Here: Lost and Found at Guantánamo* by utilizing Jeremy Bentham's concept of 'panopticon' and Mathiesen's concept of 'synopticon' to explore narrative mobility. Adayfi's firsthand experience intersects with Bentham's theoretical framework which offers a nuanced understanding of surveillance politics in prisons like Guantanamo. By employing the narrative analysis, this study scrutinizes Adayfi's memoir through the metaphor of 'optics' and presents a shift where the observer is not a captor or a guard of the prison but a captive himself. The panopticon narrative (inmate watching many) of this memoir challenges the invisibility of the atrocities of the captors and legal doctrines obscuring inmate visibility. The close reading of the text projects a transition from the panopticon to Mathiesen's concept of the synopticon system where readers (many) watch the few (captors). This approach enables a deeper comprehension of narrative mobility, makes invisible visible, and also amplifies marginalized voices within carceral narratives.

KEYWORDS Invisibility, Memoir, Narrative Mobility, Panopticon, Synopticon ,War On Terror

Introduction

Political prison literature generally performs an ethical act of not just providing aesthetic gratification but they are informed with a major part of the underground discourse that is continuously challenging, interrogating, and contesting the official discourses. These stories and memories have the power to massively galvanize grassroots movements by assisting non-governmental organizations in fending off repression from the authoritarian government. Barbara Harlow contends that prison literature should not be read for aesthetic enjoyment as other types of literature. She suggests, "reading prison writing must in turn demand a correspondingly activist counter approach in response to passivity, aesthetic gratification, and the pleasures of consumption that are traditionally sanctioned by the academic disciplining of literature"(62). Many scholars intend to encourage understanding of political prisoners' pain by empathizing with them and most of them discourage this approach of "aesthetic gratification," by taking the prisoners' pain as "material" for distanced observations only where readers unsympathetically appreciate the spectacle of victims' suffering. This form of writing can have offshoots in different forms and directions and it possesses a strong protean quality. Keeping in mind the diversity of this form of literature, this study aims to use the lens of 'mobility turn' in the narrative as a scope of the diverse investigation to analyze the dichotomy of actors and actants in terms of forced mobilities (prisoners) and narrative mobilities (narrator and readers as watchers).

To delve deeper into the realm of narrative mobility, this study focuses on the role of optics as a pivotal factor in understanding how human mobility across narrative boundaries challenges the sovereignty of nation-states. This examination also illuminates

how such mobility fosters a collaborative sovereignty between storytellers and their readers. Various literary genres explore the optics of mobility concerning irregular migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees, scrutinizing borders and border techniques that question their authenticity as outsiders. However, this study specifically examines memoirs as a genre, which offers a more authentic, subjective, and critical perspective. Through narrative borders, memoirs project the intense power to evoke mobility among readers, providing visibility of invisibility in a nuanced manner(Yuval-Davis, Wemyss, and Cassidy 2019). Some anthropologists have identified the "mobility turn" as the rejection of the "sedentarist turn" in favor of migrants and nomadic lives to bring in the transformative impact on society that jiggles with the traditional perspective of human mobility and the response of societies to accept these changes (Urry 2007). This study uses this mobility turn from the perspective of narrative where the mobility of the narrator and reader is evident. Narrative mobility in memoirs entails the dynamic examination of individual experiences, permitting changes in viewpoint, interpretation, and comprehension as the story progresses and the mobility of the reader is an interesting aspect that this study aims to explore.

Literature Review

The breadth and content of prison historiography have changed dramatically since the publication of Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1977). The conventional narrative of prison history has shifted in recent years to emphasize the opposite whereas penal reform has only served to generate new forms of social control (see, for example, Garland, 1985). Prison historiography has tended to be more preoccupied with the imposition of penal power rather than resistance to it, with the abstract and theoretical rather than the experience of punishment, although such revisionism has enormously enhanced penological studies. This has meant that when it comes to incarceration, the inmates themselves are rarely given a say. The memoires are the best-documented narrative that gives the say to the inmates and prisoners. In any civilization, the autobiographies of political prisoners vividly depict the battle between people and opposition groups to achieve fundamental human rights, including the freedom of speech. In addition, this literature demonstrates what prisoners feel in captivity how they battle against the denial of their rights, and how the invisible gets the optics of visibility through their voice. In the context of political prisoners, John Urry's concept of 'mobility turn' represents a transformation in which the identities of innocent individuals are shifted to that of accused criminals or terrorists, rendering their agency feeble and invisible in the official narratives of the investigators. However, within memoirs, this shift of identity is reversed as prisoners reclaim their agency and reclaim their true identity. So here 'mobility turn' is working in two dimensions the way it mobilizes the identity of the prisoners and then the way it mobilizes the agency of readers of the narrative. Alyson Brown has shown how prison autobiographies provide rich insights into prisoners' attempts to survive during a hard time, gaining a sense of purpose from their imprisonment, while William Forsythe has drawn on prison memoirs to explore how prisoners coped with the loneliness of cellular confinement (2005).

Prisoner narratives have been largely overlooked in prison historiography until recently, despite Michel Foucault's recognition of their potential importance as a "discourse against power" and the imposition of penal power in prisons characterized by strict discipline and increased observation. However, as Alyson Brown and Emma Clare have argued, prisoners' writings capture the nuances of incarceration and "the consistency and persistence of certain sentient experiences," forming "a subjective counter-discourse of the prison," and serve as a form of resistance and a response to prison regimes. Examining

prison memoirs contributes to a growing body of research that emphasizes the voice and agency of inmates, as well as improving our understanding of their experiences.

This article takes up Mansoor Aydafi's memoir *Don't Forget Us Here: Lost and Found at Guantánamo* published in 2021 by a Yemeni writer as a narrative of a contesting sight that grapples with the politics of invisibility in detention centers like Guantánamo Bay. The narrative of memoirs is subject to the pervasive influence of state authority and the lawlessness of the absolute power of the legal discourse of the captors. Prisoners like Adayfi engage in writing to harness the 'power of writing' in opposition to the official narrative of their imprisonment to assert their version of truth(Gready 1). The ethos of larger geopolitical dimensions can be manifested in memoirs with heavy memory and first-hand witnessing baggage. This results in complex, negotiated, constituted, and contested narrative border spaces where readers can see the teller's mobility and identity formation through first-hand witnessing. Here it is also pertinent to see how the narrative of the memoir selected for this article brings the invisibility of unlawfulness into the visibility. Guantánamo is taken as the off-site prison due to its exceptional legal status, as it is a "military base exempted from any civilian or extra-governmental protocols" (Greenberg 2009). Because it is outside US jurisdiction, so rendered as a legal black where no rules and laws apply which paves the captor state's ways to violate the prisoners' basic human rights, to act with minimal accountability, and to rely on questionable methods for accessing information about possible links to terrorism.

Philippe Lejeune argues that memoirs require a kind of contract that a reader establishes with the memoirist. Such pacts allow the reader to identify what is there in the text by taking the specific "mode of reading," that combines the reader's role as a believer with his/her ability to empathize and sympathize with the memoirists. I am interested in taking the memoir of political prisoners who are accused of being terrorists and their detention story as a narrative mobility that shifts readers from the reading space to a critical space what I take as 'prisonscape', where through second witnessing (reading) they find themselves imprisoned in the charismatic appeal of words and narration.

Material and Methods

The methodology of this study synthesizes Jeremy Bentham's 'panopticon concept' and Thomas Matthiessen's 'synopticon concept' to investigate the invisibility of captors' atrocities in political prisons. By emphasizing Mansoor Adafi's firsthand perspective as a prisoner, this study grants him agency not as a narrator but as the observer, akin to the role of a guard in the panopticon system. Here, Adafi's narration serves as the singular observer watching over the many, shedding light on the invisibility of captors' atrocities and the dynamics of power and surveillance politics within carceral institutions. Through this approach, the study aims to offer insights into the complexities of visibility and invisibility dynamics in narratives of incarceration. The activity of reading and believing the memoirs provide a system of synopticon, in which 'the many' (readers) watch the bad and unjust doings of 'the few'(captors). In the panopticon-designed prison a single guard as the watcher could watch all the prisoners without these prisoners being intimated and aware if they were being watched at any point in time.

This study also introduces Thomas Mathiesen's concept of 'synopticon' in projecting the narrative mobility from the narrator to the reader. According to him, our society operates not only as a panopticon, where the few observe the many but also as a "viewer society," where the many observe the few. Interestingly if we apply this idea conceptually, the panopticon metaphor demonstrates that in modern ways of surveillance "few" can watch "many" as the adherent form of social control whereby the people who

work for such social and security institutions (the few) undertake the surveillance of many people. This study takes the narrative as a prison for the readers and uses the surveillance metaphor to see how readers (many) see the few(captors).

By leveraging Matthiessen's Synopticon concept, this study investigates how this paradigm shift challenges the concealment of captors and the ambiguity surrounding legal doctrines to hide prisoners from the mainstream media and justice system of the state and make these invisible facts visible. This improved awareness of the terrible conditions that the captives are in and the crimes committed by their captors aids readers(many) in becoming observers of the atrocities done by sovereign states like US (few).

This analytical approach necessitates a meticulous examination of the text to uncover narrative mobility where initially the author himself acts as the guard (panopticon system) and then readers become the guard (synopticon system) while interpreting the text. This narrative mobility also helps in making the invisible facts visible by amplifying the voices of marginalized individuals within carceral narratives. A methodical and in-depth examination of the text is used to reveal layers of meaning, symbolism, and narrative devices through a close reading of the narrative of the memoir *Don't Forget Us Here: Lost and Found at Guantánamo*.

Results and Discussion

The data analysis of this study involves a rigorous examination of Mansoor Adayfi's memoir, *Don't Forget Us Here: Lost and Found at Guantánamo*, by focusing on the key themes related to visibility, invisibility, and surveillance dynamics within carceral narratives. By doing a close reading of the narrative, this study aims to extract and analyze specific textual evidence, and patterns that illuminate the research objectives of revealing the invisibility of surveillance politics. By systematically dissecting the narrative through qualitative methods, this analysis seeks to uncover deeper insights into Adayfi's experiences as a prisoner, the portrayal of captors and the state, and the broader socio-political implications embedded within this memoir. This analysis sets the stage for a detailed exploration of the scholarly discourse on surveillance, power dynamics, and human rights within carceral contexts.

This memoir starts with the incidents revealing authorities of sovereign states' captors who establish, classify, and record people through a rigorous process of scrutiny by designating them as terrorists or criminals frequently even before their legal proceedings begin. This emphasizes how the identities of the detainees as human beings are fragmented and dehumanized. Wu Yenna in her book *Human Rights, Suffering, and Aesthetics in Political Prison Literature* posits the idea that the evidence of extreme human rights abuse does not happen only in lawless countries and regions rather some countries with their proper law and constitution bypass the law, they just flaunt their lawfulness in reality but they don't practice it in actuality (2012). This article selects the memoir of a political prisoner who is accused of being a terrorist and his detention story as a narrative mobility shifts readers from the reading space to a critical space what this study presents as a 'prisonscape', where through second witnessing (reading) they find themselves imprisoned in the charismatic appeal of words and narration. This activity of reading and believing provides a system of synopticon as posited by Matthiessen, in which 'the many' (readers) watch 'the few'(captors). In the panopticon-designed prison surveillance a single guard as the watcher could watch all the prisoners without these prisoners being intimated and aware if they were being watched at any point in time.

Marc Falkoff reports that the Guantánamo detainees were given access to writing instruments after the first year in which such access was denied (3). Some of the prisoners like Adayfi sent their poems and other writings out to the volunteer lawyers to keep a record of it. Writings of detainees were destroyed, confiscated, or forbidden to be made public because the Pentagon argued that poetry "presents a special risk" to national security due to its content and format (40). This article explores how Adayfi presents first-hand witnessing of atrocities within the Guantanamo detention center as the testimony of chronicled events of dehumanization, and pulverization of identities which make readers second witnesses of the torture.

To safeguard the identities of his fellow detainees, as well as camp personnel and guards, Adayfi took precautionary measures by altering certain names and locations when composing his narratives. These narratives were crafted in the form of letters addressed to both his initial attorney, Andy Hart, and subsequently to his second attorney, Beth Jacob. This memoir, which is an autobiographical account of his writing while incarcerated, provides a thorough articulation of the oppositional "power of writing." He began collaborating with award-winning author Antonio Aiello in 2019 to transform these letters from Guantanamo into a book. The narrative of this book tells the story of Mansoor Adayfi's years in Guantanamo, where he was detained on suspicion of being a Muslim terrorist, from the age of 19. From the moment of his arrest until his life in jail, the interrogators' optics or eyes could not see him as a young guy full of life and goals or as a student with a future ahead of him. Rather, the perception of him was that of a first-class terrorist, or at the very least, that of one of the most dangerous terrorists hostile to the United States.

Adayfi's account begins at the start of the book when he was abused by the agents of CIA in Kandahar, he was subjected to severe mistreatment by the CIA, including physical beatings, electrocution, intense interrogations, and being suspended from the ceiling in a pitch-dark room while utterly unclothed. Adayfi was confronted with excruciating torment and was compelled to confess to a crime he had never committed due to the relentless pressure from his interrogators in the initial stages of his ordeal.

"I told them the truth…..that I didn't hate America, that I wasn't al Qaeda—but they didn't want that. They wanted something from me I didn't have to give. They wanted me to admit that I was a man named Adel, an Egyptian al Qaeda recruiter, a terrorist who planned bombings. Fine. "I'll be whoever you want me to be," I said. "I'll be your Adel" (Adayfi 2021,67).

His acceptance was a last-ditch effort to bring him some relief from his pain. To ease the agony of torture and unrelenting beatings, he first fights valiantly to persuade his captors that he is not an elderly Egyptian recruiter for Al Qaeda, an identity he admitted as a result of the investigator's unavoidably cruel behavior while he was electrocuted in Afghanistan. Then he was bound, hooded, and flown to the unknown detention camp Guantánamo Bay in Cuba. Adayfi narrates, "It's difficult to remember what my life was like before I was sold to the United States and sent to the CIA black site in Afghanistan (2021, 19).

The forced mobility in the case of Adayfi as a prisoner again brings forward the visibility of invisible terrorism on the part of US security agencies as he narrates how the plane at an unknown place lands and a few unknown soldiers pull the prisoner up and push them down and drag them off from one plane to another. The narrative technique that covers his entire journey grapples with the sense of invisible pain that one can feel while reading about the suffering of a person who prays for death as an escape from this torture and fear of an unknown destination. This narrative technique highlights the account

of his journey from Afghanistan to America as a suspected terrorist and also mobilizes readers to see the wrongs. He prays that the plane crashes into the ocean and ends it all because death would be better than this (Adayfi, 2021, 25). Adayfi also addresses the issue of racism against Muslims in his book by saying

"…people are the creation of Allah and should be treated equally. But the Americans were really good at their racism and brought it to new heights. N***er! And n***er! Towel head! Haji! They had so many names for us and it always hurt. They called Blackguards and brown guards the same names" (Adayafi,2023,p.213).

The fact that prisoners like Mansoor are deprived of the ability to choose their destination is revealed by their immobility amid forced mobility. According to him, these soldiers pull the detainees from the aircraft and toss them from soldier to soldier like a bag. In one motion, these prisoners traverse the water and the waves, and then they are hauled off the boat. When he reaches his destination, he has no idea where he is or why he is there. The physical and psychological abuse inflicted upon the nineteen-year-old boy by detainers who revel in their ability to hijack his identity in all its complexity and assert a new one is made evident by the optics of shame that burns him once more. "They take photos of you, every part of you—even your genitals. They give you a number and attach a plastic bracelet to your wrist that has your photograph and your new number" (Adayfi, 2021, p.26).

Adayfi was imprisoned for fourteen years, yet during that period, not a single piece of evidence was ever presented to substantiate the accusations made against him. Several of his fellow prisoners even confided in him, stating they believed the claims false. He has never been formally accused of breaking any local, state, federal, or international laws. He was only aware that the guards and interrogators were acting insanely, yelling and flipping out at the detainees in a language he didn't understand, and that was the only reason he was imprisoned in the first place. In some places, he is listed as a terrorist because, despite the lack of evidence, the US government decided to pretend that he was another terrorist commander-in-chief. The brutal beatings and disorientation of solitary confinement led protest groups to organize hunger strikes and other protests. Prisoners were deprived of food, water, medical care, and protection from the harsh sun. They strip them naked and mock them and their religion, sending a deeply human message that is often unheard on the receiving end of the war on terror.

According to Bauman, without security and freedom, man cannot exist (2001, p.07). We witnessed how guards at this prison deny prisoners their basic rights, dehumanize them, and steal their human identities. In such cases, these detainees are deprived of legal security and freedom of expression and stay at the mercy of detainers. It is pertinent to see that the torture inflicted on Adayfi in Kandahar and the initial days of confinement cells in Guantanamo reveal the optics of legal paucity in these detention centres. Prisoners are routinely denied their basic human rights in detention facilities in the prisons like Guantanamo, which are frequently located in isolated locations. As state agencies fail to maintain fundamental legal and ethical norms within these facilities, this intentional marginalization highlights a political goal intended to maintain the precarious situation of detainees. In addition to being against international norms, these actions support the oppressive and unfair cycle of injustice. These captive states can take advantage of these legal protections to torture prisoners in secret and without fear of consequences. Adayafi gets the help of an attorney quite late after enduring a lot of horrendous torture including his shocking kidnap and displacement from Afghanistan to Cuba. After Barack Obama wins the presidency and declares his intention to close Guantánamo, Adayfi hires an attorney. According to Adayfi's book, all of the torture cells in Guantánamo Bay are not like regular jails where prominent terrorists are kept out of the public eye and hidden from view

by mainstream national and international legislation and the media. The detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where detainees are deprived of all legal protection, torture is common, and the doctors and watchers have abandoned their ethical responsibilities, is described by British Prime Minister Tony Blair as an anomaly that is set against the ethic and human rights of Western traditions (Wilks 2).

There are many legion examples of international prisoners who have endured bigotry treatment based on their race and ethnicity and they are made to endure radically precarious conditions where there is also a danger of not recognizing their agency (Malkki, 1996; Andrijasevic, 2003; Nyers, 2003). Adayfi says in his book that he never intended to write the book as his own story; it was always meant to encompass the collective experiences of all those involved. He aimed to depict the broader narrative of Guantánamo, not just his journey. However, he came to realize that by recounting his own experiences, he could effectively convey the larger story of Guantánamo and the shared experiences of his fellow detainees. Through his narrative, he sought to ensure that the world could understand and empathize with the collective moments of Guantánamo, shared by all those who endured its confines. Adayfi in one of his interviews says that his purpose was not just to document what has happened but also to reflect on how Guantánamo still makes everyone who was held there. The title “Don't Forget Us Here” alludes to the location "here," where Adayfi continues to reside with other ex-offenders years after his parole. He is pleading with the US administration to admit the truth about what transpired at Guantánamo and to at least compensate those inmates.

Wicks notes that the cultural atmosphere at Guantanamo Bay was shaped by two key presidential decisions. The first decision involved revoking the protection of the Geneva Convention for all individuals labeled as "combatants" suspected of affiliations with Al Qaeda or the Taliban. The second decision redefined torture, stipulating that it only constituted physical pain equivalent to "serious physical injuries such as death or organ failure," while mental torture was recognized only if it resulted in "lasting psychological harm." This is evident in the memoir's depiction of the mental anguish experienced by all detainees at various points. However, despite these accounts, there is a lack of medical documentation confirming such instances of psychological torture inflicted upon the prisoners(2). This book examines the interpersonal aspect of torture to portray the horrifying effects of torture as enduring scars in the psyche of prisoners, drawing on Adayfi's account of being subjected to torture and cruel treatment explains how the common experiences they had in the prison caused them to form an unidentified brotherhood. At one point in the text, Adayfi tells the tale of Qureshi, a fellow prisoner, who was beaten while praying and had a soldier step on his Qur'an. This news spread like fire in the jungle and they all decided to do a hunger strike by refusing to take food and water for several days. They demanded a representative of IRFs to negotiate and discuss their rights and demands. “We wanted to be able to pray the way we had prayed all our lives—together—and not get beaten. We wanted to know what we were accused of and what would happen to us”(Adayfi, 2021, p.43). These demands of detainees open up the limited view of detainers who act as racists, hence readers as many can see the role of few (detainers). By narrating the atrocities done by such detainers who obstruct believers from engaging in specific religious practices, Adayfi highlights the dynamics of control and surveillance within the prison that reveal a complex interplay of power.

These incidents highlight the captors' limited understanding of religion, often conflating Muslim religious practices with terrorism. This article contends that by presenting the perspective of a detainee, it sheds light on the racism, Islamophobia, and politicization of terror perpetuated by these captors. Through the lens of a detainee, it unveils how such biases and misconceptions influence the treatment of Muslim individuals

within carceral settings, ultimately making these issues visible to a global audience. It was not just the endurance of torture on the part of Adayfi but many others like him were enduring torture at the same and sometimes at a greater and graver level he narrates in the book, "…the man cried close by. He begged someone to stop beating him. He begged for his life. This wasn't new. In the endless darkness, I'd hear women and children beg, too" (Adayfi, 2021, p.5). Adayfi casts his fellow detainees as hapless victims of this unjust system of detention centers to get information about Al Qaeda from Muslim men and women who do not have the intelligence that the Americans want. He mentions that he heard about the Sept 11 attacks in Afghanistan on a radio set. He claims that upon being apprehended, he was overpowered by the callous treatment he received from the anonymous American soldiers, who were more concerned with exacting revenge for the bombings than with identifying the captives and their actions.

This article sheds light on the fact that by focusing on his story he presents the broader optics of inhumane, treacherous, and terrorist behaviour of the US government under the garb of war on terror. The art and storytelling help the mobility of the reader from just the reading experience to the journey which hits their critical thinking and souls which the researcher calls as a 'prisonscape' where their minds get entangled in the prison of a narration in which the narrator shares his primary witnessing. Adayfi says, "I thought it was important to capture these moments and to tell them from our point of view, the way we experienced them. These are important stories to tell, and I didn't want them told by someone else who didn't live them with us" (09). The survival strategies these detainees adopt to survive as a community in these torture cells present the idea of universal brotherhood (Mathiesen 1997, p. 230).

In one of the situations when Adayfi refuses to take a shower in front of women by considering the religious implication of modesty. Adayfi talks to the interpreter that we are modest and you force us to do something that is forbidden in our religion. He says. "[y]ou make us strip in front of women. You search our genitals. It's not right that the female soldiers watch us shower. You know it's against our religion, but you still do it" (Adayfi, 2021, p.23). By voicing his concerns to the interpreter, Adayfi underscores the importance of respecting religious practices and cultural sensitivities, even within the confines of detention. These captives undoubtedly bear a lasting impact from their ordeals and traumatic situations, which affects their mental health. Wilks reports that the doctors at Guantanamo Bay have been implicated in failing to report the psychological and physical abuse of detainees even being present at the moment when that torture takes place. He further adds that the psychiatrists there trained the interrogators about the techniques to design and inflict damage to the mental health of these prisoners (2).

It is intriguing to observe that the religious beliefs of Muslims are perceived as a threat by the white soldiers. The mere utterance of sacred phrases, such as "Allahu Akbar," is enough to evoke fear and suspicion among them, associating these phrases with motivations for Jihad. This observation suggests that religiosity is perceived as unrelated to the allegations levelled against the prisoners, regardless of their actual involvement in crimes against the US. The article argues that religion constitutes a fundamental right of detainees to practice, yet the memoir vividly depicts the agonizing torture endured within the confines of the cells. This portrayal casts a dark cloud of uncertainty over the future of the captives, where their personal and religious identities are diminished to the brink of extinction. Adayfi at one place tells us that many of us had been told by soldiers or interrogators that we were going to be executed.

In the last section of the book, when Mansoor Adayfi is finally freed after fourteen years, he is instructed to go to the place he did not know before so he leaves for Serbia as

instructed by the colonel but this again reveals the level of injustice by the American government and legal system, where after knowing the innocence of Adayfi, they don't allow him to go back to his own country Yemen. General Michael R. Lehnert, a former commander of the detention operation once confessed that "Guantánamo was a mistake. History will reflect that. It was created in the early days as a consequence of fear, anger, and political expediency. It ignored centuries of rule of law and international agreements. It does not make us safer, and it sullies who we are as a nation" (qtd in Kajtár-Pinjung).

Mansoor Adayfi's memoir was written over six years on scraps of paper hidden under his mattress and relayed to his lawyers at different points in time. It provided a blistering and meticulous account of what happened to him and others at the hands of the American government. The US is a country for which democracy and human rights are supposed to be foundational principles but here through the narrative of this memoir, we see the invisibility of human and democratic rights which the narrative of a memoir turns into visibility. Few Americans also believe the fact that the US runs a torture camp where men are condemned for decades without even the semblance of any rights. Memoir or prison writing is primarily a weapon to redress, a means of reducing pain and returning power by creating a prisonscape between the narrator and the readers where the author as an inmate at the same time teller of the story gets the agency to present what is true and real to his readers. By replacing individuals' real names with dehumanizing labels such as "prisoner #442" or "terrorist," these detentions and imprisonment undermine their identity and diminish their humanity. By shedding light on this critical aspect of visibility, the study aims to challenge the dehumanization of detainees and advocate for their recognition and protection as individuals entitled to fundamental human rights. Agamben's concept aligns here with the story of this memoir which supports the notion that detainees represent individuals reduced to mere "bare life" within Western political frameworks. According to Agamben, these individuals occupy a liminal space where they are excluded from the protections and rights afforded to citizens, yet are not treated as sacrificial beings. Instead, they are subjected to the absolute power of death, existing in a state of vulnerability and disposability. By stripping detainees of their humanity and reducing them to expendable entities, Western politics reinforce structures of domination and control, wherein the state asserts its sovereignty through the management and regulation of life and death. Agamben's analysis sheds light on the systemic dehumanization and violence inherent within carceral systems, urging for critical examination and resistance against such forms of power and oppression(100).

As a memoir, it's a writing of resistance where Mansoor narrates that Guantanamo has never been a place where misery and apathy reigned uncontested rather the inmates fight for their confinement and torture from the very first day to cultivate personal and collective identities that their captors and tortures could not take away. Their collective miseries, mutual pain, hopelessness, and fear bring them together; they find a way to connect despite their language and cultural differences. In Adayfi's words, "This place called Guantánamo had created a brotherhood among us and now we looked out for each other wherever we were no matter who we were" (Adayfi 2021, p.61).

A striking illustration of collective suffering emerges from an incident in which a detainee endured excruciating tooth pain, only to be denied treatment by the guards. Witnessing the prisoner's agony, fellow detainees protested against his mistreatment by staging various acts of resistance. This included refusing to eat and retaliating by splashing guards with water and milk received with their meals. Despite facing severe repercussions, such as beatings, the protesters persisted in their resistance until a camp officer intervened and transported the suffering inmate to the camp hospital. This episode underscores the solidarity among detainees in the face of injustice and suffering, as well as their

determination to challenge the oppressive conditions within the detention center. It serves as a poignant example of collective action and resilience amid adversity.

Through the metaphor of "optics" and narrative mobility by using all of the textual evidence mentioned above, this article illustrates how Mansoor Adayfi, a prisoner, shares his experience in his narrative and how a new opposing voice started to surface from within the prison system itself, in contrast to the prison officials' growing hold over the narrative of incarceration. Prisoner memoirs, often penned under pseudonyms or anonymously, served as powerful counterpoints to sanitized government reports and restricted public access. Offering unfiltered insights into life behind bars, these narratives exposed the harsh realities of confinement, challenging the mainstream prison narrative and efforts to suppress dissent.

Conclusion

Summing up the discussion, the researcher finds out that in Adayfi's narration, he doesn't position himself solely as the principal author; instead, he shares the experiences of fellow inmates, underscoring his belonging to the particular morally charged category of a narrator (Van de Mieroop 10). Adayfi himself asserts that " I wasn't even a leader – but I had found my role in this place: To feel the pain of others. To stick up for those who were beaten. And to try to make our lives better" (2021,p.83). This article highlights how acts of resistance in writing establish a "synopticon," enabling readers to witness the narrative journey through the writer's perspective. By engaging with the writer's narrative, readers gain insight into the politics of invisibility within the state power structure. Adayfi's writing sheds light on hidden realities, making visible what is often unseen and overlooked.

Mansoor Adayfi's memoir elucidates the unethical practices of America in the name of the war on terror, revealing its behavior akin to that of a terrorist state through the unjust imprisonment and inhumane treatment of individuals without substantiated evidence or legal justification. Adayfi's narrative underscores the severe isolation endured, lasting six years without communication with his family, fostering deep animosity towards his captors. His comments praising the 9/11 crimes and declaring determination to battle the United States upon release is indicative of this anger. Adayfi's expectations were scuppered because Guantanamo Bay was still in use, even though Barack Obama had promised to close it during his presidency.

However, a glimmer of optimism emerged when he secured legal representation, prompting the inception of his memoir to document and disseminate his harrowing experiences. The lawyer treated him as a human being but only after being horrified to meet him and not believing he was meeting the right person. All four administrations, from Bush to Biden, have argued that the US government can detain these men as long as it deems necessary. This study highlights that the American legal system consistently commits acts of injustice and routinely silences individuals it mistreats.

The mobility turn in the narrative of this memori is working in two dimensions the way it mobilizes the identity of the prisoners and then the way it mobilizes the agency of readers of the narrative Through the narrative interplay of Mansoor Adayfi's prison memoir, this study endeavours to demonstrate that US courts have sidestepped the critical question of whether Guantanamo detainees are entitled to fundamental constitutional rights. When Adayfi brings up this issue through his narration, he offers the detainee's perspective on the atrocities from a panoramic standpoint. But when this agency of observation moves from detainees to readers then they read and receive the narrative in terms of synoptical perspective where many (readers) observe few (state, legal limbo, and

power. Using panoptical and synoptical critical lenses, this study also emphasizes how these narratives, coming from a Muslim writer, present a disputing and counter-narrative that contributes to the global narratives of terror and terrorism.

Recommendations

As a nonfiction artifact, this study reveals the testimony that delves into the political narrative of the war on terror, particularly concerning intersections of race and religion that perpetuate disparaging narratives, such as the stereotype equating Muslims with terrorism Even while the US claims to be committed to humanitarian standards, its actions in Guantanamo Bay, where political ploys are essentially terrorist attacks, present a glaring contrast. Memoirs and testimony that have been documented show that the nation's actions in this area are inconsistent with its declared principles, sustaining an atmosphere of fear and injustice that is eerily similar to the very terrorism it claims to be fighting. Through Mansoor Adaydi's direct experience and perspective as an insider, this study exposes the politics of invisibility surrounding torture perpetuated by the USA claiming humanitarian values. Focusing on Adayfi's firsthand narrative, the memoir uncovers fractured, contested, and obscured optics within the interplay of the visibility of torture and injustice and the invisibility of human rights. Adayfi's insights into Guantánamo Bay warrant thorough examination, offering a unique perspective that contributes to what can be termed the "Guantánamo narrative". This narrative holds significance for both the general public and literary scholars, providing rich material for further exploration within the realm of life-writing. Although the engaging story of Yemeni writer Mansoor Adayfi inside the carceral milieu has been the focus of this article, it is recommended that future academics broaden their perspectives by studying the narratives of writers from various geographic landscapes, cultural origins, and intersecting identities. Furthermore, supporting translation initiatives and adopting an international and inclusive perspective would not only provide a voice to underrepresented groups but also advance discussions on justice, human rights, and social transformation. Using such debates, scholars might persist in revealing the multifaceted realities of individuals confined to spaces, cultivating compassion, consciousness, and purposeful action.

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