

Review

Spaces of Hope: Reconceptualizing Utopia in Stephenie Meyer`s *The Host*: A Harveyian Reading

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Abstract: This paper intends to study the notion of Utopia in Stephenie Meyer`s *The Host* within David Harvey`s framework. Generally, utopias are spaces of hope, which give the disillusioned and disintegrated readers new hope by relocating them to new spaces with novel experiences. Harvey emphasizes the spatial dimension of utopia and the utopias of the process which is possible in the age of Globalization. Harvey emphasizes the fact that the present moment is witness to a re-articulation on a new spatial scale of the contradictory logics of capitalist modernization. *The Host* has got attention for its imaginary spaces set in an apocalyptic future which has been associated mostly with spaces of utopia rather than dystopias assumed for the future of the planet earth. So, this paper intends to clarify how the novel engages in spaces of utopia and how the writer represents diverse strange worlds alien to a human being at the same time while highlighting human life and earth, projecting hope to such beings.

Keywords: Apocalyptic Utopia, Globalization, Spaces of hope, Utopianism.

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INTRODUCTION

Utopias are always out of reach and elsewhere. They are spaces that human constantly looks for. Most contemporary works, especially science fiction novels, have put their primal focus on utopias, mainly concerned with utopian spaces. Such works recreate new spaces of the Happy Valley presented by Thomas More, by which they satirize the unhappiness of frustrated desires with the unhappiness of boredom, and then promise hope to postmodern man. The term utopia has been a challenging term throughout history. It was first coined by Thomas More in 1516 in his book called *Utopia*, who believed that utopias are fictional spaces that represent an ideal, nonexistent political and social way of life. In his

book, Thomas More has created a society that is worth noting for its society that is void of poverty, where there is also no desire to be rich (More, 1516). In this work, Thomas More tries to create a flawless society in comparison to the actual society. Erich Fromm, in the Afterword section of *1984*, affirms that works like Thomas More`s "do not speak in general terms of principles, but give an imaginative picture of the concrete details of a society which corresponds to the deepest longings of man. In contrast to prophetic thought, these perfect societies are not at the end of the days but exist already - though in a geographic distance rather than in the distance of time" (Fromm, 1961). This thought was born to give humankind an imagination to create an ideal society through which he or she could get fulfillment and

happiness not achieved in a real-life situation. Utopian thought criticizes the current state of life. One of the first works which implied utopia was Plato's *Republic* (Plato, 380 B.C.).

Further, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels noted that utopianism offered a vision for a better future, a vision that contributed much to Marxism. These critics criticized utopian writers' lack of a wider understanding of social and political realities that could make changes. However, Utopianism is expected to be able to go beyond conscious reality by projecting images of hopes, dreams, and desires. So, Utopian ideas play an important role in bringing forth positive social change. Utopias give thinkers a chance to distance themselves from the existing reality by projecting into their minds new spaces and possibilities.

Then, Krishan Kumar in his *Utopianism* (1991) argues that utopia should be seen as a much more specific tradition of social and political thought. It has cultural and historical boundaries. As a Western concept, it arose in the West as a specific and highly original way of dealing with the novel problems of modern Western society. Its themes are the characteristic ones of modern Western social thought: power, inequality, democracy, and science. But, as a form of imaginative fiction, its treatment of these themes is distinctive and compelling. Far from being merely fantasy or wish fulfillment, utopia is a critical rehearsal of the dilemmas of modern society and, at the same time, a prescriptive account of the best way of resolving them.

Elsewhere in *Postmodern Utopia and Feminist Fiction* (2013) Wagner balances literary analysis with innovative extensions of feminist philosophy to show how inclusionary utopian thinking can inform and promote political agency. Moreover, in *The Principle of Hope* (1986), Ernst Bloch brings a critical history of the utopian vision and a profound exploration of the possible reality of utopia. Even as the world has rejected the doctrine on which Bloch sought to base his utopia, his work still challenges us to think more insightfully about our visions of a better world. As for Levitas, utopia is expressive and broadly about the desire for a better way of life. She refers to a crucial quotation by Abensour, which is referred to by E.P. Thompson in his book on William Morris: "to teach desire to desire, to desire better, to desire more, and above all to desire in a different way". For Levitas, this quotation captures a core aspect of utopia: "to think and feel outside existing normative and conceptual framework or to desire differently" (Levitas, 1990).

Through the lens of Spatial critics, David Harvey named as a major theorist, Utopias are looked upon as the production of new spaces or cultural geographies that are shaped through a diverse range of social processes and human interventions, and which have a cultural logic behind them. These spaces force, influence, and direct

possibilities of action and way of human beings in the world. In his *Spaces of Hope*, David Harvey presents an analysis of the relationship between space and utopia. He provides a critique of contemporary notions of Globalization and the Body, an argument for a dialectical interpretation of utopianism. He turns towards a hope held within the utopian tradition. His project becomes an attempted critique and revitalizes utopianism to discover spaces of hope. *The Host* as a postmodern novel seems to follow the utopian notion of Harvey. Throughout the novel, Stephenie Meyer depicts those spaces of hope and wish fulfillment that is encouraging and give a better image of the future.

DISCUSSION

Stephenie Meyer, a contemporary popular culture author, has got fame by publishing her four saga twilight novels and has become known as an international bestseller. Her novels are discussed and re-read everywhere again and again. In her later novel, *The Host* (2008), she portrays an apocalyptic future where human beings are going to extinct. These humans are identified and dominated by alien creatures, called Souls. These creatures have experienced different bodies and spaces, this time entering the human body and earth, experiencing the most bizarre human sensation called love. This feeling pushes them to a new romantic life in a cave, somewhere at the heart of a desert, away from technology and at the heart of nature, giving the postmodern man a new sense and a hybrid style of life, experiencing love with an alien, with no need to be afraid of their extinction. Seemingly, Stephenie Meyer's *The Host* revisits the notion of utopia through the lens of David Harvey. Since, it provides disillusioned postmodern readers with hope and the new sensation of life, helping them to skip the bitter real situation they feel stuck in by promising them new spaces and experiences. Meyer has added up to the notion of utopia, by depicting a utopian life in this way. So, it could be argued that Meyer has portrayed a utopian life by offering the experience of an alien love at the heart of a cave, referring to primitive human life and situation. The cave in this novel, promises a happy valley, which plays a major role in providing happiness for the characters of this novel.

The Host is a Science Fiction which is about Earth, space is highlighted, in a post-apocalyptic future, being invaded by a parasitic alien race, known as Souls, and follows one Soul's predicament when the consciousness of her human host refuses to cooperate with the takeover of her body. The time is the future and the space represented in the novel is a fully developed, peaceful, and free-of-charge place where there is no violence or cruelty. The earth's planet with the help of these aliens has turned into a place of absolute honesty and kindness.

The aliens who enter the body and get control of the body, narrate their experience of previous worlds and planets which were as perfect and lovely as a mind can imagine:

When we thought of the new planet—Earth, so dry, so varied, and filled with such violent, destructive denizens we could barely imagine them—our horror was sometimes overshadowed by our excitement. Stories spun themselves quickly around the thrilling new subject. The wars—wars! our kind having to fight! were first reported accurately and then embellished and fictionalized. When the stories conflicted with the official information I sought out, I naturally believed the first reports. (Meyer 15)

These souls are alien to human violence and cruelty. They think of men as destroyers of the whole planet Earth. These aliens constantly remind humans how they were cruel and thought of them as not proper species to the planet. They thought of the earth as the best place to live. That is why they try to clean it of any intruder and protect it. David Harvey in his *Spaces of Hope* notes that what is now striking is the dominance of an almost fairy-tale-like belief, held on all sides alike, that once upon a time there was structuralism, modernism, industrialism, Marxism, or what have you and now there is post-structuralism, postmodernism, post-industrialism, post-Marxism, post-colonialism, and so forth. Like all such tales, this one is rarely spoken of in such a crude or simplistic way. To do so would be particularly embarrassing to those who deny in principle the significance of broad-based meta-narratives. Yet the prevalence of 'the post' is a dominant characteristic of contemporary debate. It has also become a serious game in academia to hunt the covert modernists or to hunt the decadent postmodernists. (11-12)

This story is a fairy tale depicting alien souls coming from imaginary Bats World, Singing World, Dolphin World, Flower World, and others of the sort. These souls narrate the story of their life on these planets as a flower, dolphin, etc. Wanda, the major character of the story, narrates her life as different species. She tells human beings that she has traveled to and experienced many bodies and spaces before coming to the Earth. Wanda sees Earth as a pleasant, novel, and wonderful place. It's a new space: "This world was very pleasant in so many novel ways, and it would be wonderful to be able to appreciate it without the distractions of an angry, displaced nonentity who should have had better sense than to linger unwanted this way." (41)

Harvey discusses his project which is one of attempting to critique and revitalize utopianism to discover spaces of hope. He discusses two dimensions of utopia: firstly, exploration of spatial, organizational forms, such as

More's Utopia, which Harvey concludes is permeated with modes of authority and control; secondly, processes based on temporalities, such as Adam Smith's dream of Laissez-Fair, or free trade. Harvey traces the way that spatial utopian thought tends to lack any sense of social change and dynamism, whereas process-oriented utopias tend to produce destruction and degeneration in the ways he has detailed earlier in his book. Harvey argues that revitalizing utopian thought requires a completely different approach that combines the utopias of spatial form and social process, or 'dialectical utopianism'. He finds promise within more recent utopian novels. Here the vision of a new society contains a variety of spatial forms but also includes the social struggle of the protagonist, Connie, and an explicit recognition of the process towards a better world: a spatial-temporal dynamic. For Harvey, the time is now ripe to use such dynamic utopian visions to try and shape an alternative to the present destructive elements of global and local neo-liberalism. (189)

In *The Host*, Meyer doesn't speak of imaginary, unreal spaces. Rather, she imagines real flower, dolphin, and jellyfish worlds that are spatial and real. For Meyer, these spaces are new societies and in other words, society-perfected. Almost all the postmodern novels are depicting a utopia, and in each period, there is a new meaning and sense of utopia. In the age of globalization and an era of technological society, utopia is depicted as a space of escape from the reality of life. *The Host* provides the readers with a new society. It has transformed social life and geographical spaces into ideal and perfect spaces. In many ways it contradicts the global and contemporary spatial issues by creating a utopian space of the present moment, and promising new and hopeful places:

As Harvey notes, the word Utopia is usually attached to someplace that is no place as well as a happy place. The qualities of place are important and this means, an evocation of and close attention to spatial form as a container of social processes and as an expression of moral order. Idealized versions of social processes, in contrast, usually get expressed in purely temporal terms. They are bound to no place whatsoever and are typically specified outside of the constraints of spatiality altogether. The qualities of space and place are ignored. (174)

Accordingly, the Flower world, Dolphin world, and other depicted worlds are regarded as happy places. These worlds are the spaces that everyone enjoys living in. every human being is keen on flowers, nature, and looking at a dolphin in a pool. Meyer mostly refers to nature, animals, and water to help the man escape the bitter reality of human life that is stifled with cruelty and violence. She would rather look upon life gently. So, she

strives to touch life as gently as she can: "The deep green of the ivy was pleasing to the eye, especially in contrast to the faded red of the old bricks. The air was golden and soft, and the smell of the ocean gave a briny edge to the honey sweet fragrance of the flowers in the bushes. The breeze caressed the bare skin of my arms. "In your other lives, you can't have felt anything so vivid". (54)

For Meyer, the cave is the happiest place for the human species and at the same time, it reflects a no place. It could be argued that Meyer intends to fill the readers' minds with nature and natural pictures which means that she takes the mind away from bitter realities, and encourages them to look at life and surroundings differently. There is a garden in the cavern reflecting spring green which gives human being peace and love. At the heart of the desert and inside a cavern there is a garden that makes humans feel at home and takes them to the heart of beauty and calmness. There is corn growing waist-high in the blistering heat of the brilliant mirrors in a cave at the heart of a desert and there is water streaming in it. A hospital is provided for the people in the cave. The huge garden cavern where the carrots sprout, make a bright green carpet across the dark floor. This cave is not just a cave but very much different. Nobody seems to hide in it. There is real life going on and people are doing everyday stuff. There is a garden, a field for a plantation, a stream to get cleaned, a hospital, a school, a game room, a kitchen, and lots of bedrooms. There is also the sun shining inside, giving a sense of refreshment. The cave is just a real home. It is furnished with everything needed and just feels like home. It seems like a real and normal life with real work to be done. Men are just living in nature, doing everything manually and in traditional methods though at the same time in a perfect manner. At the end of the day, everybody feels joy and enjoys others' company. This space is where they can easily celebrate their happiness.

In the meantime, the city space of Tucson and other real cities in this novel are transformed into the happiest and most perfect city space ever imagined. Aliens have changed them into civilized spaces, aliens to violence and horror. Life is peaceful and easy. These aliens have access to hyper-advanced machines and stuff which are provided for more civilized Human beings. The humans by the alien's company get whatever they need for survival and they can enjoy an easy life with these aliens' aid. Wanda, the new alien friend of humans can get anything in the world they need since she is more civilized and more developed, educated, and modern than primitive human beings. The most incredible action which these aliens have provided the Earth with is their medical science. They can cure a body in the flickering of an eye, with no pain which just seems a dream for the man. For David Harvey:

The idea of imaginative spatial play to achieve specific social and moral goals can be converted into the idea of potentially endlessly open experimentation with the possibilities of spatial forms. This permits the exploration of a wide range of human potentialities, different modes of collective living, gender relations, production consumption styles, in the relation to nature, etc. This is, for example, how Lefebvre sets up his conception of the production of space. He sees it as a privileged means to explore alternative and emancipatory strategies...For him, the production of space must always remain an endlessly open possibility. The effect, unfortunately, is to leave the actual spaces of any alternative frustratingly undefined. (182)

Looking from this perspective, Meyer has represented the various worlds open-ended, and constantly produces new spaces. The Earth she talks about is a new world and at the same time a transformed and possible place that man hopes to experience one day. It is the most strange and ideal society that even an alien wishes to live and admires its beauty. In many dimensions, Wanderer describes her amazement and love towards this planet. She talks for hours about her desire to end up living on this planet:

I could abandon this entire world as a failure and move on to a tenth planet. I could work to forget this whole experience. Earth could be just a short blip in my otherwise spotless record. But where would I go? A planet I'd already experienced? The Singing World had been one of my favorites, but to give up sight for blindness? The Planet of the Flowers was lovely.... Yet chlorophyll-based life forms had so little range of emotion. It would feel unbearably slow after the tempo of this human place. (60)

The way Wanda talks about the planet Earth gives the hope of living since it is depicted as the strangest and as the best place to live. The Earth is even regarded as more beautiful than other planets, which satisfies man and encourages him to love his planet and change it into a good place. Meyer's novel in this sense is a good hint for readers since she pushes them forward for a change. In all her novels, Meyer skillfully portrays beautiful life hidden somewhere nearby. She always seeks beauty and perfection by making her readers sensitive toward life and their surroundings. As Harvey remarks:

Our thinking about ideals becomes visionary or external to the extent that it holds up a picture, however partial or fragmentary, of a radically altered scheme of social life and appeals to

justifications that do not stick close to familiar and established models of human association. The visionary is the person who claims not to be bound by the limits of the tradition he or his interlocutors are in ... Notice that visionary thought is not inherently millenarian, perfectionist, or utopian. It need not and does not ordinarily present the picture of a perfected society. But it does require that we be conscious of redrawing the map of possible and desirable forms of human association, inventing new models of human association, and designing new practical arrangements to embody them. (186)

Through Harvey's perspectives, Meyer is proficient in portraying new spaces and bodies. She is conscious of presenting and redrawing a map of possible and desirable forms of human association. In that way, she gives the readers a chance at new experiences of the spaces and bodies. The perfect society of America gives readers the opportunity of imagining a society differently and most cases encourages them to experience a desirable human association. The new alien species that are depicted could give human beings the chance of experiencing new interactions and relations with other species. Moreover, Meyer, by depicting alien creatures, reminds men how kindness, caring and good deeds can change the whole thing. She has created aliens that are selfless creatures, who sacrifice themselves for the good of others. The alien, Wanda reminds Melanie that they by sharing everything and by being honest can enjoy everything with the help of each other and by this, there is no need for labor or class consciousness. With equality, everybody can enjoy anything equally. She tells that such a society in a harmonious way needs no money. Kumar in his *Utopianism* provides a generally narrow definition of utopia; "it is essentially a story, a piece of fiction about an imaginary good society"(35).

The Host is a story in which the human race has been taken over by parasitic but peace-loving aliens called souls. Melanie, the human host of a soul called Wanderer, is resistant and refuses to fade away, and leads Wanderer on a journey unlike any she's experienced in her nine lives in other hosts' bodies around the universe. It is a story that stirs thought on ethics, the power of love, and the pros and cons of the human experience. Though, the imaginative description of other-worldly planets and creatures is the most fascinating part of the story. It depicts humans and the planet Earth otherwise than being. This novel involves aliens who possess technology well advanced beyond ours. There's friendship and familial love as well as romantic love in likely and unlikely places.

Ultimately, it's about the power and hope of love in a good society that human in the process of history always

craves. "The planet called Earth was as peaceful and serene as it looked from space, invitingly green and blue, wreathed in its harmless white vapors. As was the way of the soul, harmony was universal now". (22) Meyer's imagining of different worlds and imagining the Earth being different and more perfect with more civilized creatures and in a fully developed and everything-at-hand city gives man hope of a better life and a change in society. For Bloch in his *Principle of Hope*, imaginative thought is the foundation of hope: 'thinking means venturing beyond' from the mediated present. He traces a diverse spectrum of hope in popular entertainment, architecture, literature, music, and art. Glimmers of hope can also be found in daydreams(33). It is believed that the Earth is so vast that any man can find his place of comfort in it or change the place if feels uncomfortable. Wanderer, the alien, sees the earth as a pleasant, novel, and wonderful place. It's new for them: "I'd never lived on a planet where such atrocities could happen, even before the souls came. This place was truly the highest and the lowest of all worlds—the most beautiful senses, the most exquisite emotions... the most malevolent desires, the darkest deeds." (120)

In this novel, Meyer has depicted those pictures of life that real life lacks, and a man desires to achieve: The calm space and life in a city with no difficulty where there is harmony, honesty, and kindness. The cave at the heart of a desert within which a garden, stream, and anything peaceful is provided for anyone who has got bored of city life, and the imaginative fabulous and lovely planets that any human wishes to experience or be instead of being a human. These are all dreams of a man or escapist fantasies that lead man to imagine a space of violence, imperfection, cruelty, and crowded city space. As Bloch notes:

"Daydreams have the presentiment of what we want, need, and lack, what we hope to find. Unlike dreams, they are not repressed or forgotten desires and experiences, they point to real possibilities. Daydreams can be escapist and mundane but they also contain a 'provocative' element that can be nurtured and clarified. Bloch maintains that the popular adventure story may reflect the dream of which is 'never again being trapped by the routine of daily life. These wishful images will involve escapism but fleetingly reveal an essential quality of hope, the possibility pointing beyond existing reality. We can learn to extract 'hope-content' from these images. Bloch explores how 'strange-utopian meanings', despite being 'shrill and fraudulent, cheap and uncontrolled, manifest a yearning for a constellation in the world, made out of the esoteric and weird things, the yearning for the curious. (Bloch 183)

The spaces in *The Host* are just different places. These spaces have flourished out of real spaces. They depict the world differently. Meyer just represented spaces to think of the world differently. Highlighting its surroundings and focusing on flowers, spiders, and other species. She has just provided the reader with the different notions of these creatures and helps the reader to think in other ways. The alien gives a new picture of different spaces and different experiences of the body.

Throughout the novel, Wanderer is lecturing on her experiences of new spaces and new bodies: The fire World, the spider's world, Flower World in which Fire tasters, walking flowers and spiders, Faces Sunwards (51). These are just elegant and fabulous stories that the inhabitants of the cave have long for listening to for ages. It was a long time since man was preoccupied with daydreaming and hearing of happy life. Here, in the cave, people are experiencing a new life, where they feel at home while being bestowed with the comfort of life. This cave is a utopian space for a postmodern man. It is the happy Valley that they have always imagined. It is a future happy valley that takes them to their past and primitive life. For David Harvey in his *Spaces of Hope*, "a map of the world that does not include Utopia is not even worth glancing at. Harvey considers More's Utopia as a species of spatial play. More in effect selects one out of many possible spatial orderings as a way to represent and fix a particular moral order. (161)

The way Meyer has focused on portraying the space of the cave is of crucial importance. She has just put in detail what brings to mind the feeling of home and comfort. Though the cave is depicted as rough with uneven walls, a pocked ceiling, and a worn, dusty floor which is not a proper place for an advanced man, it is suggestive of a comfortable home for the characters of the novel (110). There is a garden in this cavern that reflects spring green, and gives human being peace and love. At the heart of the desert and inside a cavern there is a garden that makes humans feel at home and takes them to the heart of beauty and calmness. A man can just imagine living in such a cave decorated with everything at hand: "It's a cool place, Lots of clouds, with a bunch of different-colored layers. It's the only planet where souls can live outside of a host for very long. The hosts on the Origin planet are really pretty, too, with sort of wings and lots of tentacles and big silver eyes." (220)

As Harvey in his *The Condition of Postmodernity* refers to McHale's emphasis on Foucault's concept of heterotopia, he notes that it is "a perfectly appropriate image to capture what that fiction is striving to depict. By heterotopia, Foucault means the coexistence in an impossible space of a large number of fragmentary possible worlds or, more simply, incommensurable spaces that are juxtaposed or superimposed upon each other" (48). It is also the case in Stephenie Meyer's novel, where she seems to have depicted a heterotopia

as well. Meyer has artistically mingled spaces and bodies together. There are hybrid imaginary worlds of Dolphin world, Flower world, and other worlds which coexist with the real planet Earth. The Flower world which is a beautiful and placid planet is a hybrid space of real and unreal species: "So I told him about that most beautiful and placid of planets. "So did you eat flies, like a Venus flytrap? I'll bet you did—or maybe something bigger, like a bird—like a pterodactyl!" "No, we used sunlight for food, like most plants here (187)". Also, the period is different on different planets. The alien feels a thousand years old on earth while on her planet is a child. These aliens are eternal and live forever which is an impossible human wish. The aliens are just happy creatures. As if it seems they are the only suitable partners for humans. They are the most suitable partners that can provide human beings with a utopian happy life.

It seems that *The Host* as a popular culture novel has portrayed all kinds of spaces that demand new wants and needs. The story intends to create a new sense of space and world to offer novelty. It has put love at the center and made it the most primary and demanding need of life, but this time it is not a cliché love, it is more colored and astonishing by the love of an alien, the most challenging topic of postmodernism, while it is a hybrid and a strange sense of love. In this way, Meyer intends to highlight human life. This time, there is a new story with new characters. She has created new alien characters in new spaces, highlighting romance. This story is gentle to the ear of a disillusioned man. So, Meyer struggles to project hope by showing and inspiring a new sense of life in this way. This challenges the routine life and gives new ideas, for example, to change the style of life, such as making houses out of town and at the heart of nature which is novel for modern man, who regularly creates new spaces and also demands others to follow the same rule, finally giving fresh ideas to merchants to develop and create such spaces which promise comfort and at the same time luxury at its simplest level. According to Harvey:

These ideas at the heart of which lies capitalism, offer man difference and provide the lacking needs for them. They offer the comfort of a simple and rural life in new spaces filled with ease to the crowded and mechanical life of the city, in other words, they refer to supplements of city life. These ideas induce culture if there is no peace in the city, there is always a way and place to achieve that goal. They say if there are endless spaces to live and other creatures to love and new experiences to get through, at the same time you are provided with your normal life and advanced stuff that you can return to anytime you want. After all, as Harvey believes, Modernization entails the perceptual disruption

of temporal and spatial rhythms, and modernism takes as one of its missions the production of new meanings for space and time in a world of ephemeral and fragmentation. (216)

Accordingly, Meyer strives to change the world for the better. All spaces invite utopian spaces, and the style of life it promises entertains the readers with heaven-like utopian life. Regarding Deleuze's notion of different worlds and looking from a philosophical perspective and belief in several lives experienced by man, Meyer masterly and beautifully delineates those worlds and bodies that human souls experience before or afterlife. It projects the image of an enjoyable experience of other lives, worlds and shapes, that is, being a Dolphin, a Bird, a Flower, etc. This gives an imaginary satisfaction to everyone. Meyer delicately depicted those heaven-like beings that human is always wondering about. Furthermore, The Earth and other planets are also new spaces that are depicted intentionally. Giving a map of such spaces helps anyone have a better picture of life and the real world. In *The Concept of Utopia* by Levitas:

Utopia is about how we would live and what kind of a world we would live in if we could do just that. The construction of imaginary worlds, free from the difficulties that base us in reality, takes place in one form or another in many cultures. Sometimes utopia embodies more than an image of what the good life would be and becomes a claim about what it could and should be: the wish that things might otherwise become a conviction that it does not have to be like this. Utopia is then not just a dream to be enjoyed, but a vision to be pursued. Yet the very term utopia suggests that most people that this dream of the good life is impossible- an escapist fantasy, at best a pleasant but pointless entertainment. The virtue of utopia is that it holds up an ideal, an ideal which encourages social progress- but that progress is seen as properly a gradual process, which the literal attempt to institute utopia would interrupt. Utopia fascinates as an expression of the felt problems and solutions of particular historical situations; it inspires as a response to the recurrent problems across history, yet it provokes a fear that the revolutionary may the mistake of taking it literally. (13)

Therefore, it could be argued that *The Host* reflects a desire for perfection and the best. All the characters, their interaction, romantic life, spaces, city life, and the cave are different and are taken to their height and at a level that man always desires. The characters are as civilized as the mind can imagine. The city and social life are at

their most advanced and developed level. The Cave is portrayed as a garden that seems like Eden where anyone lives a comfortable and happy promised life. For Levitas "utopia is expressive and broadly about the desire for a better way of life... to 'teach desire to desire, to desire better, to desire more, and above all to desire in a different way... to think and feel outside existing normative and conceptual framework, or to desire differently'" (122). Thus, Meyer by depicting a perfect situation of the future and by portraying wishful images of this planet, the community, and the social progress, both spiritually and technologically, intends to satisfy the young and inspire them by giving ideas for change. She is so hopeful for the future of the human world and society that she projects it to her readers, as well. In other words, she entertains her readers with escapist fantasy and wish-fulfilling images of the future. This supports the notion that human needs hope to keep up living, and the hope for the better encourages man to live.

The Host seems to depict a utopia that anyone ever desires. It represents the best world ever imagined. American society is a fully-advanced society where the human community lives in peace and harmony. Everyone is honest; there is no cruelty, no class distinction, and no discrimination. Money is disappeared from daily life which is believed to be the root of all evil and peace is returned to the world. There is a cave provided for those who cannot support city life. Love is a prolonged emotion that brings joy to life. Meyer highlights the importance of being human, their individuality, and their emotion: "I tried to say only true things. "It's different on other planets, Jeb. There isn't any resistance. And the hosts themselves are different. They aren't as individualized as humans, and their emotions are so much milder. It doesn't feel like stealing a life. Not like it feels here. No one will hate me. And I'd be too far away to hurt you. You'd be safe." (498) Meyer finishes her story by promising that there is some hope for this planet to bring back its peace, and happiness. It's a really strange planet. It has to be ended happily ever after. Also, Meyer proposes that love is a specific human experience, as something endless and forgoing. She portrays love as something forever:

In so many millennia, humans never Figure *love* out. How much is physical, and how much is in the mind? How much accident and how much fate? Why did perfect matches crumble and impossible couples thrive? Love simply is where it is. My host loved Curt's host, and that love did not die when the ownership of the minds changed. It seems like some things can't die. In our mind, their faces were close and clear. The love we felt for Jared and Jamie did feel very permanent. At that moment, I wondered if death was strong enough to dissolve something so vital and sharp. Perhaps this love would live on with

her, in some fairytale place with pearly gates. Not with me. Would it be a relief to be free of it? I wasn't sure. It felt like it was part of who I was now. (97)

Finally, the Earth in this novel is regarded as the best planet looking upon from an alien perspective. Meyer represents it as the best place to live and the most deserved place to be and she also highlights humans as the best creatures and partners to live with, even for the alien. This is why Wanda prefers to live in the human body forever: "I think... Well, I think that maybe... you're dying to be human. There was almost a smile in her thought as she heard the silly double meaning of the phrase. After all the planets, and all the hosts you've left behind, you've finally found the place and the body you'd die for. I think you've found your home, Wanderer (96)". This represents the fact that Meyer's novel is oriented towards hope, desire, and belief in the possibility of a better world. Therefore, she is a utopian writer since she pertains to utopian studies and provides utopian satisfaction by depicting love as the most primary need of life and taking this love to its level of perfection. The spaces in her all novels are happy valleys or happy places springing out of real violated spaces. She always depicts a man and her aliens as perfect and nice and injects their loyalty, honesty, and kindness. They are characters that any reader identifies with and wishes to be. The urge to goodness and being otherwise is her specific style of writing which encourages readers all around the world to regard her as the hero of their life. Also, for Ruth Levitas, "social dreaming, longing, and desire for change are key dimensions of the utopian, along with the hope that more egalitarian, freer ways of living are possible" (3).

CONCLUSION

This paper intended to look at Stephenie Meyer's *The Host* from David Harvey's Perspective. Harvey argues that to re-vitalize utopian thought requires a completely different approach that combines the utopias of spatial form and social process, or dialectical utopianism. He finds promise within more recent utopian novels. For him, the vision of a new society contains a variety of spatial forms and an explicit recognition of the process toward a better world. For Harvey, the time is now ripe to use dynamic utopian visions to try and shape an alternative to the present destructive elements of global and local neo-liberalism. Such an approach would build on the dynamic potential at the heart of capitalism, particularly its imaginative and diverse ability to build innovative institutions and practices. It could be argued that *The Host* is successful in providing new spatial forms and is effective in representing imagined spaces which help in

the process towards a better life. It is regarded as a utopian novel in many respects. Besides, the spaces represented in this novel give hope for a better future and gives wishful images of the future. Throughout the texts, Stephenie Meyer depicts those spaces of hope and wish fulfillment which is encouraging and gives a better image of the future. *The Host* provides the readers with a new society. It has transformed real and geographical spaces into ideal and new utopian spaces. In many ways, it contradicts global and contemporary spatial issues by creating a utopian space of the present moment and promising new and hopeful places. Meyer has represented the various worlds open-ended. The Earth she talks about is a new world and at the same time a transformed and better place that man hopes to experience one day in reality. It is depicted as the strangest and the most ideal society that even an alien wishes to live in. Meyer is proficient in portraying new spaces and bodies and giving the readers a chance at new experiences of the spaces and bodies. The perfect society of America gives readers the opportunity of imagining a society differently and most cases encourages them to experience such a perfected society differently. Even the new alien species that are depicted give the chance man to start experiencing new interactions and relations with other species.

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Plato's *Republic* (380 B.C.E.) was, at least on one level, a description of a political utopia ruled by an elite of philosopher-kings, conceived by Plato (compare to his *Laws*, discussing laws for a real city). (Plato's *Republic* at Project Gutenberg)

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