

## Questioning the Sacrosanct Centrality of Home vis-à-vis Richard McGuire's *Here*(1989)

### Abstract

Home, by the virtue of its physicality and concreteness, is generally considered to be the locus of identity; which is probably why the narratives of displacement are propelled by an unmistakable desire for the rootedness that characterises the home. In fact, the very premise of an othered outside is based on the centrality of home; for the nature of home circumscribes the ideas of its negation, i.e., *not home*. The aim of the paper is to question this sacrosanct centrality that is assumed by the discourse of home and to displace it to the realm of the other. The paper, for this purpose, seeks the aid of Richard McGuire's revolutionary comic strip titled 'Here' (1989). The focus of McGuire's comic is just a single corner of a living room and the same place is portrayed as inhabiting different and multiple moments in time, starting from 500 billion BC to all the way to 2033 AD. The end result is a mind-boggling juxtaposition, reminiscent of a somewhat skewed application of *mise en abîme*, of the multitudinous manifestations of a single location through the successive panels of the comic strip, which tells us not just the story of its inhabitants but also the story of their home. Throughout its six consecutive panels, the comic strip depicts time and human life in flux by creating the illusion of being anchored to the same geographic location. However, what is really interesting is the subtlety with which the comic dismantles the entire idea of rootedness that is characteristic of a home because the home too, like its inhabitants, becomes an object in flux. More importantly, by depicting the outside as well as the varying temporal manifestations of the home as inhabiting the home, the comic strip transforms central figure of home into a microcosm of spatial contestations, thereby transforming the home into a heterotopia.

[Key words: Centrality, Home, Other, Heterotopia]