For the real miracle is language, that we humans want not only to touch each other but that we want to exchange words, like marbles from a fist, that we want to hear discernible sounds from each other’s mouths, that we want to decipher them, that we utter our own sounds and others understand them. Even more miraculous, that we put these various marks on paper, written or printed or typed, and others understand the message, make some connection with these peculiar runes. This is a sweet and terrifying exchange, this intricate and shared knowledge of what is certainly a secret code.

_In Visible Ink: Crypto-frictions:_ Aritha Van Herk.
Writing As Site: Negotiating Intertextuality

Literature is a paradoxical institution that functions by exposing and criticising its own limits. As writing it is primarily, a linguistic event. The writing that designates itself as literature draws its material from different sources and foregrounds them in language through imaginative activity. As an activity, writing presupposes a need that is self-reflexive to the author who says, “I was here”. The self-presence of the writer may or may not be visible in the textual space, but his/her presence could be traced through articulation. This does not mean to say that the authorial presence is important or crucial to the life of a text, but the position that the author takes in an intertextual negotiation is significant.

Literature is also an activity of mediation. It mediates between/among events, characters, places and weave them together with an objective of integrated representation. The author becomes a host, and invites the readers to invade/explore the writing “site”. Writing is primarily an activity, which expresses feelings, emotions, imaginations, notions and above all the materiality of the words. Writing is a sophisticated weapon that employs “imaginative strategies” to do “make things happen” through words. Then “writing is an act of need: to make a mark, to say ‘I was here’”(Van Herk.1991: 192). Writing needs to have a formal appearance and that comes in the form of text, according to the mode of genre. All writing is inspired by passion, a passion for words, and a passion for playing with the language. Writing, a linguistic “site” full of linguistic events is constructed with the words, the powerful words -- lively and alluring that attract the reader to invade the “site”. It
makes way for the people and place to live within socio-cultural context in words that even brings along lot of other things. This site in writing becomes a replica. It comprises the mass of text with all its formal literary technicalities. A reader enters this site to co-create the text.

Thoughts germinate in writing and it registers the boundless context in a relatively fixed text. Text, as a term has been used prior to the advent of literary theory to connote literary genres for the consideration of the linguistic aspect of literature. In fact, text is one species of the social institution called *écriture* and it cannot exist in vacuum but in language, in the world. Bakhtin maintains:

> We may call this world the world that creates the text, for all its aspects ... participates equally in the creation of the represented world in the text.

[1981:253-254]

Text is not merely a self-contained and self-confirmatory structure but a differential and historical structure. Said insists that texts cannot be isolated from the circumstances which made them possible and which render them intelligible. It is formed by the process of recurrence and transmutation of other textual structures though it cannot be held in place and in a fixed system of knowledge. Barthes in his essay *From Work to Text* writes:

> Text is that special space that leaves no language safe or untouched, that allows no enunciative subject to hold the position of judge, teacher, analyst, confessor, or decoder. The theory of the Text can coincide only with the activity of writing.
A text is therefore an open site and it invites readers with different assumptions, ideologies and social background to negotiate with it in their search for meaning.

In linguistics, a text is defined as a body of signs or the system of signs constituting message that has an “existence”, independent from its author or sender and its reader or receiver. Here the “existence” signifies the physical aspect of the text. A text never gives rise to independent and universal meaning without its reading possibilities. Literary texts are networks of meaning and multilayered in their compositions. This implied multiplicity couldn’t be reduced into a single, stable, established meaning. A particular reading of a text may seize on one aspect and privilege it as a central meaning. But for Barthes, if there is anything essential about the idea of a text, it is its plural nature and it is irreducible and open to a number of readings and reinterpretation. Barthes in *The Death of the Author* maintains.

... a text is made up of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation.

*[In Modern Literary Theory, A Reader. Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh (eds.). 1992:118]*

As such it has no one fixed or established meaning and there is no accepted, normative way of reading. It will create different meanings according to the conditions or contexts in which it is read processed or consumed. Although a text
creates its own contexts, contexts themselves are unending and multiple. That gives a way to constant ongoing process of reinterpretation of a text, as meanings cannot be confined to a determined context since contexts in which it is read or written are very much subject to change. It is very much a product of the world as well as of the language. There lies the essence of textuality. The experience of the world is constructed via language and reflection. A text cannot do without references to different discourses. The objects, nature and the world are nothing but linguistic texts for the simple reason that we become conscious about them by means of language articulated through representations. A text thus situates itself in the world through discursive practices involving the author and the reader in interplay of speech and reception and verbality and textuality. Edward said maintains:

A text in its actually being a text is a being in the world, it therefore addresses anyone who reads

[Said. 1971: 225]

Texts are produced and developed out of cultural and ideological practices, conventions of genre, styles and idioms embedded in the language, connotations and collocative sets, cliches, formulae, proverbs and above all out of other texts. It demands attention of the reader and provokes him/her to consider literature in terms of a set of changing relationships that are never firm but provisionally loose, although embodied in a relatively stable written text. In a sense it involves the whole of a particular reality--all of an existing society, existing pattern of life. On the principle of shared habits and associations, a text becomes easily accessible and is subject to the aptitude of an individual reader.
The theoretical discussions of the present century often lead to the debatable notion of text as free-floating, untouched by purposive human activity and expression or by the interpretative conventions of groups or reading communities. “Author-centered” criticism dominated the critical scene till 1950s that focussed much attention to the author, almost making him/her a sort of a model and medium of controlling and directing the text without even admitting the text’s independent identity. To Michel Foucault authors are commonly represented as being the source of creative talent, genius and imagination. But branding the works according to authors is an impediment to the free circulation of knowledge in a particular system where works are already placed. Besides Foucault a number of critics started questioning this “author-centered” notion in putting forward the view that attention should be centralized chiefly on the text or literary work and not on the author. D H Lawrence maintained that

“Never trust the artist, Trust the tale”.  

(1964:297)

During 1950s, literary critics mainly considered language and the form of the text while discussing the privilege earlier granted to the author as a producer or creator of the text. For them, author no longer exists once the text is in circulation and he possesses no right to claim and interfere. Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter deliberately refrained from making any statement or comment on their works even in the given interviews as if they had no right to comment. A text becomes a public property despite the copyright. It becomes a public affair and it remains open for the
readers to read/re-read/interpret or misinterpret a text in their own way depending on their relevant experiences and knowledge. Moreover meaning is produced not by the author but through the language of the text. Roland Barthes’ essay *The Death of The Author* (1968) is the befitting example where the conventional role of an author as an “originator” of literary work has been challenged. Not only that, the essay also interrogates author’s authority over the text. Barthes says, “it is language, which speaks not the author”.

This position discusses the “author-centered” approach for understanding the full range of meanings embedded in a literary text, to realise that a text leads an independent existence. Readers seem to replace the author in exploring meanings in a text. The Reader-response theory of late concentrated neither on the author nor on the text but only on the reader as the central figure in the reading process to decode the plural meaning of a text.

Deconstruction as a method of reading attempts to subvert the implicit claims of a text to possess adequate grounds, in the system of language that it deploys to establish its own structure, unity and determinate meaning. Following Derrida, his followers believe that there exists “nothing except the text” or “nothing outside the text”. According to the Deconstructionists, a text may betray itself as it insists on exposing the conflicting forces within the text itself to show the apparent definiteness of its structure and meaning into indefinite, undecidable possibilities of multiple structures and meanings. Deconstructionists say that the inherent, subversive, self-contradictory and self-betraying elements in a text include what is
not in the text, what is outside the text and what is not said. Such an approach opens up avenues for assumptions and possibilities by defamiliarising meaning. So Barthes maintains:

...there is one place where this multiplicity is focussed and that place is the reader, not as was hitherto said, the author ... the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author.

[The Death of the Author; 1968]

Barthes “Readerly” and “Writerly” texts come closer to Umberto Eco’s “close” and “open” texts. “Writerly” text activates the reader to co-create the text just as “open” text offers a range of possibility for interpretation whereas “readerly” text makes readers passive and offers restrictive scope for the reader. The process of liberating the text and granting it a theorized status leads to the phenomenon known as intertextuality that denotes the dependence of a text on the other texts. Tonny Bennett maintains:

A text is constantly rewritten into a variety of different material, social, institutional and ideological contexts.

[Bennett, 1983:216]

The idea of a text that is being constantly written/rewritten through reading/re-reading and process of interpretation and re-interpretation generate the idea of intertextuality with great force that has been always existing in some form or the other. Texts produced and created are part of the intertextual possibility.
The phenomenon of intertextuality came into existence in 1960s in France. Julia Kristeva popularised the term though it is quite old. Great philosophers had talked about intertextuality in different forms. Plato's "theory of imitation" has much in common with the modern theories of intertextuality because of his insights into the way texts act. Plato believed that a work of art is not autonomous but intertwined by diverse references to social knowledge. In fact Plato's dialogues contained the element of intertextuality. Even Socratic dialogue was transformed by Bakhtin into *heteroglossia* that is what Kristeva named as intertextuality. Both Bakhtin and Kristeva were of the opinion that all discourses are essentially dialogical or intertextual. Whereas Aristotle's "theory of imitation" rests on the assumptions that dramatic creation is an intensification of a whole lot of texts known to the poet as well as to the audience. Cicero and Quintilian emphasised that imitation is not only a means of forging one's own discourse, but is a conscious intertextual practice.

The concept of intertextuality challenges our notions of originality and authenticity of a text and the view that author is the sole originator of a text. Intertextuality signifies the various ways in which a literary text is "inseparably inter-involved with other texts". That is through assimilation of structural or conventional features of an earlier text or texts and sometimes by the participation in the common linguistic conventions of the discourses. Text is a site or an intersection of countless other texts, as Kristeva maintains, of such texts which are not yet written or will be written in the future. Kristeva writes:
... every text takes shape as a mosaic of citations, every text is the absorption and transformation of other texts.

[Kristeva quoted in Fowler. 1977: 64]

She argues that every text is under the jurisdiction of other discourses. While reading fiction, we no longer can avoid intertextuality just as we cannot avoid the assumptions of critical theories. Because a text begins with an author who is first a reader and then an author and ends with a reader who is a co-producer or co-creator of the text.

The theory of intertextuality maintains that a text can never exist as a self-sufficient whole. “A work exists”, Culler maintains, “between and among other texts”. Hence it cannot function as a closed system. An author before producing his/her text is a reader of the prior texts. His/her work is essentially exposed to every possible kind of influence. Apart from that, reading as a process helps to obtain the meanings of a text due to the cross-pollination of varied textual material that a reader incorporates while reading. Intertextuality can either be very specific or it can involve, diffuse highly mediated patterns of influence and references. T.S. Eliot maintains:

No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone, you must set him contrast and comparison, among the dead.
“Tradition and the Individual Talent” in *Selected Prose:* 1953: 23

Intertextuality in this sense becomes a frail form that chiefly depends on the action of the reader as well as critic to determine the intertextual links. American critic Harold Bloom sees the attempt of writers, who suffer from the “anxiety of influence” to evade the all pervading gaze of their predecessors.

For Bloom no poem stands on its own, but always stands in relation to another. If analyzed closely Bloom’s idea of “anxiety of influence” from the author’s point of view, it implies a kind of intertextual imagination. Bloom maintains,

> We never read a poet as poet, but only read one poet in another poet, or even into another poet . . . the meaning of a poem can only be another poem . . . poetry is the anxiety of influence. [Bloom, 1973.94-95]

To Bloom intertextuality is a vigorous development of an “ego” trying to get back to primary narcissism from which it is withheld by its forerunners. Bloom’s agonistic text shows a relationship with other texts that is located in a trajectory of competition and rivalry. He developed a complex theory of revisionism by which a text wrestles with its “anxiety of influence” from previous texts. With the presence or absence of “anxiety of influence” elements of other texts in its multiple implied forms are there in a new text. Sometimes it demands even references from the other texts to perceive the meaning of the particular text. A reader has to take a position in the text. Hence Umberto Eco develops the concept of a “model reader” to explore the reader’s position to create or co-create a text out of the authored text. In his novel, *The Name of the Rose* (1980, trans. 1983) the narrator asks William:
'To know what one book says you must read others'? William replies, 'At times this can be so. Often books speak of other books'.

(Eco quoted in Webster. 1990: 29)

Similarly, Aritha Van Herk's *Places Far From Ellesmere* articulates a sense of a model reader, who can recognize the full range and play of references, allusions, parodies. The ideal or model reader reaches that reading position that the text promotes for its understanding and interpretation. One who fails to observe all these will definitely fail to recognize the text and the discourse within the text. As Riffaterre understands intertextuality is nothing other than creating multiple possibilities of reading. In his words:

Intertextuality is not a felicitous surplus, the privilege of a good memory or a classical education (but is) the perception that our reading of the text cannot be complete or satisfactory without going through intertext. [Riffaterre 1984: 143]

"Transtextuality" becomes an apt term to denote an apparently direct and specific interconnection that exists between two texts. This turns to be useful to distinguish more complex cases where influences and references are extensive from mere relatively simple examples of references and quotations. At times, difficult situations arise when a writer picks up a character(s) from another writer's work and recreates in a new work in a different context. Because most of the time the recreated version challenges and compliments the portrayal of the character in the prior text.
Intertextuality has much in common with “fictional reference”, another literary technique that exposes the grounds on which literary allusions rest. That is quite similar to Russian Formalists’ concept of foregrounding and Brecht’s alienation. Roland Barthes in his essay “Theory of the Text” writes:

Any text is a new issue of past citations. Bits of codes, formulae, rhythmic models, fragments of social language etc. pass into the text and are redistributed within it, for there is always language before and around the text.

[Barthes 1981: 39]

In fact Barthes suggests something similar to intertextuality under the name cryptographie which is translated as cryptogram. He used the term in “Writing Degree Zero”. He writes:

Any written trace precipitates, as inside a chemical at first transparent, innocent and neutral, mere duration gradually reveals in suspension a whole part of increasing density like a cryptogram. [P.23]

Following Barthes one may say that a writer at best acts as a synthesizer to blend the multiple writings of a text, which are drawn from different discourses. Literary textuality is perceived as a sort of discursive practice, though the incorporated discourses in the text ensure that literary writing is never entirely repeated or similar. Daphne Du Maurier’s Rebecca (1936) is a rewritten version of Charlotte Bronte’s Jane Eyre like Jean Rhy’s Wide Saragasso Sea (1966). Authors take enough liberty to modify the original version to give a twist to newly written
work in keeping with the mental make up, memory mapping and personal geography. The discourses are turned and twisted even after centuries for the sake of a new text to be written with new dimensions out of previous texts. The all time favorite *Hamlet* is taken up as a source material by Tom Stoppard’s *Rosencratz and Guildenstern are Dead* (1967). On the other hand, John Fowles’, *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* (1969) is not worked on one single source, but it draws on many quotations from historical, sociological, biological, geographical and literary texts. *Thru* (1975), a novel by Christine Brooke Rose frequently quotes the pieces of pre-existing language and imitates the established style of writing. It shows that a text can never stand on its own ground but it stands on the diverse discourses or interdisciplinary subjects to represent itself. It’s like palimpsest, “a re-used parchment” with the half-effaced residues of the earlier text, displaying through the new text. For reading James Joyce, one has to frequently negotiate with intertextual design. The set of cross-references and allusions demand familiarity of all his texts. In approaching *Ulysses* (1922) one has to move through *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) and even the earlier version of *Stephen Hero* (1944). Apparently *Ulysses* has an intertextual link with the *Odyssey*. Pierre Menard’s *Don Quixote* is another such text, which is again reworked by Jorge Louis Borges.

Jean Rhys in her work *Wide Sargasso Sea* recreates Charlotte Bronte’s characters from *Jane Eyre*. This is just not a matter of two sets of characters sharing similar fictional space, but there are revisionist and oppositional positions as well. Joseph Conrad’s Marlow negotiates transtextuality of a sort that differs from Jean
Rhys. Van Herk, in fact articulates a negative but challenging interconnection in an extended form to build up the text, *Places Far From Ellesemere*. She not only directly refers to Tolstoy but also to other male authors full of patriarchal ego, who think, they are there to create something magnanimous avoiding female perspectives.

Jerome J. McGann says that many literary works cannot be said to exist in one text, which unambiguously represents its author’s final intentions. He is very doubtful about the autonomy of the creative writers:

> An author’s work possesses autonomy only when it remains an unheard melody. As soon as it begins its passage to publication it undergoes a series of interventions some textual critics see as a process of contamination.

[McGann 1983: 100]

As Gerard Genette understands one type of intertextuality that can be termed as "hypertextuality" that implies some active transformation or rewriting of one text by another. To Genette hypertextuality is:

> ... any relation that links a text B (the hypertext) to a prior text A (the hypotext) to which it is connected in a manner that is not that of commentary.

[Palimpsests. 1982]

Joyce’s *Ulysses* is hypertextually grafted onto *Odyssey* and provides the best suitable example of it. Another term related to intertextuality is *sister text*, a form that describes the connection between “novel and novel” and “novel and autobiography”. *Metatextuality* is another mode of intertextuality that implies the relation of commentary to a text. In Genette’s words:
... the relation which links a text to another text which it discusses.

[Palimpsests. 1982]

This type of analysis is often based on a critical relation. This metatextual element is obvious in *Places Far From Ellesmere*, since Van Herk is being hypercritical towards Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* and provides commentary on/critique of Tolstoy’s work that becomes a part of her own work. With the reader’s active participation that possibility in a text comes to surface. Readers identify the allusions or parody in a text. The knowledge of theory equips a reader to explore different aspects in a text, may be such aspects of which the author perhaps may not be aware of. Intertextuality may function as trace or representation, it is the web of functions that regulate the relationship between text and intertext.

Intertextuality cannot avoid being hermeneutic in nature since hermeneutics is associated with the interpretation of human action that includes creative writing. This act has sociological implications, because it is linked to the institutions such as political, cultural, economic and kinship. In this sense, Van Herk’s *Places Far From Ellesmere* is drawn upon the nineteenth century’s Russian socio-cultural context, in contextualizing Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*. Nineteenth century Russia was socially and culturally patriarchal in its own way and did not allow any freedom to women to experience desire. Vronsky and Stiva were allowed to be casanovas without a pinch of conscience or self-reflection as they represent the patriarchy since the “order and the rules are male”. For such men women are not individual human beings but commodities. The prevailing moral code is only binding on women but not men.
Anna was discussed in almost every household for her extra-marital affair, for being a deviant to bear a child outside wedlock. Such stereotyped attitude towards women was not only popularized but also idealized. Such idealization negates choice and suppresses any expression of desire because they are only men’s prerogative. To deconstruct this ideological position Van Herk takes up the issue from a female point of view taking a woman’s position in _Places Far From Ellesmere_, attempting to liberate Anna from the patriarchal shackle. The intertextuality in _Places Far From Ellesmere_ is not only between a man’s text and a woman’s text, but between territories-- male territory and female territory. The territory or domain of fiction writing so long occupied by male is retrieved by women writers transferring it into an equally exciting and virtuous female territory. Intertextuality thus becomes a means of interrogating male authority and self-reflexively representing a feminist position.

A sort of intertextual negotiation constantly goes on with a literal playfulness in Van Herk’s _Places Far From Ellesmere_. Postmodern writing has changed to a great extent, which is reflected in V.S. Naipaul’s writing. He writes in _A Way In The World_:

> Writing has changed and then finding exactly where. But those are precisely the places you have to identify. Because those are the places where the writer decides to add things or hide things (P 166).

As Van Herk maintains in this context:
Writing place: hiding place.

[Places Far From Ellesmere, 1990.21]

That is enough to indicate that writing germinates a lot of provocative ideas, thoughts. Specially a woman may delve deep into the writing site and explore it to her advantage. Naipaul further writes:

Perhaps Phyllis with her initial French speaking limitations (Guadeloupe, Paris, West Africa) had established her own further construct of the world. Perhaps in that fluidity, in that shiftingness, she had found freedom (P.155).

Van Herk writes about this “freedom” in In Visible Ink:

That freedom to question encouraged me to write novels about Judith, Ja-el and Archne, mythic women whose powerful and active stories have been dismissed or obscured, and worse, misread and demeaned.

[P.132]

While male writers inherit a “construct”, women writers have to construct that to celebrate autonomy of selfhood and identity. That’s why “escape” is found to be an alternative mode to be free from patriarchal gaze and bondage. In Places Far From Ellesmere, Van Herk exhorts all stranded fictional female characters along with Anna to run away to Northern Arctic, Ellesmere to breathe freely:

You are at Ellesmere. You have escaped to Ellesmere. Her island, tabula rasa, a wayness so thoroughly truant you have cut all connexion to all places far from
Ellesmere. This is what you long for. Anna must have too (P.77).

Even Van Herk speaks about the desire of women including the fictional Anna, to exist, without any limitation. She feels all women suffer like Anna, they are caught in their orbits, “between children and husbands and lovers, their needs and desires”. At times women feel suffocated, rather they are trapped in the patriarchal system. “Feminism” thus becomes a discourse of desire that creates possibilities for women to articulate themselves.

In *Anna Karenina*, Tolstoy portrays Anna in a way where she is humiliated for daring to be different, to make a choice for herself, which society does not approve of a married woman. He writes:

... but the role of a man pursuing a married woman and staking his life on drawing her into adultery – such a role was too great, too magnificent ever to be considered ridiculous.

[Anna Karenina (Vol.1) trans. 1978: 166]

Lambasting Tolstoy, Van Herk writes in *Places Far From Ellesmere*:

In order to contain Anna’s sexuality, Tolstoy must make her unhappy, she cannot enjoy her appetites as simply as enthusiastically as Stiva does. Anna’s eroticism, the power she exerts, is culturally mis/timed, and she is damned. She has not appropriate colouration to suit the trappings of bourgeois respectability that first Karenin, then Vronsky, and above all Tolstoy, wish to impose on her. Her real sin is that she will not
serve, and so old Tolstoy, he who claimed that she should be pitied rather than despised, is merciless and pitiless. He shadows her unto her death. [P.107]

The mental make up of patriarchy is same everywhere. Perhaps that authenticated Tolstoy to malign Anna in Russian society, where she acquires a “new position” by deviating from patriarchal norms and she is not accepted. He writes:

This is what Vronsky experienced in respect to society ... very soon he discovered that it would receive him but not her (Anna).

[Anna Karenina Vol.I 1978 (trans.) 113]

Van Herk questions the authority that created Anna as a “fallen woman”, a guilty woman: “but whose invention is she? Tolstoy’s? The nineteenth century’s? Russia’s? The novel’s? Your’s? She is the north’s invention [P.113].”

It is in bonding that Aritha discovers closeness for women as class. While interrogating Tolstoy’s representation of Anna she is indirectly suggesting what possibly could have been the situation. She also creates such condition for Anna in her own text. No one except princess Myakaya has sympathy for Anna -- no one understands her. Princess putting on Anna’s shoes curtly says:

Is it her fault that everyone falls in love with her and follows her about like her shadow?

[Anna Karenina: Vol. I 1978 (Trans ) 175]

Van Herk writes:
I am merely pointing out that she was a shadowed woman, and if we are so lucky as not to be pursued, then we have no right to condemn her [P 109]

Tolstoy made Anna suffer in the hands of her lover for why she endangered her position, her life. She suffered alone. No one dared to sympathize with Anna except princess Myakaya, not to speak of to counter her since patriarchy tied their tongue. Anna was deeply hurt and humiliated:

Anna’s grief was the greater because she endured it alone. She could not and did not want to share it with Vronsky. She knew that, even though he was the main cause of her unhappiness, he would never be able to understand the depth of her suffering.

[Anna Karenina, Vol. II. 1978 (trans.)116]

Van Herk adopts a challenging tone in her writing to deconstruct a man’s judgement, man’s outlook. She tries to rescue Anna, for that matter, all women from such dehumanized attitude. She writes.

Why Anna, a self indulgent character created by a man who couldn’t imagine women enacting anything more interesting than adultery or motherhood. Prescribed choices; mothers, saints or whores. [p 81]

Anna is not spared of criticism even after her death/murder. Death is considered to be an escape, but it’s no more an escape for Anna. In fact it is a total freedom under such circumstances to articulate protest. Thomas Hood was humane enough to exhort the readers to forgive the sin of the “fallen woman” after her death, as death washed away her sin and what remained was the purity, the trace of a woman, though lifeless. But Tolstoy seems to be devoid of that humanitarian feeling.
and consideration. He let the venomed tongue lash on Anna after her death. He treated her like dirt. The countess speaks:

... yes, she ended her days as a woman of her sort could have been expected to do. Even the death she chose was low, despicable ... she was a bad woman ... All just to show she was someone out of the ordinary. Well, she has shown it. Ruined herself and two fine people------- her husband and my unfortunate son ... her very death was the death of a wicked woman without religion.

[Anna Karenina Vol.II.1978: 395-396]

So Van Herk writes to efface this trace of accumulated hatred of society (Russian):

... Anna Karenina should have gone to Ellesmere.
... where you must read her over, through the transparency of Tolstoy's blame, his punitory withholding of erotic and emotional case. Anna, poor Anna, dead before she begins the end already read. You know where she is going, have pre,read that destination. But re/reading her, in Ellesmere a/new, reading her whole, you can re/write her too (P.83).

Places Far From Ellesmere becomes an intertext in more than one way. This feminist text is negotiating with a male text to deconstruct it, to overcome the “male historiographic gaze”. It is an attempt to assert feminist point of view by analyzing the misrepresented male authoritative voice and by subverting male echo. Intertextuality is apparent as Van Herk quotes from Tolstoy's Anna Karenina to
show misrepresentations and wrong utterances in the original work and erasing this text with a new evolving text in a new dimension. She quotes, “a peasant carrying a sack over his shoulder” and she interprets – “In the sack over his shoulder is the novel, a huge muddle of words into which he stuffs the cut-off hands of beautiful expressive woman who refuse to be domesticate” (P. 114).

Again she quotes:

To avoid seeing people she got up quickly and seated herself at the opposite window of the empty compartment. A grimy, deformed-looking peasant in a cap from beneath which tufts of his matted hair stuck out, passed by this window, stopping down to the carriage wheels. ‘There’s something familiar about that deformed peasant’, thought Anna. And remembering her dream, she walked over to the opposite door, trembling with fright.

As Van Herk interprets: “Anna is right to be afraid: Tolstoy is about to beat her into a railway tie, rape her with her own reading. His forced and enforced writing of Anna will crush her beneath the cars of the text she has travelled for so many pages” (P. 92).

Intertextual representation becomes a powerful mode here. While Van Herk is analyzing Tolstoy’s Anna she is dissecting all other Annas, “women” in their sufferings and oppressed conditions. This fictional Anna represents the entire woman community seeking freedom, a space of their own. She is successful in representing as she shows her linguistic ability to build up the text with the help of powerful
rhetoric. She does not follow any normative, standardized punctuation in her text, because it’s not what is needed, but a “punctuation of desire” is required and wanted. It is a conscious effort to disinherit the patriarchal language and pattern, which exclude women, rather inflict pain. The novels are at some level about novels (sister texts) about the problems and possibilities of representing and giving shape or meaning to experience. Aritha Van Herk does that giving an outlet to her female experience by challenging the male text and breaking the fixed barrier of novel. She thinks every human being behaves as a character in a larger novel to articulate self. She writes in *Places Far From Ellesmere*:

> You know you are a character in a larger novel, a novel of geography and passion, reading yourself as you are being read by a comprehensive reader. (P. 118)

She intertextually carries on this concept in *In Visible Ink*:

> we are all characters in some huge novel that someone, somewhere is reading. (P. 154)

So intertextuality will just carry on both in reading and writing process in the form of multiple process of encoding and decoding

**Works Cited**


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