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Delimiting Private and Public Spaces in Joy Mathew's *Shutter* and T. K. Rajeev's *Up and Down*

Reji A. L.

In literary and cultural studies, the past two decades have been increasingly concerned with the ways in which space and place inform aesthetics, culture, and politics. Literature, of course, is only one among many "spatial" forms of art. Other media such as film, photography, painting, sculpture, architecture, and music are also vehicles for the aesthetic expression of place and space. The main characteristics of public space are accessibility and usability for all citizens. However, current developments, primarily observed in cities, suggest the loss of a clear distinction between public and private space, which is what this article attempts to examine, as depicted in Joy Mathew's *Shutter* and T. K. Rajeev's *Up and Down*.

Key Words: private space, psychological space, public space, spatial alienation

The private and the public are 'normally', or in the first place, not seen as 'dimensions' or 'aspects' of life or of society, but as areas or *spaces*, as 'places' and relations between places in the world. Each of these spaces is governed by a specific 'regime'. In the seclusion of the home, one can think and say what one wants, without anyone overhearing or even being entitled to listen, and one can stay home when one does not wish to go out. In a democratic society, where everyone is entitled to this freedom and 'privacy', this implies that these private spaces are closed off from the world in which everyone is free to move as they please, and therefore, that these spaces are effective restrictions on that freedom. These private spaces are 'inaccessible'.