Exploring Collective Memory in Sarnath Banerjee's "Corridor"

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Abstract

Sarnath Banerjee's graphic novel, "Corridor," explores the interplay between collective memory and its defining characteristics within the pages of the novel. The author of this book employs a unique visual narrative to explore the involutions of collective consciousness that characterize a society in transition against the backdrop of postcolonial India, a country in transition in terms of cultural shifts, and historical echoes. An analysis has been conducted into how Banerjee efficaciously portrays and engages with the collective memories of the depicted people by utilizing visual elements, character dynamics, and storytelling techniques that they employ throughout the piece. The article examines how the story of the "Corridor" intersects with historical events, assembling personal narratives with broader historical contexts in a manner that draws upon critical reception and scholarly interpretations. A key objective of this article is to offer a nuanced perspective on the postcolonial experience in India through examining the characters as carriers of memory and visual storytelling as a way to recollect. It seeks to explore Banerjee's work to gain a deeper understanding of how it navigates the intricate terrain of collective memory.

Keywords: postcolonial, collective memory, visual, storytelling, narratives.

INTRODUCTION:

"Corridor," by Sarnath Banerjee, is a visually engaging graphic novel that explores collective memory within the dynamic framework of postcolonial India and within the context of its vibrant cultural heritage. Utilizing a broad range of visual mediums such as photography, Banerjee employs an approach to storytelling that transcends traditional narratives, sanctioning him to develop a story that aims to explore the layers of shared experiences, historical legacies, and cultural nuances that influence the collective consciousness of the society he is depicting. We are commencing our exploration of Banerjee's visual masterpiece, "Corridor," and it is becoming more pellucid and more pellucid than his work accommodates as a canvas, intricately weaving together the threads of individual memories and societal narratives against the backdrop of an otherwise compelling backdrop of transformative transmutation in a country.

Collective memory plays a very consequential role within literature, categorically when it comes to the context of postcolonial societies, and this consequentiality cannot be overstated. It acts as a repository of shared histories, providing a lens through which to understand the intricacies of identity, culture, and societal evolution. As a paramount contribution to this discourse, "Corridor" utilizes the graphic novel format in order not only to tell a story, but additionally to visually depict and engage with the multifaceted nature of collective memory and its multifaceted characteristics.

There are many dimensions to the story of "Corridor" that will be explored by this exploration, as Banerjee will fixate on the visual elements, character dynamics, and storytelling techniques that are employed by Banerjee in order to evoke and examine collective memory in a sensitive way. This article aims to illuminate how "Corridor"

captures the essence of postcolonial collective memory in India through the exploration of the characters as carriers of memory, their intersections with historical events, and their nuanced visual storytelling. As we embark on this literary journey, we are poised to unravel the layers of devotement embedded in Banerjee's visual narrative and gain a deeper appreciation for the role of collective memory in shaping the narrative tapestry of "Corridor."

A graphic novelist, visual storyteller, and artist, Sarnath Banerjee is keen for his contribution to contemporary Indian literature and visual storytelling, as well as for having made an innovative contribution to contemporary Indian graphic novels. As a child of Indian immigrants, Banerjee grew up in Kolkata, India, where he developed his diverse life experiences and background, both of which influenced his artistic endeavours greatly.

There is an exceptional cumulation of wit, satire, and a keen visual examination of contemporary urban life in India that is distinctive about his work. Banerjee often depicts intricate convivial issues and cultural dynamics in her graphic novels, as well as the intersection between personal narratives and broader historical and political contexts in her graphic novels. He is keen for works such as "Corridor" (2004), "The Barn Owl's Wondrous Capers" (2007) and "All Quiet in Vikaspuri" (2015), which are some of his most eminent works.

In addition to editing graphic novels, Banerjee has additionally taken time out to engender short films, documentaries, and documentaries as a component of his filmmaking vocation. His facility to seamlessly integrate text and visual elements, coupled with sharp convivial commentary, has garnered him apperception both in India and internationally.

Sarnath Banerjee's contributions to the graphic novel genre have been influential, marking a departure from traditional storytelling conventions and expanding the possibilities of visual narrative in Indian literature. "Banerjee's work, characterized as rhizomatic, employs a hybrid symbolic system to navigate the complex postmodern and postcolonial landscape of India. He does so through the use of symbolic, emblematic, and indexical features, which are integral in articulating these societal tensions" (Christabel Vol. 6. No. 2) His work perpetuates the celebration of its thought-instigating themes and humour, and its exploration of the intricacies of contemporary Indian society.

Sarnath Banerjee is an Indian indicter and illustrator who has indicated and illustrated the graphic novel "Corridor". An engaging, multifaceted narrative set-in modern-day India, this novel explores the lives of a diverse group of characters as they navigate the intricate web of relationships within the chaos of a bustling metropolis, all set against the backdrop of India's vibrant culture. An Indian urban slang term for a dormitory involute where the story unfolds is the corridor, a term that is utilized to describe the location of the story. The book is narrated through a series of interconnected vignettes that introduce the reader to a variety of characters from many ambulation's of life, each with his or her own aspirations, struggles, and peculiarities found in life. In the film we meet a displaced rural migrant, a filmmaking aspirant, a retired civil coadjutant, a journalist, as well as an aspiring filmmaker.

This narrative introduces us to a variety of characters with their own personal experiences and memories, engendering an opulent tapestry that reflects the involutions of contemporary urban life in India, and how it plays out in their lives. The novel is additionally concerned with broader themes, including the concept of cultural identity, the dynamics of a convivial group, and the impact which globalization is having on traditional ways of living, as it explores the characters' individual challenges.

One of the distinctive features of "Corridor" is Banerjee's utilization of a visually engaging storytelling style. Banerjee utilizes the graphic novel format to convey nuanced emotions, convivial commentary, and cultural optical discernments, coalescing humour and insight with his faculty to convey nuanced feelings, a coalescence of convivial commentary, and cultural visual examinations utilizing a coalescence of humour and insight. It is widely acknowledged that "Corridor" has a unique narrative structure. It explores earnest gregarious issues with a sense of humour, while at the same time tackling earnest societal issues. The novel provides the reader with a unique window through which they can explore the intricacies of contemporary Indian society through the lens of a graphic novel, making it an eminent contribution to the genre of graphic novels within the context of Indian literature as a whole.

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Postcolonial India is characterized by a shared memory, narrative, and interpretation of historical events and experiences that both shape the nation's identity and consciousness, engendering a sense of collective memory. "The postcolonial situation in which humans that have been deprived of their indigenous history and culture are trying to recover their own narratives and memories" (Assmann 210) Postcolonialism refers to the period after the cessation of direct colonial rule, in this case, after India became independent from the British colonial rule in 1947, or after the terminus of direct colonial rule. The key to understanding the concept of collective memory in postcolonial India is to acknowledge the multifaceted nature of that nation's history as well as the perpetual process of defining a shared identity in the face of the diverse challenges and experiences it encounters. In Corridor, "the structural and cartographical connections between comics and cities have opened new discursive spaces which are nonlinear, connective, and nomadic. These discursive spaces pose challenges to the political and neoliberal narratives which are most palpably felt in the Indian metropolis of Delhi" (Abrol 218-232)

There are a number of theories cognate to collective memory that can be acclimated to analyse Sarnath Banerjee's "Corridor". The graphic novel by Banerjee, though not explicitly aligned with a particular theoretical framework, has elements that lend themselves to interpretation utilizing concepts drawn from collective memory studies, even if Banerjee's work does not explicitly adhere to one. According to Maurice Halbach, according to which individual memory can be regarded as gregariously constructed within concrete gregarious frameworks, here are some theories that may be pertinent to "Corridor", as well as how they may be reflected in its details: 'Corridor' is predicated on a convivial context which weaves together the memories and experiences of the characters. The shared space of the dormitory involute accommodates as a gregarious framework where individual memories are shaped and influenced by the interactions and relationships within the community.

With assistance, Assmann differentiates between communicative memory and cultural memory, accentuating the role of cultural practices in shaping perennial memories. The sundry characters in "Corridor" engage in everyday conversations, rituals, and cultural practices that contribute to the formation Banerjee's exploration of urban life and become a component of the broader cultural memory depicted in the graphic novel.

Collective memory is approximately tied to the formation of group and national identities. The diverse characters in "Corridor" represent different facets of contemporary Indian society. Their individual stories contribute to a collective understanding of the intricacies, challenges, and nuances that shape the identity of the broader community and, by extension, the nation. Media plays a crucial role in shaping collective memory, influencing how certain events are recollected. Banerjee's utilization of the graphic novel format itself is a form of media that contributes to the representation of collective memory. Visual storytelling, along with textual elements, influences how readers perceive and recollect depicted narratives.

Postcolonial Memory Studies: the novel reflects aspects of postcolonial urban life and the impact of societal changes. The characters' experiences may carry echoes of a postcolonial context, contributing to a collective memory shaped by historical transitions.

It's consequential to note that these theories provide interpretive frameworks, and the application of these theories to "Corridor" is subjective. Banerjee's work is intricate, multi-layered and sanctioned for sundry readings that may incorporate elements of different collective memory theories. Analysing graphic novels through these lenses can enhance our construal of how memory, identity, and societal dynamics are portrayed and interconnected in "Corridor."
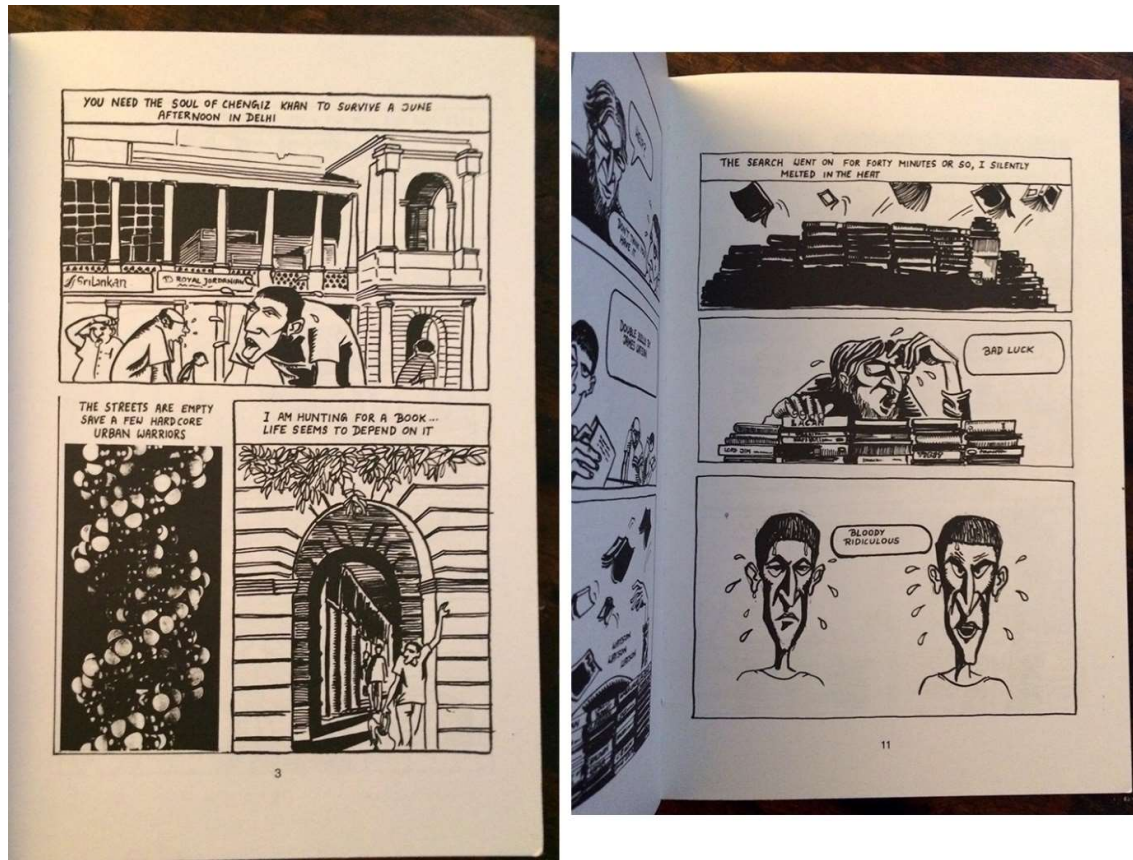

Figure 1 – corridor

Visual Elements and Storytelling in Sarnath Banerjee's "Corridor" is eminent to its innovative utilization of visual elements and storytelling within the graphic novel format. Here are key aspects of visual elements and storytelling in "Corridor". Banerjee employs a distinctive artistic style characterized by detailed and expressive illustrations. The visual aesthetics play a crucial role in conveying the nuances of the characters' emotions, the urban landscape, and the overall atmosphere within the story as shown in figure 1.

The layout and composition of panels are conscientiously designed to guide the reader's attention and engender a visual rhythm. Banerjee utilizes a variety of panel sizes and arrangements to control the pacing and accentuate certain moments or details as in figure 2. The colour palette in "Corridor" contributes to the mood and tone of the narrative. Banerjee employs colours strategically to convey emotions, highlight concrete elements, and evoke a sense of place. The imagery is opulent in symbolism, enhancing the narrative depth.

Figure 2 – corridor

Banerjee skilfully integrates text and images to engender a cohesive storytelling experience. The text complements the visuals, providing adscititious context, dialogue, and narration. The synergy between text and image sanctions for a nuanced exploration of the characters and their environments as in figure 3.
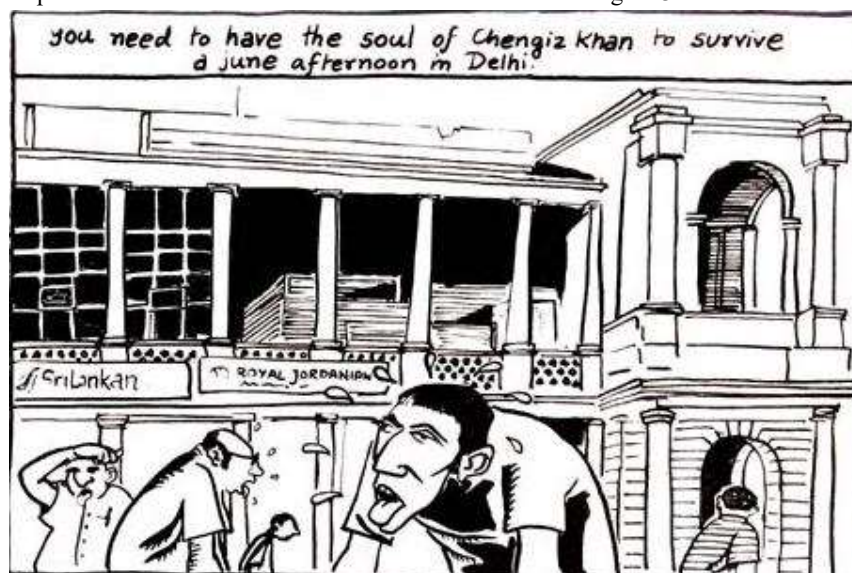

Figure 3 - corridor

Visual elements often carry symbolic meaning and metaphorical consequentiality as in figure 3. Banerjee uses

symbols and visual metaphors to convey themes, emotions, and cultural commentary. Readers are invited to interpret visual symbols, integrating layers of devotement into the narrative.

"Corridor" features montage and collage techniques, where multiple images are juxtaposed to convey a sequence of events or conceptions. This technique sanctions for a dynamic and fragmented representation of the characters' experiences and memories as in figure 4.

Figure 4 – corridor

The urban setting is not merely a backdrop but a character in itself. Banerjee uses visuals to portray the intricacy of urban life, incorporating details of architecture, street scenes, and the diversity of city spaces. The cityscape becomes an integral part of the narrative, influencing the characters' interactions and experiences.

The graphic novel employs non-linear storytelling, moving back and forth in time. Visual cues avail readers to navigate temporal shifts, contributing to the involution of the narrative structure. This nonlinear approach integrates layers to the collective memory theme, as memories are not presented in a linear chronological order.

Banerjee's utilization of humour and satire is often conveyed through visual elements as in figure 4. Countenances, body language, and visual gags contribute to the comedic aspects of the novel, offering a unique form of storytelling that blends wit with convivial commentary.

In "Corridor," Sarnath Banerjee masterfully utilizes the graphic novel medium to engender a visually opulent and thematically layered narrative. The visual elements and storytelling techniques contribute to the immersive experience of exploring collective memory, urban life, and the diverse characters within the pages of the graphic novel.

In Sarnath Banerjee's "Corridor," the characters accommodate as carriers of memory, playing a central role in shaping the collective narrative of the graphic novel. Here's how the characters function as carriers of memory in "Corridor":

Each character in "Corridor" brings with them a unique personal history, reflecting a concrete set of experiences, challenges, and aspirations. These personal histories become integral to the collective memory of the community,

contributing to the overall richness of the narrative. Moreover, characters' lives are interconnected within the shared space of the dormitory intricately. Their interactions, relationships, and conflicts become a component of their collective memory as they navigate the involutions of urban life together. The interconnectedness of their lives accentuates the communal nature of memory engenderment shown in figure 5.

Figure 5 – corridor

Banerjee captures the characters' everyday experiences, mundane activities, and minute interactions as in figure 5, which collectively contribute to the construction of memory. These ostensibly mundane moments have become paramount in shaping the shared experiences of the community. However, characters in "Corridor" represent different facets of contemporary Indian society. Through their backgrounds, vocations, and cultural affiliations, they embody diverse aspects of the nation's identity. The characters become carriers of cultural memory, reflecting the broader sociocultural context in which they subsist.
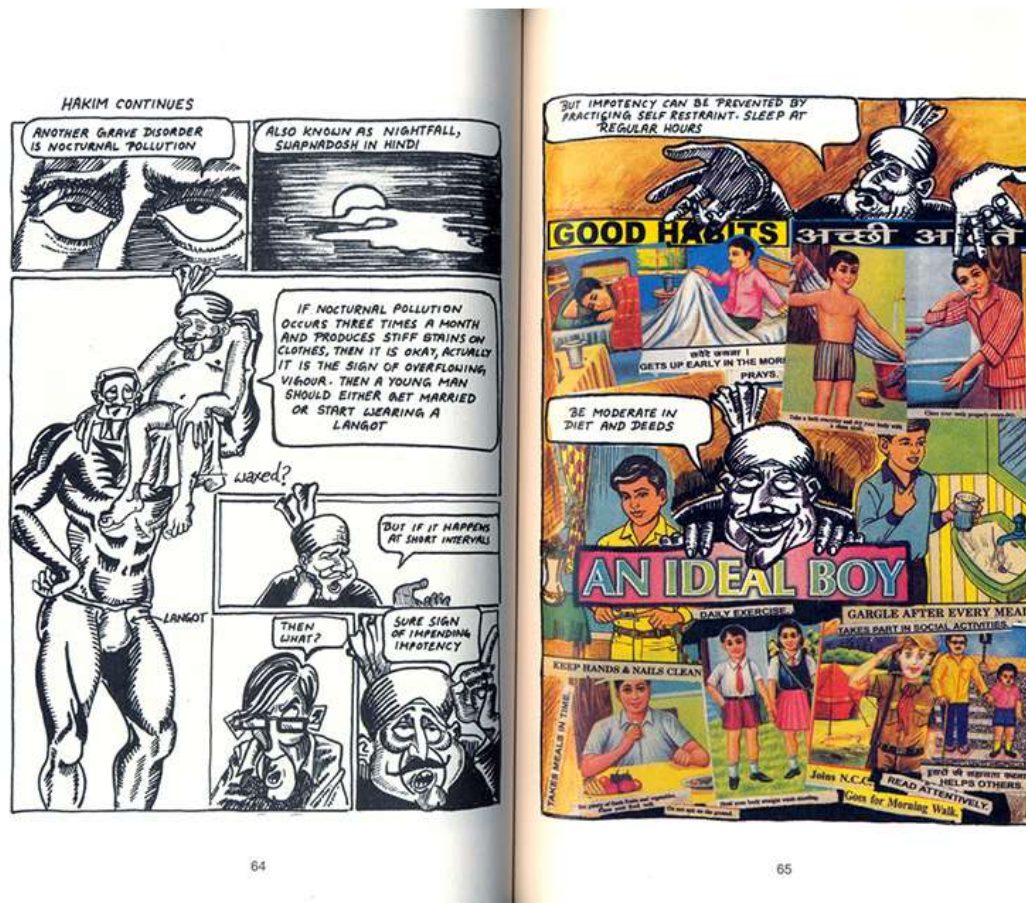
Figure 6 – corridor

Some characters in "Corridor" may carry individual or collective traumas, which become embedded in the collective memory of the community. These traumas, whether personal or societal, influence the characters' comportments, postures, and interactions, leaving lasting imprints on the narrative as in figure 6. Characters participate in rituals, celebrations, and traditions that are a component of their cultural and convivial milieu. These rituals contribute to the collective memory, providing a sense of continuity and shared identity. The characters act as carriers of these cultural practices, passing them down through generations.

Banerjee employs multiple narrative perspectives, sanctioning readers to optically discern events through the ocular perceivers of different characters. Each character's perspective contributes to the overall understanding of the narrative, providing a multifaceted view of the community's collective memory and withal the characters in "Corridor" may have an impact on future generations within the community. Their stories, values, and experiences may be passed down to younger characters, influencing the perpetual construction of collective memory within the graphic novel. Through the diverse and dynamic cast of characters in "Corridor," Sarnath Banerjee explores how individual stories intersect and contribute to the broader narrative of collective memory. The characters accommodate as vessels through which the intricacies of contemporary urban life and the evolving identity of postcolonial India are vividly portrayed as in figure 7.

Figure 7 – corridor

Sarnath Banerjee's "Corridor" intricately weaves personal narratives and experiences within the broader historical context, engendering intersections with history that contribute to the novel's opulent tapestry. "Corridor" unfolds in the postcolonial era, reflecting the transformations and challenges that accompany the shift from colonial rule to independence. The urban setting accommodates as a backdrop for exploring the evolving dynamics of a city and its denizens in the aftermath of colonialism. The graphic novel delves into the legacy of the partition of India in 1947. While not the central focus, the memories and repercussions of partition are subtly woven into the narrative, influencing characters' backgrounds, identities, and relationships. The consequences of historical events shape the present experiences of the characters.

"Corridor" reflects the cultural and convivial shifts in postcolonial India. Through the characters and their interactions, the novel captures the transmuting norms, values, and aspirations of a society navigating the involutions of modernity and globalization. However, the novel physically contacts upon the political landscape of postcolonial India. References to political events, ideologies, and societal debates provide a historical backdrop, influencing the characters' perspectives and contributing to the overall atmosphere of the narrative.

Economic changes and the shift toward industrialization and globalization are subtly explored in "Corridor" as in figure 8. The characters' vocations, aspirations, and struggles reflect the economic transformations occurring in postcolonial India. Moreover, Banerjee portrays cultural hybridity as a consequence of historical interactions. The characters embody a coalescence of traditional and contemporary influences, reflecting the intricate and dynamic nature of cultural identity in a postcolonial context. Further references to technological advancements and the impact of modern technologies are woven into the narrative. This reflects the historical trajectory of India as it embraces incipient technologies and experiences the associated vicissitudes in lifestyle and communication.

Figure 8 – corridor

The novel explores the impact of ecumenical influences on local cultures. The characters, through their experiences and interactions, embody the intersection of ecumenical and local forces, showcasing the interconnectedness of the world in the postcolonial era as shown in figure 8.

By embedding personal stories within a historical framework, "Corridor" captures the intricate relationships between individual experiences and the broader historical context. Banerjee skilfully intertwines the characters' lives with historical elements, offering readers a nuanced perspective on the involutions of postcolonial history and its enduring influence on the present

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, Sarnath Banerjee's "Corridor" accommodates as a captivating exploration of collective memory within the dynamic context of postcolonial India. The graphic novel's innovative narrative approach, opulent visual storytelling, and multifaceted characters contribute to a nuanced understanding of how memories are constructed and shared within a community.

The characters in "Corridor" represent a diverse array of experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives. Through their interconnected lives, the novel captures the multifaceted nature of collective memory, showcasing how individual stories contribute to a broader narrative of shared experiences. The urban setting of the novel accommodates not only as a backdrop but as an active participant in shaping collective memory. Banerjee's vivid portrayal of the cityscape becomes a canvas upon which memories are imprinted, illustrating the dynamic interplay between personal and communal memories.

Visual Medium in Banerjee's novel, adept at utilizing the graphic novel format, emerges as a potent implement for conveying the involutions of memory. The visual elements, including symbolism, imagery, and visual metaphors, enhance the narrative depth and provide readers with a unique and immersive exploration of collective

memory. "Corridor" skilfully weaves personal narratives within the historical fabric of postcolonial India. The novel's engagement with historical events, cultural shifts, and societal transformations highlights how collective memory is deeply intertwined with the broader historical context.

The characters in "Corridor" play a pivotal role as carriers of memory. Their diverse personal histories, everyday experiences, and interactions become integral components of the collective memory within the shared space of the dormitory involute. But Banerjee's utilization of humour and satire integrates a distinctive layer in the exploration of collective memory. The wit employed in the narrative not only regales but accommodates as a reflective implement, sanctioning for a critical examination of societal norms and cultural idiosyncrasies.

In "Corridor," Banerjee invites readers to navigate an intricate web of memories, offering a poignant commentary on the fluid nature of collective memory in an expeditiously transmuting society. Through its innovative narrative style and thematic richness, "Corridor" stands as a testament to the potential of graphic literature to delve into involute gregarious phenomena and contribute to a deeper understanding of the human experience.

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