

Identity and Space in Works by Emine Sevgi Özdamar and Olga Grjasnowa

BY

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SUMMARY

Examining two works of German transnational literature -- Emine Sevgi Özdamar's "Der Hof im Spiegel" (2001) and Olga Grjasnowa's *Der Russe ist einer, der Birken liebt* (2012) -- I argue that globalization has ambivalent effects on contemporary understandings of "nation" and national belonging. It reaffirms and undermines them at the same time. On the one hand, individuals become more cosmopolitan, and communities are formed cross-culturally and independent of national boundaries. On the other, notions of national identity are reinforced in situations of border crossings, by means of the "nationalizing gaze" (Löfgren) and conceptions of "self" and "other".

I demonstrate that the protagonists in both works are portrayed as cosmopolitan subjects, but with important differences. Grjasnowa (born 1984 in Azerbaijan) belongs to a generation that has a disposition to "rootless" identity, which is mirrored in her novel. Özdamar (born 1946 in Turkey), in contrast, portrays a "rooted" protagonist, who is at home in Turkey and Germany. By reading particular spaces of the private realm as heterotopia, and comparing them to public spaces of the German city that I interpret as Third Spaces, the diversity within the German metropolis is emphasized. The society of the German metropolis is depicted as pluralistic of diverse populations, but with indications of failing coexistence. Hence, in order to depict alternatives to the Third Spaces of the public sphere, the figures create utopian sites within the realm of the private, via the "mirror", a combination of heterotopia and utopia, as described by Foucault in *Of Other Spaces* (1984). These sites link real and imagined spaces and thus illustrate an ideal model of multicultural space.

1. INTRODUCTION

In an ongoing debate in the literary section of the German newspaper *Die Zeit*, literary critics as well as authors such as Maxim Biller and Florian Kessler describe the German *Literaturkrise*, the crisis of contemporary German literature. They address foremost the alleged homogeneity of current German literature, and argue that transnational writers have – to their detriment – “assimilated” their writing in order to be successful. Conversely, when Emine Sevgi Özdamar received the Ingeborg-Bachmann-Prize in 1991 for an excerpt of her work *Mutterzunge* as the first non-native German writer, the committee was accused of confusing her allegedly naïve style of narration for an exotic surrealism (Dayioglu-Yücel 28-29). This debate shows that the perception of literature is dependent on circumstances of production: critics differentiate between “German” and “non-German” authors. On the one hand, the discussion shows that literature by “non-German” authors is viewed as an important part of the “German” literary scene, but on the other hand, by creating two classes of authors based on their alleged cultural heritage, this debate ultimately contributes to the empowerment of dichotomous assumptions of cultural differences of “self” and “other” and undermines the possibility of a German literature that is as multicultural as Germany.

In this paper, I examine how multiculturalism is portrayed in two works of German literature that could also be categorized as “transnational”. Literature plays an important role in deciphering the society and cultural circumstances of the “second modernity” and “reflexive modernization” as described by the sociologist Ulrich Beck. Beck argues that the shift from first to second modernity, generated by globalization, “alters the interconnectedness of nation-states” as well as “national societies and the internal quality of the social” (“The Cosmopolitan Perspective” 87). As a consequence of the second modernization, Beck observes a “process of

cosmopolitanization”, which, according to him, can only be made meaningful via “reflexivity”, which he defines as the processes of “self-definition and public reflexivity of transnational ways of life and situations” that affect all members of the “emerging society of world citizens”, either marginalized or privileged (98). In our globalized time, contemporary literature also reflects the interconnections and networks of the world and portrays the heterogeneity of identities in its figures. As noted by literary scholar Leslie Adelson, “literatures certainly are one important site of cultural reorientation” that display a “creative engagement with a rapidly changing present” (266). Thus, interpreting transnational literature in Germany allows conclusions in regard to transformations within German constructions of culture and nation.

My readings will show that even though the works were published only eleven years apart, globalization and its effects are markedly more prominent in Grjasnowa’s text. I argue that Emine Sevgi Özdamar’s protagonist in “Der Hof im Spiegel” (2001) can be interpreted as a “rooted cosmopolitan”, belonging to two cultures. Olga Grjasnowa’s protagonist in *Der Russe ist einer, der Birken liebt* (2012), however, depicts a protagonist who is not in between two cultures, but rather a “rootless cosmopolitan”. Although the notion of the cosmopolitan -- either “rooted” or “rootless” -- has been long associated with constructions of Jewish identity and national belonging in a negative way, the terminology of the “rooted” and “rootless” cosmopolitan can be made useful in determining relations of *Heimat*, national identity and belonging within the second modernity. Levy and Sznajder, for example, utilize this terminology in their work *The Holocaust and Memory in a Global Age*, in which they define new forms of rooted cosmopolitanism as “universal values that are emotionally engaging” (3). They argue that the Jewish figure as the paradigm of the “other” has led to “a positive reorientation of the concept of cosmopolitanism” (47). Although cosmopolitanism within the first modernity was used to

describe the Jew's "inability to assimilate within a national framework" (48), these discourses can no longer be limited to "specifically Jewish concerns. Instead, they constitute the broader arena in which issues of citizenship, civil society, and cultural identity are played out" (48), resulting from the "universalization of the particular" (49). Levy and Sznajder describe "cosmopolitanization" as "internal globalization" (2) or

a nonlinear, dialectical process in which the global and local exist not as cultural opposites but, rather, as mutually binding and interdependent principles. The process not only entails connections that break down old boundaries but also extends to the quality of the social and the political within national communities. (9-10)

The literary scholar Tom Cheesman, who describes the paradigm of the "foreign" Turk within Germany today as similar to the Jew in the past (41), distinguishes between seven types of cosmopolitanism and employs the notion of the rooted cosmopolitan in order to describe Özdamar's writings. He denotes her as an "internationalist cosmopolitan" (69), as "her work embodies a critical cosmopolitanism rooted in the internationalist, socially committed traditions of art and politics" (74). Since I focus in this paper on a single story in which Özdamar describes the life of her protagonist between Turkey and Germany, I will avoid the notion of the "internationalist cosmopolitan" to describe her, although Cheesman's definition is convincing. Nor do I wish to identify the first-person narrator with Özdamar, even though there certainly are many parallels between them.

Cheesman defines cosmopolitanism as the

Function of the awareness of differences, alternatives, and ensuing ambivalence. . . . It is a mode of being and consciousness. . . . It is not an

exclusive asset of the privileged. The indigent migrant worker, crossing borders in search of a livelihood, may develop not only cross-cultural linguistic skills, but also a skeptical attitude toward ideologies of nation, race, and religion coupled with a curiosity about difference that characterizes cosmopolitan consciousness. (43)

As outlined above, I will use the terms of the “rooted” and “rootless” cosmopolitan to analyze Grjasnowa’s and Özdamar’s characters, who are negotiating their identities within conceptions of nations, while taking this negotiation beyond the simplified dichotomy of “ethnic origins and host culture”, in order to “assert a place in the cosmopolitan, global culture” (Cheesman 53).

In the works “Der Hof im Spiegel” and *Der Russe ist einer, der Birken liebt*, the tangible effects of globalization on German politics become obvious: legal reforms regarding citizenship and integration, that were introduced after Özdamar’s story but before Grjasnowa’s novel were published, reflect how the German government has struggled to balance conceptions of the global and local.

It should be noted here that the term “multiculturalism” has acquired a pejorative connotation in Germany. The political scientist Bassam Tibi, for instance, has argued that “*multikulti*-communitarianism and the ‘free space’ that it promotes lead to parallel societies and consequent security risks”, and cautions that terrorist attacks of the 21st century can be seen as a result of failed integration (230).¹ Günther Beckstein, a politician of the CSU², addresses what he

¹ Tibi argues that the involvement of Mohammed Atta, who lived in Hamburg, in the events of 9/11 are closely connected to immigration and that successful integration could be an important tool against terrorism (Tibi 228-229).

² The CSU, the “Christlich-Soziale Union” is a conservative party that is only represented in Bavaria.

interprets as the local issues of multiculturalism,³ and is of the opinion that there is a need for “rejection of multicultural ideologies” in Germany (304). Both Tibi and Beckstein thus interpret multiculturalism as several cultures “living next to” as opposed to “living with” each other, and conclude that this sort of multiculturalism has failed (Beckstein 304). However, advocates of the multicultural concept argue that it needs to be understood as an enrichment and progression of cultures. Adelson suggests that the effects of multiculturalism should not be read as mere “cultural encounters”, but rather as changes “*within* German culture” (268). In this paper, I use the term of multiculturalism not to describe failed integration or “parallel societies,” as claimed by Tibi and Beckstein, but rather as a neutral term, i.e. in order to denote the co-existence of several cultures.

My textual interpretations rely on Foucault’s notion of heterotopia and Bhabha’s model of the Third Space. The concept of the heterotopia as originally construed by Foucault appears to be culture-specific, i.e. one heterotopia links juxtaposing sites of *one* culture, such as libraries and museums in western cultures of the 19th century, which he interprets as archives “accumulating time” (Foucault “Of Other Spaces” 7). Bhabha, in contrast, conceptualizes the Third Space as a space not specific to a particular culture, in which *several* (two or more) cultures meet. Hence, the main difference between the heterotopia and the Third Space is that the former is an existing space, whereas the latter is produced. In order to interpret the texts in regard to identity and space within Germany, I employ concepts of both heterotopia and Third Space to analyze Germany and culture within Germany as either a hybrid space in which several cultures meet, or, along the lines of Adelson and the migration researcher Mark Terkessidis, as a space that calls for a

³ Beckstein lists ghetto formation as well as insufficient command of the German language among immigrants as main issues in Germany (304).

redefinition of culture itself. As Terkessidis explains, traditional notions of “German-ness” are outdated, there is no “German” essence; instead, he advocates for a concept of *Interkultur* that establishes a new conception of the German society. This *Interkultur* is characterized as a form of multiculturalism, not describing a utopian goal, but rather the present state of Germany as country of immigration (Terkessidis 7-10).

The heterotopia as a “successful” site of multiculturalism is displayed in both works as something that is created in the private sphere of the protagonists and requires utopian features, which coincides with Terkessidis’ argument. The Third Space, by contrast, is a site of the public that the utopian heterotopia of the private signifies: it appears that “successful” sites of multiculturalism within the public sphere are potentially possible, once particular conditions are fulfilled. These conditions can be reached by education and awareness, and have the potential to redefine culture “within Germany”, as called for by Adelson and others.

I also examine situations of border crossings and their spaces, i.e. the airport. Borders are considered highly ambiguous spaces; and how they are perceived depends on the nationality of the individual who crosses them. They can produce a high level of anxiety on the one hand, and on the other hand they can be interpreted as a utopian place. This aspect of borders additionally underlines the enforcement of distinct cultures and show thereby that globalization has not succeeded in creating a frontierless world. In other words, globalization simultaneously creates and eliminates notions of “self and other”. This paradox created by globalization shows that the heterotopia, as a Third Space portraying a successful site of multiculturalism, always needs the utopian dimension, as it is added within the texts. The airport, as portrayed by Grjasnowa, is depicted as a dystopian site that underlines the failing aspects of globalization and multicultural societies.

Finally, these findings point to conclusions in regard to the current debate of German contemporary literature. The concept of the heterotopian Third Space can be fruitful here, I argue. The heterotopia, as a “prestige” for the Third Space that indicates its potential as a redefined space, demonstrates that dichotomies need to be erased. Hence, Grjasnowa’s and Özdamar’s utopian heterotopias (i.e. the mirror and the internet) of the private sphere allude to the Third Space of the public sphere (i. e. the airport, the German city), that carries the potential to redefine the “German” culture radically while eliminating these dichotomies.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: FOUCAULT'S HETEROTOPIA AND BHABHA'S THIRD SPACE

The notion of the heterotopia appears for the first time in Foucault's *The Order of Things* (1966) in order to describe spatial relations within texts. Here, they describe "places of epistemological and representational disorder on the margins of a society's order of representation" and thus indicate "a 'tectonic' shift in Foucault's own ways of thinking discursive and social space" (West-Pavlov 137). Later in the same year, he mentioned heterotopias in a radio broadcast on the topic of utopias. He discussed them further in a lecture in 1967, which was published after his death in 1984 as "Des Espaces Autres" ("Of Other Spaces"). In his treatises, the notion of heterotopia is marked by a shift from literary to social and cultural meanings, as they denote locations in space and their interconnections.

The text "Of Other Spaces" consists of two main parts: First, Foucault gives an overview of the notion of space and the analysis of its perception from the Middle Ages up to his present time. With Galileo, the perception of space opened up due to his insights regarding infinity; localization was replaced by extension, which has now, according to Foucault, been replaced by the site. He argues that contemporary society reached an "epoch of space," in which space is characterized by "relations of proximity between points or elements" (2). Thus, external space is defined as heterogeneous space, and we "live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another." Foucault is concerned with sites that are "in relation with all other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invent the set of relations that happen to designate, mirror, or reflect," which he calls heterotopias. He denotes heterotopias as "counter-sites," as "all the other sites that can be found within the culture are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted" (3). This

description correlates with Homi Bhabha's notion of the Third Space, which he defines as spaces "in-between" or "beyond," and further as spaces "of intervention in the here and now," which "innovate and interrupt the performance of the present" (7). In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha criticizes traditional methods that characterize encounters of various cultures based on dual oppositions that draw on Eurocentric hierarchies and presume clear cut borders between them. Resulting from today's interconnectivity of the world, the weaknesses of such assumptions are obvious. Therefore, Bhabha introduces the concept of the Third Space; spaces in between in which cultures meet without borders and hierarchies, spaces defined by heterogeneity. Further, Bhabha coined the term of "hybridity" to describe the "cultural dimension" of the Third Space (38). He stresses that "the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity," enabling the individual to "negotiate and translate their cultural identities in a discontinuous intertextual temporality of cultural difference" (37-38).

Although Bhabha is mainly concerned with post-colonialism, his theories are nevertheless valid for other pluralistic environments, such as those created via expansion by means of globalization. Beck defines globalization as the "processes through which sovereign national states are criss-crossed and undermined by transnational actors with varying prospects of power, orientations, identities and networks" ("What is Globalization?" 11), which corresponds to both Foucault's and Bhabha's conceptions. Globalization in turn has an impact on the notion of states and national identity:

The world society which, in the wake of globalization, has taken shape in many (not only economic) dimensions is undermining the importance of the national state, because a multiplicity of social circles, communicational networks, market relations and lifestyles, none of them specific to any particular locality,

now cut across the boundaries of the national state. (Beck “What is Globalization?” 11)

The correlation of heterotopia and Third Space has been noted by postmodern political geographer and urban planner Edward Soja, who, by borrowing from Bhabha, philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre’s “triple dialectic”⁴, and Foucault, developed the concept of Thirdspace, which is a “creative recombination and extension, one that builds on a Firstspace perspective that is focused on the “real” material world and a Secondspace perspective that interprets this reality through “imagined” representations of spatiality”. This Thirdspace therefore represents a “purposefully tentative and flexible term that attempts to capture what is actually a constantly shifting and changing milieu of ideas, events, appearances, and meanings” (Soja 2-7). Hence, Bhabha, Foucault, and Soja outline conceptions in order to extend dual traditions. These conceptions represent helpful tools to examine contemporary transnational literature while avoiding dichotomies of “self” and “migrant other”. Important for the context of this paper is in particular the capability of heterotopias to serve as a space to reassess perspectives.⁵ In the analysis of transnational literature, binary notions of “self” and “other” or identity and alterity come together in the realm of the heterotopia and are negotiated; within the Third Space, notions are taken “beyond” and reevaluated. Tafazoli and Gray, for example, argue that by interpreting Germany as a heterotopian space, it becomes clear that debates of *Leitkultur*, migration and integration cannot be based on dichotomous assumptions, and conclude that heterotopias, in which “other” and “self” coexist and design the space together, can be

⁴ Based on Lefebvre’s phrase “il y a toujours l’Autre“, Soja develops the strategy of “critical thirding” in order to defy binary thinking and differentiates between three kinds of spaces: “the perceived space of materialized Spatial Practice; the conceived space defined as Representations of Space; and the lived Spaces of Representation” (Soja 10).

⁵ “Die Heterotopie kann eben als Ort eines perspektivischen Umwertens fungieren” (Tafazoli 14).

interpreted as a “prestige” of a heterogeneous society, which they view as a utopian ideal. Hence, the literary text as heterotopia is not viewed as a space of division and separation, but instead as space of transformation and exchange (Tavazoli and Gray 15-20).

Foucault’s explanations of heterotopias are admittedly vague and fragmentary, but this vagueness opens room for interpretation and application to various contexts. In “Of Other Spaces”, he develops a set of six principles in order to define heterotopias further. These appear to evolve from associative reflections, and therefore it is unclear if they depict fixed rules or mere guidelines. The following is a brief summary:

As the first principle, Foucault states that heterotopias can be found in every culture. In older times, these were usually “crisis heterotopias,” which are certain sacred rites that are disappearing in today’s secular society and are replaced by “heterotopias of deviation,” for example, retirement homes or asylums. Secondly, throughout time, the function of a heterotopia can change depending on changes within society. Thirdly, and most importantly for the purpose of this paper, heterotopias are “capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible.” Foucault stresses in this principle that the heterotopia is to be viewed as a microcosm that at the same time represents the “totality of the world” (6). In the fourth principle, he introduces the notion of the heterochrony, which denotes a “slice in time” that marks a break with previous traditions and therefore initiates a new or altered meaning for a heterotopia. Connected to conceptions of time, Foucault also distinguishes two forms of heterotopia; the first are heterotopias of “indefinitely accumulating time”, and the second are those that are “absolutely temporal” and linked to “time in its most flowing, transitory, precarious aspect” (7). In the fifth place, Foucault addresses the accessibility of heterotopias. He states that they are not freely accessible, and entry is either enforced or needs to

be granted on the basis of regulations and standardized gestures. This seems of particular interest in examinations of border crossings and the space of the airport, as it becomes clear that the act of crossing is regulated and controlled via exactly such rules. Lastly, Foucault stresses again the function of heterotopias, and states that there are two functions a heterotopia can have: they are either a “heterotopia of illusion” or a “heterotopia of compensation.” Either they need to “create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory,” or “their role is to create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect. As meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled” (8).

It remains unclear whether all the principles need to apply to every site in order to classify them as heterotopia. The heterotopian places I describe in this paper do not correspond entirely with every principle; however, there is enough congruency to justify their categorization as such.

3. TRACES OF COSMOPOLITAN IDENTITY AND NOTIONS OF HETEROTOPIA AS THIRD SPACE IN “DER HOF IM SPIEGEL”

Foucault acknowledges in his essay “Of Other Spaces” that there exist mixed forms of utopias and heterotopias. Utopias in turn are defined as non-places, or “places with no real site” that depict society either in its ideal or inverted form. Heterotopias, by contrast, are the realization of utopias, which Foucault describes as “a kind of effectively enacted utopia in real sites . . . outside of all places even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality”

(3). Foucault elucidates these mixed forms of real and unreal sites -- or utopia and heterotopia -- by the metaphor of the mirror:

The mirror is, after all, a utopia since it is a placeless place. In the mirror, I see myself where I am not, in an unreal, virtual place that opens up behind the surface; I am over there, there where I am not, a sort of shadow that gives my own visibility to myself, that enables me to see myself where I am absent: such is the utopia of the mirror. But it is also a heterotopia in so far as the mirror does exist in reality, where it exerts a sort of counteraction on the position that I occupy. From the standpoint of the mirror I discover my absence from the place where I am since I see myself over there. Starting from that gaze that is, as it were, directed toward me, from the ground of this virtual space that is on the other side of the glass, I come back to myself; I begin again to direct my eyes toward myself and to reconstitute myself there were I am. The mirror functions as a heterotopia in this respect: it makes this place that I occupy at the moment when I look at myself in the glass at once absolutely real, connected with all the space that surrounds it, and absolutely unreal, since in

order to be perceived it has to pass through this virtual point which is over there. (4)

Through reflection, the mirror opens up a space that is inherently not real. Mirage-like, it mediates the illusion of dimensional space and the existence of objects and subjects within that space. But at the same time, the mirror is an existing, physical object, and portrays the connectedness of sites and spaces by mirroring it.

In order to examine Emine Sevgi Özdamar's story "Der Hof im Spiegel" in regard to its features of cosmopolitanism, I apply Foucault's metaphorical notion of the mirror to the physical mirror in the story. I argue that the conjunction of heterotopia and utopia are found in Özdamar's story, and that they are represented by the mirror. "Der Hof im Spiegel" includes both mimetic and antimimetic elements. It is a realistic portrayal of the life of a Turkish woman who lives in Düsseldorf, Germany; but at the same time, through the protagonist's powerful imagination, Özdamar weaves in fantastic elements. The mirror is the site where all elements come together: the apartment of the protagonist as well as the courtyard outside of her apartment and the apartments across the courtyard, various people inhabiting those places, and further, people who have special meaning for the protagonist live on in the mirror after they die.

As a heterotopia, the mirror combines multiple sites that coexist in the new space it creates. It functions as extension and approximation, similar to the maze-like residential houses of the Orient:

Auch ich hatte diese Wohnung mit drei Spiegeln bis zum Hofhaus verlängert.
In der Küche ein Spiegel, von der Küche aus konnte man links und rechts in zwei Zimmer gehen. Im Zimmer rechts stand ein großer Spiegel in der Ecke, und im linken Zimmer hing über einem Malerschrank ebenso ein sehr großer

Spiegel, der an der hohen Decke aufgehängt war. Die drei Spiegel sammelten alle Fenster und Etagen und den Garten des Nonnenhauses aus drei verschiedenen Perspektiven. Wenn ich mit dem Rücken zum Hof stand, sah ich in den drei Spiegeln alle Fenster und den Garten der Nonnen. Wir lebten alle in drei Spiegeln Nase an Nase zusammen. Wenn ich aufwachte, schaute ich nicht vom Balkon aus auf den Hof, sondern schaute in den Spiegel. Ich kochte Kaffee oder schrieb oder putzte und konnte immer wieder den Hof und meine Nachbarn in meinem Zimmer sehen. (Özdamar 26)

The protagonist actively adds utopian elements to the mirror. She feels isolated in the German city where she does not know many people, and through the mirror, she gathers beloved people as well as makes contact with people from her immediate surroundings, i.e. other inhabitants of her house. In addition, the mirror connects places that are spatially separate. In this newly created space, she comes together with living and dead people and interacts with them. This can also be read as way of dealing with death and keeping a constant in her life:

Meine Mutter in Istanbul und ich vor dem Spiegel weinten am Telefon.
 Alle Toten wohnen in dem Spiegel. . . . Die alte Metzgerin wog 300g
 Hackfleisch ab, die junge Metzgerin gab mir im Spiegel Rezepte, wie ich
 Roastbeef machen könnte. Sie spricht mit ihrem Mann, der unten im Keller
 das Fleisch hackt, durch ein Mikrophon. . . . Die Toten im Spiegel machen
 Platz, wenn ein neuer Toter kommt. Manchmal fliegt eine Biene durch das
 Fenster und fliegt im Spiegel zwischen den Toten. Die Toten sehen sie, sie
 sehen den Dampf der kochenden Espressomaschine auf dem Herd. Oder ein
 Vogel fliegt durchs offene Fenster und fliegt im Spiegel umher. Ich dusche in

der Badewanne, sehe mich nackt zwischen den Toten im Spiegel. . . . Im Spiegel sah ich mich, die Küche, die Badewanne und den Balkon, der zum Hof schaute. (Özdamar 24-25)

The protagonist rarely speaks with the other people that live in the house face to face; instead, she interacts on an intimate level with them through the mirror: she strokes the reflection of the mother from across the yard over the face, and tickles the young nun. In addition, she transforms her neighbors and alters their appearance and characters:

Der Herr Pfarrer wohnte genau gegenüber dem Küchenspiegel. Auch er stand wie die alte Nonne an einem Frühlingsabend am Fenster und atmete, als ob er staunen würde, dass er noch lebte. Beim Telefonieren mit meiner Mutter nahm ich meine Haare und machte ihm im Spiegel einen Schnurrbart; dann nahm ich meine Zigarette aus dem Mund und steckte sie ihm im Spiegel in den Mund. Ein wie auf einem Foto unbeweglich dastehender kleiner Pfarrer rauchte eine echte, große Zigarette, und ich gab ihm im Spiegel einen Kuss. (Özdamar 31)

An einem Frühlingstag sah ich ihr [die alte Nonne] Gesicht zum ersten Mal im Spiegel. . . . Ich hatte einen Pelzmantel, den ich jetzt genau vor ihr in den Spiegel hielt. Damit sah sie aus wie Greta Garbo, die im Pelzmantel ihren Kopf an ein Luxushotelfenster gelehnt hat und an ihre unmögliche Liebe denkt.

(Özdamar 28-29)

Here, it is shown that the protagonist also creates a fantasy world on a performative level. She transforms the nun into a glamorous film star, and also compares herself to a film about Glenn Gould, who is depicted as depressed and constantly talking to his friends on the phone. Through performance, she breaks down borders between bodies. By using her own hair to give the pastor

a mustache, she joins their bodies. With the help of all these strategies, she creates a utopian site for herself: “Ich war glücklich in dem Spiegel, weil ich so an mehreren Orten zur gleichen Zeit war” (Özdamar 31).

According to Jacques Lacan’s psychoanalytical conception of the mirror stage, the child begins to form an understanding and formation of the ‘I’ when he or she is able to recognize her or himself in the reflection of the mirror, which depicts an important step towards an understanding of her or himself as a subject. In the “imago”, the individual creates an ideal form of oneself, which, however, is impossible to achieve:

This form situates the agency of the ego . . . in a fictional direction, which will always remain irreducible for the individual alone, or rather, which will only rejoin the coming-into-being of the subject asymptotically, whatever the success of the dialectical syntheses by which he must resolve as *I* his discordance with his own reality. (Lacan 3)

The ideal I therefore is a projection, and in the mirror, the individual constructs a “world of his own making” (Lacan 3). This notion is resonated in the mirrors of the protagonist: within the heterotopia-utopia of the mirror, the first person narrator surrounds herself with people she wants to be close with and alters relations of “Innenwelt” and “Außenwelt”. Although I do not want to go as far as saying that the protagonist, as an adult who is stuck in the imago-phase, suffers from neuroses; however, one can assume that her isolation and the issues she encounters as a migrant in a foreign country contribute to the creation of an imagined place within the mirror.

In conclusion, the mirror in the story functions as a heterotopia with added utopian features. Multiple sites coexist and are joined although they typically would be seen as

juxtaposing sites, especially the realms of “life” and “death”. In the mirror, they are connected meaningfully for the protagonist. Moreover, the protagonist links Eastern and Western sites: not only are Turkey and Germany brought together within the mirror through joining people that are located in the respective countries, but the narrator also conceptualizes the “German” space of her apartment and its surroundings in a way that corresponds to the habits of the Orient. She expands her private space, mixing it with the private space of others (“Die Häuser mischten sich ineinander . . . Die Nachbarn wachten Nase an Nase auf.” Özdamar 25)

Further, by adding another dimension, which in this case is the imagination of the protagonist, a joint space between heterotopia and utopia is created. Comparing the heterotopian notion once more to Bhabha’s Third Space, it can be argued that Foucault’s mirror is an extension as it adds features of non-places to real places. Thus, the mirror in Özdamar is a multicultural site that expands to include “inner spaces” such as imagination. The fact that the protagonist needs to add this dimension can be interpreted as a comment on the state of pluralism in Germany: without this antimimetic dimension, there can be no real heterotopia. Therefore, the utopian aspect needs to be added. Germany is not a harmonious Third Space (yet?), and conflicts between Germans and Non-Germans do exist.

Outside of the protagonist’s apartment, Özdamar portrays Düsseldorf as a Third Space. In the story, the city is portrayed as a multicultural space with diverse inhabitants. They all come together in the individual city map the protagonist imagines, which represents her subjective perception of the city. On this map, the protagonist lists a number of places that she frequents, including the people she associates with them:

Wenn ich in dieser Stadt hier meinen persönlichen Stadtplan zeichnen würde,
dann sähe er so aus: Als erstes der Papageienladen auf der großen Straße. Ich

ging damals, als ich hierhergezogen war, in das Geschäft. „Entschuldigen Sie, wie viele Sprachen spricht ihr Papagei?“ Die Verkäuferin sagte: „Wir sprechen deutsch.“ Dann die Bäckerei, in der die Bäckerin, wenn ich reinkomme, mir fast mit ihren großen Brüsten die Tür aufmacht. „Hallooooo!“ Wenn ich kurz vor Ladenschluss zu ihr gehe, erzählt sie mir von ihrer Liebesaffäre mit einem polnischen Mann und schenkt mir Kuchen. „Nehmen Sie, sonst wird das Schweinefutter.“ Dann der Buchladen, in dem Oriana Fallaci und ich Lesungen hatten. Dort der Herr Rupp, der schöne Buchhändler, der nachdem die Buchhandlung sich in eine Reisebuchhandlung verwandelt hatte, in einer anderen Stadt Arbeit suchte. Dann der Penner, der auf der Luxuseinkaufsstraße Königsallee Weihnachten unter den Glühbirnen, die in den Bäumen hingen, allein mit seinen Plastiktüten auf einer Holzbank genau gegenüber von Armani saß. . . . Dann die Metzgerei Carl. Das Haus war rosa gestrichen, und über dem Eingang der Metzgerei hing eine rosa Schweineskulptur. Die alte Metzgerin, ihr Sohn und ihre Schwiegertochter arbeiteten dort. . . . Auch diese Brücken sind ein Teil meines persönlichen Stadtplans, wie auch Heinrich Heines Geburtshaus, das Bambi-Kino und der Hauptbahnhof. (Özdamar 17-21)

It appears as though the protagonist maps out significant moments listed in a chronological order; the list of sites and people is structured in parallel sentences. She provides snapshots of her memory and gives arbitrary additional information. This underlines the subjectivity of her individual map. It is striking that the list includes people from several countries and of different social milieus. This emphasizes once more the heterogeneity of the city. Notably, other Turkish

people are entirely missing in the description of Germany; the only Turks the protagonist is in contact with are in Istanbul. This factor stresses that Özdamar does not want to portray the dichotomy between German and Turks in her story; instead, she shows that the German metropolis is “a summary of the world with its ethnic, cultural, religious, social and economic diversity” (Augé 12). This notion is not restricted to Germany, Istanbul is depicted similarly. There, the protagonist interacts with Roma, Kurds, Armenians, and Bulgarians. The protagonist’s perception of the city is not restricted to notions of identity versus alterity, e.g., Turkish and German places. Rather, the city, as heterotopia, is a pluralistic space.

The individual or subjective map of the protagonist can be interpreted as a heterotopia as well: in the map, a number of sites are joined, and people that have never met are brought together. In this particular case, the protagonist as the creator of the heterotopian site adds another dimension, which is the dimension of time. In her description of the places that come together in her map, she combines several instances when she visited them. Therefore, it can be argued that the heterotopia of the map resembles the concept of Bakhtin’s chronotopes: “neither category [time or space] is privileged, they are utterly interdependent” (Holquist 425) so that “spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole” (Bakhtin 84). Especially in the descriptions of her encounters with the homeless man on the *Königsallee*, and of the butcher’s shop, the narrator fuses a number of instances. Hence, it is not the places or the people alone that are meaningful and important but several interactions and events in combination that create importance. Place *and* time are equally important and lead to inclusion on the subjective map.

The protagonist herself is portrayed as a cosmopolitan individual; she speaks several languages. The first person narrator crosses borders both physically and virtually, as she travels between Germany and Turkey. She uses intertextuality by integrating poems by Heinrich Heine, Charles-Pierre Baudelaire, and Turkish poet Can. It certainly is no coincidence that the protagonist has a fondness of bridges.⁶ As the metaphor par excellence for conjunctions and border crossings, it underlines the interconnections not only between Turkey and Germany but of the world. As observed by Moray McGowan, the motif of the bridge is used frequently in Turkish-German literature, not only to depict relations between the figures in the texts, but also in order to describe the function of literature itself (31). As the motif has become so clichéd, one cannot help but wonder whether Özdamar uses it ironically. One culture is not to be seen as a homogenous group; as Bhabha stresses, cultures are unstable and variable, there is no “essence” inherent in a particular group (3). Instead, identity is dynamic and negotiated by the individual. Thus, neither the protagonist nor Özdamar, as transnational writer, should be interpreted as model migrants or bridge-builder. This is underlined by the highly subjective writing style.

The first person narrator is, in conclusion, depicted as a “rooted” cosmopolitan. There are strong notions of “home” that can be found in the story. She does not reside in an “in-between” space. Even though the character migrates to Germany and makes that country her second home, she maintains strong bonds to Turkey and talks to her mother and Turkish friends regularly; further, she creates parts of Turkey in the mirror. It can be concluded that she remains rooted in Turkey, which is her home, in particular due to her strong family ties there; but this does not prevent her from setting down roots in Germany. In order to make the pluralistic society within Germany work, utopian features via the imagination of the protagonist are added to the German heterotopia.

⁶ „Auch in dieser Stadt hier liebe ich die Brücken.“ (Özdamar 21)

4. TRACES OF COSMOPOLITAN IDENTITY AND NOTIONS OF HETEROTOPIA AS THIRD SPACE IN *DER RUSSE IST EINER, DER BIRKEN LIEBT*

In her debut novel *Der Russe ist einer, der Birken liebt* (2012), Olga Grjasnowa portrays characters that are not depicted as hybrid beings living in in-between spaces, or figures torn between their ethnic background and the culture of the country to which they immigrated. Rather, they are “rootless” cosmopolitans and polyglot citizens of the world. Grjasnowa’s protagonist Mascha Kogan as well as her closer friends do not have a *Heimat*, nor is their identity fixed on nationality or the notion of a distinct culture. Instead, their lives are shaped by mobility and multiculturalism. In this chapter, I argue that the characters of the novel show that the advanced globalization leads to a redefinition of identity, as it results in increased access and flexibility of lifestyles and residences. Further, I examine heterotopian spaces in regard to their quality as Third Spaces. I argue that Grjasnowa depicts attributes of the globalized city which can be interpreted as Third Space, but she acknowledges at the same time that multiculturalism causes networks of inclusion and exclusion; especially in her descriptions of situations that deal with border crossings, she demonstrates that one can be established as outsider or insider based on nationality or ethnic attributes, and thus, that spaces such as the airport are ambiguous. Therefore, it becomes clear that globalization creates a paradox of disestablishing frontiers and extended access while at the same time generating hierarchies of identities that affirm systems of “self versus other”.

The author Olga Grjasnowa was born in Azerbaijan, and her family relocated to Germany as Russian-Jewish quota refugees when she was 12 years old (Kister). She studied in Germany, Israel, Poland, and Russia. Her protagonist Mascha Kogan has a similar background, although the family in the book immigrates to Germany due to the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which was traumatic for the protagonist: at a very young age, she watched several people die and was exposed to constant danger and fear. Mascha's trauma is embodied in the figure of a woman in a blood-stained blue dress. The exact happenings are not revealed, but it is suggested that Mascha witnessed how this woman was pushed out of a window and hit the ground so close to Mascha that her shoes were splashed with blood.

Notably, Grjasnowa's figures are not on the search for an identity. Eschewing the notion of a fixed, stable identity based on ethnicity, ancestry, or language, or even gender or sexual orientation, they embrace multiculturalism: Mascha and her group of friends switch between different nationalities and languages. They pick and choose and adopt what they like, as from a "smorgasbord". Their identity can be viewed as something in flux that cannot be pinned down to any particular culture or nationality.

Mascha, having experienced her own *Sprachlosigkeit*, her speechlessness, when she initially arrived in Germany unable to speak German, realizes the power that languages possess and decides to study interpreting and learns five languages. Her multilingualism provides her with choices. With its help, she can play with identities and characteristics. In one scene of the book, she tries to bake a quiche, in order to "try on the word":

Ich hatte versucht, eine Quiche zu machen, weil ich das Wort Quiche für meinen Sprachgebrauch anprobieren wollte. Als wäre ich eine französische Schauspielerin, die eine französische Hausfrau spielte, die ihren französischen

Liebhaber erwartet, der als Invalide aus dem Krieg zurückkehrt, und die für ihn eine Quiche bäckt und nicht weiß, welches seiner Gliedmaßen er verloren hat. Quiche lag gut auf meiner Zunge, und ich mochte ihr grammatikalisches Geschlecht. (Grjasnowa 11)

Language thus is portrayed as one possibility to connect with a culture and to acquire its characteristics. However, one does not need to stick to one, but can combine from several as one pleases. A wide array of knowledge of cultures and languages adds therefore to one's character and individuality, and one has the opportunity to playfully embody different roles. This evokes Bhabha's notion of performance (2). Identity is to be viewed as dynamic, always in negotiation and confirmed through performance. Thus, the modern subject is a hybrid one, who redefines identity also on a performative level. Both Foucault's notion of the heterotopia and Bhabha's concept of the Third Space have their origins in the field of linguistics; thus, language can be interpreted as a performative way to act out identity within a multicultural space. Bhabha denotes the "place of utterance" as an "act of cultural enunciation," while the space of enunciation is described as "contradictory and ambivalent." The Third Space enables intervention, and "makes the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process," and moreover, "constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity" (36-37). In the preface of *The Order of Things*, Foucault describes heterotopias as the site where linguistic terms are juxtaposed and challenge cultural understandings of semantics:

But between these two regions, so distant from one another, lies a domain which, even though its role is mainly an intermediary one, is nonetheless fundamental: it is more confused, more obscure, and probably less easy to

analyze. It is here that a culture, imperceptibly deviating from the empirical orders prescribed for it by its primary codes, instituting an initial separation from them, causes them to lose their original transparency, relinquishes its immediate and invisible powers, frees itself sufficiently to discover that these orders are perhaps not the only possible ones or the best ones; this culture then finds itself faced with the stark fact that there exist, below the level of its spontaneous orders, things that are in themselves capable of being ordered, that belong to a certain unspoken order; the fact, in short, that order exists.

(Foucault "Preface" xx)

Foucault and Bhabha thus both state that language and semantics are an important factor creating differences between cultures; and both use their sites that combine conceptions considered incompatible to confront them with one another and challenge binary assumptions.

Internationality and multiculturalism is mirrored in Mascha's group of friends as well.

There is, for example, Cem, who studies with Mascha and is gay:

Er war der erste aus seiner Familie, der studierte und besseres Türkisch als seine Eltern sprach. Cem war in Frankfurt geboren und ist bilingual aufgewachsen, das dachte er zumindest. Erst während eines Urlaubs in Istanbul stellte er fest, dass er einen starken Dialekt hatte. Außerdem musste er oft nach Wörtern suchen. Also verbrachte er ein Jahr an der besten Istanbuler Universität und legte sich den feinen Dialekt der Istanbuler Oberschicht zu. Mit seinen Verwandten sprach er nach wie vor in dem Dialekt des Dorfes, aus dem sie nach Deutschland eingewandert waren. (Grjasnowa 56-57)

Sami, Mascha's ex-boyfriend, whose father is Swiss, was born in Lebanon but grew up in France until he moved to Germany at age 13. He finished high school in California and attends university there as well. He returns to Germany for his Master's degree, and moves back to the States to pursue his doctoral degree.

In Israel, Mascha makes friends with Israelis, Palestinians, Jews, and Muslims. Further, Mascha has romantic and sexual relationships with both men and women of different nationalities.

It becomes obvious that none of these characters are portrayed as figures of one inherent fixed identity, but as cosmopolitans. However, any success in their respective careers means proving themselves in two respects, because they are still at times judged based on their background by others. Mascha, for example, has experienced discriminating treatment at school by her teachers:

Auch bei den Elternsprechtagen, einer durch und durch schikanösen
Angelegenheit, saß ich neben meiner Mutter auf dem Gang. . . . Die Deutsch-,
Mathe- und Erdkundelehrerinnen erklärten einstimmig, ich sei auf diesem
Gymnasium fehl am Platz. Ich übersetzte es ungeduldig für meine Mutter. Das
Gymnasium, das ich besuchte, kannte Migranten ausschließlich aus der
Springerpresse und dem Nachmittagsfernsehen. (Grjasnowa 38)

When Mascha begins her studies, she does so as a nearly perfect student and with high ambitions. She is contrasted in her language skills with her professors, who embody an elitist division of cosmopolitans:

Dann würde er [der Professor] sich nach den Weinbaugebieten in
Aserbaidshan erkundigen und mich wegen meiner spät erworbenen
Mehrsprachigkeit bedauern, ich sei eben keine Muttersprachlerin, da ließe sich

nichts machen. Und ich wiederum würde schweigend in meinem ungesüßten Tee rühren und ihm nicht von dem ausgezeichneten Kognak aus der Region um Gänschä erzählen, denn diesen Kognak gibt es weder in einer eleganten Flasche, noch in einem Feinschmeckergeschäft in der Fressgass, sondern nur in Gänschä und auch nur in kleinen Kanistern, die ausschließlich an Kenner und engere Verwandte verschickt wurden. . . . Ich würde ihm auch nicht sagen, dass Menschen, die ohne fließendes Wasser leben, nicht zwangsläufig ungebildet sind, aber mein Professor war mein Professor und hatte Patenkinder in Afrika und in Indien. Sein Multikulturalismus fand in Kongresshallen, Konferenzgebäuden und teuren Hotels statt. Integration war für ihn die Forderung nach weniger Kopftüchern und mehr Haut, die Suche nach einem exklusiven Wein oder einem ungewöhnlichen Reiseziel. (Grjasnowa 32-33)

The professor's cosmopolitical habitus consists of taking advantage of the luxury other cultures provide. He, as an accomplished interpreter and uses his secondary languages in upscale circles. Grjasnowa exposes the elitist cosmopolitan as ignorant, as his understanding of the world is one-sided and oriented toward exploitation. The opposing ways of how languages are acquired are brought up again when Mascha's professor named Windmühle takes her out for dinner to an Italian restaurant:

Windmühle sagte ständig: "Das must du unbedingt probieren." Und bestellte immer mehr, immer auf Italienisch, immer augenzwinkernd und mit dem Keller scherzend. Ich versuchte herauszufinden, in welcher Gegend Italiens er die Sprache gelernt hatte, aber es gelang mir nicht – sein Italienisch war klar und steril. Ohne die Spur eines Dialektes wirkte es seelenlos, als ob es in einem

Labor gezüchtet worden wäre. „Wo haben Sie Italienisch gelernt?“, fragte ich ihn. „In Mainz, an der Universität. Und Sie?“ Er sah mich genauso aufmerksam an wie während der Prüfung. „In Rimini.“ / „Was haben Sie dort gemacht?“ / „Drei Sommer lang gekellnert.“ (Grjasnowa 132)

Here, it is stressed again that the elitist group participates in a different kind of cosmopolitan discourse. The privileged individuals learn the foreign language at school, but fail to become part of the culture and society of that respective language. Dialects signify participation in a culture, and, similar to the professor who only partakes in the pleasant sides of traveling and interculturality, Windmühle, although he speaks the language perfectly, cannot be seen as a hybrid individual of several cultures; he remains rooted in Germany. Mascha, on the other hand, learns the languages while being in the respective country. By participating in the culture, she is able to learn further aspects of the culture and country. She becomes a hybrid subject, and a “rootless” cosmopolitan.

The characters’ open-mindedness and liberal attitudes provide them with chances, which at the same time is a strategy to fight stereotypes and racism. Mascha and her friends experience being reduced to particular features or stereotypes on several occasions in the storyline. This depiction of racist or bigoted encounters is not restricted to Germany, but also happens in the USA and Israel. Sami is denied his visa renewal from the USA, which makes it impossible for him to return to his studies:

Samis Studentervisum für die USA war abgelaufen, normalerweise war so etwas eine Sache von etwa zwei Wochen, aber wenn im Pass ein arabischer

Name stand und als Geburtsort Beirut vermerkt war, konnte selbst die deutsche Staatsbürgerschaft wenig ausrichten. (Grjasnowa 110)

Cem has to fight German prejudices against Turks. When he causes a minor car accident, he is addressed in a condescending manner, e.g. uses the other driver the “du” form instead of “Sie”. He is accused of being in Germany illegally, and called a “Kanake,” which is an offensive term for Turkish immigrants (Grjasnowa 155). All of the friends have undergone biased treatment in school due to assumptions that migrant children are less intelligent and belong in the lower-tier secondary schools, not the college-prep *Gymnasium*. In addition to depicting racism, Grjasnowa also thematizes issues of sexism: for example, at her university, Mascha is harassed by a man who stares at her chest and comments on it (31). Thus, various forms of “othering” are criticized in the novel.

Mascha stresses her dislike for words such as “Migrationshintergrund” or “postmigrantisch” that are used to categorize and stereotype her and her friends. She avoids discussing these issues, with her boyfriend Elias, as well as with fellow student Daniel, and Tal or Ismael (Grjasnowa 12). She refuses to take a political stance, and, influenced by her experiences with war and death, states: “Was ich will, ist fließendes Wasser, Strom und ein friedlicher Platz, an dem niemand getötet wird.” She is satisfied with a “Platz an der Sonne,” her place in the sun, and concerned with working through her trauma (Grjasnowa 235).

Her dislike for categorization through national identity can also be attributed to her trauma; as a child, she experienced the war between Armenians and Azerbaijanis in Baku, and witnessed up close how classifications of national self and foreign other lead to racism and hate crimes:

Der Hass war nichts Persönliches, er war strukturell. Die Menschen hatten keine Gesichter, keine Augen, keine Namen und Berufe mehr – sie wurden zu

Aserbaidshern, Armeniern, Georgiern und Russen. Menschen, die sich ein Leben lang gekannt hatten, vergaßen alles über den anderen. Nur die vermeintliche Nationalität blieb. . . . Instrumente zur Klassifizierung und Identifizierung wurden geschaffen. (Grjasnowa 46-47)

Mascha and her friends deduce that a cosmopolitan habitus – multilingualism, mobility and knowledge of cultural specifics -- provides them with a chance of escaping their prevailing circumstances, and thus Mascha already dreams of travels and other countries as a child:

Ich war auf ein diffuses Später ausgerichtet. Ich spann Träume: studierte Karten, las Reiseführer und machte Listen mit Sachen, die ich unterwegs brauchen würde. Ich war mir sicher, dass alles besser würde, sobald ich fortginge und anfinge zu leben, als Fotografin, Journalistin oder Flugbegleiterin. (Grjasnowa 39)

And even as an adult, the idea of moving to another place reappears to Mascha as the way out of problematic situations:

Ich dachte daran wegzulaufen. Ich wäre in der Lage, innerhalb von zwei Stunden meine Sachen zu packen und unsere Wohnung zu verlassen. Ich könnte in den meisten Ländern überleben. Eigentlich brauchte ich gar keine Sachen. Ich könnte sofort los. (Grjasnowa 42)

The expression “überleben” shows that Mascha’s aim is precisely not to find a place that she can make into a home. Instead, it evokes the image of a refugee who has to flee the country in order to survive. This once more is likely another outcome of her trauma. As long as she suffers from it, she is unable to find a home. When Cem visits her in Israel, he tries to convince her to come back with him to Germany:

“Aber was willst du hier?” / “Ich weiß es selber nicht.” . . . „Bist du religiös geworden? Hast du das Judentum als deine kulturelle Identität entdeckt?“ / “Ich musste weg.“ / „Willst du nicht wieder zurück?“ / . . . „Komm nach Hause!“ „Deutschland? Zu Hause?“ / “Ich spreche nicht von Deutschland. . . . Ich meine Frankfurt, Gallus.” (Grjasnowa 222-223)

The “Gallus” denotes a district of Frankfurt am Main in the city center, which is probably where Mascha’s former apartment is located and where she and her friends mainly spend their time, a highly localized notion of “Heimat”.

At age 17, Mascha realizes that the small town circumstances are partly responsible for making her feel like an outsider; thus, she moves to Frankfurt and finishes high school there. Frankfurt, as a German metropolis, is depicted as a Third Space. Mascha’s surroundings are characterized by multiculturalism. For example, her apartment is located in a neighborhood close to the central station -- in Germany those areas are usually inhabited by culturally diverse and underprivileged residents, and this is also signalized in Grjasnowa’s depiction of the area:

Durch die weit geöffneten Fenster drangen in unser Schlafzimmer das Lachen der Gemüseverkäufer . . . , in unserem Stadtteil gab es ganze Straßenzüge, die man besser mied, mit Billigkaufhäusern und riesigen Pornokinos. Hier zwischen einer chinesischen Wäscherei und einem alternativen Jugendzentrum, dessen Besucher regelmäßig in unseren Hauseingang urinierten, lebten wir. Unsere Wohnung war heruntergekommen und baufällig, aber sie war günstig. (Grjasnowa 9)

Similar to the mirror of Özdamar's narration, Grjasnowa depicts the use of the internet as a heterotopian space, in which the interconnectedness of the world is demonstrated. Shortly after Elias' death from pulmonary embolism, Cem visits Mascha and brings his laptop with him. As a gesture of helplessness and in order to help Mascha mourn the death, Cem and his friend Konstantin hired professional mourners, whom they can watch via a live stream on his Youtube channel:

Er zog sein Notebook aus der Tasche und ich sah auf dem Bildschirm zwei verhüllte alte Frauen, die nichts taten außer in einem nahezu leeren Raum auf weißen Plastikgartenstühlen still zu sitzen. Cem starrte enttäuscht auf den Bildschirm und stieß einen türkischen Fluch aus. Anschließend rief er Konstantin an. Ich hörte auch Konstantin am anderen Ende der Leitung fluchen. Konstantin muss wiederum jemanden in Griechenland angerufen haben, denn bereits eine Viertelstunde später nahmen die Klageweiber ihre Arbeit auf: Sie schrien, heulten und schluchzten. Wir sahen ihnen eine Weile lang zu, sie wiederholten immer wieder einen einzigen Satz. Zumindest klang es für uns wie ein Satz. Ich fragte Cem, was er bedeutete, er wusste es nicht. Wir riefen wieder Konstantin an. . . . "Tun. Leiden. Lernen", übersetzte Konstantin. "Weshalb zitieren sie die Orestie?", fragte Cem. "Das sind Griechen", sagte Konstantin. (Grjasnowa 107-108)

Here, the internet is a heterotopian space. The computer screen possesses some features of the mirror as described by Foucault; in some regard, it can be interpreted as a modernized and technical version of it. It is a heterotopia, because through the help of Skype and YouTube -- and the phones that Cem and Konstantin use in addition -- a number of sites that are spatially apart

are connected, and interaction is enabled. The reader does not learn whether Mascha's webcam is turned on as well, but if it were, her picture would be visible on the screen, resembling the reflection of a mirror. Through their engagement, however, they become part of the space and therefore create the utopian dimension of the "mirror" space. The internet here does not only do away with spatial borders, but also, through the recital of the *Oresteia* by Aeschylus written in 458 B.C., with borders of time. "Tun. Leiden. Lernen.", or „Do. Suffer. Learn.“, as the conclusion of the tragedy that addresses vengeance and its consequences, can be applied to any of the more recent conflicts and wars mentioned in the novel. Although one could argue that humanity has not yet learned through suffering, as wars still happen, the friendship between Cem and Konstantin, who have Turkish and Greek families, can be read as a start for 'learning' among individuals.

Opposing this example of "successful" multiculturalism, Grjasnowa depicts two occurrences at the Ben-Gurion airport, Israel's main international airport, that portray the other side of the paradox of globalization. When Mascha's boyfriend Elias dies, this adds to her suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder and, in order to escape her immediate surroundings and the site of her trauma, she takes a job in Israel as a translator. In those airport scenes, Mascha experiences the hierarchies of the network within the airport that mirror the political situation outside of the airport.

Airports make up very special spaces with ambiguous properties, especially since they have various and very different meanings associated with them. First of all, they are spaces of transition, and, in the age of mass transportation, no longer only reserved for the global elite, although certainly more often frequented by them. Secondly, they possess idealistic, utopian characteristics, as an airport does not consist merely of its gates, but nowadays also includes

shopping areas, duty free stores, and many other possibilities to pass the time until one can board. As a third aspect, airports can be viewed as national monuments. Lastly, depending on the traveler, they can also cause tremendous anxiety and make up the dystopian side of the perception of airports: As Löfgren describes, “fears of hijacking and international terrorism led to an even more radical restructuring of the airport into a defense system” (264), which results in heavy use of technology, surveillance and control on a level that would “never be tolerated in other modes of transport” (266).

All of these features of the airport contribute to its interpretation as heterotopia, especially as their traits stem from heterochronia, i.e., cross-national events of terror and war. In my interpretation of Grjasnowa’s novel, I will focus on the depiction of the airport as dystopian, anxiety producing space, and analyze it in regard to questions of identity. Based on Löfgren’s summary of the history of border crossings, heterochronic events that lead to redefinitions of the heterotopias of border-crossings spaces have almost always been connected to war and violence between nation states: Firstly, “the First World War put an end to a life without passports. . . . After Second World War, border controls had to adjust to new conditions,” and most recently, “the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, led to a radical redefinition of national security” (255-258).

The protagonist Mascha takes a flight from Frankfurt, Germany to Israel, but Grjasnowa does not address the process of checking in or boarding in Germany, when Mascha enters the airplane, it is clearly marked as an international space:

Sie [eine Mutter] sprach sie [ihre vier Kinder] im Plural an: „Les enfants, asseyez-vous! Soyez calme!“ Die Flugbegleiterinnen hatten Mühe, die koscheren Mahlzeiten zuzuordnen. . . . Sobald die Ansnallzeichen erloschen

waren, standen die Israelis auf und liefen auf und ab – auf der Suche nach Bekannten. (Grjasnowa 158)

This international atmosphere continues when the airplane arrives in Israel:

Menschen, die sich ratlos umsahen, Soldaten, russische Großmütter, orthodoxe Juden und arabische Großfamilien. . . . In der Flughalle vermischten sich die Sprachmelodien zu einem Klangteppich: Russisch, Hebräisch, Englisch, Italienisch und Arabisch. (Grjasnowa 161)

Both the airplane and airport can be read as heterotopias and interpreted as Third Space.

Cultures, nationalities, languages and religions are mixed.

When Mascha proceeds to the passport checkpoint, it becomes clear that her ambiguous identity, resulting from her Christian given name, the Arabic letters on her laptop, and her ability to speak Arabic but not Hebrew raises suspicion among the inspector and the soldiers that search her luggage. Although she is equipped with a work visa and has all the necessary documents at hand, it becomes obvious that her person is non-compliant with the “ideal visitor” of the Israeli state. Thus, the absurd description of Mascha’s arrival in Israel culminates in the seemingly arbitrary shooting of her laptop. In this depiction, the reader can observe Löfgren’s notion of the “nationalizing eye” or the “nationalizing gaze”. Certain individuals are treated differently than others, and this depends on “the growing emphasis on nations representing not only territories, but also national cultures and mentalities.” Not only travelers realize they are wanted or unwanted, but migrants too find themselves divided in two groups, “desirable and undesirable immigrants.” Migrants as well as travelers undergo “selective treatment”; they are judged based on outer appearances and attributes that raise suspicion. Further, Grjasnowa’s depiction underlines the “standardized ways of defining identity” in the space of the airport: individuals are

categorized due to abstruse standards, which are distilled in the form of the passport (Löfgren 255-259).

Mascha, in her cosmopolitan habitus, signals ambiguous traits to the “nationalizing gaze” of her inspectors. She cannot be assigned clearly any nation or culture, which makes it difficult for them to decide whether she belongs to the group of “desirable” or “undesirable” visitors. This results in them treating her in an ambiguous way as well; the first inspector is “missmutig”, the two soldiers searching her belongings “machten Scherze, um die Situation aufzulockern,” and the female one acts particularly “respektvoll”, which leads to a reprimand from the supervising inspector (Grjasnowa 162-163). All of Mascha’s dictionaries arouse suspicion, and she is questioned in regard to her work and personal life:

Wen kennen Sie in Israel? Bei wem werden Sie wohnen? Für wen werden Sie arbeiten? Worin besteht Ihre Aufgabe? Der Soldat sah mir in die Augen.
Weshalb ich nach Israel gekommen bin und weshalb ich nicht schon früher gekommen bin und weshalb nicht für immer. Die Soldatin durchsuchte mit ihren rot lackierten Nägeln meine Arabisch-Wörterbücher, auch ihr Ton wurde zunehmend aggressiv. Weshalb ich in arabische Länder gereist bin und was ich über den Nahostkonflikt wisse. (Grjasnowa 163)

Especially the mention of Elias contributes to their confusion:

Haben Sie einen Freund? / Ja. Nein. Ich meine, nein. / Ist er Araber, Ägypter oder Palästinenser? / Nein. / Was denn dann? / Tot. . . . Wann ist er verstorben? . . . Vor kurzem. . . . Woran ist er gestorben? . . . An einer Lungenembolie. / War er Araber, Ägypter oder Palästinenser? (Grjasnowa 163-164)

They are desperately trying to fit Mascha into the categories of their protocol. When Löfgren argues that “the nationalizing gaze is both an economic and a persuasive model for explaining differences, which otherwise would stand out as more complex, diffuse, or ambiguous” (267), it becomes clear in this scene that this model cannot be made to fit individuals such as Mascha, whose identity proves to be too multifaceted. This evokes sociologist Zygmunt Bauman’s observation that the modern era, the “boundary between human and inhuman” is “disguised as the boundary between citizens and foreigners;” the foreigner cannot claim the same rights as the citizen. Birth therefore provides the individual with “the only ‘natural’, no-questions-asked and no tests required, entry into the nation” (Bauman 127-129).

In summary, the reader is confronted with several attributes of the heterotopian space of the airport. Grjasnowa depicts utopian aspects but above all, she focuses on the anxiety-producing sides. The travelers find themselves reduced to the identity of their passports and experience humiliating treatment, as the boundaries between personal space and public space are crossed by the inspectors. In Mascha’s case, the effects of globalization – mass transportation, mobility and access – create ambiguity: the Israeli inspectors need to be particularly careful and accurate in order to avoid the concrete threats of terrorism and therefore act upon particular signifiers, but at the same time, Mascha’s identity as a hybrid individual is irreducible to the categories of national characteristics and therefore needs to be fragmented. The cosmopolitan subject cannot be fully grasped within the model described by Löfgren.

5. CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have described the two female protagonists of Özdamar and Grjasnowa as cosmopolitan characters. However, they differ in the extent of their respective cosmopolitan features: Özdamar's figure is portrayed as in between two homes – Turkey and Germany; she is a “rooted” cosmopolitan. Grjasnowa, on the other hand, depicts a character that is without a home country, a “rootless” cosmopolitan. Thus, Özdamar's protagonist is in between her Turkish origin and her new German environment, whereas Grjasnowa takes the identity of her figures in terms of multi-nationality beyond dichotomies. Thus, it can be argued that Grjasnowa's novel is depicting a more fully globalized world. This is not only a result of the age in which either author moved to Germany (Grjasnowa was twelve years old, whereas Özdamar immigrated at age 19). Both works entail autobiographic elements, but none of the protagonists should be identified with the authors. More importantly, their writing is influenced by the circumstances of current events. Grjasnowa describes in her novel “the rootlessness and the speed of experience of a young generation, for which globalization is not only an empty phrase in the economic news, but describes their everyday life” (März).

The differing understandings of hybrid identity may also be based on the different generations; Mascha, who is a student, is most likely around the age of 25, and Özdamar's protagonist is likely older, at least forty, although the reader never learns her age. Löfgren also suggests that a transition happens from “rootless” to “rooted” cosmopolitan, once individuals reach the age or the circumstances when they typically settle down:

In different periods, the notion exists that new forms of mass travel, mass migration, or mass tourism will change the world, turn locals into cosmopolitans, and break down artificial boundaries between nations, localities, classes or generations:

nineteenth-century emigration, modern-day tourism, or contemporary globe-trotting college youths will produce a more international world. . . . The restlessness and mobility of youth may be just a “Sturm und Drang” stage in the life cycle, and before one accepts the idea that mobility equals cultural and social change or new identities, one has to look much closer at what people learn or experience or do not learn and experience by leaving their homes, their localities, their nations – by crossing borders. (Löfgren 270)

It is, however, suggested in Grjasnowa’s novel that the “rootless” identity of Mascha is a typical characteristic of her generation. First of all, it is distinctive for all her friends, and even her cousin in Israel who has a child, abandons it instead of settling down and becoming rooted. But it becomes especially clear in the scenes in which Mascha is contrasted with her parents: as they are of a different generation, it is hard for them to find their place in Germany, and they are less flexible. Mascha’s mother, who in the USSR worked as a concert pianist, had difficulties adjusting to Germany:

Sie [die Mutter] unterrichtete Klavier – zuerst an einer Musikschule, dann an der Hochschule. Auch sie hatte am Anfang Schwierigkeiten mit dem neuen System: Ausgebildet an einem sowjetischen Konservatorium, hatte sie professionelle Standards, hinter die sie nicht zurückkonnte. Als der Vater einer ihrer ersten Schülerinnen, ein Priester, sich bei ihr beklagte, der Musikunterricht würde seiner Tochter keinen Spaß bereiten, bekam meine Mutter Herzrasen und schwitzige Hände. Sie hatte bis dahin nicht gewusst, dass Spaß der Zweck der Kunst war. . . . Die Musik wurde in der UdSSR mit größtem Ernst behandelt, genau wie Ballett und bildende Kunst. Im Gegensatz

zu Deutschland konnte jedes Kind neben der schulischen eine hochprofessionelle und vor allem kostenlose künstlerische Ausbildung bekommen, allerdings nur solange das Kind gewillt war, hart zu arbeiten, und meine Mutter verstand nicht, wie es jemand nicht wollte.

The reader learns that Mascha's mother struggles especially with the differing understandings of arts within the culture of the Soviet Republic and the German one. She was brought up viewing arts as a form of work, whereas her students and their parents in Germany regard it as a hobby, which one learns as a form of amusement. Moreover, teachers have a different status: since they are paid in Germany by the student's parents, they have to report to them and make sure the student enjoys the lessons. Mascha's father considers the family's move to Germany as exile:

Mein Vater war ein Mann, der verstanden hatte, dass es niemals gut werden würde. . . . Deutschland hatte für meinen Vater keine Verwendung. In seinem sozialen Sibirien trug er Jogginghosen und Feinrippunterhemden . . . Vater hatte aufgegeben, von einem Tag auf den anderen. Er freundete sich nicht mit anderen Menschen an, er ging kaum aus dem Haus, nur manchmal, um an der Tankstelle die Benzinpreise zu vergleichen. (Grjasnowa 52-53)

Hence, Mascha's father fails to integrate himself into German society. It is said that his German language skills remain rudimentary. Although Mascha's mother is able to find work after their arrival in Germany, she is confronted with an understanding of teaching music that is different from the one she has internalized, which leads to a culture shock. Mascha's father is unable to find work, and, unable to adjust to the new environment, becomes isolated and depressed. The circumstances of the father resembles in some extent the protagonist in "Der Hof im Spiegel", as

she is at risk of suffering the same fate; she is isolated as well, and, after experiencing a negative incident, makes the decision to never speak with a German person again:

Ich ging in die nächste Kneipe, in der eine Frau mit zwei Freunden an der Theke saß. Sie war etwas besoffen. „Wo ist der Barbesitzer?“ Sie schaute mich an und schrie: „Waaasss!“ Ich lief sofort raus, mein Herz zwischen meinen Händen, und draußen in der Nacht schwor ich mir, ab jetzt mit keinem Deutschen mehr zu sprechen. (Özdamar 41)

However, she revokes that decision, after talking to Can:

Can sagte: “Liebling, du gehst jetzt raus und triffst an zehn verschiedenen Orten zehn verschiedene Deutsche. Wenn einer von denen dich schlecht behandelt, sprichst du mit keinem mehr.“ . . . Am nächsten Morgen ging ich in verschiedene Kaufhäuser, sprach mit Verkäufern, Busfahrern, . . . und fand keinen, der mir weh tat. (Özdamar 41)

Once more, it is implied that culture is heterogeneous and one cannot make generalizations based on one encounter.

Comparing the older generations of both works with the younger one, it can be concluded that rootless cosmopolitan subjects are an outcome of the 21st century; their parents, by contrast, struggle with relocation and its implications.

Zygmunt Bauman as well as Marc Augé have observed that globalization by now has almost reached the last corners of our world: even the inhabitants of the smallest rural villages cannot escape its interconnectedness, as everything is interdependent and becomes more and more assimilated. Moreover, by the act of decentering, location no longer defines environment or

experience, as we have access to virtually anything, via our TVs, cellphones or computers (Augé 8).

All this makes a redefinition of national notions imperative. The heterotopian Third Space, I argue, is a useful concept to redefine these notions. Although it has the potential for ambivalence, caused by ambiguous effects of globalization as described in the introduction, it is a space in which “new cultural forms” can be created (Milz 25). If the Third Space is understood as a site where cultures do not clash but rather interact, Adelson’s call to understand “cultural contact today” not as fixing them as “utterly different cultures”, but rather as redefining the notion of culture entirely as processes “*within* German culture” can be made productive within this Third Space (268). Bhabha seems to argue for a reformation of the concept of culture as well, when he states:

The very concepts of homogenous national cultures, the consensual or contiguous transmission of historical traditions, or ‘organic’ ethnic communities – as the grounds of cultural comparitivism – are in a profound process of redefinition” (5)

This ultimately leads to a “radical revision in the concept of human community itself” (Bhabha 6) and “may open the way to conceptualizing an *international* culture” (38). Thus, the heterotopian Third Space as constructed by the characters poses an alternative to the “negative” or failed multiculturalism perceived in Germany.

Grjasnowa designs another alternative in the utopia that Cem pictures when he visits Mascha in Israel and both are watching a playing child on the beach:

Aber der Kleine wird keinen Scheiß machen, er wird alles lesen und alles verstehen: alle Klassiker der Post Colonial Studies, der Critical Whiteness Studies, der Rassismustheorien, Fanon, Said, Terkessidis. (Grjasnowa 221)

Awareness and appropriate education are needed in order to enable political and social change.

Augé, who writes about the dangers of globalization and its division of inclusion and exclusion, thinks along the same lines when he writes that education is “the ultimate utopia” (10).

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