Title
A/Effective Landscapes: Transnationalism, Affect and Feminism in Transnational Literature and Film

Permalink

Author
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Publication Date
2014

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

A/Effective Landscapes: Transnationalism, Affect and Feminism in Transnational
Literature and Film

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Comparative Literature

by

Carmen Braun

June 2014

Dissertation Committee:
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The Dissertation of Carmen Braun is approved by

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Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

Dedication

To my husband Udit

Whose love is my breath

and my friend Marion

whose faith is my air

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

A/Effective Landscapes: Transnationalism, Affect and Feminism in Transnational
Literature and Film

by

Carmen Braun

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Comparative Literature
University of California, Riverside, June 2014
Dr. Sabine Doran, Chairperson

This dissertation deals with affect and its power to structure the current political

landscape of migration, displacement and transnationalism into what I call a/effective

landscapes. Borrowing the concept of affect from Gilles Deleuze and his followers such

as Rosi Braidotti and Brian Massumi, who define affect as an impersonal pre-personal

force, an immanent vitality and instrinsic to matter that is linked to the body's ability to

experience affect and to affect, my premise is that affect *affects* emotionally (the

protagonists of the work as well as the recipients of thereaders and viewers of artwork)

and from which ensue political *effects* ensue.

Utilizing a comparative methodology, this dissertation explores the work of four

German-speaking female transnational filmmakers and writers, all of whom contribute to

and intervene in contemporary discourses on transnationalism, transnational subjectivity,

concepts of space and time, the discourse on *Heimat* and monolingualism through their

use of affect in writing and filming.

Seen through a transnational, feminist lens, I try to identify affect in the works of Angelina Maccarone's *Unveiled*, Andrea Štaka's *Das Fräulein*, Herta Müller's *Reisende auf einem Bein* and Yoko Tawada's short story "Wolkenkarte," examining the political efficacy of their aesthetic of writing and filming affect. *Unveiled* in particular explores affect as a positive force, with the potential to overcome the various borders that have been created for the purpose of keeping out those regarded as aliens. *Das Fräulein* explores the affective state of three migrant women from the former Yugoslavia and their transversal becomings, which leads to a new definition for transnationalism beyond identification. "Wolkenkarte" and *Reisende auf einem Bein* are discussed as vibrant texts, which—inspired by the neutral aesthetics of Roland Barthes and the nomadic aesthetics of Rosi Braidotti—a/effectively engender modes of belonging that are not rooted in stable notions of monocultural and monolingual nation-state and *Heimat*/home.

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Beyond Identification: Transversal and Transnational Engagement in *Das Fräulein (2006)*

Abbreviations used in text

ATR for: *The Affect Theory Reader*- [Gregg, Melissa and Gregory J. Seigworth, eds. *The Affect Theory Reader*. Durham and London: Duke UP, 2010. Print.]

CP for: *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*- [Ahmed, Sara. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2004. Print.]

RB for: *Reisende auf einem Bein*- [Müller, Herta. *Reisende auf einem Bein*. Berlin, Dt.: Rotbuch Verlag, 1989. Print.]

SE for: *Strange Encounters*- [Ahmed, Sara. *Strange Encounters*. *Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*. London,UK and New York, NY: Routledge, 2000. Print.]

WK for: "Wolkenkarte."- [Tawada, Yoko. "Wolkenkarte." *Überseezungen*. 2002.Tübingen, Dt.: konkursbuch Verlag Claudia Gehrke, 2010. 51-52. Print.]

ML for: "What Is a Minor Literature?"- [Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari and Robert Brinkley. "What Is a Minor Literature?" *Mississippi Review*. 11.3 (1993): 13-33. JSTOR. 19 October 2011.]

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INTRODUCTION

> Affect is an impingement or extrusion of a momentary or sometimes more sustained state of a relation *as well as* the passage (and the duration of the passage) of forces or intensities. That is, affect is found in those intensities that pass body to body (human, nonhuman, part-body, and otherwise), in those resonances that circulate about, between, and sometimes stick to bodies and worlds, and in the very passages or variations between these intensities and resonances themselves. Affect, at its most anthropomorphic, is the same name we give to those forces—visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally other than conscious knowing, vital forces insisting beyond emotion—that can serve to drive us toward movement, toward thought and extension that can likewise suspend us (as if in neutral) across a barely registering accretion of force-relations, or that can even leave us overwhelmed by the world's apparent intractability.
> —Gregory J. Seigworth & Melissa Gregg, *"An Inventory of Shimmers"*

The idea of a culturally or politically homogenous Europe is part of Europe's amnesia when it comes to colonial history and migration (Kofman 2009). From the post-war years up until the 1970s, a substantial number of foreign male laborers (primarily from Spain and Greece) helped rebuild Europe's devastated landscape, through their construction work. Those migrants were managed by means of the guestworker program, by which they were supposed to leave the country after their work was no longer needed. When they did not leave, an assimilationist policy of integration was pursued (Kofman 2000) in the hope to keep Europe culturally homogenous. Ever since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 (Nanz, 2009; Kofman, 2000), the migration of women from the post-Soviet world has been actively changing Europe's cultural and political landscape as well. As Marciniak points out, the fall of the Berlin Wall has been rhetoricized as the fall of the

second world, which has been made to mean that communism's legacy has been subordinated to the notion that post-Soviet states are primarily 'Western' in nature nowadays. This gives, of course, the impression of a Western "uniform cultural and political space" (Marciniak xv). Verstraete (2007), however, observes that Europe has has always been a multicultural landscape and has never been homogenous in terms of either culture or politics. Because of Europe's multicultural landscape, she calls for a "new transnational imaginary" that is needed in order to "accommodate the numerous communities that have come to Europe" (111). Another community that has changed Europe's landscape is the increasing number of female migrants not only from post-Soviet countries but also "third nationals" (those who are not part of the European Union). The increase of female migrants is shaped by many factors, such as the higher demand in "feminized jobs" (Kofman 2008; Piper 2008),[1] which include the care sector (nurses, teachers, care-givers), domestic help, sex workers and restaurant/service industry workers.

Verstraete further observes the paradox of the demand for and increase in women's labor in Europe, while at same time, "fortress Europe" has begun to heighten border control in order to keep out unwanted migrants, such as irregular aliens in order to produce a culturally, morally and politically homogenous Europe. Frontex,[2] the European border guard association, makes sure that all external routes by sea, air and land are

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[1] She lists four phenomena that are connected to the feminization of migration, such as improved statistical visibility, the ability of women to participate in all migration streams (regular and irregular), men not finding full-time employment in the origin countries and lastly, an increasing demand for "feminized jobs" (3).

[2] For detailed information please refer to http://www.frontex.europa.eu/operations/roles-and-responsibilities

secured, protected and surveilled, to ensure that no "third nationals" (those who are not part of the European Union) slip into "fortress Europe" unnoticed. The internal borders of the fortress within the Schengen[3] states should ensure free internal movement. Consequently, the national borders in Europe are highly protected and secured to ward off the irregular third nationals, while at the same time the borders are open for the highly skilled educated European cosmopolitan travel-workers,[4] who enjoy the privilege of an EU- passport that allows them to work and live anywhere within fortress Europe.

Those contradictory patterns of unifying Europe under one Western democratic, culturally and politically homogenous paradigm, while trying to deter third nationals, whose labor is needed, *stratify* Europe inevitably into a multicultural and not so homogenous landscape. The idea, however, of a homogenous Europe has its root in the tradition of imperialistic and colonial ideas. The idea that Europe could become one empire with one race (white) is a particularly painful reminder of some of Europe's fascist leaders. Those thoughts and beliefs engendered a narrative and an epistemology of the "other," which, from a transparent Western Eurocentric perspective, was the barbaric, colored, less skilled other. I would like to connect this well-documented colonial legacy and narrative to an affective basis. Both Gilles Deleuze and Rosi Braidotti agree that thoughts always have an affective basis (Deleuze 1994; Braidotti 1994) and those colonial narratives are attached to an affective basis of the "other" as impure, disgusting,

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[3] For more information see http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen/

[4] I am taking the definition of a cosmopolitan traveler from Wendy Hesford, who defines them as citizens of the world and thus "individuals who have the freedom and capital to move about the world" (54), as well as from Katarzyna Marciniak, who also says that they are associated with "a class of elite Western subjects" (24).

and less desirable. Those affective narratives, rhetorical signs and images became attached to those bodies, which in turn effected that the Western body wanted to keep its distance from those impure bodies. This narrative has a homology in the national body as well, with the "other" described as a threat to the national body.

Hence, there is no intrinsic "otherness" in the "transnational other" but rather the *affective narrative* that circulates and repeats the rhetoric, shaping the public imaginaries and discourses. By transnational other, I am referring to third nationals as well as migrants that travel within Europe. The levels of "otherness" depend on the intersection of race, skill, gender, sexuality and often religion. As Catherine Dauvergne (2009), a global immigration specialist, also observes, it is still the white, masculine, skilled and heterosexual body that is favored in global immigration and citizenship law. Consequently, the hierarchy of the transnational "other" in levels of "otherness" and "foreign-ness" depends on the normative heterosexual masculine body. Thus, the colored third national is less desirable in Germany than the migrant white Greek body. Embedded in this affective landscape of Europe, "transnational others" cannot only experience a physical expulsion from within the national border or at the border, but can also experience psychological and emotional expulsions by "natives," if allowed into the country. Hence, the levels of exclusion range from physical exclusion to finer, miniscule, emotional exclusion.

Within these stratifications, the public images, imaginaries and rhetoric, and the multiple exclusions of the transnational "other," the filmmakers and authors I chose, such as filmmakers Angelina Maccarone and Andrea Štaka, and authors Herta Müller and

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Yōko Tawada, *intervene* in this public imaginary of a homogenous Europe on all levels

of exclusion. Etymologically, the word *intervene* originated in the 16th century and comes

from the Latin *intervenīre*, which signifies "to come between," from inter

(between) +*venīre* to come.[5] It also signifies "to come in the course of an action" (482). I

am particularly interested in exploring the aesthetic strategies of the filmmakers and

authors, in the context of the current rhetoric and public imaginaries of Europe that seek

to pronounce the transnational "other" as bad, as disgusting and as threatening. In their

intervention, they not only rupture the current affective narrative by showing their

otherness as ontological affective sameness but they also create and produce a new

imaginary in a beyond and beside-ness of the current political homogenous imaginary.

The beyond and beside-ness of an imaginary points to the fact that the female

transnational "others" in the films and texts experience time and space in a different

manner, often as multi-temporal and multi-local. I see the intervention as a feminist

intervention that contributes to the visibility of the lives of female migrants in Germany

and Switzerland and also because it intervenes in the Western Eurocentric binary

epistemology that is linked to patriarchal power structures. It is, furthermore, a

transnational intervention, as it focuses on transnational engagements within diasporic

communities as well as between diasporic and host country. Lastly, I will also investigate

how those engagements shape the protagonists' sense of identity.

   Part of the intervention is that the filmmakers and authors zoom in on the *inner*

exiles that the female transnational "others" experience because of the affective narratives

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[5] Information taken from the *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*. Ed. C.T. Onions with the assistance of G.W.S. Friedrichsen and R.W. Buchfield. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1966. 482. Print.

and public imaginaries of the "other" that circulate and shape Europe's landscape. Consequently, the landscape that I am exploring is the landscape that comes into being as female migrants experience their *exilic subjectivity*. I refer to that landscape as *affective*. It is loosely defined as an emotional landscape of experienced pain because they feel "othered" in the host country or because they experience their modes of belonging as painful. Yet it is also the landscape of their expressed affects of hope and vitality and their pushing back another narrative of being ontologically the same.

This landscape is different from a sociologically stratified European landscape of migration. It is not a landscape that is stratified by migrational patterns, for example, relating to how many migrants (at the intersection of race, gender, ethnicity and legal status) live in a specific place (Piper 1-18). At the same time, I am exploring this affective landscape as a politically efficacious and thus *effective* landscape, as it introduces an ontology that Jane Bennett, a Deleuzian inspired political theorist, refers to as ontologically the same, yet "formally diverse" (Bennett quoting Deleuze xi).

My hypothesis is also that the affective experiences of female "transnational others" in Europe and particularly in Germany and Switzerland are shaped not only by the natives' discourses of the "other" but that the women themselves actively shape the affective narratives. I will thus explore how those female transnational others display an intrinsic vitality (which is an immanent affectivity), which lends them the agency to engage on an everyday basis with people from their own communities, as well as with people from the host country. Consequently, I try to explore how the female migrants

reshape the imaginaries through their very own affectivity. The "push force" or that which conceives the imaginaries, thoughts, rhetorics and narratives is affect.

I will thus explore how the protagonists are *interstitial subjectivities* as well as *exilic subjectivities*. By interstitial, I am referring to their belonging to more than one nation, language or culture. By exilic, I am referring to the affective experience of their in-between belongings. *Interstitial subjectivities* refer to their belonging to more than one nation, culture and language or legal status in the host country, which gives them a certain *borderland* status. Borderland is a term coined by Gloria Anzaldúa, which she elaborates on in her book *Borderlands/La Frontera* (2007), which not only refers to the physical borderlands between Mexico and the U.S. but also to the psychological, linguistic and cultural borderlands, as two different paradigms and epistemologies clash with and grate against each other. In Maccarone's film, the interstitial protagonist is a refugee, who fled persecution. In Štaka's film, the three protagonists could be classified as two migrants and one nomad. In Müller's text, the protagonist is displaced forcefully through dictatorship and could be classified as living in exile. In Tawada's short story, the protagonist could be classified as a cosmopolitan citizen, who has the privilege of travelling to different places. In Deleuzian terms, I will explore this interstitiality as a molar difference within the subject, which is the same distinction he uses to describe spaces.

A subject or a space is explained through three lines and two planes: the first plane is the plane of organization, which houses the line of molar segmentations into binaries such as social class, gender or private/public, nation state or territory (96); the

plane of organization is interconnected with the plane of immanence that houses the other

two lines, such as the line of molecular becomings, of relationship and speed, of slowness

and viscosity; of smooth spaces and deserts; the third line is the line of flight, which is the

line that makes you "become like everyone…imperceptible, clandestine" (95).

Molecularization is a form of becoming-other and of entering into relation with someone

but on a molecular, not molar level. On this level of molecularization, one enters into an

emphatic proximity with the other, across differences (of a molar kind), which engenders

transversal becomings. A becoming is not a transforming into but rather a situation in

which one can "emit particles that take on certain relations of movement and rest because

they enter a particular zone of proximity" (Deleuze, *Thousand Plateaus* 273). Becoming

is never an evolution (by descent or filiation) but rather an involution, "in which form is

constantly being dissolved, freeing times and speeds" (Deleuze, *Thousand Plateaus* 267).

Deleuze further differentiates involution from regression: "…involution is creative. To

regress is to move in the direction of the something less differentiated. But to involve is

to form a block that runs its new line "between" the terms in play and beneath assignable

relations" (Deleuze, *Thousand Plateaus* 239). Hence, this becoming is the entering into

of "emphatic proximity" and "intensive interconnectedness" (Braidotti 5). It engenders

closeness on an affective energetic level, which can be measured in terms of rhythm and

movement. Hence, on a molar level, subjects are different and can belong to more than

one nation. On a molecular level, however, subjects share the same affects, yet in a

variation of compositions.

The commonality amongst those protagonists is that despite their different classifications into refugee, cosmopolitan, migrant or exile,[6] they share an exilic subjectivity. The *exilic subjectivity* then refers to the finer, molecular plane where female transnational others experience their affective composition in regard to how their interstitiality and their differences make them feel and how it positions them within the current discourse and imaginaries. Thus, I am interested in exploring how interstitial subjects engage on a level of exilic subjectivity with each other and how they can experience an affective sameness transversally, meaning across their interstitial differences.

Consequently, if subjects are not only conceived as molarized into rigid categories of race and gender but as molecular affective subjects, then the binaries that categories such as race and gender spawn, such as man/woman, native/foreigner or homosexual/heterosexual, no longer hold. If subjects share an affective ontology, which of course is diverse in intensity and movement (some people feel more alive than others; some people have more energy than others), then transnational "others" and natives can engage with each other and amongst each on a molecular affective level, as well, and experience an emphatic interconnectedness in order to share an affective experience. They are then able to engage with each other and *become transversally,* which means connect on a molecular level despite molar differences of legal status, age, gender or ethnicity. As affects are shareable and have no form other than movement and qualities of

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[6] According to feminist philosopher Rosi Braidotti (1994), the term migrant refers to someone who leaves for economic betterment (thus tied to a class structure), whereas a nomad is not homeless but can be travelling intellectually, physically or between languages (22-23). The exile is not tied to a class structure (as is the case with the migrant) but has been exiled for political reasons (22).

intensity, one's affective experience can be can be shared. Thus, the sharability of affective experiences and exilic feelings, can engender transnational engagements, which can lead to a shared subjectivity (transsubjectivity). This shared subjectivity can occur within a transnational engagement that Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih (2005) call major and minor communities. In their definition of transnational engagement, major refers to the host country and minor to the diasporic communities living within the host country (major). I will explore how this engagement also completely deflates the power structure as well as the binaries of foreigner/alien. Consequently, I explore the power of affect as it shapes those landscapes that come into being because of inner exile and have the political effect of producing an alternative to the Western binary epistemology as well as the Western colonial and imperial power structure as well as rupturing the existing structure and epistemology (and their affective imaginaries and narratives).

Exilic subjectivity also refers to the protagonists' past experiences (affects on a molecular plane as present, past and future) in their respective countries, which still impinge upon their present experiences in the host country, in turn creating for them an intrapsychic struggle. As they often experience their past in the present, the present experience becomes a multi-temporal and multi-local exile, which I will explore in the depictions of chronotopes. As affects also project into the future, I will explore how the protagonists also experience a hopeful future (and how this is depicted cinematographically as well as textually) because of their capacity to imagine that despite their interstitial borderland differences, they can find a mode of belonging that includes all of their modes of belongings (to two nations, languages, homes or cultures).

The reason for bringing filmmakers Štaka and Maccarone and authors Müller and Tawada together is that they seem to have a great sensitivity to the affective experiences of "transnational others." Thus their thematic focus often deals with issues that relate to their own biographical trajectories. Their works are certainly not biographical yet their own interstitial background provides them perhaps with a certain sensitivity and a certain optic that enables them to depict the inner exiles of their protagonists. Despite their molar classifications into migrant, exile and cosmopolitan traveller, they also share, like their protagonists, the commonality of interstitial subjectivity. They further share the privilege of distributing their work on a global scale, while talking about local issues. Because of the privilege of being able to have such a global platform and at the same time having the sensitivity toward the inner exiles of the "transnational others" that they explore, I believe they are able to look critically at Germany's and Switzerland's climate of foreign policies as well as the general atmosphere toward "transnational others," while they offer an alternative imaginary and narrative to the "othering" that the protagonists experience.

Andrea Štaka[7], a Swiss former Yugoslavian filmmaker, was born in Lucerne in 1973, Switzerland and now lives now between Zurich, Switzerland and New York. Her production company located in Zurich, Switzerland, *Dschoint Ventschr*, primarily works with young and upcoming directors, whose purpose it is to distribute films that thematize cross-cultural topics and appeal to international audiences. Štaka's parents come from Croatia and Bosnia. Štaka herself spent many summers there growing up until 1991, when the war broke out. She is a second-generation immigrant filmmaker, who also had

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[7] Biographical information taken from http://www.okofilm.com/main.html and from Ciné Portaits http://www.swissfilms.ch/en/information_publications/cine-portraits/#S

the privilege of studying in New York, which makes her a rather cosmopolitan filmmaker. Her oeuvre so far has focused on women from the second world and their lives abroad (e.g., *Yugodivas* deals with female artists from the former Yugoslavia working in New York; *Hotel Belgrad* discusses the war through an encounter between a man from Belgrad and a Swiss woman). Her first feature film *Das Fräulein* thematically deals with the lives of three migrant women from the former Yugoslavia. Even though none of the characters has been forcefully displaced or became a refugee—two of them migrated before the war for economic advancement, while one of them migrated after the war in Sarajevo—they still experience their new lives as inner exiles. I plan to explore how Štaka introduces a form of transnationalism that does not include identification, by exploring transversal becomings and moments of shared subjectivity (transsubjectivity).

Angelina Maccarone[8] was born to Italian guestworkers in Pulheim, Germany in 1965 and received her MA in English and German in Hamburg with an emphasis in media studies. While she initially wanted to be a songwriter, she now writes scripts for her movies as well as producing them. Similar to Štaka, she is a second-generation migrant, who could also be classified as a cosmopolitan filmmaker. Her oeuvre deals with bi-ethnic lesbians in Germany (e.g., *Vivere, Kommt Mausi Raus?! Alles wird gut*). The film *Unveiled/Fremde Haut* deals with a lesbian refugee, who not only crosses into the nation of Germany with fake papers but also crosses gender, cultural, discursive and ontological borders. Whereas Štaka's film explores how national identity is materially and affectively lived in between many modes of belonging *after* migration, Maccarone's

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[8] Biographical information taken from http://www.filmportal.de/person/angelina-maccarone_7b9164a0166b407090cea221bed0a3cd

film deals primarily with what happens to an Iranian lesbian refugee *during* migration. I plan to explore how Maccarone provides a transnational feminist imaginary through the hopeful figure of Fariba, as well as through innovative cinematic techniques that allow for more fluid national, gender, epistemological and national borders.

Unlike Štaka and Maccarone, the novelist Herta Müller has experienced forceful displacement and exile, which becomes a major focus (one that she does not choose but that chooses her)[9] in her work. She was born in 1953 in Nitzkydorf, Banat, a small German-speaking minority enclave in Romania during the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaușescu. Upon completion of her studies (Romanian and German), she started working as a translator and teacher. She was dismissed from her employment in 1979, after she refused to cooperate with the Romanian secret service (the Securitate). After receiving death threats from the Securitate and being accused of spying, she was finally allowed to emigrate to West Berlin in 1987. Her writing started with the "Aktionsgruppe Banat," which was a group dedicated to fighting for freedom of speech, writing against the terror of dictatorship and the battle against the ideological usage of language under Ceaușescu. This thematic focus of her work (selected works: *Atemschaukel, Niederungen, Herztier*) revolves around (often female) protagonists that suffer from the aftermath of dictatorship, forceful displacement, surveillance, the experience of migration, the search of identity when being exiled and its relation to *Heimat*. I plan to explore how the aesthetics of writing from a place of sensation create a palimpsest that vibrates with affective

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[9] All biographical information on Müller is taken from the documentary "Writing against Terror" as well as Paolo Bozzi's *Der fremde Blick* (2005).

memories from the past and affective experiences in the present, which make a belonging to a singular stable notion of *Heimat* an impossibility.

In contrast to Müller, Yōko Tawada, a Japanese-German writer, who also lives in Berlin, is more of a cosmopolitan, who had the privilege of studying in Hamburg.[10] She intended to study Russian literature at a Polish university but her scholarship was canceled in 1980 and consequently, she was not able to study Russian literature. However, a business associate of her father (a book dealer) was able to arrange an apprenticeship for her at a book dealership in an office in Hamburg, Germany in 1982, which she gladly accepted. The dealership exported German books and soon German piqued her interest, prompting her to begin to study German at the University of Hamburg, ultimately receiving her doctorate in German in 1998. Tawada's oeuvre (selected works: *Überseezungen*; *Sprachpolizei und Spielpolyglotte*; *Das nackte Auge*; *Das Bad*;) often includes a female narrator (often Asian or Japanese) who is mostly concerned with language, the inherent foreign-ness of it and the unnatural dichotomy between mother tongue and foreign tongue, the East and the West (geographically, epistemologically and culturally). I plan to explore how the aesthetics of writing render the text a rhizome of plateaus (that also show a palimpsestic structure), which discuss the impossibility of belonging to a monolingual nation.

In Chapter 1, I will discuss how the figure of the refugee in Maccarone's film operates like the abject that threatens the boundaries of the unity of two nation-states

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[10] All biographical information taken from Linda Koiran's *Schreiben in fremder Sprache. Yōko Tawada und Galsan Tschinag. Studien zu den deutschsprachigen Werken von Autoren asiatischer Herkunft*, especially from pp. 251- 266.

(Iran and Germany). I will explore how Maccarone manages to queer the viewers' optic by utilizing cinematic forms, such as an emphasis on a haptic optic that emphasizes transversal becomings and the concomitant transsubjectivity, which allows for an imaginary of fluid borders between genders, nation or legal statuses.

In Chapter 2, I will explore the aesthetic techniques that render the texts of Herta Müller and Yōko Tawada vibrant. For Müller's as well as Tawada's texts, I will explore the aesthetic techniques of writing that create a textual structure that vibrates with past affects, places and times, while at the same time with present experiences, places and times. Consequently, stable notions of *Heimat*/home and singular modes of belonging to a monocultural nation is not tenable anymore, as the affective experiences of the protagonists introduce a temporal and spatial structure that is palimpsestically overlain.

In Chapter 3, I will explore the affective cinematographic techniques of Andrea Štaka that lead to transsubjective becomings between the second-world migrants Ruza, Mila and Ana. As the affective proximities and molecular becomings are related to transnational engagements, I will investigate how Štaka in fact contributes to a definition of transnationalism that departs from Lionnet and Shih's definition by leaving out the variable of identification.

CHAPTER 1

Unveiling Hope in *Unveiled/Fremde Haut (2005)*

> Although looking at planet earth from a satellite makes clear that there are no borders, which immediately suggests that borders are human constructs, an average atlas of the world shows a globe divided into states.
> —Henk von Houtum, in "Remapping Borders"

> [H]ope matters because it discloses the creation of potentiality or possibility…
> —Ben Anderson, in "Becoming and Being Hopeful"

Border Chronotopes and Queer Optics

German-Italian filmmaker Angelina Maccarone begins and ends her movie *Unveiled/Fremde Haut* in the airplane that crosses the border, initially from Iran to Germany and subsequently from Germany to Iran. With the border central to Maccarone's cinematography, the narrative likewise deals with border-crossings. After an initial shot of an airplane wing that cuts the sky into two separate halves, a voice-over states, "We have just crossed over the border and left Iranian air space." The scene clearly ironizes the notion of a fixed, walled-off, clearly-demarcated nation-state and mocks its borders, visually echoing Henk von Houtum's (2012) statement to the effect that borders are always artificially constructed, whether on earth or in the sky. This is the cue for the Iranian female passenger in sunglasses to unveil herself in the bathroom and to re-appropriate the chador for purposes of disabling the smoke detector, to have a cigarette. The sunglasses that are placed on the washbasin are visibly framed, which indicates that the movie not only deals with physical borders and border crossings but

also provides spectators with a queer optic. Queer does not only refer to gender/sex-based denotations anymore but is often defined more inclusively now as, "by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without an essence. 'Queer' then, demarcates not a positivity but a positionality vis-à-vis the normative" (Halperin 62). Hence, queerness becomes a "way of life," a mode of being in a world that encompasses "subcultural practices, alternative modes of alliance, forms of transgender embodiment, and those forms of representation dedicated to capturing these willfully eccentric modes of being" (Halberstam, "Queer Temporalities" 1). The queer optic refers to the fact that spectators are encouraged to view the undocumented (alien) lesbian asylum seeker Fariba outside or beside the common public imaginary of the lesbian as threat, the alien as a threat, which poses in our heads as a normative and dominant imaginary. Throughout the movie, glasses as well as mirrors play a major role in crossing the border from woman/man as well and provide the visual clue for engaging spectators with a new optic on gender instability, fluid subjectivity and resistance to patriarchal, heteronormative as well as imperialistic gazes and structures.

Maccarone's cinematography as well as thematic focus is also embedded within the genre of an accented cinema, which foregrounds, as Maccarone's *Unveiled* does, narrations of border-crossing, homecoming or migration, employing a visual style that emphasizes the interstitiality of the characters, claustrophobic spaces and psychological liminality. Hamid Naficy defines accented cinema in his groundbreaking seminal book *Accented Cinema* (2001) as a cinema that is interstitial, hence created in-between "social

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formations and cinematic practices" (4). Accented not only refers to the accented speech of the characters within the movie but also refers to the displacement of the filmmakers and their artisanal production modes, as well as a list of narratological and cinematographical features. In the book's appendix (289-292), Hamid Naficy characterizes accented cinema as employing a certain visual style (e.g., caustrophobic interiors, fetishized objects of homeland and past, etc.), a narrative structure (e.g., multilinguality, accented speech, voice-over narration, epistolarity), characters/actors (e.g. accented speech, outsiders), the subject matter or plot (e.g., homelessness, home-seeking journeys, exile, displacement), structures of feeling (e.g. sensibilities, synaesthesia, interstitiality, hybridity, liminality) and the filmmaker's location and mode of production. Maccarone focuses aesthetically and visually on claustrophobic spaces, such as the airplane toilet, on transportation vehicles, and on border chronotopes such as the airplane that crosses. The term chronotope comes from the Russian formalist and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin, who used this type of unit of analysis to speak of the importance of space-time (chronotope) in narrative. Hamid Naficy appropriates the notion of chronotope, using it to describe the cinematic form, which transmits exilic feelings or feelings of safety (152ff). This cinematic form is an important feature of an accented cinema, as "dialectics of displacement and emplacement" (125) are expressed in space-time configurations.

Hence, by introducing the protagonist Fariba/Siamak in an airplane crossing the border, Maccarone prefigures her/him as a border figure. Fariba/Siamak is introduced as a liminal and interstitial figure that belongs to more than one nation, language and

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gender. As the movie begins with border-crossings and ends with border-crossings, Maccarone also prefigures the aporetic quality of the many borders that will be crossed. Aporia in the Derridean sense, then, means that a sign can mean more than one thing and can in fact hold opposing significations: the ghost can signify absence and presence, the pharmakon can signify both poison and cure. The border between words can therefore unite two opposing concepts that contradict each other and are incommensurable, yet are not divided by a borderline.

I would like to focus on the multiple aporetic borders that Maccarone exposes, such as the borders between concepts of nation-states but also conceptual borders of alien/citizen and its interconnected-ness to the discourse of the other, its homology to sexuality and nationality, and the borders between visual versus tactile economy. I am exploring how Maccarone intervenes in mainstream cinema as well as imaginaries that puts the "other" on the other side of the border (national, sexual, legal). Any intervention is ultimately an intervention in the law of the father, which, by intervening into binary schemes, exposes the aporia of the previously upheld border and binary scheme. The movie deals with a number of border-crossings: not only are physical borders trespassed by flying over national borders but borders of epistemologies (Iranian and German) as well as identities (at the intersection of sex, gender, race, religion and class) are crossed as well. I will show how *Unveiled* upsets binary and oppositional ways of thinking, meaning-making and epistemologies, through multiple border crossings of Fariba. By focusing on Fariba's affects, Maccarone visualizes her sometimes exilic subjectivity against the backdrop of discourses of the "other". The affective component of hope that

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Maccarone explores through the figure Fariba becomes an important affective (in the sense of emotional) as well as effective (in the sense of political efficacy) mode of trespassing those borders because of hope's inherent anticipatory and future-oriented "not-yet-ness" (Bloch 1986).

Aporia of National, Ontological and Gender Borders

When Fariba arrives at the airport, her passport is checked at the border to determine whether she is legal and whether her documents are valid. Maccarone depicts this event as important because it is part of the border and enforcement spectacle (De Genova, "Conflicts of Mobility" 455) and functions as a theater piece (Brown 111), which is meant to keep out and become impermeable to what is perceived as a national threat, a danger to the purity of the nation, as well as an intruder into the inside of a nation (Brown 111-122). Both Wendy Brown and Nicolas De Genova (2009; 2012) agree that walls and border enforcement function as spectacles, which project power and efficacy. Though such artificially constructed boundaries do not actually enforce anything, they do feed into the public imaginary of the alien as a threat, as someone who penetrates into the interior of the nation, who pollutes and contaminates what is deemed as pure, impermeable and secure. Wendy Brown defines the supposedly dangerous alien as a "figure of otherness" (115), which threatens the civilized nation with its monocultural and monolingual core values. Consequently, the alien has to be contained, which Maccarone visualizes later in the claustrophobic spaces that Fariba is put into, beginning with the detention center and then the temporary home. The fantasy of impermeability positions the nation-state as an enclosed repository for citizens who need

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to be protected from intruding outsiders with contaminating influences. Brown claims

that this fantasy of impermeability is a "supremely masculine political fantasy (or fallacy

of mastery: penetration, pluralization, or interruption are its literal undoing" (119-120).

Consequently, Fariba as an alien and a female is a double threat to the masculine fantasy

of containment, purity and inside-ness. Fariba thus has to be checked for her rightful legal

papers so that she is not intruding, contaminating or "coming to take or plunder what is

rightfully the nation's own" (121). When Fariba has to undergo a rectal examination, she

is examined to be not physically pure enough to enter the nation of Germany. Mugshots

and fingerprints are also required of Fariba, which shows how the third national is treated

like a criminal. Maccarone thereby comments on the necessity of this staging to uphold

the construction of the discourse of the dirty alien, the illegal, the stranger as potential

criminal that is a threat to the nation-state and the national purity. At the same time,

though, Maccarone intervenes in this public imaginary of the potential threat to the nation

by presenting another visual that ruptures the narrative of the criminal alien.

In figure 1.1., Maccarone represents the ontological aporia between the figure of the alien

versus the native and by extension, the aporia between national and gender borders

through a glass-shot (which functions also as a mirror) and the space assignments . Fariba

is framed standing opposite an official who is sitting in a glass box. In a shot-reverse-

shot, the official is shown looking at Fariba through the glass box while Fariba is

mirrored in the glass.

FIGURE 1.1. Fariba upon arrival at the airport. Her papers are being examined. Fariba is placed on the more powerful side of the frame (right side).

Fariba's mirror image is visible on the right hand-side, the more powerful side while the official's face is framed on the left-hand side, the less powerful side. The visual pattern of placing Fariba as the "other"—racially, sexually and nationally—on the more powerful right-hand side, contradicts the public discourse and imaginary that metaphorically and also literally places the alien/woman/illegal on the less powerful side. Hence, instead of enforcing the public imaginary of the alien as less powerful, Maccarone queers the spectator's optic and links their gazes to Fariba as the alien/Iranian/female as the more powerful one. The putative natural order and ontology of alien/national and female/male is subverted. Showing the German official inside the glass box symbolizes the "being-inside-of –the-nation-state" and represents masculinity as inside the national border and thus on the more powerful side, whereas Fariba's position outside the glass box symbolizes her status as a national outsider, as well as her gendered outsider status. Since Fariba is being mirrored in the shot and placed on the more powerful side, Maccarone not only imbricates the sexually, gendered, racially and nationally alien "other" as being part of the frame, but also as being the powerful mirror-image, which

cannot be abjected by the German national view. Hence, the public imaginary and the discourse of keeping the alien outside the national borders become conflated here: the borders between alien/native—and by extension, woman/man, legal/illegal—become aporetic, as they are in fact imbricated in each other within one frame, one shot and being imagined as occupying the same space.

It shows that there is no ontological there-ness of an "alien" or a native but they are mutually constituted in their encounter, as Sara Ahmed explains *Strange Encounters* (2000), which discusses the encounter in the context of colonial subjects. Ahmed uses the term encounter to suggest a meeting, "but a meeting which involves surprise and conflict" (6), adding that identity is shaped with the surprising encounter with the other that poses a challenge, a surprise and often a conflict. She describes the fact that any constructed identity has no ontological there-ness, but rather always emerges within the context of an encounter with the other and within relation. The encounter then is "ontologically prior to the question of ontology" (7) and hence implies that notions of self/other, nationhood, native/foreigner are discursive constructs that are produced through encountering each other. Consequently, if there is no ontological there-ness of the "other," "alien," "foreigner," as such, then it has to be continuously produced through discursive strategies or the staging of the border as a spectacle, which supports, constructs and feeds into the public imaginary of the constructed "other." Hence, Maccarone provides us with a transnational feminist intervention amidst the public imaginary and shows the aporia of the national discourse that is linked and structurally homologous to the discourse of the alien/illegal/feminine: they are not opposed to each

other but rather imbricated in each other and in fact, the other/feminine/alien haunts the presence of the official/Germany/man as a ghostly image (as both presence and absence).

Mirror as Heterotopic Spatial Imaginaries of Self and Other

The fact that Maccarone chooses to film the border inspection with a glass shot, which doubles Fariba as absence and presence. In a Derridean aporia, she is absence and presence (like a ghost). In Maccarone's cinematography she is placed on the more powerful side (right side) and as the camera gives us the subjective view of Fariba, it is Fariba's imaginary as well. Fariba sees herself as powerful, not as "alien" or as "other" or a "foreigner". From the German official's point of view, Fariba is first of all outside the glassbox (outsider). Under the common Western paradigm, Fariba as the "other" (woman and alien) is always outside the "native" nation. Fariba's viewpoint produces a heterotopic place, which is at once real and imagined (and utopian).

Michel Foucault (1967) discussed the mirror in reference to the Western concept of space and posited the mirror as a heterotopic place. Foucault defines heterotopia as a space that is at once real and imagined and hence a mix between utopia (unreal, imagined places) and a real place. The mirror is classified as a heterotopia because the person looking into the mirror is not actually at the real place of the mirror, yet virtually occupies the place seen in the mirror. At the same time the person occupies a real physical place opposite the mirror. The mirror reflects a utopian place back to the one looking into it. Foucault comments as follows on the mirror as heterotopia:

> In the mirror, I see myself there where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space 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 there 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 (3).

Consequently, Maccarone's shot of Fariba at the border reflected in the glass of the glassbox, depicts Fariba's heterotopic position: she sees herself occupying an imagined utopian powerful place next to the official, which indicates the imagined conflation of insider/outsider and alien/native dichotomy despite the real place opposite the official (as an outsider). Her real place outside the glass box feeds into the public imaginary that the alien/female has to be outside the national border (the glass box) and be positioned opposite the native/male. In the eyes of the German official and by extension under Western eyes (and discourse),[11] she occupies a place outside the mirror (which functions as border screen) and as a homogenous "third national" should be placed on the left-hand side (less powerful). Hence, Maccarone provides a hopeful imaginary of the imbrication of the alien/native through Fariba's optic and through framing her in a heterotopic chronotope. This heterotopic chronotope also comments on the interrelation of space, time and gender, which is further evidenced in the work of feminist geographer Doreen Massey.

Massey (1996; 1994) discusses space as "constructed out of the interrelations, as the simultaneous coexistence of social interrelations and interactions at all spatial scales, from the most local level to the most global" ("Politics and Space/Time" 80). The space

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[11] I am referring to Chandra Talpade Mohanty's groundbreaking essay "Under Western Eyes," in which she cautions that Western feminists need to be careful not to discursively homogenize, colonize and produce "the historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the third world, thereby producing/re-presenting a composite, singular 'Third World Woman'—an image which appears arbitrarily constructed, but nevertheless carries with it the authorizing signature of Western humanist discourse" (334-335).

of the glassbox, which the German official occupies is thus not naturally there but is constructed. The repository of the German official in the glass box, which also signifies the nation as a repository, is a construction that came into existence through global discourses on the "others", which have to be kept outside. At the same time, space has been coded as feminine and been linked to stasis, passivity (Massey 1994, 6). Time has been conceived as "change, movement, history, dynamism" (72) and mapped onto masculinity. Maccarone, however, shows through her framing that Fariba, as a woman imagines the space as a heterotopic place, of being imbricated inside the glass box and the nation and being imbricated with the gender. From her point of view the space is neither masculine nor feminine but constructed in concomitant relation to each other. The space is experienced not as stasis but as constructed by both genders as they move through time. Consequently, Maccarone shows that as much as space and time are interrelated variables that condition each other, so is gender. Hence, space and time cannot be conceived as one or the other but as being both masculine and feminine. Through the eyes of Fariba, viewers experience her spatial configuration as interrelated with masculinity and the "native" (German official). Linda McDowell (1999) has provided a list of binaries, which start with the over-arching binaries of the division of genders (masculine/feminine), onto which spatial categories such as public/private, outside/inside, work/home, production/consumption or power/lack of power can be mapped (12). From a Western perspective, the overarching term could similarly be termed patriarchy and the law of the father that governs the binaries and seeks to establish binaries in order to gain supremacy and power, and ultimately to oppress and

repress in order to maintain that power. Consequently, when Maccarone shows how Fariba is spatially imbricated with the German official (in a heterotopic place), she also shows how the genders are imbricated with each other and are mutually constitutive of each other (rather than naturally there). Thus, the border between spatial configurations as well as genders is aporetic and needs to be enforced repeatedly to stop the otherwise endless slipping in and out of each other.

Establishment of Patriarchy through Visual Economy

After the border official gazes at Fariba and her documents, deciding on her "alien" status, he expels her to a structural place of subordination and illegality, making her an object of national security investigation. Fariba has to undergo mugshots, rectal exams, be contained in a detention center and go through an interrogation process that will further determine her legal status. It will determine whether she will be expelled or further contained within the nation of Germany. Thus the border is not only erected between nation-states but infuses all aspects of the process. Fariba is kept in check and contained at every step of the way.

Even though Fariba looks back at him, which diminishes the white man's gaze of supremacy and power,[12] she resists the subordination but cannot overthrow the border examinations. Mulvey theorized that the male gaze establishes an asymetrical power relationship between man and woman because man looks at a woman as an object to be devoured for sexual pleasure or as an object that enhances his own masculine ego. Man needs woman to experience visual pleasure and also to perceive himself as superior.

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[12] bell hooks says in her analysis of black spectators' oppositional gazes that a black person's gaze is a rebellion against white supremacy (309).

Woman is only needed to complement the man, as well as fulfill his need and desire. Under his gaze, woman becomes a tractable object that can be punished or devoured. The patriarchal gaze sets the boundaries: woman cannot take his place and be active, yet at the same time needs to be available for his pleasure. That dynamic is similar to the dynamic of borders: borders need to be erected to keep out the alien yet at the same time the alien is needed to maintain the country's economic strength. From an economic and patriarchal as well as a historical standpoint, as much as woman's work is and was needed in the private sphere (household) to sustain the male power in the public sphere (as a protector of the nation), the alien is needed to support the nation's economic growth. The signifier woman and alien become structurally homologous under the patriarchal law: the alien has to be contained and kept in check, as much as the signifier woman does for his pleasure in cinema and the alien is needed to support the nation's economy as much as woman is and was needed to support the nation (by reproducing citizens) as well as raising national citizens.

Hence, the male gaze that seeks to deter woman from taking his place is structurally homologous to the reasons for border erections. As Wendy Brown (2010) says in *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (107-133), borders and walls are erected because they fulfill certain fantasies. There is a fantasy of the dangerous alien (figure of the "other"), which could contaminate the purity of the self. Thus Fariba has to undergo a rectal examination to prove her physical purity. Her moral purity still needs to be determined by an interview. The fantasy of contamination is connected to the fantasy of containment, which leads to the detention centers at airports, where potentially dangerous

bodies are contained and thus managed. Those fantasies are connected to the fantasy of an impermeability, which is complemented by a fantasy of impenetrability. Brown defines this as the sovereign fantasy of the nation-state, which "carries the fantasy of an absolute distinction between inside and outside" (119). This impenetrability is of course a masculine fantasy of "mastery" (120). Thus, letting Fariba into the nation is in fact an interruption as well as a penetration and pluralization (120) in this masculine fantasy that resembles Mulvey's position of the patriarchal gaze. If a woman looks back, the masculine fantasy of wholeness becomes interrupted and pluralized as well.

Brown also mentions the inefficacy of those borders in economic terms (which do not really deter aliens as they are needed), which also relate to the inefficacy in structural patriarchal terms. Whereas the woman has to be fantasized as being kept outside the borders and the law of the man, the woman is in fact needed to support that patriarchal fantasy. Similarly, whereas the border is erected to protect the purity, sovereignty and masculine impermeability of the nation-state, the alien is economically needed to support that fantasy as well as to support the national economy, which allows then for the erection of more borders.

Fariba, who speaks fluent German and hence would clearly contribute to the economy, brings out the paradoxical nature of the border. The official, who interviews her mentions jokingly that the authorities should hire her as a translator, yet he claims to be unable to immediately grant her asylum and issue her a work permit. However, once Fariba—utilizing the identity of Siamak—gets approved for a permit to legally remain in Germany but not to work legally, s/he quickly finds a job in the Sauerkrautfabrik, which

produces Germany's national food. This serves to demonstrate the inefficacy of the

borders as the undocumented workers are vital to Germany's economy and are in fact

welcomed under the country's neoliberal framework. However, it serves to demonstrate

that Fariba actually had to "turn into a man" in order to procure work. Even though she

would have been useful as a translator, she had to deskill and take on Siamak's identity.

Fariba crossed the border that the patriarchal gaze tries to establish by assuming a

masculine identity. It is easier for such a nation-state to deal with aliens within a

discourse of illegality or criminality, so that these individuals can be readily controlled,

incarcerated or deported. De Genova (2012) sums up the aporia and paradoxical nature of

borders this way:

> The *scene* (where border enforcement performatively activates the reification of
> migrant "illegality" in an emphatic and grandiose gesture of exclusion) is
> nevertheless always accompanied by its shadowy, publicly unacknowledged or
> disavowed, *obscene* supplement (the large-scale recruitment of illegalized migrant
> labor). In light of what the scene presumes to reveal and the obscene that it
> simultaneously conceals, the frail ideological dichotomy of "exclusion" and
> "inclusion" utterly collapses (493).

Consequently, while Fariba as a woman is barred from work as a translator—

denied a work permit—she nonetheless becomes included in the shadow economy built

upon undocumented, unregulated and underpaid migrant labor as Siamak (as a man).

Fariba/Siamak functions to supplement Germany's national economy and hence is

included unofficially but not legally. This again resembles Mulvey's logic that a woman

cannot be a full, whole person under the masculine gaze but only a fetishized fragmented

object. She is included as long as she serves the nation-state's purposes (in particular,

contributing to its economy) yet is barred from procuring employment appropriate to her

qualifications. As an alien, she becomes a tractable and disposable object for economic

purposes, an object that can be controlled and kept in its designated place, which is

analogous and homologous to Mulvey's sentiment on woman and her structural place in

patriarchal society. As Mulvey says, so powerfully: "Woman then stands in patriarchal

culture as a signifier for the male other, bound by a symbolic order in which man can live

out his fantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the

silent image of woman still tied to her place as bearer, not maker, of meaning" (59).

Consequently, by making Fariba/Siamak illegal, and an undocumented worker, s/he

serves the economy of Germany, while fulfilling the subordinate feminine role within a

patriarchal structure, yet as a male alien. Hence, the partriarchal logic goes beyond

gender significations and extends to the significations of the "other" as well.

Resistance to Patriarchy through Gaze

Mulvey argues that the masculine gaze becomes internalized by the female

subject, in such a way that she begins to see herself as an object and in fact desires to be

desired, even going so far as to cross-identify with male desire. By extension, this logic

extended to the raced "other" as bell hooks theorized, means that the white gaze or the

native gaze has supremacy over the "colored" gaze. Maccarone demonstrates how the

resistance to patriarchy is also a resistance to discourses of the "other" and colonialism.

When Fariba is taken to the detention center, a German official adjusts the

rearview mirror in the car so he can glance at her. When Fariba again sees herself being

looked at in the rearview mirror by the male official as an erotic spectacle, she feels

objectified and shields herself by wearing sunglasses. She literally uses her glasses as a

veil with which to resist his patriarchal objectifying gaze. By intercepting his penetrating gaze, she refuses to be objectified and positioned as an object for visual pleasure or for sadistic punishment. She creates a veil for herself and resists a "to-be-looked-ness" (Mulvey 63) that literally tries to limit her space into a flat two-dimensional object. Since Maccarone's framing shows both Fariba's gaze and her veiling of her eyes, as well as the official's penetrating gaze, the border between masculinity/femininity or alien/native becomes again aporetic: the masculine gaze and hence the epistemological supremacy is resisted by Fariba's veiling and hence collapses into meaninglessness.

Fariba has experience with repressive gazes and structural violence. It is not only Germany that considers Fariba's body under a patriarchal gaze, as a threat to the nation yet as a useful object for the economy. Iranian state officials threatened to kill Fariba because her lesbian body violated the purity of the nation of Iran. In theocratic Iran, lesbianism is "transgressing beyond bounds" (Holy Quran 7:80-81)[13] and justifies state violence against homosexuals. Hence, Iran and Germany become homologous in their structural patriarchy of the "other", which can signify woman, lesbian or alien. The structural patriarchy in both nation states comes to signify the erection of borders while at the same time needing the other to assert supremacy over the other. Maccarone visualizes Germany's politics of containment of the threating body of the "other" how asylum seekers are kept in claustrophobically small rooms. In the detention center, Fariba has to sleep on a bunk bed in a dorm room, which she shares with at least four others. Similarly,

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[13] http://www.islamawareness.net/Homosexuality/homo.html and
http://www.thereligionofpeace.com/Quran/026-homosexuality.htm
quote the same passage from the Koran.

when Fariba as Siamak is allowed to live in the temporary home because a residence permit was granted, the room is so small that a third bed could not fit, as Fariba jokingly remarks. In Iran, Fariba was expelled, whereas in Germany, she has to be contained before officials decide whether she will be expelled or further detained (and eventually, after being granted a visa be able to live freely). As Fariba/Siamak's roommate says, he has not gotten his visa for the past four years.

Whereas Fariba does not identify with those politics and discourse, hence does not see herself as a body that needs to be contained or kept in check, Siamak has internalized this structural patriarchal violence that extends to the discourse of the "other". Siamak, like Fariba, is afraid the Iranian state nationals will kill him as they did his brother, on the grounds that the student group to which he belonged advocated ideas that were too revolutionary. Maccarone demonstrates that visually by framing Fariba on the powerful right-hand side while placing Siamak on the left side. Additionally, she does not film Fariba as a flat eroticized, fragmented spectacle that is there to be visually consumed by the male viewer, which would replicate patriarchal structures insofar as the gaze is masculine and "depends on the image of the castrated women to give order and meaning to its world" (58). Maccarone, on the other hand, films Fariba as "whole" and thus becomes a threat to the patriarchal structure that seeks to produce her as woman and alien as a threat. Maccarone films Siamak as fragmented, flat and only partly within the frame and thus places him in a victimized, feminine position. Maccarone introduces Siamak by means of a partial image of a quivering foot in the airplane, as well as partial image of his glasses. Hence, Siamak is represented as fragmented, never whole and thus

as having internalized the patriarchal structures. When Siamak and Fariba meet for the first time, Siamak's hands in the toilet stall are framed on the left-hand side of the screen.

FIGURE 1.2.
Fariba meets Siamak in the unisex bathroom at the detention center. Note the prefiguration of reversal of gender and power roles (evidenced by positions within the frame).

The mirror shot references again the powerful spatial component and the imbrication of the masculine and feminine positions. Fariba is positioned on the more powerful side and looks not at herself but Siamak, which prefigures her transformation from Fariba into Siamak. Thus she sees Siamak and not herself in the mirror, which foreshadows that she will soon occupy the real place of Siamak as she will take on his identity. She thus views her subjectivity as highly fluid, which is further represented by the fact that the bathroom is a unisex toilet. Here, neither concepts of femininity or masculinity are strengthened and enforced but rather subverted.[14] Siamak, situated on the powerless side and in soft focus, is framed in a weak and not very clear, hazy position, which prefigures his complete elimination. Siamak gazes at Fariba instead of himself, which also prefigures Fariba as the hopeful figure through which he will survive (Fariba keeps his presence alive by writing to his parents when he is gone) and through which Fariba herself will survive. Siamak is framed on the left several more times: for example,

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[14] Judith (Jack) Halberstam describes the bathroom as an extension of the domestic space for women and as a sanctuary of enhanced femininity (*Female Masculinity* 24), where femininity is strengthened. Yet for Fariba and Siamak, masculinity and femininity are presented as fluid concepts.

when he explains to Fariba how his brother is in jail. During this conversation, Siamak's image is unsteady and only partially captured in the frame. Many times he fell out of the frame, which prefigured his own death. Once he learns of the death of his brother, he escapes his fear of deportation and possibly being killed in Iran by killing himself by drinking a toilet bowl cleaner, Draino, which is supposed to clear the toilet of dirt and scum. Since learning of his brother's death, Siamak is so fearful in his anticipation of being deported that he begins to see himself as the dirt that he is regarded as by Germans as well Iranians. He takes matters into his own hands and literally flushes himself away as the unwanted scum of this earth. He becomes the abject of Iran and Germany, doing both nations the favor of eliminating himself before they have the chance to do so. Maccarone positions him in not only in a powerless abjected position but also as fragments that bespeak Mulvey's feminine position and his internalization of a patriarchal "othering" narrative. Thereby Maccarone also indicates how gendered positions are fluid rather than fixed but more so, that patriarchy is a structural power position that transcends genders and extends to narratives of "others". The narrative of the other that has to be contained, detained, is perceived as dirty or a threat, has literally killed Siamak. Fariba, on the other hand, who has not internalized that narrative, is shown looking at the cleaning products before she is summoned into the interview room, yet never sees herself as a body worthy of elimination.

Resisting Patriarchy and Imperialism through Haptic Optic

If patriarchal structures and the discourse of the "other" persist on the basis of a vision that creates distance and allows objectification of women/aliens that tries to keep

them in place and within the spatial imaginary of the nation and patriarchy, then a

resistant gaze is one way to resist patriarchy. The actual antidote to the visual economy

upon which patriarchy is based[15], however, is touch. When Fariba as Siamak and Anne

begin to fall in love with each other, Maccarone exposes Anne's female haptic gaze

(Marks 2010) as that which is attracted to the "ethnic" other (while at the same time

being attracted to sexual sameness). A haptic optic is that which operates through and

within the proximity to other bodies. As opposed to a purely visual economy, this optic

does not establish distance between subject and object but rather conflates the two. It is

also here that the body of Fariba/Siamak is not expelled and experienced as a threat that

one needs more spatial distance to but on the contrary, Maccarone presents the viewers

with the proximity to the body that is always endangered to be contained or expelled.

Consequently, through a haptic optic (which is a touching gaze, as opposed to a

penetrating visual gaze), the subject/object binary merge, with all other binaries (e.g.,

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[15] Donna Haraway explains in her articles, "The Persistence of Vision" and "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," how historically from the Enlightenment onwards, (white, male) scientists claimed to have a disembodied vision that allows for an all-encompassing and God-like vision capable of "seeing everything from nowhere" ("Persistence of Vision" 284). This vision is God-like and thus all-seeing because the eye (and hence vision) is completely detached from a human (male) body. Consequently, it promises full disclosure for one objective truth. Haraway further argues in "Persistence of Vision" that all vision is always already partial because it is first of all connected to a human body with the sensory apparatus (feeling, touching, hearing, smelling) and is always already subjective in its objective claims (283-284). We see and know on the basis of where we stand and the object we know can never fully be an object, because of its own subjective status. Our "objective" knowledge is subjectively situated and partial because of our embodied vision. Hence our claims to truth and our limits to knowledge are influenced by our senses, our bodies and our radius of interaction with others. Haraway sum up her claims by saying that, "The moral is simple: only partial perspective promises objective vision. All Western cultural narratives about objectivity are allegories of the ideologies governing the relations of what we call mind and body, distance and responsibility. Feminist objectivity is about limited location and situated knowledge, not about transcendence and splitting of subject and object" ("Persistence of Vision" 285).

alien/citizen and heterosexual/homosexual). However the collapse of the binaries is only temporary.

Laura Marks (2010) termed this gaze haptic, denoting that the eye is located in the haptic sense itself. Her conceptual framework was inspired by Gilles Deleuze and operates in a relational, rhizomatic matter: the eye is not separated from the touch and so the sensory apparatus stands in relation to the visual economy. Laura Marks's haptic optic contributes to the temporary sublation of binaries and a sense of shared subjectivity (transsubjectivity) across molar differences as Deleuze defines them as ethnicity, age or gender. Marks describes this experience of transsubjectivity as follows:

> In the sliding relationship between haptic and optical, distant vision gives way to touch, and touch reconceives the object to be seen from a distance. […] In a haptic relationship our self rushes up to the surface to interact with another surface. When this happens there is a concomitant loss of depth—we become amoebalike, lacking a center, changing as the surface to which we cling changes. We cannot help but be changed in the process of interacting (144).

The touching and the merging of the subject and object position is likened to a becoming the same surface where surface, bodies or subjects cannot be distinguished from each other. Maccarone evokes that haptic optic when Anne visits Fariba/Siamak in the temporary home in Sielmingen. Maccarone persuasively establishes a subject-subject relationship between two very different women (racially, religiously, culturally) who, unbeknownst to Anne, share the sameness of biological sex. However, it is the interaction between them rather than the defining of each one of them through a haptic optic that creates a moment of merged subjectivity and an experience of transsubjectivity. In this merged subjectivity, the two surfaces of subject and object touch and become interconnected. The surface metaphor breaks down the boundaries

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between self and other, exposing once more the artificiality of the boundaries between self/other, Iran/Germany, me/you and the concomitant construction of an unequal power-relationship.

The camerawork reflects the sliding relationship within a haptic optic, through oscillation, as well as close-ups of face and hands. The camera frames the two women in a centered medium shot, giving each of them equal space and thereby equal power. Anne is positioned on the right-hand side (more powerful side), whereas Fariba sits on the left-hand side (less powerful), which signals their power-relations but this power relationship is continuously disrupted by Maccarone's framing that oscillates between right and left angles.

FIGURE 1.3.
When Anne visits Fariba at her home, Anne showed and let her touch the Caesarean scar, which leads to a romantic moment.

When Fariba/Siamak touches Anne's Caesarean scar, the camera zooms in on the stomach and the hands touching. The skin becomes a smooth, depthless space where the hands of subject and object become indistinguishable as their hands make contact along the surface of the bare stomach. One cannot tell who is touching whom: the subject/object barrier is lifted. The two hands and consequently the two bodies, as well as the difference between them (sexually, racially and so on) merge into indiscernibility, which Sara Ahmed also calls a "metonymic slide of touch" (*Strange Encounters* 49). It is in this indiscernibility where "bodies slide into each other, in such a way that aligns some

bodies with other bodies, engendering the perpetual re-forming and deforming of both bodily and social space" (49). It is in this moment that the bodies of Fariba/Siamak and Anne and consequently of alien/citizen, legal/illegal, "masculine"/feminine become indiscernible in their closeness. The skin is emphasized as the boundary between self and other as the close-up of the stomach with the hands intertwined shows. The skin, to use Ahmed's turn of phrase, is "a border that feels" (45). It is a border to the outside as well as to the inside. In fact, as is the case with all borders, I argue that the skin is aporetic insofar as this is where the outside and the inside collapse and surface—in a literal as well as figurative sense—as affect such as shame, fear and disgust. Since affects move subjects towards reactions, the skin and its affects prompt the body to move away from some bodies while others move towards it. Ahmed (2000) says, "So while the skin appears to be the matter which separates the body, it rather allows us to think of how the materialization of bodies involves not containment, but an affective opening out of bodies to other bodies, in the sense that the skin registers how bodies are touched by others" (45). Consequently, the emphasis on Anne's skin (her bare stomach) opens her body to the body of Fariba as the touching hands become indiscernible. The border of the skin opens up to contain Fariba and Anne in an indiscernible touch (who is touching whom) that also refers to the indiscernibility of subject and object, homosexual and heterosexual desire, masculine and feminine and alien and citizen. Through the haptic touch the molar binaries collapse as they experience a one-ness of bodily touch. The hands that touch merge with the surface of Anne's skin, expanding the feeling of a shared body, shared touch and shared space.

Even though Fariba/Siamak and Anne are sitting on the bed in the cramped room that Fariba/Siamak shares with a roommate, with Anne, the bodily space becomes emphasized and concomitantly the social space for both women becomes enlarged. Whereas the asylum politics of Germany are not willing to grant more physical space to asylum seekers because they are not citizens—hence dangerous and dirty and therefore also metaphorically kept outside of the realm of the citizen—Maccarone shows instead how the physical proximity between the bodies of Anne and Fariba/Siamak engenders the opposite: the alien and the citizen become indistinguishable through the sliding of their bodies into each other. The politics of containment and/or elimination give way to a politics of touch, proximity and sameness. Hence, the transsubjective experience (subject- object merging) also engenders a transversal becoming on a molecular (affective) level. As the women experience a moment of affection towards each other, the touch also not only a physical approximation but also an approximation in each other's affective composition. Maccarone thus also stages a transversal becoming that goes indicates a shared affective composition, which in fact she underlines with intradiegetic music. As music expresses a certain affective movement, the hands and bodies adopt the rhythm of the music as well, which engenders a strong affective becoming.

The shot is followed by two close-ups, which disrupt the transsubjective and transversal becomings and restore both Fariba/Siamak and Anne to their subject/object positions again. Yet, the desiring gazes continue to signify upon their strong affection towards each other, which upsets the heteronormative desire. Even though for Anne, the gazing is within the context of heteronormative logic, for the audience the gazing

becomes a transgender and queer gaze. The viewer's gaze that is sutured to the feminine or rather transgender gaze upsets the old logic of classical narrative cinema and its patriarchal ideology that represents women as erotic spectacles that men can consume visually. Maccarone's haptic optic and transgender gaze emphasizes that a new "queer" logic is at work, a logic that "reveals the ideological content of the male and female gazes and it disarms, temporarily, the compulsory heterosexuality of the romance genre" ("Transgender" 152), as Halberstam puts it so aptly. In this queer logic, where desires are not structured into binaries (man-woman, woman-man) but rather wrested from it, the compulsory heterosexuality is upset as well.

This temporary sublation of subject/object and the indistinction of all binaries are only temporary, resist the patriarchal structures of binaries, hence interrupt and rupture that logic while at the same time providing a transnational feminist imaginary that allows for transversal becomings and a shared subjectivity (transsubjectivity). However, this framing is only temporary, as Maccarone zooms out and frames both women leaning against the wall. They are neither touching nor looking at each other. Fariba/Siamak, who is closer to the camera, is out of focus, while Anne, who is further away, is clearly in focus. Fariba becomes a blob. The crossing of boundaries between subject/object can only be temporary under a haptic optic. As Marks explains, "But just as the optical needs the haptic, the haptic must return to the optical. To maintain optical distance is to die the death of abstraction. But to lose all distance from the world is to die a material death, to become indistinguishable from the rest of the world. Life is served by the ability to come close, pull away and come close again" (144). Fariba/Siamak's blob-ness prefigures the

establishing of the boundaries between two heterogeneous entities. Yet, this establishing

of boundaries is not only the restoring of the subject and object position, the vision and

the haptic vision, but also an establishing of the alien/citizen dichotomy. Hence, as Ana

rushes out, Fariba/Siamak is left alone. Hence, Maccarone intercepts the boundaries of

patriarchal logic (and binaries) through haptic optic, tactile encounters, transversal and

transsubjective becomings and a transgender gaze, yet cannot make it permanent. Yet,

through the continuous visualization of the affective encounters between Fariba/Siamak

and Anne, Maccarone interrupts the patriarchal logic more and more.

Unveiling Hope amidst Fear

As Maccarone continuously shows how the bodies of aliens and "others" need to

be examined, contained and their spaces restricted, she visualizes an economy of fear,

which manifests in the discourse of the other as dangerous. Ahmed characterizes fear as

having a future anticipation because of an unwanted object "that approaches us"

(*Cultural Politics* 65). If fear works "to contain bodies within social space through the

way it shrinks the body, or constitutes the bodily surface through an expectant withdrawal

that might yet present itself as dangerous" (70), then hope works to un-contain those

bodies and broaden the surface of interaction, as well as to expand the social space.

Unveiled's backbone "feeling" landscape is that of a homophobic, racist nation (Germany

as well as Iran) that is afraid of otherness, endowing the other with negative value and

emotion. Hope, however, as an affect, "anticipates that something indeterminate has not-

yet become" (Anderson 733). Hope as affect works like a projectile into the future,

anticipating a better future and operating as a passage between now and the future. It thus

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marks its duration, hence the zone of indeterminancy, of future anticipation and indeterminate outcome. Hope as affect and as an anticipatory consciousness then intercepts the sedimentations of an emotional landscape that is characterized by fear towards the "other". Fariba's hopeful attitude and belief in her own truth, perforate the sedimentations of binary thought. The affectivities that vibrate in the different relations that Fariba enters into also structure the space-time of the characters and the energetic and affective compositions. Ben Anderson summarizes this quality of affect as "…affectivities of different types of relation… [that] energetically enhance or deplete the living of space times" (735).

Fariba does not internalize this fear and this narrative and consequently does not experience herself as an exilic subjectivity at all times. Yet, when she assumes an identity as Siamak and thus has to veil her identity as a woman, she begins to feel as if in exile. When Fariba/Siamak moves into the temporary home with her Russian roommate, s/he has to get up in the middle of the night to take a shower in the claustrophobically small porter- potty- type of shower. Maccarone visualizes Fariba's inner exile by tightly framing her in this tiny place through a chronotope of exile (Naficy). The only light is from a candle that Fariba/Siamak stole from a church. As Fariba/Siamak unwraps her very tightly binded- breasts the pain becomes palpable for the viewers, as the camera is so close to her/his body. The camera brings the body of the alien "other" into a painful proximity to the viewers so that viewers are left with a close-up of pained body. The body that has been shown as fearful, as dangerous is shown as the body that is vulnerable, in pain and exiled. Through a close-up of Fariba/Siamak's back and a chronotope of the

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place where her/his transformation into an inner exile (another gendered identity) happens, Maccarone not only exposes Fariba's/Siamak's inner exile but brings it into close proximity to the viewers. Viewers thus cannot but experience this inner exile as the pain they see on Fariba/Siamak's back and hear (as s/he moans in pain).

In yet another instance, Maccarone visualizes not only how the fear of the body of the "other" has to be contained and restrained, which naturally leads to a feeling of exilic subjectivity but also shows that Fariba/Siamak's resists that someone tries to push her into feeling exilic. On a date with Anne, in the bowling alley called "Exit" Fariba/Siamak meets Anne's friends such as ex- boyfriend Uwe, Sabine and her boyfriend Andreas. Sabine, Andreas as well as Uwe, misname Fariba/Siamak as "Salmi" and "Ayatollah". Salmi as a diminuative version of Siamak is a form of belittling him as well as relegating him to a place of marginality and foreignness (you are so foreign we cannot even pronounce your name). This misnaming and assigning places for the other to speak from, reflects the attitude of "othering" and assigning the other an exilic place and a place where the other can be contained.

Anne's friends peer- pressure Fariba/Siamak into drinking alcohol and then urge him/her to tell them something about where s/he is from, putting him/her into the position of being a "native informant" (Shohat 16). When Fariba/Siamak asks what specifically they want to know, she destroys their notion of being able to give an authentic report of all cultural differences. They want to use Fariba/Siamak as entertainment and want him/her to talk about his/her differences as if they were one homogenous entity. But Fariba's not answering right away, leads to more "bullying" and violence. The

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exoticizing of Fariba/Siamak serves the strengthening of their very own borders of the

Western paradigm that the other cannot even talk or represent him/herself and needs to be

helped. However, the wanting to help Fariba to express herself leads to more exoticizing

that is accompanied by violating Fariba's physical space. Uwe grabs Fariba/Siamak's

hands and says," If you cannot talk then maybe pantomime." Sabine suggests then

perhaps "expressive dance" would be the adequate medium to talk about the country

Fariba/Siamak comes from. The exoticizing shifts from a vertical superiority to a vertical

inferiority by making Fariba/Siamak a grotesque marrionnette that is too helpless to

navigate the subtle epistemic violence faced Anne and his friends. While Uwe is

"manhandling" the alien body, he is also steadily gazing at Anne, thereby signaling her

that his masculine gaze can still put the alien into (an inferior) place and signal that he

disagrees with Anne's choice of men. In this scene the repressive masculine gaze

Maccarone perpetuates the patriarchical ideology, which situates male bodies above

female bodies. The patriarchal ideology is extended to alien bodies as well, extending the

power relationship and the sadism and violence that is needed to enforce this power

relationship to the alien body as well. As Uwe feels threatened by Anne's attraction to

Fariba/Siamak, he feels the need to repress not only Fariba/Siamak by demeaning

him/her and physically intruding into his/her space but he also feels the need to show

Anne that he is the man in power, indicating that her attraction is to a less powerful

individual. Fariba/Siamak resists the physical and verbal violence that try to exile her/him

forcefully by getting up to sing a song in Persian. S/he finds an exit to the violence of this

"othering" and exoticizing. Maccarone frames Fariba/Siamak in a way that s/he stands in

front of the audience of Anne (to the left against the wall) and Uwe, Andreas and Sabine at the table. Even though they do not understand what the song is about Fariba/Siamak, they are struck by its beauty. Fariba/Siamak pushed back with her/his own vitality by opening up a third space (spatially and metaphorically) that enables and allows an understanding *transversally*, across the borders of cultural and linguistic differences. Maccarone shows how the fear of the "other" (which finds an expression in violence) becomes minimized by Fariba/Siamak's performance and her own agentic vitality that pushes back. Her refusal to feel exiled completely on the basis of a discourse of "otherness" is Fariba's hope. Her hope thus intercepts the borders of patriarchal structures of violence.

Unveiling Hope as Interruption

Maccarone ends the movie with an evocation of a Fariba's hopeful attitude and her refusal to *feel* exilic while at the same time enforcing the public discourse and imaginary of the "other" that has to be contained, eliminated or put into exile. She parallels the repressive male gaze with the establishing of the borders between nations and genders. As Siamak is ordered or "allowed" to go back to Iran because reforms have made it possible to conduct the revolutionary student group, Fariba as Siamak arranges with Anne a car-stealing mission, which helps Fariba to pay for a passport as a woman so she can finally stay in Germany legally and as a lesbian. After a night with Anne, Fariba sits at the kitchen table in her underwear and looks at her passport and her possible future life that would allow her to live her sexuality freely and most importantly to live without fear of prosecution. After Uwe and Andi enter Anne's house with their own key, which

exposes the non-privacy and non-boundaries between Anne's private sphere and her public sphere, Uwe feels so threatened in his masculinity and his feelings of propriety towards Anne that he starts to cry when he realizes that Siamak is actually a woman. Maccarone exposes how homosexuality as well as the female body in combination with the alien's body becomes such a threat to masculinity and by extension to the law of the father that Andreas feels compelled to resort to violence in order to restore his world-view, his epistemology and by extension the patriarchal power structure. Whereas Uwe feels completely emasculated and can only cope with such an epistemological crisis with tears, Andreas tries to restore the female body and the alien body to its rightful place. Andreas grabs Fariba like an animal and asks Uwe not to cry "because of someone like her," indicating the complete "otherness" as the inferior other/the women and the alien. The gender signifier "woman" and the signifier "lesbianism" unveil a barrage of masculine aggression not only towards Fariba but also towards Anne, as she tries to help Fariba. Maccarone shows the homology between lesbianism as punishable and criminal in Iran by state actors, whereas lesbianism is equally punishable by non-state actors in Germany who feel threatened in their masculinity, their structural supremacy within patriarchy.

Not only does Maccarone show the homology of punishable lesbianism but she also shows a parallel to the securing of national borders. When Uwe violently throws Fariba against the wall, thereby establishing his masculinity and supremacy through physical violence, Maccarone parallels that with the subsequent shot of the policewoman, who also throws Fariba to the ground and handcuffs her to show the supremacy of her

power as "national security." Maccarone exposes the homology between Iranian and German national politics of elimination and containment: the lesbian body cannot be contained within Iranian national borders and is threatened with elimination, whereas the lesbian and alien body cannot be contained with German national borders. Fariba is deported on grounds of "Verdacht auf illegalen Aufenthalt" (in English, "If she is illegal, she'll be deported") (01:30:04). The men manage the inner private domain by violently asserting their masculinity, while the police take over immediately once she leaves the private domain. Maccarone thereby stages a homology between non-state actors (men) that uphold patriarchal structures with the private domain and state actors that uphold the same structures in the public domain. Fariba thus not only experiences state violence in Iran but also Germany, which renders them yet again structurally homologous on how the "other" (lesbian, alien) can be treated.

Consequently, from the point of view of human rights, Maccarone shows that female asylum seekers often flee from one patriarchal society that exercises violence over the female to another patriarchal system that exercises violence over her (Daenzer 231). Instead of receiving protection from Germany on the basis that she has been threatened with death, regardless of whether it was political or sexual prosecution, Germany is depicted as less concerned with the fact that Fariba might die if sent back to Iran than whether she has legal documents. Although Maccarone clearly exposes how violent and potentially life-threatening the structurally homologous logic of Iranian and German nations is to a female lesbian asylum seeker, Fariba is nonetheless sent back. Maccarone

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explains in an interview with *Ventura* (2010) why Fariba is not allowed to stay in Germany within the logic of a "happy ending":

> Wir bastelten an verschiedensten Versionen—vom "Happy End" mit und ohne Anne bis hin zur größten Tragik. Schließlich haben wir uns entschieden, realistisch zu zeigen, dass dieses System beim kleinsten Fehler unerbittlich greift. Gleichzeitig wollen wir Mut machen, trotzdem weiter zu kämpfen, und auch in schwierigen Zeiten nicht aufzugeben. Die Hoffnung ist ein wichtiges Prinzip (All translations are my own, unless otherwise indicated; We tinkered with different versions—from "happy ending" with and without Anne to an ending full of tragedy. In the end we decided to stay realistic and show that the system will intervene at the slightest mistake. At the same time we wanted to show that you need courage and should keep fighting and not give up, even in difficult times. Hope is an important principle).

Whereas Maccarone tries to stay within the system and thereby also the binary system of keeping the binaries intact, she does intercept the boundaries through border-crossing of various sorts: the boundaries of nations are crossed, the boundaries of stable gendered subjectivities are challenged, the binaries of legal/illegal are thrown over board for neoliberal capitalistic reasons and the compulsory heterosexuality and heterosexual desire is challenged by Fariba's slippery subjectivity from Fariba to Siamak. Even though Maccarone does not show a happy ending to Fariba/Siamak's story, she does unveil hope and keeps the transnational imaginary alive through Fariba's final transformation into Siamak.

Hence, she does energetically enhance the space-time continuum by showing Fariba's fluid subjectivity, which keeps the hope and the anticipation of "fewer borders" and fewer binaries alive. Yet she ends the movie with a final shot of Fariba as Siamak framed at the left side, referencing the powerless position that Siamak fell prey to and internalized until he killed himself, as well as projecting her very own powerless position

as Siamak into the future. As Siamak, she will have to live exiled as a woman's body in a man's suit. At the same time, Maccarone also exposes the different power positions we occupy that are subject to change, which again exposes hope. In the last shot of the movie, Maccarone frames Fariba once more in the airplane bathroom mirror and shows how she transforms into Siamak. Fariba's slippery and fluid subjectivity that does not attach to a specific gender is not only emphasized by her seamless transformations into Siamak but also through her active gazes, which are typically coded as masculine. Fariba's subjectivity is primarily figured through the slipping in and out of genders and again visualized as neither particularly feminine nor as particularly "butch" or masculine, which proves Butler's point that there is no originary identity behind any gender performance and consequently can be "put on" by anybody (186). Consequently, if gender is a regulatory fiction that does not express an originary identity but rather is a perpetual performance of corporeal stylized acts that do not veil an essence of identity, then Fariba as Siamak is Siamak and sometimes Fariba, depending on the performance. The borders become aporetic and by extension this gender aporia becomes homologous again to the trespassing of physical and national borders, which are then exposed as aporetic as well. The spatial aspect of the aporetic binaries is further emphasized by the mirror shot. The framing of Fariba as Siamak in the mirror again creates a heterotopic place of the co-presence of Siamak and Fariba, where the mirror as a utopian place of the non-place of not-Fariba (but Siamak) also shows the real place of the real Fariba (as Siamak). The mirror image conflates both subjectivities and genders, rendering Fariba the hopeful aporetic figure that can conflate and hold opposites such as gender binaries and

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by extension the aporia of national citizen/alien, legal/illegal, even dead/alive in one place. The co-presence of both Fariba and Siamak as an aporia is further emphasized by the last epistolary voice-over, where Fariba as Siamak writes a goodbye letter to Siamak's parents, keeping both Siamak alive as well as keeping Fariba through Siamak alive. The borders between subjectivities of Fariba and Siamak become aporetic and co-present in a heterotopic place, as real and imagined. This letter also mirrors Fariba as Siamak's hopeful plans, namely that she will try and return as Siamak to Germany. Maccarone frames Siamak here on the right-hand side, yet as soon as Siamak puts on eyeglasses, he is on the left-hand side, which might prefigure that Siamak's return to Germany is not very likely. At the same time, it might simply prefigure that Siamak is no longer and Fariba will be the one to return to Germany.
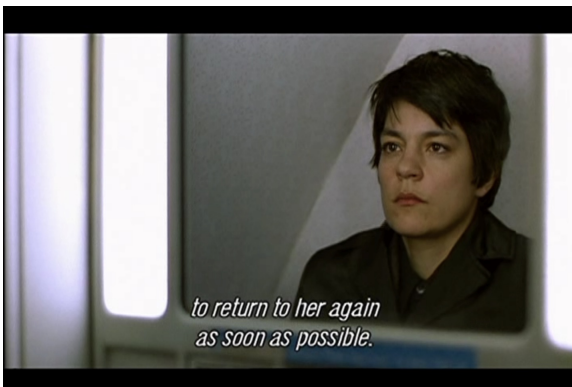
FIGURE 1.4.
Fariba transforms into Siamak in the bathroom on the flight back to Iran. S/he plans to return to Germany as Siamak (epistolary voice-over).

FIGURE 1.5.
Siamak's transformation complete with glasses. Note the position on the left side of the screen, indicating the contradictory power positions that Fariba/Siamak occupy.

The fact that Fariba/Siamak are both powerful and powerless indicate that the hopeful-ness is a powerful interruption into the otherwise public affective narrative of the "other" as less powerful and that this power binary also depends on the genders. In a subversion of the Western binary of placing woman on the less powerful side, Maccarone creates a hopeful imaginary by intercepting that with placing Fariba on the more powerful side. Whereas Maccarone has managed to successfully produce a transnational hopeful imaginary, the reality of national, heteronormative and patriarchal borders are still alive and grounded in a narrative of fear of the "other", whether that is Iran or Germany. Nevertheless, she creates a hopeful affective landscape through Fariba as an aporetic figuration that comes in-between the national, gender and identity borders, ultimately upsetting the binary thinking mode. She exposes hope amidst the homologies of securing borders in Iran and Germany within the categories of heteronormativity and national purity. Maccarone paints a hopeful affective landscape through the figure of Fariba, who is represented as slippery subjectivity that makes gender borders as well as national/legal borders aporetic through an emphasis on touch as well as a resistant active female gaze.

Hope is a strong affective force that vitalizes, enhances and augments space-time, as well as the relationship into which one enters. Hope is anchored in the belief in a new vision and optic, which is unveiled in *Fremde Haut* as a new transnational feminist imaginary that opens up national boundaries, fixed genders and primacy of vision as a sole source of knowledge and objectivity and epistemology. The slippery translation of the title supplements (as in replace and adds to) the hopeful figurations of Fariba, who

slips in an out of Iranian/German paradigms and epistemologies. She not only slips in and out but most importantly *traverses* them in such a way that they are unveiled as sharing the common denominator of fear of the other, the insistence and production of the other as sexually other/racially other/legally other, against the measuring normative "good" side (citizen, male, white, heterosexual). Fariba's moments of transversality (the me/I indisctinction), her moments with Anne that let her experience a shared subjectivity (transsubjectivity), her merging with Siamak (that extends to his parents who still think he is alive) are touching and expressed through touch (haptic optic), which deemphasizes the repressive masculine gaze and the patriarchal, imperialistic structures of Iran and Germany. Those hopeful affective landscapes that Maccarone evokes through Fariba's affects are an *interruption* into the affective narratives of fear of the "other", which do make Fariba experience an inner exile at times. Yet more often Fariba pushes back with her hopeful affectivity.

CHAPTER 2

Vibrant Texts: Nomadic Homes in Herta Müller's Novel *Reisende auf einem Bein* (1989) and Yōko Tawada's Short Story "Wolkenkarte" (2010)

> It is lived in motions: the motions of journeying between homes, the motions of hailing ghosts from the past, the motions of leaving or staying put, of "moving on" or "going back," the motions of cutting or adding, the motions of continual reprocessing of what home is/was/might have been. But "home" is also re-membered by attaching it, even momentarily to a place where we strive to *make* home and to bodies and relationships that touch is, or have touched us, in a meaningful way
> -Fortier, in "Making Home: Queer Migrations and Motions of Attachment"

Introduction

Heimat has been both a widely used and much contested concept in the German-speaking world, a concept that goes far beyond the idea of simply belonging to a certain nation or country. It encompasses notions of identity, language and patriotism, as well as notions of a unitary, often heterosexual family home. Particularly during the Romantic period, beginning with Johann Gottfried Herder, *Heimat* was associated with *Volk* (meaning the people) and was rooted in a common language (Kristeva 178). This idea helped to form the groundwork for the Nazi ideology and propaganda that incorporated *Heimat* and *Volksgeist* (spirit of the people, of *Heimat*) as the rationale for expressing superiority and cultural elitism, placing the German culture "*above* other people, languages and cultures" (Kristeva 180; emphasis in original). *Heimat* then connoted an "*invisible foundation* of universal, visible nature" (180; emphasis in original), which

served to unify the German *Heimat* under Hitler's "Reich" of "Aryan"-German people. *Volk* and *Heimat* were used interchangeably for belonging to a nation under one language. It was associated with origins, common traditions, common language and a common past (Blickle 51- 55). Thus to speak of *Heimat* meant and still often means to speak of a particular national identity rooted in a national language and a national history, which excludes the foreign and alien, proposing a unitary, stable, monolingual and monocultural entity.

German scholar Peter Blickle (2002) and German writer and academic W.G. Sebald (1991) observe in their work on *Heimat* that translations of *Heimat* into English (and other languages) are particularly tricky because it is such a historically layered German word. Blickle, who discusses *Heimat* from a variety of angles such as how it relates to construction of femininities (Heimat seen as the mother), how it can be explained psychoanalytically (*Heimat* as a place of no subject-object distinction) and how it anchors identity (de-individualization; return to mother). Blickle suggests a few English translations and definitions, including "home," "homeland," "fatherland," "nation," "nation-state," "hometown," "paradise," "Germany," "Austria," "Switzerland," "Liechtenstein," "native region," "native landscape," "native soil," "birthplace" and "homestead" (4). Blickle also mentions how *Heimat* does have a de-individualizing affect as *Heimat* usually connotes a belonging to an imagined community (15). Hence, *Heimat* can lend to an individual the experience of having rights to protection from the nation-state or country to which one belongs, a feeling of safety and security within one's country (a refuge) and a sense of communal identity (shared language, shared cultural

heritage, shared relationship with food). Sebald, on the other hand, offers a rather loose definition of *Heimat*, "All that is possible—and I don't want to attempt any more here—is to look around a little from certain vantage points … to see what in each case is called Heimat" (11). *Heimat*, consequently, always has to be historicized and has to be defined individually, as each human being has a different point of view and affective connection with *Heimat*. I will therefore translate *Heimat* as home and let the protagonists of Müller and Tawada redefine the notion of home/*Heimat* through their very own affective lenses.

Nomadic Desire: the Text as Rhizome

If a rhizome offers the readers multiple exit and entry points to the book and if the rhizome, as Deleuze and Guattari describe it, has no "beginning or end" (25) but is "between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*" (Deleuze, *A Thousan Plateaus* 25; emphasis in original), then Müller's *Reisende auf einem Bein* can be classified as a rhizome, as her novel begins with the description of being in-between two countries, which are not localized or named. As opposed to an arborescent model where a novel would progress from an origin to a telos, in a rhizomatic model, there are only lines that are connected or not connected horizontally. A rhizome, much like a ginger root, begins no where in particular and has no mother plant. Similar, Müller's text has no mother plant and origin but begins in the middle, and at the border. The description of the border is immediately linked to Irene's sense of identity and hence connects the physical border to Irene's psychological border, positioning her as an interstitial (being in-between nation, culture, languages) and exilic subjectivity (feeling in-between),

> Zwischen den kleinen Dörfern unter Radarschirmen, die sich in den Himmel drehten, standen Soldaten. Hier war die Grenze des anderen Landes gewesen. Die

steile Küste, die halb in den Himmel reichte, das Gestrüpp, der Strandflieder waren für Irene das Ende des anderen Landes geworden. …In diesem losgelösten Sommer spürte Irene zum ersten Mal das Wegfliessen des Wassers weit draussen näher als den Sand unter den Füssen. An den Treppen der Steinküste, wo Erde bröckelte, sah Irene wie in all den anderen Sommern die Warntafeln stehen: "Erdrutschgefahr". Die Warnung hatte in diesem losgelösten Sommer zum ersten Mal wenig mit der Küste und viel mit Irene zu tun (All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated. My translation of this passage is as follows: Between the small villages under the radar screens, which turned into the sky, stood soldiers. Here was the border of the other country. The steep shore, which reached half-way into the sky, the undergrowth and the lilac of the beach became the border of the other country for Irene….For the first time in this detached summer, Irene felt the tide of the water closer than the sand under her feet. At the steps of the stony shore, where the earth crumbled, Irene saw, as she did the summer before, the same warning sign. It read, "Danger of landslide!" For the first time in this detached summer, Irene felt that the warning had a lot to do with her and not so much with the shore (7).

The narrative begins with Irene describing the location of the border between two countries as that, which is guarded by soldiers. The border becomes a zone that protects one country from the other and implies that any trespassing between those two countries could be dangerous. The fact that the border has to be guarded references the narrative of nations that need to be protected from non-citizens (aliens). This scene alludes to the fantasy of border protection from evil aliens that can penetrate the nation from outside and also from inside (traitors), as Irene later on refers to it by calling it the "Sog" (undertow) coming from outside the country. The border to her has become the end of the other country (the totalitarian regime). The quote implies that the earth alludes to her old home and the other country, from which Irene is going to slide away and into Berlin, Germany. The "other country" is the country from which she is migrating, while the new place is named as Berlin later on. The "other country" thus becomes a symbol for any totalitarian regime, as it is not anchored with a specific name and not anchored in a

specific geographical location. The earth that Irene feels sliding away

("Erdrutschgefahr") refers to the country that she is about to leave and thus the earth

symbolizes her home/*Heimat* in the "other country." The water on the other hand refers

to the place (Berlin, Germany) she will migrate to. The fact that Irene stands in-between

two elements, such as water and earth, also symbolizes the two political regimes that she

experiences. Irene's physical location is at the border of two countries and two political

regimes, which marks her interstitial status. At the same time, the quote relates to Irene's

psychologically borderland state because Irene relates the warning of the

"Erdrutschgefahr/landslide" not to the physical landslides but to her very own physical

and psychological uprooting, which marks her exilic subjectivity.

Gloria Anzaldúa (2007), the late Chicana novelist and Third World feminist

theorist, describes the borderlands in her book *Borderlands/La Frontera*. She describes

the physical borderland as well as the psychological borderlands as that imaginary or real

place where two or more cultures collide: "The coming together of two self-consistent

but habitually incompatible frames of reference causes *un choque*, a cultural collision"

(100). Anzaldúa emphasizes the merits of borderland living, and borderland

consciousness as the element to end the violence of binary thinking but she also knows

how painful this experience can be. Irene for example refers to her displacement and

migration as a dangerous thing because she senses that the overthrow of the epistemology

and her sense of identity will threaten any unity of self that she might feel in the "other

country". She says that she feels the water and thus the new country (and her prospective

new home) already closer than the guarded stretch of land (the other country, her old

home). The fluidity of water corresponds to and foreshadows the fluid sense of self that Irene is about to feel once she gets displaced from this earth (the other country, this home). Hence, the fluidity refers to the sweeping away any sedimentations of identity or sedentary modes of belonging.

What makes this text a rhizome is also the fact that the narrative does not progress in a linear manner towards for example, Irene's settling into Berlin and making it her home. Hence, there is no teleological movement, as there would be in an arborescent model. As a rhizome consists of many lines, such as molar and molecular ones, a rhizome always forms a multiplicity and a heterogeneity (*A Thousand Plateaus* 5-8). As molecular lines make up the plane of immanence, where desires and affects circulate and connect and assemble, becomings and assemblages can emerge, which are not linear in time and space, but rather can involve and make time and space co-present. When the molar and molecular lines become increasingly dense and intense in their becoming, a plateau comes into existence. The density in a plateau (space and time becomes co-present, affect becomes more palpable and intense) is described as vibration. A plateau, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is "always in the middle, not at the beginning or the end" (21). Since the text begins with the middle, in between two countries, at the border, the narrative begins at a plateau of in-between-ness. Deleuze and Guattari describe a plateau as a "continuous, self-vibrating region of intensities whose development avoids any orientation toward a culmination point or an external end" (22).

Consequently, the initial quote of *Reisende auf einem Bein* illustrates such a plateau as Irene's borderland experiences (exilic and interstitial subjectivity) are

heightened and made more intense by connecting the physical uprooting to the psychological uprooting, as well as connecting it to two elements of earth and water, which evoke the opposing forces of stability and fluidity. However, that plateau is not dissipated in climax but this borderland experience (exilic and interstitial) is sustained throughout the novel. The connecting plateaus, which make up the narrative, do not culminate in a teleological end point of settlement for Irene. Irene thus does not move the narrative forward but rather throughout the novel gives a description of her affective experiences. As a result, the text has no narrative progression in the traditional sense of a hero or heroine that is driven forward by desire but rather the text assumes a rhizomatic structure of intensive plateaus, which come into being through the exilic and affective experiences of Irene.

The narrative does not follow the usual linear progression and thus is not structured according to an Oedipal desire, which constitutes sexual differences. Oedipal desire has its roots in a psychoanalytical framework, which posits that desire has a biologically rooted drive. Hence, the biological determination of desire assigns males active desire (and active visual economy) and females passive desires but also the active desire to be desired. Teresa De Lauretis (1984) discusses in "Desire in Narrative" how desire, which is always male and active, drives the narrative forward. The female is always the one who passively desires to be conquered or married by the man at the end of the narrative. Simultaneously, female desire can be active as well (which is a remnant of a short bisexual psychosexual development phase), insofar as the female can cross-identify with the male's desire to possess the female. Hence, the narrative begins with the

active desire of a male, who ventures out to get the girl. In between, there is drama, along with obstacles to overcome. The narrative usually ends by fulfilling the man's desire of marrying or conquering the girl. The female desire in such a narrative progression is passive, a desire to be desired. The female passively awaits the reward (the man) at the end of the novel. Desire in narrative thus reproduces the sexual difference and the sexual desires that order our world, as well as constituting the Oedipal myth. According to the Oedipal logic, every narrative follows the psychosexual development pointed out by Freud, which suggests that males actively desire, while females passively strive to be desired. An Oedipal logic also presupposes that the active gaze and active desire of a man is connected to wanting to know the female mystery, as the Oedipal myth symbolizes. The man wants to solve the riddle (and thus the mystery of woman) and hence thinks he can do so by penetrating her space, conquering her and subsuming her as his own (someone he knows). This also means that a narrative is pleasurable for men and women if the narrative follows the structure of a male hero actively searching for a female that he can conquer and marry. Female readers can cross-identify with the active male hero as well as the passive female, hence occupying both positions.

However, in a rhizomatic structure, desire is not conceptualized as an internal active and passive drive that also constitutes sexual difference. Desire, as Deleuze and Guattari conceptualize it, is not structured according to an Oedipal logic but is conceptualized as a positive force that is primarily active though not directed at a goal of usurping the other, as the male hero wants to actively usurp and know the female other. Desire is related to the molar and molecular structures of a subject. Desire is the plane of

immanence that seeks to establish proximity on an affective level. Consequently, Irene has to be viewed and conceptualized not only as a molar subject (a female whose age, nationality and class are unknown) but mostly as a molecular subject (as a force field of affects, intensities and desires), as she gives an account of her affective traumatic experiences. Irene's desire is a form of becoming, hence an approximation to the city and its people, which is constantly intercepted by her memories and traumatic experiences. This leads to a narrative that is not structured by a progression through actions (hence a linearity of desire) but a narrative structured by a desire that is always active insofar as it nomadically seeks to connect, disconnect, attach and detach on a molecular affective level and a desire that intensifies in plateaus (and assemblages of a molecular sort). The narrative assumes then the structure of a series of vibrating plateaus that express Irene's nomadic desire to attach or detach to the city, never arriving at a fixed definition of home/*Heimat* but rather describing the affective experiences of past homes and present experiences and thus speaking from a place of exilic and interstitial subjectivity.

Hence, the narrative moves from the anticipated uprooting "Erdrutschgefahr/landslide" not to a regrounding of Irene in the new city but rather to a settling into the new city with the desire to nomadically belong or unbelong. She daydreams and fantasizes about climbing into a train and into the landscape while observing other people, who drift through the city like nomads. In the last paragraph of the novel, Irene narrates,

> Der Wunsch zu schlafen war wie eine Sucht. Und der Wunsch, weit weg zu fahren. Aus dem Abteil durchs Fenster zu sehn, in den Sog der Landschaft hinein, die sich in grünen Schlieren wegdrehte und verschwand. Und Menschen im Abteil, die zustiegen. Die assen und schliefen. Die nichts von sich preisgaben. Die

ausstiegen an grossen Bahnhöfen, unschlüssig dastanden, eine Weile im Lärm.
Die zögernd, zwischen Wartenden hindurch, in die Städte gingen.
So zögernd, dass man, nachdem sie längst verschwunden waren, nicht wusste,
weshalb sie in zerdrückten Kleidern im Wind gestanden hatten. Vermuten oder
ahnen konnte, dass sie, die Tasche unterm Arm, die Parkplätze verloren
überquerten. An Schaufenstern vorbeigingen, ohne hineinzusehn. Wie
Gestrandete am Ufer fremder Flüsse auf nassen Bänken sassen. Auf Treppen
unter Denkmälern ins Leere sahen. Menschen, die nicht mehr wussten, ob sie nun
in diesen Städten Reisende in dünnen Schuhen waren. Oder Bewohner mit
Handgepäck. Irene lag im Dunkeln und dachte an die Stadt. Irene weigerte sich,
an Abschied zu denken (176; The desire to sleep was like an addiction. And the
desire to drive far away. To look out the compartment's window and get pulled
into the landscape, which turned away in green smears and disappeared. And
people in the compartment, who boarded and ate and slept. Who did not reveal
anything about themselves. Who deboarded at big stations and stood in the noise,
indecisively for a little while. Who hesitantly walked through people waiting, into
the cities. So hesitantly that you did not know after they were long gone why they
had been standing in crumpled clothes in the wind. You could suppose or suspect
that they crossed the parking lots forlornly, with a bag under the arm. Walked past
windows without looking at them. As if stranded, they sat at the shores of foreign
rivers on wet benches. On stairways below memorials, they gazed into space.
People who did not know any more whether they travelled those cities in thin
shoes. Or whether they inhabited those cities with carry-on luggage. Irene lay in
the dark and thought of the city. Irene refused to think of saying goodbye to the
city).

Her thoughts and desires in the above quote do not express any wish for

permanency but rather express a desire to be far away, to travel and to wander around

like the people she observes and imagines in her daydreaming. It is unclear whether she

wants to be like them or whether she observes a fantasy of people that behave like

nomads. Nomad is also a term used by Deleuze and reappropriated by Rosi Braidotti,

who defines nomadic people not as people who really wander around like actual nomads,

from place to place. Nor are they migrants (who have a destination for economic

betterment) or homeless people. Nomads to Braidotti are figurations of subjects that do

not bind themselves to one language, one nation, one thought or one idea. Nomads thus

have a critical consciousness and a healthy disrespect for any sedimentations such as for example the idea that *Heimat* can only connote a fixed place and a place or family of refuge, safety and security. Braidotti says, "Being a nomad, living in transition, does not mean that one cannot or is unwilling to create those necessarily stable and reassuring bases for identity that allow one to function in a community. Rather, nomadic consciousness consists in not taking any kind of identity as permanent" (33). Consequently, as Irene entertains that thought of nomadic people who simply pass through the city or might stay, she also entertains that idea that those people make connections to survive but don't identify with a single "national, fixed identity" (33). As those people do not reveal anything about themselves, as Irene says, their identities are not stable or fixed. And as they don't reveal anything on a molar level (who are those people, where do they come from, how old are they), they are simply determined by their movement through the city—the waiting, the crossing of parking lots, the sitting, the deboarding of trains, the eating and sleeping. Their identities are not determined by what language they speak, what nationality they have or what experiences they have had in the past. As affect is described as movement, Irene describes the nomads in their affective composition. Irene's imagination and daydreaming offers Irene all of a sudden a refuge and a safe place from where to begin to think of the new city as a home *in its affective composition of the people*. As she reimagines and redefines this home as a place that is occupied by nomadic people, temporary settlers with carry-on luggage, it is their nomadic desire that is appealing to Irene. Consequently, the idea of assembling with those nomadic people in a city like Berlin, makes the city all of a sudden a place that she

refuses to leave from. It seems as if the city offers a place for living out her nomadic

fantasies and does not require her to settle down permanently.

The last plateau thus vibrates with indecision, of "neither-here-nor-there," but at

the same time with the positivity of nomadic desire that oscillates between not wanting to

leave and not wanting to stay permanently, but of wanting to connect. As she reimagines

the city filled with nomadic people, she recreates a place for her in her mind that is not

interrupted by the traumatic past experiences of the other country. Her fantasies become a

source of possibility to create a nomadic home for herself that she can belong and

unbelong to as Irene is too traumatized to consider home a permanent settlement ever

again. Home, to Irene, can only be nomadic and mobile, as her traumas that she

experienced in the old home prevent her from wanting to permanently attach to a place

ever again.

Borderland Experiences

Upon her arrival at the airport in Berlin, the face of the dictator appears as a

phantasmagoric figure to Irene, foreshadowing Irene's inability to leave her past behind:

"Irene kannte das eine, ihr zugewandte Gesicht. Es war das Gesicht des Diktators, der sie

vertrieben hatte aus dem anderen Land. Kurz hob der Diktator den Blick. Er schaute Irene

an. Irene entfernte sich mit dem Rücken voraus, um das Gesicht des Diktators nicht aus

den Augen zu verlieren" (RB 25; "Irene recognized the face that was turned towards her.

It was the face of the dictator, who displaced her from the other country. Briefly, the

dictator looked. He looked at Irene. Irene moved away with her back first so that she

would not lose sight of the dictator"). When the dictator's face erupts into Irene's

consciousness and acts as a reminder of the traumas experienced at the hand of the dictator, the airport becomes a multi-local and multi-temporal place where Irene's past and present experience coalesce. Irene experiences the present moment in Berlin as a past/present and as a there/here. It is as if the other country is invading Berlin. The fact that the dictator's face appears as a fantasy at the airport is significant insofar as the airport as a location again marks an in-between and transitory space.

The airport marks a place where the identities of both Irene and the dictator are not tied to any particular place, country, nation but are completely anononymous. Marc Augé (2006), a French anthropologist, defines airports motels or highways as non-places of supermodernity. Supermodernity is defined by the excess of spaces such as non-places that came into existence through globalization and urbanization. Non-places are spaces that are highly frequented yet are not places in the sense that a place is where one forms an identity, settles down and forms lasting social relationships. One has a contractual relationship with a non-place, which means that one is anonymous while frequenting that place. Yet before one frequents and consumes, one has to prove one's identity. For example, you need to have a ticket to fly. The time one spends in a non-place is quantifiable and usually has the purpose of consumption: you go to the airport, in order to travel from point A to point B. Since the purpose of a non-place is not to form relationships or explore one's identity, non-places "often put the individual in contact only with another image of himself" (Augé 64). Hence, when Irene passes through the non-place and is haunted by the image of the dictator's face, she is really presented with

an image of the dictator living within her, as part of her, as the hovering traumatic wound that cannot be integrated, yet that does not define her whole identity as such.

The airport is a transitory place between the other country and Berlin where identities are not formed. It marks a transitional place, which is reflected by the emergence of the face of the dictator, which stands for Irene's traumatic experiences that emerge in a place where identities are not fixed. Hence, the dictator's face is also transitory and does not anchor Irene in a fixed traumatic identity. The transitory place also becomes a multilocal as well as multitemporal place for Irene, as the dictator from Irene's past evokes past affects that invade the present moment, rendering the place an affectively charged multidimensional place where her identity is split between past and present time, past and present place. This place becomes a thirdplace, as described by Edward Soja in *Thirdspace* (1996), where "Everything comes together in Thirdspace: subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, consciousness and the unconscious…"(56-57). Hence, in this transitory place Irene becomes victim to the trauma (structure) and an agent, as she backs away from the face. She becomes conscious of the trauma as it erupts from her unconscious; the imagined face is real as it affects her emotionally; it is palpable in her body and a phantasmagoric figure of her mind; it is part of the repetitive structure of trauma as the wound erupts in order to be healed. The transitoriness of the place thus reflects the exilic and interstitial thirdspace that Irene feels she is in: in the trauma, in the other country yet at the airport in Berlin. The splitness that occurs temporally and spatially, which exiles

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Irene and renders her also interstitial, has a homologous structure in the functioning of the traumatic wound.

Trauma theorist Cathy Caruth explains in *Unclaimed Experience (1996)* that trauma is not a wound in the body that will heal over time but rather a wound of the mind, which cannot heal with time. Because this wound is "an event that … is experienced too soon, too unexpectedly, to be fully known, [it] is therefore not available to consciousness until it imposes itself again, repeatedly, in the nightmares and the repetitive actions of the survivor" (4). This means that if the body experiences a threat to be injured, there is a chance one can protect oneself. In case the body does get injured, however, the wound can heal over time. Conversely, though, if one's psyche or one's consciousness is threatened with an injury, then the self shields itself from it by making it not available to the consciousness. The mind is not able to experience the wound not because of the quantity of stimulus but because of the "lack of preparedness to take in a stimulus that comes too quickly" (62). Hence, the threat is recognized too late and thus cannot be experienced. If the threat and shock cannot be experienced because one is not prepared, then the trauma cannot be digested. If it cannot be experienced when the trauma happened, then the self splits into a past self and a present self, whereby the past self tries to experience that trauma in order to integrate it into the self. The two selves are in touch with each other, like an inside and an outside, communicating with each other. The past self is stuck in that moment when the trauma threatened, whereas the present self recreates the conditions for the trauma to happen again in the present, so the two selves

can finally merge into one. The wound thus is the unassimilated experience, which seeks healing through an experience.

Consequently, the wound becomes latent rather than assimilated. During that latent period, the "effects are not apparent" (17) but erupt belatedly when they come in contact with a similar experience or actively search for an experience in an effort to become integrated.[16] Consequently, Irene's wounded past self such as the fear of the dictatorship which emerges as the face of the dictator, rushes up to the surface of the present self in order to heal and anchor identity to a more stable, whole identity. The image of the dictator cannot be integrated but it can be warded off, put back into latency. Since the wound also creates a split in the subject's sense of time, Irene likewise is split at that moment into a past self and a present self. Caruth explains that though the person gets away seemingly unharmed (hence survives the trauma), the apparent forgetting of the trauma causes it to resurface, at another time in another place. Hence, trauma engenders a temporal structure that joins together present experience and past events at a multi-temporal and multi-local location.

The non-place of the airport becomes a multi-temporal and multi-local place and reflects her exilic subjectivity as she feels the traumas from the other country invading her present experience. This experience renders Irene's sense of identity split which is also insinuated by the novel's title (*Reisende auf einem Bein; Traveling on One Leg*). In this non-place, as Irene's identity splits and dissolves, she is soon to be anchored into

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[16] Latency period is a Freudian term that signifies "the period during which the effects of the experience are not apparent" (Carut 17). Latency can refer to the period where the effects of trauma are not yet visible or palpable. It can also refer to a sickness that has not yet erupted but is still latent, in an "incubation period."

another identity. This anchoring is through a sign and an instruction, which is part of

what Augé calls the prescription of an identity via signs or instructions in those places.

As Augé comments:

> But the real non-places of supermodernity—the ones we inhabit when we are
> driving down the motorway, wandering through the supermarket or sitting in an
> airport lounge waiting for the next flight to London or Marseilles—have the
> pecularity that they are defined partly by the words and texts they offer us: their
> "instructions for use," which may be prescriptive ("Take right-hand lane"),
> prohibitive ("No smoking") or informative ("you are now entering the Beaujolais
> region") (77).

The airport as a non-place works via instructions and disallows permanent

identity formations. Rather, the airport experience offers Irene an identity through a sign

that prescribes her identity as Irene. Irene is literally arriving to her new self as a sign,

held by a man who announces her name in Berlin: "Da kam das Schild mit ihrem Namen

auf Irene zu. Und der Mann hinter dem Schild sagte: Du bist Irene" (RB 25; Then the

sign with the name Irene on it came closer. And the man behind the sign said, "You are

Irene"). The sign and the man behind the sign inform Irene of her identity in this non-

place, thus anchoring her with her name after she just had a borderland experience where

the face of the dictator made the airport a multi-temporal and multi-local non-place. The

sign that the man holds up and through which he interpellates her becomes an agentic

force that impinges on her and literally moves her into the direction of *an* Irene that has

arrived in Berlin. Because the traumatic experiences haunt her, Irene does not experience

herself or identify just as *the* Irene (a monolithic entity that she knows). She does not

experience herself as a whole person but feels split affectively, temporally and locally,

hence experiences her subjectivity as exilic, as being caught affectively in the other country as well as in Berlin.

Irene often refers to herself as "die andere Irene"/"the other Irene" (RB 54, 122, 166). The "andere Irene" is unfamiliar yet omnipresent and reflects a past Irene that Irene herself cannot identify with at the present moment anymore. For example, Irene sees herself in a photograph as "the other Irene" from the other country," Und wie in dem anderen Land, wie auf den Passphotos, war auch auf diesen Photos eine fremde Person. Auch auf den Photos des Automaten war die andere Irene" (54; "There was an alien person on the pictures, as it was in the other country and as in the passport photos. The other Irene was even on the photos of the machine"). The past Irene, the other Irene, is on photographs yet Irene perceives it as a foreign person, which not only illustrates how traumatized people experience the self as temporally split but also that identity is not a self-isomorphic entity that does not change over time. Whereas it is true that identity is not stable and fixed, the splitness in Irene comes from traumatic experiences that painfully create incisions. Irene's traumatic wounds erupt belatedly in a dynamic present engagement with the city.

Vibrant and Nomadic Homes

Having arrived in the city of Berlin, Irene is supposed to feel joyous about the prospect of building a new home, as the "Sachbearbeiter" (case officer), who arranges for her apartment, enthusiastically states, "Eine Wohnung, sagte der Sachbearbeiter. Nächste Woche können Sie umziehn. Es ist ein Gerangel. Wissen Sie, Sie haben Glück gehabt. Das ist nicht so einfach" (37; "An apartment," the case worker says. "Next week you can

move. It is a struggle. You know, you are fortunate. It is not that easy"). He thinks that

Irene is fortunate to get an apartment so soon and implies that it must be important to her

to have her own space, in order to make it a home. He also mentions that it is a struggle

and implies that Irene should be extremely happy to be able to get an apartment so soon.

Irene, however, is unsure about the joys of settling into a new environment and making it

her home. When she sees her apartment for the first time, she looks at the wall and thinks

about the bed (41). Without addressing anyone in particular, Irene muses, "I would prefer

a guestbed" (43; "Ich möchte eigentlich ein Gästebett, sagte Irene"), which indicates that

she does not desire to permanently attach herself to any place but would rather believe

that she is there temporarily. Her refusal to attach already exemplifies Rosi Braidotti's

"nomadic desire," a desire to do away with the sedimentations of monolithic identities.

Hence, Irene's refusal to attach expresses a new thought, namely that the home as

a permanent settlement is no longer the preferred ideal. Irene's desire to not permanently

attach to a new city or a new apartment is not entirely a conscious decision but is due in

part to the eruption of her traumatic experiences. As desires and affects are unconscious,

so are her traumatic experiences unconscious forces that disrupt a desire of potentially

wanting to settle down. Her thoughts (which share an affective basis) are similarly

filtered through unconscious forces, as the following passage indicates. When the janitor

of her new apartment gives her the keys to her apartment, he makes some small talk and

asks Irene where she has lived before, where she is from and who the political leader

there is. During that conversation, Irene seems to completely leave her body to avoid the

current situation and observes herself as if standing next to herself. The passage reads,

"Da kamen Gedanken in Irene's Kopf und gingen. Und keiner hatte was mit ihr zu tun. Ihr Koffer stand neben dem Stiegenhaus, warf einen Schatten neben die Tür. Und kein Gedanke drängte Irene zum Bleiben und keiner zum Gehn" (40; "And then thoughts came into Irene's head and left. And none of them had anything to do with her. Her suitcase was standing next to the staircase and cast a shadow next to the door. And no thought urged Irene to stay or to leave"). Her thoughts are registered as exterior agentic forces (prediscursive, prepersonal) that position Irene not as the originator and master of thoughts, language and willful actions. The thoughts do not tend toward permanently settling down, nor do they develop into a desire to return to the land of the dictator that Irene named to the janitor. Rather, her thoughts have to be seen as impersonal affects that do not move Irene's body but make her literally motionless. The fact that the thoughts cannot move or urge the body in either direction proves that Irene is conscious of the fact that her thoughts are interconnected with her body, putting her thoughts as prepersonal and prediscursive affects on a continuum with her body.

The continuum of body, affect, and thought has been theorized by Gilles Deleuze. In *What is Philosophy?* (1994), he proposes that thoughts themselves have an affective basis, which deepens the connection between thoughts, affects and the body. Before a thought or a concept can emerge, it has to go through the plane of immanence,[17] where affects and sensations circulate in a chaotic way and molecular becomings happen. By

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[17] Gilles Deleuze (2002) understands the world as divided into two planes: the first plane is the plane of organization, which houses the line of molar segmentations into binaries such as stratifications into social class, sex, gender or private/public (96); the plane of organization is interconnected with the plane of immanence that houses the other two lines, such as the line of molecular becomings, of relationship, affects and desires, which are described in speed, rhythm and viscosity; the third line is the line of flight, which is the line that makes you "become like everyone…imperceptible, clandestine" (95).

chaos, Deleuze refers not to an absence of determination but rather to the infinite speed with which affects and sensations take shape, lose shape and then take shape again (42). In order to form a thought or a concept of home, for example, affects have to be put into a form and shape, hence stopped in their movement temporarily, given a consistent form so they can be articulated. If a thought is a movement that is temporarily stopped, then it can also involve back into the chaotic plane of immanence, again into the chaos of affects. Hence Irene's thoughts that immobilize her are in fact affects that do not propel her toward a coming or going and hence do not propel her toward a telos. As affects are prediscurisve, thoughts emerge as "empty" (empty of language) first, as well before they can be articulated. As Irene cannot name those thoughts, they are prediscursive affects, which Irene simply names as unspecified thoughts that come and go. Those immobilizing thoughts are in fact past affective experiences from the old home, the other country and the experiences with the dictator that are metonymically present with the suitcase, as the passages described below demonstrate.

When Irene carries her suitcase up to the apartment, she seems to be entranced and not inhabiting her body. It is as if the suitcase conjures up traumatic experiences from the past and produces Irene as a ghostly and invisible presence to the new apartment and the potentially new home: "Irene trug den Koffer durchs Stiegenhaus hoch. Dann ging ein Flur durch sie hindurch. Dann eine Küche. Dann ein Bad. Dann ein Zimmer...Der Koffer stand lange geschlossen im Flur, als wäre Irene nur halb am Leben. Sie konnte nicht denken, nicht gehen" (41; Irene carried the suitcase up the staircase. Then a corridor walked through her. Then a kitchen. Then a bathroom. Then a room…The suitcase stood

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in the corridor for a long time, as if Irene was only half-alive. She could not think, could not walk"). Instead of Irene being the animate subject, the willful masterful subject that begins to inhabit her apartment, the apartment begins to walk through her, master and inhabit her. Consequently, the conventionally perceived inanimate objects such as the corridor, the bathroom or the kitchen become animate, vibrant subjects with agentic forces that interact with Irene. The object of the suitcase begins to assume an agentic force and impose itself on Irene with its inherent vitality, which creates an ontological vibrancy with regards to Irene's notion of home. Vibrancy is a term taken from Jane Bennett, who discusses in her book *Vibrant Matter* (2010) how all things, organic or inorganic, are sustained by the same vital energy and the same matter. Bennett thus follows a posthumanistic approach, which ontologically does not distinguish between matter in terms of organic or inorganic, animate or inanimate. She draws on the Deleuzian material vitalism, "according to which vitality is immanent in matter" (x). She defines vitality broadly, as "the capacity of things" (viii), which can "impede or block the will and designs of humans but also … act as quasi agents or forces with trajectories, propensities, or tendencies of their own" (viii). The capacity of things and their vitality is leaning on Spinoza's as well as Deleuze's philosophy that a body's or a thing's capacity lies in the ability to affect and be affected. Consequently, vitality and affectivity is inherent in all matter and thus all things have the capacity to affect and be affected. As affects are always pre-personal they do not supplement matter (humans or things) but rather are intrinsic to matter. Her aim in this book is to theorize vitality as making up an intrinsic part of material matter and to prove that humans, non-humans, trash or ingested

food all consist of vital matter, which can act as agents or actants (Bennett uses Bruno Latour's term actant (viii)). Her project becomes politically efficacious because all matter is sustained by the same intrinsically material affectivity, which equals vitality, and interacts dynamically with each other, forming and deforming, impeding and enhancing the course of events.

The suitcase, which, as Immacolata Amodeo observes metonymically often stands for home (5), begins to act on Irene and impede her thoughts. The suitcase metonymically represents the traumatic experiences that Irene had to suffer under the dictator. As it stood in the corridor, which is the hallway that connects rooms to each other and therefore marks an in-between space, the suitcase also implies that the old home occupies and marks the liminal space between Berlin and her old home, between her house there and here, as well as metonymically stands in for Irene's psychological liminality. Consequently, in this in-between space, the suitcase (her old home and her experiences) acts as a constant reminder that intervenes and pulls Irene into a paralyzing state, in which she cannot function properly. As she can neither talk nor move and feels as if she was only half-alive, the other half of her life and the other Irene seem to be stuck in the other country. It is as if the suitcase has sucked all vitality out of her, which made her only "half-alive". Hence, it is as if the traumatic experiences in the other country made her only "half-alive". Irene's subjectivity is thus again split and exilic as she painfully experiences the traumas suffered in the other country in the present.

The text begins to vibrate not only because of the interaction of Irene with her environment that has agentic forces but also because of Irene's traumatic affects that are

evoked by the object of the suitcase. The suitcase inhabiting a liminal space in the apartment represents the liminal exilic subjectivity of Irene, who experiences the traumatic past again in the present. It paralyzes her and robs her of her vitality and her agentic force to affect her environment. In a mutually constitutive relationship with her environment, the suitcase affects Irene's body so much (hence her traumatic experiences) that Irene is unable to feel joy about her new place. The text begins to vibrate with Irene's past and present affects.

Remembered Homes

When Irene arrives in Germany and gets her papers sorted out, she is asked by the interrogating official whether she has anything to do with the security service in the other country (RB 27). During the interrogation, Irene's memories of the other country intermingle with her present perceptions, rendering the interrogation a multi-local and multi-temporal experience that evokes the remembered sensations from her "old home" (country), bringing them into the "new home" (country) and creating an affective sameness,

> Der Beamte trug einen dunklen Anzug, wie Irene sie kannte aus dem anderen Land. Die Farbe zwischen braun und grau. Nur der Schatten hatte diese Farbe. Und das Blauweiss hatten nur die Hemden, die zum Schatten gehörten....Auch die Haltung des Kopfes, das Gesicht halb im Profil, ein wenig nach unten gewandt, kannte Irene....Was wusste er, der mit den Blicken zielte, von leise am Randstein parkenden Autos, vom Echo der Brücken in der Stadt...Von streunenden Hunden, die vor Hunger klapprig waren und auf Stelzen gingen, die sich neben Mülltonnen paarten und jaulten mitten am Tag. Sie hatten die Farbe seines Anzuges. Auch sie waren Schatten (27-28; The official was wearing a dark suit, the kind Irene knew from the other country. The color between brown and grey. Only the shadow had that color. And only blue-white shirts belonged to that shadow. …Irene also knew the keeping of the head with the face half in the profile, a little bit tilted towards the chin….He, who aimed at her with looks, what did he know about silently parked cars next to the curb, about the echoes of bridges in the city….about the

straying dogs, which were frail and walked on stilts and mated next to the trash cans and howled in the middle of the day. They also had the color of his suit. They also were shadows).

The color of the suit worn by the official triggers the traumatic memories of experiences of interrogation and everyday surveillance in the other country. It is the shadow's color that symbolizes the shadow of a totalitarian regime, of surveillance and police state oppression as Irene insinuates when she talks about the many forms of the shadow such as the cars that silently park, the emaciated dogs that howl and the bridges that echo. Irene's descriptions do not talk about a similar experience of interrogation in the other country, hence not revealing the real personal experience. Rather, Irene describes the atmosphere of surveillance, which is described as a shadow (and all that relates to it, such as the dogs and cars) that brings out the affective component of Irene's memory. The whole city, the bridges, the dogs and the pedestrians who notice the silently parking cars all vibrate with the shadow of surveillance, hence assume the same affective and atmospheric quality. The color of the suit, which metonymically stands in for the surveillance in the other country, triggers the memory of the same atmosphere.

Deleuze describes memory as membranes that bring together an inside and an outside that communicate with each other, similar to the traumatic wound that brings together a past self (experience, place and time) with a present self (experience, place and time). Deleuze says that memory, "which puts an outside and inside in contact, makes them present to each other, confronts them or makes them clash. The inside is the psychology, the past, involution…the outside is the cosmology of galaxies, the future, evolution…" (*Cinema 2* 206). As Irene remembers the shadow in the other country,

Irene's inside "psychology," her traumas and her past affects all function as a memory

membrane pressing against the membrane of the present "outside," during the

interrogation in Berlin, which renders this encounter again a multitemporal and multilocal

occasion. Deleuze describes the temporality as a time crystal in his *Cinema 2*. In this

crystal of time, "sheets of past and layers of reality correspond, the first emanating from

an inside which is always already there, the second arriving from an outside always to

come, the two gnawing at the present which is now only their encounter" (Deleuze 207).

Hence, in this dynamic encounter where the present shadow meets the past shadow, the

outside meets the inside, Irene narrates not from a standpoint of an intellectual memory

that would recount a similar interrogation in the other country but rather Irene narrates

from a standpoint of an affective experience, of an atmosphere of eeriness, of a shadow

of surveillance, rendering the text affective.

Thus, the memories triggered have a sensory, affective quality rather than an

intellectual one because Irene is not talking *about* the other country but rather speaking

from a place as if she is simultaneously in both countries, while speaking from a place of

experiencing the surveillance in the other country. Irene experiences the present

affectively in the same way as she experienced the past. Deleuze gives a detailed

explanation of the affective quality of such a memory. In his framework of thinking,

Irene's memory produces Irene on a molar level as the Irene who had the experience of

surveillance and interrogation in the past. Yet, at the same time, on a molecular level,

Irene's memory produces *an* Irene, which is not a particular Irene but an Irene-ness that

expresses fear of surveillance. The molecular Irene-ness, which expresses an abstract

quality of fear (sensation), occurs on a molecular level on the plane of immanence and is an "antimemory" (Deleuze, *A Thousand Plateaus* 294- 297). Memories that occur on a molar level as a punctual event have "a reterritorialization function" (294), which means that on a molar plane, the things as we remember them locate us as molar subjects in the past. Irene remembers the dogs, the cars, the howling and the color of the suit, as the other Irene in the other country. All of this reterritorializes her on a molar plane as the Irene she once was and from where she moved on. However, since molar and molecular lines are connected, memory as a punctual past event on the molar plane has to be connected to the molecular plane of immanence, where involution and a molecular "*antimemory*" (294; emphasis in original) take place. Irene is thus concomitantly also reproduced on a molecular level as an antimemory. This involves becoming *an* Irene, not a particular one but rather the sensations of the permanently hovering shadow of surveillance.

Those anti-memories produce Irene as a surveilled, haunted person who has experienced a lack of safety and security, while at the same time Irene remembers herself as a molar Irene, who experienced surveillance. The color of the suit and the associated shadow, however, bring the molar and molecular Irenes together as anti-memory and memory, making the interrogation a multi-temporal and multi-local place and sensation. The fact that those sensations produce Irene as "a" person of eerily silent cars and surveillance allows readers to read the novel along the lines of the produced sensations and feelings. The novel then can be read as a social account of any displaced person who has experienced the horrors and terrors of surveillance and the oppression of a police

state. The novel therefore becomes an affective novel that complicates the notion of home as a stable, fixed ahistorical place because home for displaced people such as Irene becomes instead an affectively charged concept that oscillates between present experiences and traumatic memories.

Home as Palimpsest

Hence this Irene-ness expresses the abstract fear of being surveilled, which renders the text an affective and vibrant text. Affective means that the text is written from a place of Irene's affectivity. Vibrant refers to the intrinsic vitality of her memories that act upon Irene and bring past affects together with present experiences, thus layering her experience into a palimpsest. A palimpsest is "a written document, usually of vellum or parchment, that has been written upon several times, often with remnants of erased writing still visible" (Palimpsests 1982). Gérard Genette, a French literary theorist reappropriated the term in his book *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* in order to describe the inherent intertextuality and transtextuality of texts, which is "all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts" (1).[18] Consequently, the temporal structure unfolds in a palimpsestic nature, as the past affects overlay with the present in Irene's description. The palimpsestic structure of a co-presence of temporal, spatial as well as affective memories (sensations) further unfolds as

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[18] Genette enumerates a whole taxonomy of features that make a literary text a palimpsest, such as intextuality (a copresence between two or more texts), a paratext (a more distant relationship with another text, such as through footnotes, titles and so on), metatextuality (commentary on another text without directly citing it) or hypertextuality (a relationship that unites two texts but not in a way that one would comment on the other; a derivative relationship; imitation; transformation). Within those categories, Genette lists subcategories as well, such as what can be classified as a hypertext, such as parody (imitation), pastiche or travesty (transformation). For more detailed information please refer to his book *Palimpsests. Literature in the Second Degree (1997).*

Irene is met with the same suspicion by the case officer at the end of Irene's interrogation, similar to what she had experienced in the other country. Whereas in the other country, she was constantly suspected of possibly working against the regime of the dictator, she is now similarly perceived as someone who could work for the dictator while in the new country, as the following quote implies. Irene narrates, "Wollten Sie die Regierung stürzen. Nein. ...Draussen hatte der Himmel sich verändert. Durch den Spalt zwischen Vorhang und Vorhang zog eine Wolke. Der Beamte hatte Irene zur Tür begleitet: Falls Sie dennoch einen Auftrag haben. Ich meine es gut (RB 29; "Did you want to overthrow the government? No…The sky had changed outside. A cloud moved through the gap between the curtains. The case- worker accompanied Irene to the door: If you have been orderd, I mean well[19]"). Even in Berlin Irene is suspected of having an order and thus begins to feel the same surveillance that she was exposed to in the other country. The eeriness and change of the atmosphere is brought about by the two curtains, through which a cloud moves. Irene says that the sky has changed, which indicates that the weather and the atmosphere have changed outside, meaning that she moved from a totalitarian regime to a democratic one. Yet, the fact that the cloud is moving through the curtains indicates that the weather and atmosphere are brought into Berlin as well, which naturally makes Irene feel that the totalitarian and the democratic regime share the same atmosphere of suspicion. The cloud, which reappears in a later quote, will also relate to the communist regime in East Berlin that was overthrown with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The cloud that moves through the curtains, which symbolizes the two countries,

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[19] If you have been orderd is my translation that should imply that Irene might have been ordered by the other country to overthrow the government in Berlin or to act as a spy.

brings in the sameness of overshadowing, of distrust and surveillance and thus creates the same eerie atmosphere. Both temporalities and spaces, of the past home and the potential new home, coalesce palimpsestically for Irene and become indistinguishable.

Irene is split into two Irenes at that interrogation moment: first, the Irene who has to undergo the present interrogation in Berlin with the official and second, the Irene who had to undergo interrogations in the other country. On top of that, the color of the suit and the demeanor of the official evoke the sensations of the other country. Consequently, Irene's past interrogation as an old present become present in the present moment as a punctual past event. At the same time, the antimemory (molecular sensation memory) shines through, to makes the present interrogation assume the affective atmosphere of the past punctual interrogation. The shadow that Irene perceives in the color of his suit becomes the same shadow she perceived in the other country, in the suits of officials and stray dogs. Irene's account is thus drawn from the borderlands of memory, where past sensations and present sensations meet. The affective sameness and permanent hovering of the shadow echo and howl through Irene's perception, haunting this interrogation, rendering the present moment a past-present moment and establishing the enemy as the interrogator (present and past). The two membranes of present peaks and past sheets, as well as present perception and molecular past anti-memory (or sense memory), touch and begin to communicate, producing an affectively charged account of the borderlands of memory, rendering the present moment a painfully experienced past moment.

Home/*Heimat* and *Heimweh*: Affective Longing

Home for Irene is thus suspended between past memory and present experience, as well as between past sensations and present sensations. Home for Irene becomes a painful reminder of a past trauma and a potential new trauma in Berlin, as she is met with the same suspicion by the German interrogator. Irene's displacement from the totalitarian regime to democratic Berlin is thus not liberation for her. Irene is not able to experience her new apartment as a new start, as a new home. Katarzyna Marciniak, a transnational feminist theorist, explores this painful exilic subjectivity in her book *Alienhood* (2006). Marciniak's project is to de-romanticize and decolonize conventional representations of aliens and immigrants as "privileged" transnational subjects that have an epistemic advantage because of their seeing double and of being familiar with at least two cultural traditions or languages. By using examples from literature and film, she persuasively demonstrates that whereas it is chic nowadays to theorize in-betweenness as liberatory and celebatory states or as a possibility for accumulating cultural capital and citizenship (Ong 1999), it is "quite different to live it" (23). Marciniak differentiates between the assimilated immigrant whose differences (cultural, language, religion) are appeased and who adds a diverse touch to the host country, on the one hand, and the alien whose color and differences still present a threat to the nation's body and soul (27), on the other. She borrows Derrida's concept of the pharmakon, which can be both poison and remedy, to describe the undecidable state in which exilic aliens can find themselves. They can be a remedy because they diversify (immigrants) or they can become abjected aliens because they poison and contaminate the national body. The alien bodies are thus forever caught

in "quivering ontologies" (27), which means that they can either be welcomed as culturally valid or rejected as culturally invalid. This complex ontological state is both a site of "painstaking complexity and possibility"(30) and thus the exilic position cannot be seen as "fully liberatory or disempowering" (30). With regard to Irene, she too is caught up in this quivering ontology and is caught between the possibility of starting a new home in democratic Berlin and between being paralyzed by her own traumatic experiences that surface when confronted with the possibility of being given a new apartment or when confronted with yet another interrogation in Berlin. Irene tries to define home yet is unable to arrive at a definition. In the following passage, Irene tries to find words to the feelings of paralysis that she experienced when she was shown her new apartment and her ambivalent feelings toward home, feelings that are neither joyful nor incredibly sad. Irene has dinner with a man, to whom she describes *Heimat*/home as follows,

> Ich bin heimatlos. Italiener. Ich bin in der Schweiz geboren. Die zweite
> Generation Ausländer. Ich bin nicht heimatlos. Nur im Ausland. Ausländerin im
> Ausland. Er lachte. Nur (RB 65; I am homeless. Italian. I am born in Switzerland.
> Second-generation foreigner. I am not homeless. Only in a foreign country. A
> foreigner in a foreign country. He laughed. Only.)

Whereas the Italian-Swiss man considers himself homeless, Irene considers herself not homeless but in a foreign land. His definition of home/*Heimat* is akin to static concepts of home as nation, *Volk* (a people) and ethnic heritage. Home is lost for the Italian because he associates home/*Heimat* with being born in the country of his ancestors, and as the source of his ethnic heritage. The Italian views home within an aborescent metaphor. An aborescent model stands in opposition to the introduced

Deleuzian rhizome, which does not have an origin (roots) and a telos (crown). For the Italian, home is forever lost because he has moved away from Italy, which he considers his roots and his originary place of home. For Irene, home is not lost and thus she is not *heimatlos* (loss of home; without home). She views home in a more rhizomatic manner without having to have an origin in a specific country. Her home dwells within her as a spatialized feeling of familiarity, which she carries with her into the foreign country where she now dwells. Her home is not something lost in an originary way, as she disclosed to the Italian. Hence it is not figured in an arborescent manner but rather in a rhizomatic manner. In a rhizome, home is not figured as an originary point or country on a molar plane alone but is also figured on a plane of immanence as an affective inventory. In a Deleuzian framework, on a molar plane, home is a physical localizable place on a map or in a country. The molecular plane can connect home to feelings (part of one's biography), sensations and affects (impersonal, project also into the future). When Irene intimates she can take home with her, home is accessible to her as molecular sensations and affects (and thus offers a future possibility of making home a happy place). This means that home is also connected to the past experiences and affects (thus rendering home a sad, surveilled place). The *nur* ("only") that Irene ironizes the connotation of only, which implies that only being a foreigner in a foreign country is not a little thing, nor an exclusive thing, nor a desirable thing but an all-encompassing feeling that suffuses her sense of self. Irene thus implies that to be a foreigner in a foreign country is not easy but is emotionally difficult and makes her feel exilic and neither feeling at home here or

there. Irene's definition of home becomes an affectively charged mobile concept that oscillates between past affects and present experiences.

The fact that Irene says she is not homeless and that she only feels like a foreigner in a foreign country implies that she carries her home (as a future possibility and a limitation from the past) with her at all times. The fact that she seems to carry her home as an affectively charged concept with her and does not locate or root it in a specific country anymore bespeaks her nomadic identity. As Braidotti says, "The nomad carries his/her essential belongings with her/him wherever s/he goes and can recreate a home base anywhere" (16). Irene cannot define home as one fixed stable place that one can pinpoint on a map. *Heimat*/home, in Irene's conceptualization, is therefore in itself a quivering concept that defies the fixity of a definition. Irene's concept of home behaves like the Derridean pharmakon, referring to both the remembered surveillance in the other country, the interrogations in both countries and the potential home-making possibilities in democratic Berlin.

Similarly, Irene cannot define home in conjunction with a nostalgic longing (*Heimweh*) for her old home in the other country. When Irene is interviewed upon her arrival in Germany, and is asked whether she has *Heimweh* (longing for home or homesickness), she says no,

> Haben Sie Heimweh. Irene sah, wie sich seine Augen bewegten, als hätten sie unter den Lidern keinen Platz: Nein. Denken Sie nie zurück. Sehr oft.Und dann. Sie haben Heimweh gesagt. Irene suchte eine Stelle an seinem Rock, an der ihr Blick sich festhalten konnte. Sie sind so empfindlich, sagte der Sachbearbeiter, so empfindlich. Man könnte meinen, dass unser Land alles aufwiegen soll, was Ihr Land verbrochen hat (55; Do you have a longing for home? Irene saw how his eyes were moving as if they did not have enough room under the lids: No. Are you never thinking back? Very often. And then. You said longing for home. Irene

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searched for a place on his suit where she could steady her gaze. You are so sensitive, said the case worker, so sensitive. One could assume that our country has to cancel out whatever your country has done wrong (in the sense of criminal offense).

She cannot or does not want to answer the question in the affirmative because she does not want to operate under the sign of the case- worker's conventional definition of *Heimweh*. In his monograph on *Heimat*, German professor and historicist Peter Blickle (2002) says that in 1688, a Swiss medical student named Johannes Hofer described *Heimweh* as nostalgia (68) and thus as a longing to return to that place where one was born. Ever since then it has been defined as a feeling of not being at ease in another country, as a dis-ease and a sickness that occurs when removed from the place where one has grown up. It has been described as bringing about physical and psychological conditions such as depression or loss of appetite. According to Blickle, *Heimweh* refers to a nostalgic longing for a unitary, wholesome place of familiarity, of feeling at ease— whether that be in terms of language (69), the place one is born into (nationalism) or as a rooting in one's self, which if absent, leads to self-alienation (70).

Hence, when the case- worker anthropomorphizes the country from which Irene originated and gives it agentic powers—it has the power to make Irene sensitive—he implies that the country is not a good, wholesome place. The case- worker says that the country has done many bad things, which Berlin now has to cancel out or compensate for. Thus the other country causes Irene to be sensitive, as it impinges on her and makes her not long for returning to it. Thus, the case- worker implies that *Heimweh* would mean for Irene to long to go back to a country (a home) that has treated her badly. Irene does long for home but not for the country that only treated her badly and that is solely

associated with the experiences under the dictator. The fact that Irene's gaze is wavering

and not steady again signals Irene's borderland state of living in-between two homes,

between two affective states of being haunted by the traumatic experiences and wanting

to belong.

Irene is literally searching for a place on his suit where she can steady and settle

her gaze. The longing for a settlement, even if temporary, can be related to Irene's

longing for a (temporary) refuge. Irene longs for the things that are also entangled with

thoughts about her home in the other country, to which readers are not privy. Irene does

not reveal anything about her past longings or her future longings. She does not reveal

anything about herself, much the way she characterized the nomadic city dwellers she

fantasizes about in the last paragraph of the novel. Irene's longings vibrate within her

narration and her descriptions that only allow readers to sense her longings rather than to

pinpoint them. As Irene says that she does have a longing, a *Heimweh* that occurs when

she thinks about the other country, she tries to define *Heimweh* for herself in conjunction

to the other country,

> Irene dachte oft an das andere Land. Doch sie drückten nicht in der Kehle, diese
> Gedanken. Sie waren nicht verworren. Überschaubar waren sie. Fast geordnet.
> Irene nahm sie hervor, in die Stirn. Schob sie zurück in den Hinterkopf. Wie
> Mappen.Was musste sich bewegen im Kopf, dass es Heimweh hiess. Das
> Nachdenken blieb trocken. Es kamen nie Tränen (83).Vielleicht hat Heimweh
> nichts mit dem Kopf zu tun, dachte Irene. Ist selbständig und verworren in der
> Ordnung der Gedanken drin. Vielleicht ist das ein Gefühl, wenn man weiss, wie
> es abläuft. Und wie man es vertreibt. Wenn man mal zu leicht und mal zu schwer
> ist auf den Strassen. Wenn das Heimweh ist, dachte Irene, dann bin ich verlogen
> (84-85; Irene thought about the other country a lot. But the thoughts did not pinch
> the throat. They were not muddled. They were manageable. Almost ordered. Irene
> took them out and moved them to the forehead. Pushed them back into the back of
> the head. Like folders.What had to move in the head so that you could call it
> Heimweh/homesickness. The thinking stayed dry. Tears never came (83). Perhaps

homesickness has nothing to do with the head, Irene thought. It is autonomous and entangled with the order of the thoughts. Perhaps it is a feeling if you know how it works. And how you can make it go away. If you sometimes feel too light and sometimes too heavy on the streets. If that is homesickness, Irene thought, then I am a liar (84-85).

Irene's thoughts about the other country are orderly in compartmentalized folders, which can be pulled out and pushed back into place. Irene does not know what has to move in her head so that it can be called *Heimweh*, which in a conventional sense implies an emotional longing (tears, feelings of anxiety and loss). If *Heimweh* is a longing for a place of refuge, then Irene does not feel that kind of longing in conjunction with her thoughts about the other country. Even though Irene does not spell out the thoughts she has about the other country, the reader can glean that they are not thoughts about wanting to return to a country where she experienced the dictatorship. As longing is a desire to connect and assemble and create a proximity through a molecular becoming, Irene's thoughts about the other country do not bring about those desires to reconnect with the other country. Since Irene does not have the conventional desire to return and does not feel sad when thinking about the other country, she cannot call it *Heimweh*. Irene identifies her longing desire that occurs with thoughts about the other country as a desire that is not related to the head but is muddled with all other thoughts as an autonomous thing, "ist selbständig und verworren in der Ordnung der Gedanken drin" (RB 84; is autonomous and entangled with the order of the thoughts). Consequently, Irene implies that for her, *Heimweh* depicts an autonomy, which persists in this orderliness of thoughts about the other country, even though it does not lead to a thought about wanting to go back or lead to an emotional reaction such as tears or depression. Irene suggests that

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Heimweh as an autonomous longing is neither a feeling nor a thought but an autonomous

bodily thing that is constantly there, intertwined with body and the orderliness of

thoughts. It is a persistent longing and not like a feeling of oscillating lightness and

heaviness of the body on the street but a longing that impinges on the body and the mind,

making this longing palpable and thinkable and thus putting it on a body/mind

continuum. For Irene, the longing is split between the past experiences of the home in the

other country that caused her pain and which thus does not make her long to go back. Yet

at the same time, her longing is also a reminder that she perhaps felt a sense of belonging

in the other country, which she cannot yet experience in Berlin. This sense of belonging

cannot be pinpointed to a language, a country or a nation. Irene implies that it is simply a

longing that she felt as *belonging*.

  Heimweh for Irene is a present reminder and remainder of a past home as it occurs

with other thoughts about the country. The autonomy of *Heimweh* as a persistent bodily

thing that simultaneously occurs with thoughts about the other country is reminiscent of

the very definition of affect by Brian Massumi. Massumi, a philosopher in the Deleuzian

tradition, describes in *Parables of the Virtual* (2002) that affect is autonomous "to the

degree to which it escapes confinement in a particular body whose vitality, or potential

for interaction, it is" (35). He further classifies autonomy as the opposite of a qualified,

formed or situated perception or emotion. Affect is that which is not classified and which

"remains unactualized, inseparable from but unassimilable to any *particular*, functionally

anchored perspective" (35; emphasis in original). Hence, affect is always diffuse and

excessive and is not tied down to a particular definition of perspective or a particular

classification of emotion. Since Irene can only describe *Heimweh* neither as a feeling

(qualified affect; part of one's biography) nor as a thought but as a persistent thing that is

recognizable in the body when thoughts occur, then *Heimweh* can be described as an

unclassified, autonomous affect that is not anchored to the perspective of an originary

home (the other country), simply a longing to belong *somewhere*. As *Heimweh* occurs in

conjunction with the other thoughts about the other country, Irene must have felt a sense

of belonging there. She does not, however, long to belong there any longer. *Heimweh* is

then a longing to belong and an affective autonomous expression of that desire to connect

and be alive and experience that aliveness. *Heimweh* for Irene is a familiar belonging,

which she does not want to tie to the other country. *Heimweh*, much like Irene's concept

of home, is an affectively charged mobile concept, which cannot be defined but is an

excessive affective longing to connect and assemble, yet not to "the other country".

Home as Historical Palimpsest

Irene's ability to imagine Berlin as a new *Heimat*/home is also constantly

thwarted by her memories that pertain to Germany's and East Berlin's historical past.

When Irene wanders the city, she observes the people and suddenly is overcome by a

feeling that Germany's fascist past could erupt again and institute the same totalitarian

regime that she knows from the other country, as the following quote illustrates,

> Dann fing Irene das Gefühl ein, es könnte plötzlich alles anders werden in der
> Stadt. Die alten Frauen mit den weissen Dauerwellen, polierten Gehstöcken und
> Gesundschuhe könnten plötzlich wieder jung sein und in den Bund Deutscher
> Mädchen marschieren. Es würden lange, fensterlose Wagen vor die Ladentüren
> fahren. Männer in Uniformen würden die Waren aus den Regalen
> beschlagnahmen. Und in den Zeitungen würden Gesetze erscheinen wie in dem
> anderen Land (53; A feeling took hold of Irene that all of a sudden everything
> could be different in the city. The old women with the permed white hair,

polished canes and orthopedic shoes could suddenly grow young again and march in the League of German Girls (Bund Deutscher Mädchen). Long, windowless cars would pull up in front of the shop door. Men in uniforms would seize goods from the shelves of the shop. And laws would appear in the newspapers that would resemble the ones from the other country).

Irene is overcome with a feeling that Germany would be swept up once again in the fervor of totalitarianism, replicating the nature of the regime in the other country, which would lead to an implementation of the same types of laws. At the same time, though, Irene references the "Bund Deutscher Mädchen"/"League of German Girls," alluding to the events of Germany's Nazi era, which would not make it a replication of the other country's regime but a revival of Germany's Nazi past. The WWII history of Germany becomes overlaid with the other country's present regime, rendering the two places and histories co-present in Irene's mind in a palimpsestic manner, defying any temporal linearity, historical progression or spatial separation.

The fact that it was a feeling that took hold of her reminds us that Irene is not consciously rationalizing and intellectualizing her thoughts or feelings but is overcome with a pre-personal affect that stems from two memories: one is her personal experiences (her anti-memory of feeling about surveillance and fear; molecular affective memory) in the other country, while another is from a historical memory (knowing of WWII and Germany's history), which renders the text passage a palimpsest with regard to Germany's Nazi era as well as Irene's own experience of a totalitarian regime, with the two becoming temporally and spatially overlaid. Irene was not part of Germany's history and hence not part of the Nazi regime, yet she feels connected to it through her own experiences in a totalitarian regime. The feeling that overcomes Irene so suddenly is

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triggered by two elderly German women, who work like a Deleuzian membrane. Irene's inside molecular memory, hence her own personal experiences, rush up to the surface of the women's faces that Irene sees all of a sudden as young girls marching in the *Bund*. The outside (the ladies' faces) communicate with Irene's inside, creating an imagined scenario that could have occurred in Germany or the other country, such as the cars that pull up (which Irene detailed in her own interrogation by the official), and people getting robbed (as they are in totalitarian regimes). Laws could be converted into the laws of the other country. Hence, Irene invests in and mediates that memory of Germany's Nazi past in an imaginative way, so that both historical times become indistinguishable in place and time as Irene perceives an affective sameness of a trauma suffered at the hands of totalitarian leaders. As the memory cannot be distinguished from Germany or Irene's own, the text assumes a palimpsestic structure that overlays both histories, which assume an affective sameness. The text thus can be read not only as an account of Irene's traumatizing experiences but as an account of *anyone* who has experienced similar traumas, thereby rendering the text a transnational, transgenerational and transhistorical affective account of traumatized people who suffered at the hands of totalitarian leaders. Simultaneously, the text is a critique and a cautionary tale against totalitarian regimes. The essence of this critique is that this traumatization has happened not only to Irene (wherever she is from) but has also happened in Germany, becoming a warning that "the laws from the other country" can be implemented anywhere, at any time. Consequently, Germany does not become a safe haven and a home that is untainted by cruelty, either.

The affective sameness (of being traumatized, of having suffered from totalitarian regimes) is further observed by Irene in the following passage,

> In dem anderen Land, sagte Irene, hab ich verstanden, was die Menschen so kaputtmacht. Die Gründe lagen auf der Hand. Es hat sehr weh getan, täglich die Gründe zu sehn...Und hier, sagte Irene. Ich weiss, es gibt Gründe. Ich kann sie nicht sehn. Es tut weh, täglich die Gründe nicht zu sehn (138-139; In the other country, Irene said, I understood what made people kaput. The reasons were obvious. It hurt a lot to see the reasons daily….And here, Irene said. I know, there are reasons. I cannot see them. It hurts not seeing those reasons daily).

Irene does not understand why a democratic Berlin would be kaput, whereas it is obvious that a country led by a dictatorial regime would suffer. Their kaput-ness could be traces of a regime long gone but they themselves might still be haunted by memories of fascism and the fact that past history could once again become the current reality. In those moments when Irene describes the city and its inhabitants from the place of her own memories, and through her own traumatized lens of perception, the text becomes a multi-local and multi-temporal palimpsest, where the pre-1945 Nazi regime shimmers through. Much like in a real palimpsest, the text and the affective realities of the Nazi regime have not been completely erased, as new texts of displaced people like Irene who suffered under a dictator have overwritten it. It hurts Irene to see the same kaput-ness in the face of people as it reminds her that Germany is not very much different from the totalitarian regime. In fact, as the previous quote showed, Germany reminds her of the same totalitarian cruelties, as fascism was a reality in Germany. The text begins to unfold palimpsestically because it holds two or more histories in a present simultaneity, bringing two nations together on the level of affective sameness, which makes it difficult for Irene to consider making Berlin her new home. Because Irene's perception is tainted with her

traumatic memories, which she bestows upon the interrogator or the inhabitants of Berlin, she is, up to the very end of the novel, unable to perceive Berlin as a possible new home, At the end of the novel, as I have quoted at the beginning, Irene does refuse to leave Berlin, as she dreams of people nomadically relating to the city. Hence, Irene's notion of home involves (in a Deleuzian molecular way) into a more nomadic home at the end of the novel. However, throughout the novel, home is such an affectively charged concept that it becomes charged with the same affects in Germany. Hence, *Heimat* is suffused with anti-memories, which actively intercept her possibilities of considering Berlin her home, as well as imaginations and historical realities of a perceived affective sameness in Germany.

Vibrant Text: A/Effective Writing in *Reisende auf einem Bein*

What makes *Reisende auf einem Bein* a vibrant text that shimmers palimpsestically is a writing style that I described as a/effective. A/effective captures the affective atmosphere and how Irene is affected by her environment, which ensues political efficacy. The text is vibrant because places, memories and interrogations, in short experiences in Berlin and the other country, have a great agentic force that act upon Irene. Irene's dynamic engagement with her environment (the apartment that inhabits her), the interrogation (the color of the suit that places her in the other country in her memory) or her perception of the German people (who place her in the other country as well as in Germany's Nazi period) create a textual palimpsest where memories, histories and affective experiences begin to overlay. As they overlay, multiple stories such as that of Germany's Nazi regime begin to interact with Irene's personal history, the

interrogation in Berlin begins to assume the same "color," the same fear of surveillance and thus even the atmosphere and affective composition becomes indistinguishable between Irene's story and Germany's story, her past and her present.

Irene manages to narrate her text not as an account of her personal experience but rather narrates *from* a place of her affective experience that emerges in the contact of the membranes between her own inside (her memories and traumas) and the outside (her present experiences in Berlin). Jill Bennett, a scholar who discusses affect, trauma and loss in primarily visual art and performance in her book *Emphatic Vision* (2010) explains how the affective dimension in performance, visual, and written artwork can best be expressed and experienced by the onlooker or reader. She concludes that if an artwork is produced in an affective manner (and not in a purely representational manner)—which means that an artwork for example does not discuss a scream but rather is produced from a place of scream—the one engaging with the artwork cannot but experience it on the level of affect and sensation as well. According to Bennett, because anti-memory is not a discussion of a personal Deleuzian punctual event but is rather a "tapping into a process experienced not as a remembering of the past but as a continuous negotiation of a present with indeterminable links to the past," and "involve not so much *speaking of* but *speaking out* of a particular memory or experience—in other words, speaking from the body *sustaining sensation*" (459; emphasis in original). Consequently, if Irene does not speak of the past or the other country but rather speaks out of her experience of being surveilled, she does so from the perspective of the perceived shadow. Readers likewise

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can then experience rather than intellectualize Irene's feelings of displacement if the text
is written from a place of Irene's (molecular) sensation and her traumatic experiences.

The following quote demonstrates how Irene narrates from a place of sensation
that brings together the affective present with the affective past. When Irene waits for the
train at the station adjacent to the Übergangsheim (temporary home), she begins to
observe people and to imaginatively invest in her observations by seeing them as part of a
theater play, with which she invites readers to engage. At the railroad tracks, she
observes, "Es war ein Bühnenbild für das Verbrechen. Ein Mann in Uniform ging mit
dem Funkgerät den Bahnsteig entlang. Er musterte die Stille mit den Blicken. Er sprach
in das Gerät. ...Er spürte den Sog nicht" (31; "It was a stage for the crime. A man in
uniform walked along the railroad tracks with a radio device. He examined the silence
with looks. He talked into the device...He did not feel the undertow"). Irene's
observations are of the man in uniform and the radio device he has. Most importantly,
however, is the fact that the atmosphere of surveillance and control is similar to her
descriptions of the soldiers that guard the border of the other country at the beginning of
the novel: "Zwischen den kleinen Dörfern unter Radarschirmen, die sich in den Himmel
drehten, standen Soldaten. Hier war die Grenze des anderen Landes gewesen. ...Die
Steilküste war wie gebaut aus Erdbrocken und Sand, wie gebaut von Soldaten, damit der
Sog nicht ins Land, nicht ins Innere kam, von irgendwo her" (7; "Soldiers stood between
the little villages below the radar screens, which turned toward the sky. Here was the
border of the other country…The steep shore was built as if from hard clumps of dirt and
sand, as if soldiers built it so that the undertow would not come into the country, into the

inside of the country, from somewhere else"). In the new city of Berlin, she perceives the man in uniform as a soldier who cannot feel the undertow that the soldiers in the other country tried to ward off. The undertow prefigures the overthrow of the totalitarian regime in the other country but also alludes to the overthrow of the communist regime in East Berlin. Thus the text begins to unfold palimpsestically with the sameness of the undertow that broke totalitarian regimes as well as the sameness of the soldiers that guarded the other country and that guard the border that divided East and West Berlin, which is evidenced by the fact that Irene names the stop and the play Wilhelmsruh. Wilhelmsruh is the name of the train station where Irene is waiting. It is also the border that used to divide East and West Berlin. Irene says, "Das Stück hiess wie die Haltestelle: Wilhelmsruh. Eine Wolke war dünn und zerbrochen. Sie kam aus dem anderen Teil der Stadt. Aus dem anderen Staat herüber" (RB 31-32; "The play had the same name as the train stop: Wilhelmsruh. A cloud was thin and broken. It came from the other part of the town. From the other state"). The broken cloud that came from the other state references the broken communist regime from East Berlin after the Wall fell in 1989. Similarly, the broken cloud might also refer to the end of fascism in 1945, as well as the overthrow of Romanian communist leader Nicolae Ceaușescu in 1989. The broken cloud is also referencing the cloud that Irene perceives after the interrogation in Berlin, as discussed earlier. That cloud that came through the curtains metonymically stood for the sameness of interrogation, suspicion and surveillance between two countries.

Thus, palimpsestically, Irene's perception merges her personal history in a communist country with Germany's fascist and Cold War pasts by mentioning the

soldier, the undertow and the broken cloud, as she referred them to both Germany and the other country. Narrated from a place of perceived affective sameness, the text begins to vibrate as the histories, places, and countries impinge on each other in their agentic vitality, which disrupts a linear time progression as well as a strict divide between separate nations or states.

Neutral Writing

Irene's observations and play continue and she describes three heterogenous scenes (or plateaus), all of which depict a specific affective atmosphere, which she rhizomatically connects with each other. Irene first observes a couple kissing but can see only separation, "eine Klemme" (32) (a clamp), in the kissing, rather than a unifying moment. Without a noticeable transition, Irene's play moves to herself writing a postcard to Franz, whom she met in the other country and with whom she had a brief sexual encounter. The postcard begins with the words, "Franz, ich hab dich angerufen (Franz, I called you)" and ends with the words, "Ich will dich sehen (I want to see you)." The text cuts without any transition to, "Das Kind hielt die Hand hin. Die Mutter gab ihm Chips. …Die Mutter kaufte eine Schachtel Streichhölzer" (33; "The child stretches out his hand. The mother gave him chips. …The mother bought a box of matches at the kiosk").

Irene's imaginative play enacts transitions without a coherent plot; it is as discontinuous and fragmented as Irene's displacement and her experiences in Berlin. As her play is described in plateaus of intensive states and is moved forward by a nomadic desire the play presents a mise en abyme of Irene's story. The aesthetics of neutral writing, as described by Roland Barthes, allows an expression of such intensive states. In

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his seminal book *The Neutral* (2005), which is a compilation of his lectures from 1977-

1978, Barthes describes the neutral in terms of the structural and linguistic nature of the

sign. The neutral has nothing to do with colorlessness, grayness, indifference (7) or

political neutrality but rather refers to " intense, strong, unprecedented states" (7).

According to Barthes, writing neutral means to not write in structural oppositions, to not

define or reify positions but instead to "outplay the paradigm," which is an "ardent,

burning activity" (7) and depicts a "passion for difference" (Barthes 77). Hence, writing

in neutral means *to write the difference* and produce meaning not in the conflictual

opposition but rather to emphasize the *incomparability* of difference (my emphasis).

Barthes gives a whole taxonomy of the features of a neutral writing style, such as an

abstention from correction, an indifference to contamination, a "no ranking," as having a

relation to the present and as banality, weakness, strength, restraint and stupidity (*The

Neutral* 82-85). The "no ranking" is particularly important, as it deals with a de-

hierarchizing in language, defining the writing of the difference in more detail. The

quality of "no ranking" stresses the uniqueness of something without elevating it as the

best above all others. For example, Barthes mentions that instead of affirming Cortot as

the "first, or greatest pianist of the century" (83), a neutral writing would stress and

expound on the uniqueness of Cortot without ranking him among pianists. The difference

lies in the description with regard to the sense in which Cortot is incomparable. His

difference does not need to be sublated, ranked into an order of differences (as in the best,

the first, the only) but is described in terms of nuance. The nuanced description of

something makes the text shimmer. Barthes describes this as follows: "…the Neutral

might reside in this nuance (shimmer); it denies uniqueness but recognizes the incomparable; the unique is shocking precisely in that it implies a comparison, a crushing under quantity; it implies singularity, even originality, which is to say competitiveness, agonistic values ≠ In-comparable = difference…" (Barthes 83). That means that a neutral writing style does not seek to establish hierarchies, orders of rank but instead emphasizes "progressive accentuation (plus/minus) of intensities, their incremental shimmer: the stretching of process underway, not position taken" (ATR 11). Consequently, writing in a neutral way emphasizes the affective component of an experience rather than the description of an experience as it relates to other experiences. A neutral writing style emphasizes the incomparability of how an experience affected a particular person.

Irene's narration emphasizes the intensive neutral state in the kissing couple, "Das Paar küsste sich. Die U-Bahn rauschte in den Schacht. Das Paar küsste sich ohne sich mit den Händen zu berühren. Die Lippen gespitzt, drängten zueinander. Die Küsse waren kurz. Die Augen blieben offen. Die Lippen trocken. In den Küssen war keine Leidenschaft. Auch nicht die Leichtigkeit wie im Spiel. In den Küssen war eine Klemme" (RB 32; The couple kissed. The metro rustled into the shaft. The couple kissed without touching each other's hands. The lips pursed, pushing towards each other. The kisses were short. The eyes remained open. The lips dry. There was no passion in the kisses. Not even the lightness as in play. There was a clamp in the kisses"). The writing is neutral because it does not rank the kissing but describes it in its difference: the kisses were short but they were not better or worse; the eyes remained open; they did not touch with hands, which is neither good nor bad. The writing displays an accentuation of a

gradient of the kissing that stretches from short kisses to no touching with hands to a clamp in the kissing, all of which make the this passage shimmer in its incomparable description of kissing. The relationship between the kissing couple and the fragment of Franz is a transition that is discontinuous. Irene forms yet another plateau that vibrates with her own desire for Franz that cannot be fulfilled either but still remains intense. The transition involving the mother and the child is abrupt and emphasizes an atmospheric shift from the writing of the postcard and the observation of the kissing couple to the rustling of the chips and the matches. Barthes describes this atmospheric shift as follows,

> …an immediate and precise consciousness of the smallest shifts of affect that attack my body (jealousies, urges to get rid of fears, desires, etc.)…hyperconsciousness of the affective minimal, of the microscopic fragment of emotion = filings of affects …which implies an extreme changeability of affective moments, a rapid modification, into shimmer (101).

The relationship between these three different events is, however, not conflictual but rather forms a succession of intensive states. There is no inherent connection and belonging-ness between the mother/child, the postcard to Franz and the kissing couple. Each segment speaks of fragmentation and not unity (the kissing couple experiences a clamp in the kissing; Franz is absent, she wants to see him; the mother and child don't enjoy an activity together) but they form—in themselves and in relation to each other—unrelated heterogeneous elements. Affect is transmitted from one segment to the next by recording the microscopic shifts in atmosphere and the intensification of the in- between.

Thus, instead of describing the relationship between the heterogeneous elements of the postcard, the kissing couple and the mother with the child, Irene describes the uniqueness of each element. When Irene observes the mother and her child, she describes

the affective change in the interaction between the child and an older lady in an observational, non-interpretive manner,

> Die alte Frau hatte die Schachtel neben ihren Schuh gestellt. Sie schaute dem Kind ins Gesicht. Da ihre Wangen weich wurden, spürte das Kind, dass die Frau im nächsten Augenblick lächeln würde. Das Kind hörte auf zu essen. Drehte sich weg.So rasch drehte das Kind sich weg, dass eine Flucht in der kurzen Bewegung war. In den Augen der Frau lag Verwunderung. Die Streichhölzer in der Manteltasche der Mutter waren still. Die Verwunderung war so deutlich wie eine Frage. Sie kroch der alten Frau übers Gesicht. Als sie den Mund erreichte, wurden die Wangen hart. Die Augen klein. Dann war es Hass… (RB 34- 35; The old woman put her box next to her shoe. She looked the child directly into the face. Since her cheeks became soft, the child felt that the woman would smile in a moment. The child turned away so quickly that there was an escape in the short movement. There was astonishment in the eyes of the woman. The matches in the coat pocket were silent. The astonishment was so distinct, like a question. It crawled over the face of the old woman. When it reached her mouth, the cheeks became hard. The eyes became small. Then it was hatred…).

Irene perceives every "microscopic fragment of emotion" (Barthes 101), such as the softening of the cheeks and how the child knows that this softening will culminate in a smile. Irene perceives the old lady's astonishment at the child's abrupt turning away, the hardening of her cheeks, and the hatred that follows that hardening of the cheeks. Irene is unable to see love and trust in encounters: the couple who kisses has no passion/"keine Leidenschaft" and no lightness (RB 32) in the kissing but rather a "Klemme"/clamp (32). The shifts in atmosphere—such as the non-passionate kissing or the hatred that ensues because the child turns away form the old lady—vibrate with Irene's own affective composition and her remembered experiences from the other country. As Irene has experienced the same non-passion with Franz, she notices it in the kissing couple as well. As she has experienced the atmospheric shifts in the other country that are marked by suspicion, eeriness and surveillance, the scene between the child and

the old lady similarly begin to assume the same atmosphere. The last paragraph of the quote, which ends Irene's imaginative play vibrates particularly with Irene's own story, as she alludes to a murder: "Als die Bahn wegfuhr, blieb der Bahnsteig leer. An der Stelle, wo das Kind gestanden hatte, lagen Chips. Es war eine Stille wie zwischen Hand und Messer gleich nach der Tat" (RB 34- 35; When the train left, the railway track remained empty. There were chips at the place where the child had been standing. There was a silence similar to the silence between hand and knife shortly after the deed). The fact that Irene connects the hatred of the old lady to a possible murder, with the chips on the ground as a reminder of the deed, alludes to the fact that Irene has seen people murdered in the other country out of spite or because they were opposed to the regime. When Irene gets German citizenship and receives a letter from a friend from the other country, who informs her that some of her friends had died, Irene says, "Es gab mehrere Freunde, die so alt wie Irene waren und tot" (RB 168; "There were numerous friends who were as old as Irene and who were dead"). Irene implies that had she not left for Germany and thus the dictatorship, she might have ended up dead like her friends. Consequently, the atmosphere of hatred between the old lady and the child and the subsequent allusion to murder alludes to the hatred of people against the dictatorship and the possibility of getting murdered as a result. Thus, the atmosphere begins to assume an affective sameness and vibrate as two stories, that of the lady and the child, and that of Irene's story of running from the dictatorship (and possible murder), overlaying in a palimpsest.

What makes this writing so affective is not only the fact that Irene perceives affective changes but that it vibrates with the story of her own sustained sensations,

rendering it a story within a story of historical totalitarian regimes. Having left her home behind, Irene's perception is still haunted by fear of death (the deed with the knife), fear of surveillance, and by an unhappiness and broken-ness that she perceives even in the faces of the people of the new city (138-139). Her past shapes her present perception and prevents her from settling into the new city and making it her home.

The political efficacy of an affective text that is written from the perspective of sustained sensation with meticulous descriptions of atmospheric and affective changes is twofold. First, the description of affective changes and changes in atmosphere and the description of intense states force the reader to experience those intensified states rather than to identify with a specific historical linear sequence of events. In Deleuzean terms, silence or hatred as described by Irene produces silence and hatred in us. This is not tied to any molar distinctions (Irene is a person from a totalitarian regime, nothing else is specified) and hence can apply in its molecular abstraction to any silence, hatred, and fear. Consequently, the description of affect and its Barthian structural neutrality favor atmospheric shifts and do not reify any binaries such as totalitarian regime/fear and democratic regime/joy. Rather Irene's descriptions intervene in those binaries by describing the ubiquity of the same affective atmosphere in two political regimes with Barthian aesthetics of neutral writing. As a result, affect *has the effect of transmitting the same* affect transversally across two political regimes, which deconstructs binary opposites of political regime, historical times and national space.

Consequently, the notion of home as a spatialized feeling becomes a palimpsestically (temporal and spatial) layered feeling that vibrates with the sustained

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sensations of "past home," as well as potential "present home." The two sensations constantly stretch between the two poles, suspended between a state of "neither here nor there" and quivers in-between, which makes Irene experience herself as split and exilic. The text thus becomes an affective shimmering palimpsest that deals with home from the sustained sensation of the past as well as the present affective observations. The political efficacy of the text lies in its capacity to dismantle and demystify home as a place of wholeness, familiarity, comfort and belonging. The text also casts home as the place that can inflict great violence and fear. Similarly, home is not a place that is tied to a specific nation or political regime but can, as an affective inventory, transversally cross over to other nations and political regimes. Similarly, the sadness or fear generated by one home in the past can be perceived as the same sadness in a different location and time, rendering home a mobile affective concept that reverberates transnationally, transgenerationally and transhistorically. If home can "politicize … geography, demography, and architecture" (Mohanty 195), then home in Herta Müller's *Reisende auf einem Bein* not only politicizes the geography but also emotionalizes the geography of home.

Minor Writing

Müller's aesthetics of writing, as well as the political efficacy of her writing, resemble Deleuze's and Guattari's description of minor literature. The first feature that Deleuze and Guattari mention in "What Is a Minor Literature?" (1993) is that every minor literature is written in a major language that is used in a minor way (Deleuze, ML 16). As an example, they enlist the Prague German of the Jewish writer Kafka, who also

wrote in German but as a Jew, using the German language in a non-vernacular, deterritorialized way. Müller's first language is German but it is a highly accented German, much like the Prague German of Kafka that Deleuze and Guattari mention. The primary characteristic of minor literature is that it "involves all the ways in which the language is affected by a strong co-efficient deterritorialization" (16), by which they mean that Kafka's as well as Müller's German is used in an unusual, desiccated way. Müller's sentences are short and precise, reading like German, yet a German that is not used vernacularly or by the masses. Just as Kafka used his inflected German—the result of his belonging to an oppressed Jewish minority, displaced from the German of the "mainland"—Herta Müller uses the German that she acquired as a member of an oppresed minority. German in Prague, like German used by a Romanian-German speaker in Berlin, is a "deterritorialized tongue suitable for strange, minor uses" (16). Hence, what makes her novels and also *Reisende auf einem Bein* poetic is the minor usage of the German language as well as the neutral writing or affective writing, which I will explain in the paragraphs below. Müller herself says in the documentary, "Writing Against Terror," which was made following her receipt of a Noble Prize for literature in 2009, that the poetics of her writing are due to her having Romanian in her head while she writes in German. Things thus always have "zwei Stationen" (dual identity) because she might write the word in German and have the image of the Romanian word in mind. She defines this contrast as inherent poetry (cf. documentary 10:36-10:56).[20]

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[20] In the documentary "Writing Against Terror," Herta Müller says, "Ich schreibe das Wort auf Deutsch, aber habe das Bild vom Rumänischen im Kopf. Das war immer schon in sich etwas Poetisches" (I write the word in German but the image in my head might be from the Rumanian. There was always inherent poetry

Müller thus writes from that gap and that borderland where two languages, two cultures and two experiences of home clash. The novel certainly challenges the German national corpus of *Heimatliteratur* (home literature or national literature). As the protagonist Irene redefines home/*Heimat* challenges the conventional concepts of *Heimat* as a stable place of one language, one identity and one culture, the corpus of *Heimatliteratur*, which came to be known as a glorification of one's country of birth, is also challenged. The novel points beyond a *Heimaliteratur* because it is not about Irene per se as an individual story where the social milieu and the country serve as a mere background of *Heimat*. Rather, the story of Irene points to the difficulty of any displaced person (who has to or wants to leave a particular country or a regime), to define *Heimat*. The emphasis of the novel is not on Irene's migration to Berlin and in finding a new home that serves as a refuge from the totalitarian system. The emphasis is on the affective experiences of Irene and her experience as an exilic subjectivity, which becomes intertwined with the affective experiences of people suffering under the Nazi regime or suffering under the division of Berlin into two separate political regimes. This feeling of being ripped from what used to be home to feeling not quite at home in a new city is an in-between condition, an ambivalent condition of feeling neither here nor there. It is a feeling that can be shared not only by displaced people but also by people who do not share the opinion of *Heimat* as a safe refuge and a place of feeling "whole."

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because of that contrast) (10:44-10:55). The translations are taken from the subtitles of the documentary, which is partly in German and partly in English. Herta Müller's German answers are always subtitled and I am quoting the exact English translations here.

In that sense, Müller's novel exemplifies what Deleuze and Guattari identify as the second feature of a minor literature, namely the political efficacy of a minor literature as revolutionary, in the sense that it serves as an eye-opener to people who believe that *Heimat* can only be conceived of in conventional terms. Deleuze and Guattari say of the second feature: "The individual concern thus becomes all the more necessary, indispensible, magnified, because a whole other story is vibrating within it" (17). The other story that is vibrating within it relates to the fact that it is not only about Irene but also about the parallel to the same affective experiences that people under the Nazi regime must have had. This lends to the novel a collective value (the third characteristic of a minor literature), which means that Irene's story is also plugged into the national history of Germany. It has a collective value, as the other story vibrating within Irene's story is that of Germany's Nazi past, along with East Berlin's alignment with communism and West Berlin's alignment with democracy. The novel thus provides a fictionalized *affective* account of displaced people, including the protagonist Irene, whose home is somewhere in between the trauma experienced in the old country and the new city. The traumatic experiences such as the memories of surveillance and policing reoccur throughout the novel in a dynamic engagement with present experiences in the city. Irene never talks about the real personal experience of living under the dictatorship. She cannot or does not want to communicate that experience. Her past traumatic experiences thus seem to slip into present experiences as flashbacks and also vibrate within the descriptions of her present experiences.

Jill Bennett, for example, who investigates trauma and affect in contemporary art in her book *Empathic Vision* (2005), calls trauma-related art "*transactive* rather than *communicative*" (Bennett 7; emphasis in original). This implies that the readers of trauma-related literature can experience the trauma as it acts upon the readers in the transmitted affective quality. It also means that the real experience (the real events that led to the trauma) is not and simply cannot be communicated. Her definition of trauma is similar to what the author Müller herself says about her own novels. Müller characterizes her novels as autofictional, by which she means that the fictionalized version of what one has experienced adds something to the experience that cannot be expressed in language. In this way, the novel names her own trauma as a gap that cannot be talked about, since the real event and what it caused cannot be talked about. Hence, the traumas can only be expressed through fiction where the affective quality of the shock can remain without having to talk about the real event. Müller explains "autofictional" as follows: "Das ist eine erfundene Realität. Und gerade durch das Erfinden, nur durch das Erfinden kann ich die Dinge vielleicht einigermassen treffen, die in Wirklichkeit gelebt worden sind. Das habe ich mit Autofiktional gemeint" ("This is a fictional reality. And it is through fiction, and only through fiction, that I can to some extent, recreate the things that happened in real life. This is what I meant by autofictional" (05:21- 05:35).

Hence, the novel is not about Müller, nor about the protagonist Irene, but rather about the pure affective component of being displaced. It is also about the epistemological crisis of having to define oneself anew, as well as having to define anew the notion of home. It can be read then in a larger sense as a social critique of *Heimat* as a

stable concept tied to nationalism, German culture and monolingualism. Müller's writing represents a resistance against that ideological regime, which she has experienced and where language was abused for ideological purposes, such as Nazi propaganda. At the same time, Müller's writing represents a continuous testimony of the horrors experienced, haunted by experiences of dictatorship and surveillance.

Yōko Tawada's "Wolkenkarte" (2010)

Tawada describes her writing in German as a freeing herself from her Japanese mother tongue, as a mother tongue sticks to the person and determines his/her identity. In order to write in German, she has to jump from Japanese to German and often falls into a gap, which she considers an important part of her writing, as it defamiliarizes both languages and exposes the inherent foreign-ness and constructed-ness of a mother tongue and any other language. In her words,

> Aber Deutsch und Japanisch sind von Grund auf verschieden. Und von meiner Muttersprache springe ich hinüber zur deutschen Sprache; ich versuche, über diese Kluft zu springen, und falle jedes Mal hinein...Wenn man in diese Kluft einmal hineingefallen ist, dann ist die Muttersprache auch ganz fremd. Diese Gefühl ist für mich ganz wichtig: sich von der Sprache zu befreien. Denn die Sprache klammert ja normalerweise fest an einem Menschen und bestimmt alles, was er wahrnehmen kann. Es ist ganz wichtig sich von der Sprache zu trennen (quoted in Koiran 259; But German and Japanese are fundamentally different. And I jump from my mother tongue to the German language; I try to jump over that gap and every time, I fall into it…If you fall into that gap, then the mother tongue becomes very strange, too. This feeling is very important to me: to liberate yourself from that language. As language usually sticks to a person and determines everything that s/he can perceive. It is very important to separate oneself from the language).

This gap between mother tongue and other languages is important to Tawada, as it creates a distance between two languages, which affirms the inherent foreign-ness and unfamiliarity of *every* language. Tawada describes language as sticking to oneself, as it

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then determines one's identity and how one perceives the world. Thus, to separate oneself from the language, which Tawada chose to do deliberately because she wished to study foreign literature, is important for her to unhook monolingual and monocultural belonging from its sedimentations of belonging to one nation. Mother tongue is not natural or familiar but learned like a foreign language. In an interview with Monika Totten, she explains: "Well, I think it is an illusion to believe the mother tongue to be authentic. The mother tongue is a translation from non-verbal or pre-verbal thoughts, too. Language is not natural for us, but rather artificial and magical" (95). Consequently, Tawada's writing deals with the affective basis of language and its inherent foreign-ness. Tawada's description of her writing from that gap is similar to the way Herta Müller describes her own writing, when she says that she often has the Romanian image in her head when she writes the German word. Thus, both authors write from in-between languages and thus from in-between two national and cultural concepts. They write from the perspective of an exilic and interstitial subjectivity (the borderlands) that they themselves occupy.

The Text as Shimmering Palimpsest and Rhizome

"Wolkenkarte," only two pages long, is divided into three sections, interwoven into one rhizome, with each section discussing a different yet related aspect of what it means to live in-between languages. Together, the sections form a shimmering rhizome and palimpsest as they relate to each other, while at the same time overlaying each other.

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Section 1, Plateau 1, towards a postmonolingual paradigm

The first section of "Wolkenkarte" from Tawada's *Überseezungen* (2010) begins with the question, "Haben Sie eine Karte?" (WK 51; "Do you have a card?"), to which the Japanese narrator "I" answers, "Wie bitte?" (51; "What's that, again?") because s/he did not understand the question. The "I" is consequently thrown into an epistemological crisis not because she does not understand the word "Karte" but rather what "Karte" means in this specific social context (in the supermarket). The "I" wonders, "Ich habe die Frage nicht verstanden. Was für eine Karte sollte ich hier an der Kasse haben?" (51; "I did not understand the question. What kind of card should I have here at the check-out in Basel?") and tries to find an answer by tying the word "Karte" together with similar occurrences of "Karte" in other linguistic and cultural communities, as well as with other meanings of "Karte" within the same linguistic community. Instead of translating the word "Karte" into Japanese, the "I" explores various meanings of the word "Karte" as it pertains to similar social situations. The fact that the "I" does not translate into the Japanese mother tongue exposes the fact that the word "Karte" in Japanese would not make sense in that social situation at all. Thereby she exposes not only the German but also the Japanese (mother tongue) foreign-ness of the tongue. The "I" connects the word "Karte" to the "Starcard," which s/he was asked for at a supermarket in Boston. Whereas in a Western context, it should have become evident by then that "Karte" and "Starcard" probably refers to the membership card for regular shoppers at particular supermarkets or chains. The Japanese "I," however, is not familiar with that epistemology.

When I speak of the Western context (versus the Eastern context), I am referring to a distinction that is not geographical but refers to an epistemological perspective (which also includes language and cultural concepts). Ella Shohat and Robert Stam (2001; 2003) have defined the West as the epistemological standpoint (rather than a physical location), emanating from Europe and positing that standpoint as the normalizing and hierarchizing pole, against which all other epistemologies must be measured. They define the West as having a Eurocentric perspective, which "[l]ike a Renaissance painting … envisions the world from a single privileged vantage point. It maps the world in a cartography that centralizes and augments Europe…It bifurcates the world into the 'West and the Rest' and organizes everyday language into binaristic hierarchies…" (Shohat et al. 2003, 8). Europe is not defined in its geography as in the European Union or in an Anglo-European way (7) but is rather defined as a Western perspective that stands in opposition to the rest. Hence, when the "I" looks at the word "Karte" form an Eastern (Japanese) perspective, s/he cannot make sense of it.

At the same time, though, the "I" could equally ironize the fact that the "Karte" and "Starcard" obviously asked for a membership card, as both instances occurred at the check-out of a supermarket. By assuming an unknowing position, the "I" does not exhibit stupidity or naivete but rather challenges from a distance the apparent, natural and commonsensical meaning of a word, as well as challenges the obvious transparency that a Western perspective would lend to this riddle of the "Karte". Thereby the "I" moves towards a collapse of the binaries East and West, which I will explain in the next paragraphs.

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The "I" translates the word "Starcard" literally into the German "Sternenkarte," which does not even remotely refer to a supermarket card but literally refers to a card that can denote a belonging to a star. The "I" thus chooses that meaning and relates that "Sternenkarte" to having an ID (einen Ausweis), which would mark a belonging to a specific place. The "I" says, "Es kam mir vor, als ginge es um einen Ausweis, den man braucht, um zu dem Ort zu gehören. Ich besass keine Sternenkarte in Boston, also war ich von einem anderen Planeten. Und was für eine Karte sollte ich hier in Basel haben?" (WK 51; "It seemed as if this was about an ID that was needed in order to belong to that place. I did not own a starcard in Boston and that's why I was from another planet. And what kind of card should I possess in Basel?"). This of course, alludes to the fact that a passport or ID is required to mark a membership to a certain national community. Therefore the "I" relates the ID also to other forms of cards that one needs in order to claim membership and belonging to other groups, such as drivers (52). As the "I" explains: "Es gibt in manchen Ländern Karten, mit deren Hilfe der Staat kontrolliert, was das Volk konsumiert. Früher blickten die Könige auf den Rauch, der aus den Schornsteinen der Häuser aufstieg, um zu sehen, ob das Volk genug zu essen hatte. So steht es zumindest in manchen Märchen" (WK 51; There are in certain countries cards used by state to control how much the people consume. In the past, kings looked at the smoke that was emanating from the chimneys of the houses, in order to see whether the people had enough to eat. At least that is what it says in many fairy tales"). Here the "I" points to the fact that a card, which denotes and connotes membership to any group— whether that be a national community, group of supermarket shoppers or a different

group of consumers—is really a matter of exercising control. A card can thus be used to

determine insider or outsider status within a national community. If one does not posess

that card, one is not an insider with regard to that particular national community. Hence, a

card or a passport really works as a control mechanism to regulate the borders of a

national community and determine status as an insider or outsider, as a citizen or alien.

The "I" explores the function of a card as a controlling mechanism further when she

mentions that cards serve the purpose of controlling consumption. The "I" here also

alludes to communist regimes, which used food cards for purposes of rationing food for

each citizen. The "I" then mocks the controlling mechanism of a card by mentioning that

in fairy tales, the kings did not need a card to control the amount of food that the people

consumed—they only needed to watch the chimneys. The "I" thereby alludes to the

mechanism of power and control that the word and function of a card can have. With the

last meditation on the king's controlling and surveilling food consumption through

vision, the "I" implies that in pre-modern times, control and power were centralized,

whereas nowadays, power and control are dispersed and tangible and palpable in many

different forms. Nowadays, cards are needed to drive a car (driver's license), to confirm

one's identity (ID) and to belong to a nation (passport), as the "I" astutely observes (51-

52).

Again, the "I" assumes the position of an ironic observer and fans out the German

word "Karte" until it becomes intelligible and foreign in the context it was originally

used. This usage of the German language is a minor usage that Deleuze described as

desiccated. Much like Müller, Tawada uses a major language in a non-vernacular usage

and thereby defamiliarizes the apparent familiarity, while at the same time making it non-sensical. The "I" deterritorializes the word "Karte" completely from its proper usage in the supermarket context. In fact, because it is repeated multiple times in different linguistic contexts, it begins to lose any proper designation. The word "Karte" does not signify anything in particular any more, as it has acquired so many different meanings. Rather, as Deleuze and Guattari say, "There is no longer a designation of something by means of a proper name, nor an assignation of metaphors by means of a figurative sense. But *like* images, the thing no longer forms anything but a sequence of intensive states" (21; emphasis in original). This intensive state is brought about by the many images that the "I" conjures up. Together they form a mosaic of images that is made up of the various heterogeneous meanings of cards. Deleuze and Guattari refer to this as "a distribution of states that is part of the range of the word" (22). Hence, the many meanings of Karte in the German context become distribution of states on a plateau and each of them vibrates with its own story, such as an allusion to the communist regime or an allusion to a card that denotes belonging to a planet like an extraterrestrial alien (Starcard). The word "Karte" could mean that the "I" has to show an ID as a form of belonging (to make sure s/he is legal or allowed to drive, for example) or that the "I" has to be controlled in terms of her food consumption.

Thus, for the Japanese "I," who does not belong to any of those national communities and who does not belong to any of those languages (which also connote a national community), the experience of non-belonging to a language translates to non-belonging with regard to a national community, as well and to a general position of

outsider. When the question of "Haben Sie eine Karte?" (Do you have a card?) is repeated again, the "I" understands the key word to mean "Kumo-Karte" (52), which is a German-Japanese hybrid word. The "I" translates the hybrid word into the German, as "Wolkenkarte," (cloudcard). The "I" then concludes,

> Ach so, in Amerika musste man eine Sternenkarte haben, während man in der Schweiz eine Wolkenkarte brauchte. Nein, ich habe keine Wolkenkarte, antwortete ich. Leider nicht. Wenn ich nach einem Ausweis gefragt worden wäre, hätte ich meinen Reisepass oder meinen Fahrausweis...zeigen können. Aber Wolken konnte ich keine vorzeigen (52; Oh, in America you have to have a starcard, whereas in Switzerland, you need a cloudcard. No, I don't have a cloudcard, I answered. Unfortunately not. If I had been asked for an ID, I could have shown my passport or my driver's license. But clouds, I could not show).

Filtering the word "Karte," then, through her Japanese ear, the "I" creates a new word beyond German and beyond the native tongue of Japanese. Because of the "I"'s unique in-between language position, the "I" can filter the German word "Karte" through the Japanese ear and overlay the word "Karte" with a Japanese overtone. The "I" ironizes again that neither the German language nor German pronunciation is fixed and familiar but can be exposed as unstable and foreign. The "I" overlays the German word "Karte" with the Japanese word "Kumo" (cloud, German *Wolke),* which deterritorializes not only the German language but also the Japanese because "Wolkenkarte" (cloudcard) is a non-sensical term in both languages.

Yasemin Yildiz, a feminist German scholar, aptly describes Tawada's approach to defamiliarizing the German language as follows: "[S]he mobilizes bilingualism within each language to find new connections and associations between them. Rather than looking for the "mother tongue," she looks for spaces beyond it" (11). Yildiz calls this deviation from the mother tongue, the disinterest and impossibility of excavating *the*

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meaning of the German word, a sign of a postmonolingual paradigm. Yildiz defines the

postmonolingual paradigm against the backdrop of the persisting monolingual paradigm

that emerged at the end of the 18th century, with German thinkers such as Johann

Gottfried von Herder, who believed that one can only feel, think and express oneself

properly in one's mother tongue. Benedict Anderson in his book *Imagined Communities*

linked this monolingual paradigm as being instrumental in the formation of the imagined

community of a nation.[21] A monolingual paradigm thus structures subjectivities,

identities, nations, academic discipines and thus in general modes of belonging. A

postmonolingual paradigm for Yildiz is twofold: the prefix post signifies a temporal

dimension, as it means emerging "*since* the emergence of monolingualism" (3). It also

interrupts and ruptures the persisting monolingual paradigm, signifying a struggle against

it. Hence, when the "I" in Wolkenkarte links the German "Karte" with the Japanese

"Kumo," making it a cloudcard, the "I" literally ruptures the monolingualism of the

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[21] Anderson mentions three major historical and cultural revolutions that enabled the imaginary of a nation to form: (1) the decline in coherent religious communities, (2) the decline of monarchic rule and (3) the establishing of print capitalism. Print capitalism and the fact that a supposedly fixed language can unite people under a horizontally imagined nation, "…laid the bases for national consciousnesses" (44) because they unified and homogenized people under one vernacular. Even though the people within this community did not personally know each other and were separated spatially, print capitalism provided a powerful reminder that there are people who speak and understand the same language. Hence, an imaginary of people who speak, read and understand the same language was experienced as being part of the horizontal comradeship of a nation" (7). Anderson also mentions that this homogenous horizontal language community relied on the fixity of language, which print capitalism emphasized and that print capitalism also selected a language, which would become the vernacular (45). Thus, through a unification and homogenization of a comprehensive language community, people across a certain territorial region (including many dialects and regional languages) could comprehend "one another via print and paper" (44). In addition to that, time (24-26) became a homogenous variable, measurable by clock and calendar and distributed by newspaper and novels, which emphasize the simultaneity and homogeneity of time moving forward. Hence, people from one nation and language community thought that even though they were separated from each other spatially, they felt that they were connected by the same time progression.

German word, as well as the Japanese word. Similarly, the "I" also ruptures the idea of a monolingual nation as a mode of belonging.

A postmonolingual paradigm, according to Yildiz, thus identifies "a field of tension in which the monolingual paradigm continues to assert itself while multilingual practices persist or reemerge"(4). Consequently, the "I" thus breaks the monolingual paradigm by introducing the Japanese "Kumo" (cloud, *Wolke*) into the German "Karte," creating a multilingual neologism of "Kumokarte," which the "I" then translates into "Wolkenkarte." The breaking apart of the Westernized monolingualism by shading it into the Eastern Kumo also brings together disparate nations and frameworks of thinking, which affirm a postmonolingual paradigm. Yet at the same time, the "I" is still positioned as not having clouds to show her belonging-ness, which positions the "I" neither inside Japan nor outside Germany, marking her interstitiality. It literally positions the "I" in-between those nations—while at the same time nowhere in those nations, as the "I" exposes that those nations are constructs much like the constructed hybrid word "Kumo-Karte." If one language determines the belonging to a nation, then the "I" cannot belong to one nation with a Japanese-German word. Section one thus forms a rhizome, as it connects the various meanings of the word "Karte" in a deterritorialized manner, fanning out the word as a distribution of intensive states that also include the English-speaking world (and the translation), as well as the hybridized Kumo-Karte. The distribution of states of the word create a palimpsestic nature of this section, as well, as it overlays many stories around the word "Karte." This section begins to shimmer, as it stresses the transitions from one state of the word "Karte" to the next. At the same time, the text

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assumes a vibrancy, as the "I"'s discursive position is affected by the forces of the various meanings of "Karte": in Boston, the "I" feels like an extraterrestrial because she needs a "Starcard," whereas in Basel, she feels she needs "clouds" to show her belonging-ness. With a Kumo-Karte, however, the "I" belongs in-between the German and Japanese languages and nations, while at the same time, she unbelongs to both, as they are imaginary constructs to begin with. The unbelonging (or in-between and multilingual belonging) of the "I" in the first section and the introduction of a postmonolingual paradigm are interrupted by section two and the persistence of a monolingual paradigm.

Section 2, Plateau 2, oscillation between postmonolingual and monolingual paradigm

The second part of the text does not develop the card question further but connects it to another instance that positions the "I" clearly as an alien and outsider to the German language, thereby reinforcing the monolingual paradigm that is closely linked to the formation of the idea of a nation. Whereas in the first section of the essay, the word "Karte" is multiplied in its connotations within one linguistic community—and across linguistic communities, thereby resisting a monolingual paradigm—the second section highlights the persistence of the monolingualism. Consequently, both sections, section one and two, exemplify the postmonolingual paradigm that Yildiz describes, which is at the same time both a resistance to monolingualism (section one) and a continuation of monolingualism (section two). The sections together represent an oscillation between monolingualism and postmonolingualism, which also reflects on the "I"'s own exilic ontological position as a subject. The second section opens with a question, "Haben Sie

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ein Velo?" (WK 52; "Do you have a bike?") which the "I" does not misunderstand or mishear but hears filtered through the Japanese ear, as the Japanese word tongue (Zunge). Since the "I" inhabits a cultural and linguistic borderland, to use Gloria Anzaldúa's term, the "I" is naturally endowed with a double "ear." However, to live in the borderlands cannot only provide an "epistemic advantage," as Marciniak mentions (22), but can also be a painful experience of abjection from the host country. Just because the "I" is able to hear and understand "Velo" as the German word for "bike" or the Japanese word for "tongue," that does not translate to an advantageous epistemology for the "I". Whereas the bike question is not such a philosophical or epistemologically important question, the question of "Do you have a tongue?" becomes a serious epistemological question, as the tongue is an important organ for speech and speech is an important marker of language mastery. If as a foreigner the foreign language has been mastered successfully and is spoken without an accent, then the chance of an alien's inclusion into the nation is higher. The "I" rephrases the question that was posed to him/her as, "Haben Sie die Zunge, die man braucht, um hierher zu gehören? Nein, habe ich nicht. Denn meine Zunge kann die Wörter nicht so aussprechen, wie die Zunge der Einheimischen" (WK 52; "Do you have the tongue that you need in order to belong here? No, I do not. For my tongue cannot pronounce the words the way that the tongue of the natives can"). The "I" concludes that s/he does not have the tongue that would allow her/him to speak like a native. The first section multiplies the meanings of the word card and positions the "I" as a multilingual being and neither as an insider nor an outsider to the national context but rather as operating in-between. The second section, in contrast, reasserts a monolingual paradigm,

which inevitably ensues the binaries of national vs. foreigner, native vs. non-native, as well as West vs. East. The reassertion of a monolingual paradigm thus performs an incision into the text and expresses the "I"'s painful exilic subjectivity as s/he experiences her/himself as an outsider to the nation of Switzerland.

Section 3, Plateau 3, for a postmonoligual paradigm

The third section of "Wolkenkarte" does not develop section one or section two further but connects rhizomatically with the previous sections. Whereas the third section marks the last section of the short essay, the first section does not mark the beginning from which each section narratolgically moves towards a teleological end. Similarly to Müller, Tawada's "I" enacts nomadically, transitioning from one vibrating plateau to another, exploring the intensive states on each plateau. The third section explores the exilic and interstitial state of the "I" further and this time the "I" becomes the agentic force that positions her/himself into a powerful discursive position that challenges the Western standpoint of native vs. foreigner or alien vs. citizen.

The foreigner, the Japanese "I" educates the readers (and the Swiss people) by explaining that in a linguistic essay, s/he has found out about the 75 regional expressions for ladybug in Switzerland (in German, "75 regionale Ausdrücke für Marienkäfer") (WK 52), thereby intimating that the foreigner is also able to understand German linguistics. Whereas this gesture would merely place the "I" in a superior reverse position, thereby reifying the binaries, the "I," however, opens up a space of negotiation with a last question that dissolves the binaries: "Wie bezeichnen Sie das Tier, das auf dem Rücken Sterne trägt?"(52; "How do you call the insect, which carries stars on its back?") is an

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open question (as opposed to a closed question that only allows a yes or no answer, which solidifies binaries) that allows for and even invites multiple answers. The "I," as the one who inhabits the borderlands, opens up a space for negotiation within the Swiss nation that allows readers as well as the Swiss people, to whom this question is directed, to realize the inherent multilinguality of their own nation.

The "I" thus challenges the monolingual paradigm under which a monolingual nation operates. Whereas it was previously the Swiss people who asked the question and who therefore forced the "I" into epistemological crises, it is now the "I" who becomes the agentic force that questions the Western foundations of monolingual nationhood. Thus, the Japanese narrator, who has been in the position of the alien and the outsider to the monolingual nation, positions her/himself into the discursive position of the educator about the inherent multilingual nation. Additionally, the form of the question is equally important. As the "I" was asked closed questions, which only allow for a yes or no answer, thus allowing only a binary reply, the "I" asks an open question, which encourages and forces the addressed party out of the notion of a right or wrong answer (a right expression of a ladybug and a wrong one). The "I" therefore challenges the monolingual nation through a reversal of roles, which also reverses the roles of the Western standpoint (Swiss and American) and the Japanese standpoint.

Baroque Relations and Palimpsest

The visibility of the divide between the Japanese foreigner and the Swiss German native is also a divide between the East and the West, by which I refer to the epistemological standpoint. In plateaus one and two, the "I" is asked by Swiss people a

closed question that can only be answered with yes or no. In order for anyone to answer with yes or no, one has to first understand the question and if understood, then also be able to answer. The difficulty of understanding is manifold. First, the "I" narrates from a Japanese (Eastern) perspective, thus from the perspective of a foreigner within a German-speaking European (Western) context. Whereas the narrator appears to be very knowledgeable about the German language, she is either not familiar with the intricacies of Swiss German culture and language or she ironizes the fact that there is such a thing as familiarity within a language, by viewing the German language from a distance. The epistemological crisis in the first section occurs because the "I" is unfamiliar with the very specific requirements of a card in a Basel supermarket. Instead of clarifying and asking what kind of card the "I" is being asked for and thus instead of pushing for utmost transparency of the question, the "I" opts to not ask for clarification but chooses instead to "figure it out." At the same time, the "I" might know the answer already and seek to expose instead the arbitrariness of the meaning of a word such as "Karte," "Starcard" or "Kumo-Karte." Instead of reterritorializing the meaning of "Karte" into the Japanese (language) territory, the "I" decides to fan it out into distribution of states in order to *intensify* the inherent foreign-ness of a word. Thereby she draws not only on the German words but also the English and Japanese words of "Karte" in a supermarket context. Consequently, the "I" is less interested in transparency and more in interested in making the word intense by making it more opaque.

Opacity is a term coined by Édouard Glissant, a postcolonial critic, poet and writer from Martinique. In his book entitled *Poetics of Relation* (1997), he discusses the

interrelatedness of cultures, identities and histories. Glissant proposes that seeing the world and history as related rather than opposed can reshape the binary logic of (Western) thinking. In his sub-chapter "Opacity" (189-194) of the main chapter "Poetics" (183- 205), he discusses the right to difference and the right to opacity. Opacity, for Glissant, is not the obscure (though it can be) but the fact that one cannot truly know the bottom of things, people or cultures. Opacity relates to his concept of relation and of baroque relation, which favors the interrelatedness of ideas, identities or cultures rather than the idea of homogeneous, self-isomorphic entities that can be connected or strung together. Glissant describes baroque relationships as an artform and as a technique that layers, relates, relays and favors "expansion" over "depth" (77). Baroque appeared at a time in the West where the worldview was that nature is "harmonious, homogenous, and thoroughly knowable" (77), hence a reaction against a homogenizing transparent worldview. As baroque favors the inter-related-ness of things, favors heterogeneity and opacity, Glissant relates the baroque relations and the metaphor of opacity (versus transparency) and baroque relations (versus in-depth relations) to the relations between the East and the West and the colonizer and the colonized.

If cultures are interrelated, baroquely layered and made up of heterogeneous elements, then cultures or relations between cultures can only be opaque (and hybrid) rather than transparent. Glissant defines transparency in relation to the Western epistemological standpoint as the West, which historically tried to know and understand the "other" (East), as well as colonized the members of this group in order to subsume their particularity under their universalism. The West, as an epistemological standpoint

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that encompasses the Western binary logic that emanated from Europe and includes the

Northern hemisphere of the Americas, historically tried to know the members of the other

and make them transparent so that they could be understood. In "Opacity," Glissant

explains however that the transparency is in reality a Western construction, as opacity is

the natural state of things. He writes,

> If we examine the process of "understanding" people and ideas from the perspective of Western thought, we discover that its basis is this requirement for transparency. In order to understand and thus accept you, I have to measure your solidity with the ideal scale providing me with grounds to make comparisons and, perhaps, judgments. I have to reduce (189-190).

Consequently, the need for transparency is also a need to reduce the difference

that would not fit the Western episteme and the Western normative measuring stick.

When the "I" from a Japanese (Eastern) perspective refuses to delve further into making

the word "Karte" transparent but rather decides to make it even more opaque by relating

the word "Karte" to the English "Starcard" or to the "Kumo-Karte," she not only

baroquely layers the German, English and Japanse languages and cultural systems (thus

favoring expansion over depth) but refuses to believe that there is a natural transparency

of the word "Karte" that can be fully known and understood. The "I" thus exposes the

natural opacity of a word and by extension the opacity that disallows the reduction of

difference and meaning to a standard of Western transparency. The Western need for

transparency to Glissant also involves an enclosure that seeks to violently grasp the

different other and draw it into its circle of apparent transparency. Hence, this means that

differences of the "other" can only be understood within the Western norm and are thus

added within a Western system to create unity (191-192). Those differences are

understood according to a Western episteme rather than in and of itself as simply different, which also presupposes that the Western standpoint is that of transparency as well. If the word "Karte" can only be understood from within the Western standpoint, then the "I", who shows how opaque and baroquely related the meaning of the word is within the German language, layers it with English, as well as Japanese. The meaning of the word expands and becomes layered with many overtones and stories, yet does not facilitate an understanding what kind of card the "I" has to show. It does not help the "I" to adopt a Western point of view and explore the meaning of the word within the German or English language. Nor does it help the "I" to assume a Japanese-German (East-West) perspective, as it does not lead to an understanding and a transparency of which cards need to be shown. Consequently, the "I" exposes the inherent opacity of a word in one language but also the inherent opacity and baroque interrelatedness between Eastern and Western languages (and epistemological standpoints).

As the "I" remains in the space of exposing the baroque relations between languages as well as perspectives, remaining in the space of expanding the meaning of "Karte," s/he also does not form a unity or totality but rather creates intensive states. The "I" does not propose a unity among the states or centralize one meaning of the card over others, which would "make sense" to show at the check-out in the supermarket. As it does not make sense to show a passport, an ID to a belonging to a star ("Starcard"), it does not make sense to show a food-rationing card, or a cloudcard ("Kumo-Karte"). Rather, the "I" creates opaque and baroque relations, weaving together those meanings within one fabric that does not centralize one that would epistemologically make sense

and clarify what card needs to be shown. Hence, just like in a rhizome that has no overpowering master with supremacy over others, the baroque weave shows no unity and one epistemological standpoint (one central meaning that would make sense and would clarify what card needs to be shown). For Glissant, to understand the weave, one

> …must focus on the texture of the weave and not on the nature of its components. …perhaps, give up this old obsession with discovering what lies at the bottom of natures….Thought of self and thought of other here become obsolete in their duality….This-here is the weave, and it weaves no boundaries. The right to opacity would not establish autism; it would be the real foundation of Relation, in freedoms (190).

Instead of creating a closed system of unity between the different meanings of "Karte" in section one, the "I" generates a baroque relation that has no boundaries. Instead of trying to excavate in an in-depth expedition the meaning of the word "Karte," the "I" focuses on creating a weave of meanings, a distribution of intense states, a fanning out of a word. Whereas in the first section of the essay, the "I" exposes the weave and opacity that does not create an understanding of what card needs to be shown, while not creating a mute-ness or an autism, either, as the "I" ponders and exposes the weave. The epistemological standpoint between East and West becomes interrelated and voiced as equally opaque, as the "Kumo-Karte" ("Wolkenkarte) cannot be shown, either.

However, in the second section of the essay, the "I" creates a rupture in the view and overlays the textual weave or the text with the divide between the native and the foreigner—and by extension, the Eastern versus the Western norm and framework of thinking. The second section then becomes a postcolonial and historical reminder of a divide and of the binary logic between East and West. A palimpsestic relation unfolds as the second section overlays the first section with the East- West divide that positions the

"I" literally in a muted and autistic position. Hence, the relationship is not one of freedom and equality but one of the "I" being in a subordinate, more powerless and autistic position than the Western "native" one.

In the second plateau, the "I" affirms the divide between the native and the foreigner as s/he affirms that s/he is not able to pronounce words according to the (Western) German norm. The "I" establishes and solidifies the Western Swiss-German norm of pronunciation versus the foreigner and Japanese (Eastern) pronunciation. The fact that the Japanese "I" is not able to pronounce words "correctly" exemplifies Glissant's statement that opposed to the Western norm, the Eastern Japanese "I" is certainly different and pronounces differently. This grasp under the Western norm can be experienced painfully and render the discursive position of the "I" in a less powerless, outsider position. The "I" expresses this grasp as an inherently physiological difference, as her/his tongue cannot pronounce the words in a "correct" native way. The tongue metonymically stands in for the "I"'s "Japanese-ness" and her Eastern perspective. The "I" thus experiences her/his difference as a literally disabling foreign-ness. To link the foreign-ness with disability is based on a Western binary logic that posits the healthy, the able-bodied, the male and the rational on the good side, with the sick, the disabled, the female and the emotional on the bad side. This binary logic originated around the Enlightenment period, where the notion of mind over matter or man over woman not only stratified and hierarchized the world but also created a mindset that Ella Shohat and Robert Stam call Eurocentric. As explained earlier, this framework of thinking does not connote a European framework of thinking but rather refers to the binary logic that

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emanated from Europe (the Enlightenment period) and stretched to the "Western world," including Europe and the Northern American hemisphere. This framework of thinking allowed and enabled a view of the rest of the world as different—a view whereby difference connoted not simply an equally valid difference but a lower, uneducated barbarism. This Eurocentric view that divided the world provided justification for colonizing the "barbaric rest," in order to civilize them. Consequently, the binary of native versus foreigner and able-bodied versus disabled also includes the binary of East and West. As Tawada overlays the first section with the second section in a palimpsestic way, the text becomes vibrant as the "I"'s discursive and power position changes from the first plateau of unbelonging or in-between belonging to the second plateau of complete unbelonging, as a disabled foreigner outside the nation.

Vibrant Text: A/Effective Writing in Yoko Tawada's "Wolkenkarte"

The text assumes a rhizomatic structure insofar as the three sections of the essay are connected in a non-teleological way and can be read independently of each other. As a multiplicity and an assemblage, then, the three sections of the essay are interconnected with each other, yet each section develops its own thought on a plateau that vibrates by expressing a certain intrinsic vitality and affectivity. The text assumes a vibration in combination with the three plateaus that in themselves vibrate with a certain intensity.

The first plateau vibrates with the intensive distribution of the words' distribution of states and its stories and positions the "I" neither inside nor outside the Swiss German-speaking part of the nation. The "I" thus asserts a postmonolingual paradigm, as words are exposed as inherently related and baroquely layered with each other across cultural

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and linguistic differences. The opacity that the interrelations of words and meanings create further positions the Japanese "I" not as the colonial other but as being caught in-between and related to the Western epistemological perspective. As the first plateau gets connected to the second plateau, the vibration intensifies even more, as the second plateau vibrates within the persistence of a monolingual paradigm that positions the "I" in a painfully exilic and disabled position. The second plateau clearly affirms and asserts the divide between the East and the West, the able-bodied and disabled, positioning the "I" outside the German-speaking part of the Swiss nation, rendering her/him an outsider. The third plateau rhizomatically connects to the first two plateaus, positioning the "I" as both an insider and outsider within the Swiss-German part of the nation. As the "I" becomes both powerful and powerless, knowledgeable and unknowledgeable, disabled and enabled (disabled in speech, enabled in terms of writing and reading German), the "I" positions him/herself again in the borderlands of belonging and unbelonging, as s/he affirms the multilinguality of the German speaking part of the Switzerland (75 expressions for ladybug). The text vibrates as the three sections affect each other in an oscillating and interrelated manner. Not only do they rhizomatically connect but they also reflect the subject matter, which is the oscillation between the *persistence* of a monolingual paradigm as described by scholar Yasemin Yildiz, a paradigm that stretches to a monolingual nation and monolingual modes of belonging, as well as the *resistance* to the monolingual paradigm (my emphasis).

Her aesthetics are not suffused with the vibrational sensations that Müller expresses but rather with a very sober distant and ironic lens with regard to language.

Tawada makes the German language vibrate as she deterritorializes it into intensive states of unbelonging, unhooking words from their apparent "original" identity. Hence, in a Barthian neutral aesthetic, Tawada outplays the paradigm between mother tongue/target tongue, original/translation—and by extension East/West—by writing from that gap of unbelonging to any language and by deterritorializing the German language by making it intensive as well as by connecting it to other languages. The "I" in "Wolkenkarte" does not care about an original/translation but rather exhibits the passion for difference by connecting the word "Karte" across various linguistic, cultural and national sites in a horizontal, rhizomatic manner that is not oriented toward a final excavation (and thus a telos) of the word "Karte." It does not matter, in the end, which card the "I" has to show. The various meanings of "Karte" certainly show antagonistic and incommensurable differences that cannot be reconciled (cloudcard versus starcard). The "I" never ranks one meaning of card over the other, but focuses on the singular differences of the word "Karte." The "I" creates an inventory of shimmers, which is the showing of the gradients of differences, the "passion for difference" (77), rather than the passion for pinning down the meaning into a singular truth and one singular meaning.

As Tawada switches back and forth between different languages, she uses them as linguistic bedrocks rather than as sedimentations that form an identity or one singular meaning of the word "Karte." In the words of Braidotti,

> Writing is, for the polyglot, a process of undoing the illusory stability of fixed identities, bursting open the bubble of ontological security that comes from familiarity with one linguistic site. …Writing in this mode is about disengaging the sedentary nature of words, destabilizing commonsensical meanings, deconstructing established forms of consciousness (15).

As the "I" does not look for the singular meaning of the word "Karte," the "I" is also not interested in finding the ontological security of knowing the meaning of the card. The "I" does not look for a transparent ontology of the word, which would ultimately affirm what kind of card s/he needs and affirm one epistemological standpoint: if the "I" would only know what the "Karte" meant, the "I" would have discovered the truth. The "I" switches between the linguistic bedrock of German, English and Japanese, not to find a transparent monolingual linguistic purity of the word "Karte" but rather to expose the fact that the identity of the word "Karte" is not stable or fixed—to the contrary, it is inherently unstable. Instead of treating Japanese as the mother tongue, the "I" switches between Japanese and German without asserting the supremacy of one over the other, which affirms Braidotti's point that the polyglot is someone who "practices a sort of gentle promiscuity with different linguistic bedrocks [from which] s/he has long since relinquished any notion of linguistic or ethnic purity. There is no mother tongue, just linguistic sites one takes her/his starting point from" (13). Thus the "I" exposes the inherent foreign-ness, arbitrary construction and multi-linguality of every language and its interrelated-ness to other languages. By extension, the "I" moves toward unhooking the sedimentations of monolingualism and the idea of one nation that is built on a supposed monolingualism.

In plateau two, the "I" is positioned in an exilic outsider position that affirms a monolingual paradigm. Hence the writing begins to shimmer because the differences between plateau one, where a postmonolingual paradigm is affirmed, and plateau two, where a monolingual paradigm persists, affirming incommensurable differences rather

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than trying to solve them. Those differences are affective as the "I"'s position is affected emotionally as well as in relation to the power/knowledge and West/East epistemological perspective. As the text overlays the first plateau with yet another position of the "I" in the third plateau (that is inside and outside the Swiss German part of the nation), the text further affirms those gradients of the "I"'s oscillating and different subject positions.

The writing is politically effective because within the context of the postmonolingual paradigm that the "I" exposes in a tripartite structure, belonging-ness to one nation, language or home is not possible. The mode of belonging that the "I" exposes is a nomadic one, as s/he switches languages and linguistic codes. Lastly and perhaps most importantly, the binaries of East and West and of affirming one language and one nation (monolingual paradigm) are neutralized. The fact that Tawada's essay ends with an open question—"How do you call the insect that carries stars on its back?"—allows for a multilingual response and proves that the monolingual paradigm that also pertains to a Eurocentric perspective is as unstable as the East and West binaries that the "I" so painfully experiences in the second section of the essay. Home, in Tawada's writing, cannot be found in one monolingual or monocultural nation but rather is an opaquely interwoven concept with other cultures, a concept that palimpsestically shimmers with the history of colonialism. Home can only be thought of as a nomadic belonging within a postmonolingual paradigm. As Doug Slaymaker in the "Introduction" of *Yoko Tawada. Voices from Everywhere* (2007) says, "…Tawada does not write of immigrants or migrants, of the abject desperation of refugees and runaways. She does write, however, of a contemporary malaise, of living in more than one language, with identities in more than

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one cultural tradition, of subjectivities defined by overlapping and often contradictory linguistic webs. This writing marks a new experience of exile" (3).

Tawada thus writes from the perspective of living multiculturally and multilingually, which is the perspective of an interstitial and exilic subjectivity. The "I" is affected emotionally by the meaning of the words, which position her as an outsider or an insider to the national language community. Instead of writing from the sustained sensations of having to speak and live in a foreign language, Tawada's "I" observes the interaction of different languages from a distance, while also letting readers know at the end of each section the emotional affect and effect (as it positions the "I" differently) of this distance. Tawada's writing becomes a/effective insofar as the writing occurs from the gap between languages, in that in-between space of exilic subjectivity that positions the "I" either outside or inside the nation of a language and in the third section positions the "I" as inside/outside one nation, as the "I" deconstructs the monolingual concept of a nation.

CHAPTER 3

Beyond Identification: Transversal and Transnational Engagement in *Das Fräulein (2006)*

> Do you know the
> feeling when you think you
> are thirsty and then you
> realize what you are feeling
> is longing?
> -Ana,in *Das Fräulein*

Situating *Das Fräulein (2006)*

In an interview with *Outnow* (2006), Štaka explains that she chose three

migrants—from Bosnia (Ana), Croatia (Mila) and Serbia (Ruza)—not to recreate

stereotypes of national identities, even though she admits that the characters have such

traits, but instead to subvert these traits. However, she says that, "Es gibt sicher gewisse

charakterliche Eigenschaften, die man als typisch oder Klischees bezeichnen könnte, aber

das Script und der Film brechen ständig damit" (*Outnow*, second question: "There are

certain character traits that you could call stereotypical or cliché but the script and the

film constantly subvert them"). Before that she says that the characters could really come

from anywhere but their background gives them a certain sensitivity: "Sie könnten von

überall her stammen, aber ihr Background gibt ihnen ein gewisse Sensibiliät" (*Outnow*,

question 1: "They could come from anywhere but their background gives them a certain

sensitivity"). Consequently, Štaka's focus is less on the nationality and more on the

affective experience of living between cultures. With this in mind, I will explore how

Štaka creates an affective landscape that focuses on the exilic subjectivities of their

characters and their struggle to find a form of belonging beyond or within the context of

national ties. I will explore Štaka's cinematography and how it focuses on the transmission of the affective experiences of the characters (their exilic subjectivity) as they encounter each other on an affective molecular level. I will call this engagement an affective encounter as it emphasizes the molecular becomings. This engagement shall prove that transnational engagements can occur beyond identification. An affective encounter is characterized by molecular becomings, which are predicated on the Deleuzian notion of a subject that is drawn out in molar and molecular lines.[22]

Telling through Affect: Exilic Atmosphere in Narrative

Štaka anchors the narrative by opening with a disjunctive montage that mounts affection and abstract images onto each other, introducing the affective atmosphere of all characters rather than the characters individually. By doing so, Štaka sets the affective atmosphere of an exilic subjectivity, which is what the characters have in common and share. I argue that the montage shows what affective composition unites them rather than what separates them. Additionally, such a montage also disallows viewers to identify with the images as Štaka sutures the gaze to close-ups of twigs, cutting and knifes, the title of the movie in bold letters and a monochromatic curtain. This structure is made of affection images and one-time images that follow each other abruptly, without a narrative progression and narrative continuity or necessary belonging-ness. Thus the montage sets off not the narrative but rather gives information about the affective atmosphere and composition of the characters and introduces them through a narrative of an affective "exile".

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[22] For more information please refer to my Introduction.

FIGURE 2.1.
The first shot of *Das Fräulein.*
Twigs reach into the sky and
sway in the wind, accompanied
by intradiegetic Baltic music.

FIGURE 2.2.
Shot of a close-up of a knife
blade cutting twigs.
Intradiegetic Baltic music
accompanies this shot.

The twigs reaching into the sky, accompanied by intradiegetic Baltic music,

represent a typical time image that Gilles Deleuze describes in his *Cinema 2*. A time

image is a category of images that does not denote an action or move the narrative

forward. It stands in opposition to a movement image, which Deleuze describes in

Cinema 1 as a form of image that relies on the sensory-motor apparatus of the spectators.

It provides an image of time that is localized in a particular place. In this action-based

movement, one image follows the next in a linear time and place sequence, thereby

driving the action forward. A time image does not rely on sensory motor perception but

rather relies on the viewers' bodily and thus affective involvement with the film. Whereas

the movement image structures time and space, the time image is experienced as "pure

optical, sound (and tactile) image" (18). Hence the twigs reaching into the sky while intradiegetic Baltic music plays becomes a time image insofar that what is experienced is the pure movement of the twigs and the Baltic music, which does not however, lead to narrative progression from here. As the narrative is not set in the Baltic region but in fact in Zurich, Switzerland, this image is experienced as from a time long gone. Those images of twigs and the twigs being cut by a man's hands are images from a different time at a different place. They set the atmosphere of a time gone by.

The following close-up of the knife blade is a typical affection image as described by Deleuze in his *Cinema 1*. The affection image captures the affect of the close-up of a thing, face or body not in its movement, as something that extends and structures the space in time, but as that, which expresses movement on its immobile surface. The close-up denotes not only the face but anything that has become "'faceified' [visagéifiée]" and "stares at us" (*Cinema 1* 88). Deleuze takes his definition of affect from Bergson, who says that affect rests on two characteristics, namely "the micro-movements on an immobilised plate of nerve" (87), hence a surface (the blade of the knife or the cut-off twig) as well as the intensive micro-movements on that surface, such as the movement of cutting. It expresses a power and a quality that is unrelated and "abstracted from the spatio-temporal coordinates" (97). Consequently, what is stressed is the affect of cutting, of being cut off. The intradiegetic Baltic music points to the Baltic region, but the affect of cutting refers to no place at all or any place. It is the affective component of "cutting-something-off" that is emphasized. This refers to the tree being cut, the heavy blade cutting off fresh spring twigs, as well as the three main characters (Ruza, Mila and Ana,

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which will be introduced later) being cut off from their Baltic origins. It refers to the cut itself that all three characters have experienced. Deleuze classifies this quality and power of the affection images as expressing "pure singular qualities or potentialities" (*Cinema 1* 102) in that the knife and the blade or the cut only "refer back to themselves, and constitute the 'expressed' of the state of things" (102). It is expressing the Peircean firstness of a sign, which signifies a pure quality, instead of indexing another sign. Charles Peirce (1868) created a taxonomy of signs in his scholarship, whereby the firstness signifies that the sign just signifies itself and whose meaning or signification cannot be determined in relation or through relation or via the route of another second sign or its relation to a third sign. The affection-image is first and foremost expressing firstness: rain in its raininess, regardless of where the rain falls or for how long or onto what. Once the affection-image is related to the person, for example, the anger experienced on the surface of the face is related to the person, and the subsequent action-movement, then this would be considered an action-image. As the cut with the knife blade is not related to a person or a place, it does not contribute to the narrative progression but expresses simply the expressed state of "being cut off." In its abstraction, the cut refers to a cut in one's life that can indicate displacement from a physical location. It could also indicate an emotional displacement from family or friends.

The emphasis on the "cut" is exacerbated and emphasized by the abrupt cut to title of the film *Das Fräulein* that appears in white bold letters on a black screen. The cut to this shot is like a shock to the nervous system, as it happens so abruptly, with a concomitant abrupt stop of the Baltic music. There is no necessary belonging-ness

between the "being cut off" and the title. As the next paragraph will explain, however, it sets the exilic atmosphere for Mila, Ruza and Ana. As all three of them have been cut off from their Baltic roots and as they work as *Fräuleins*,[23] the shots form a dialogic relationship between the narratives of the three women, as it gives the first opening window to their shared subjectivity. The quality of cutting, interrupting and creating discontinuity is emphasized throughout the movie, for example in the soon-to-happen interruption in Ruza and Ana's dialogic engagement, as well as the physical cut into Mila's finger, which triggers Ana's employment in the canteen and the relationship with Ruza.

The title fades out quickly and Štaka cuts to a shot of a monochromatic curtain. The monochromatic curtain is yet another affection image, as it expresses greyness in a Peircean firstness, which is a dull, dreary color between the extreme opposites of white and black. The greyness and dreariness is visible throughout the movie in the buildings (e.g., the canteen "Härterei"), the clothes of Ana and Ruza and the grey weather of Switzerland. On another affective level, the greyness works as an atmospheric backdrop that expresses the monotony, bleakness and joylessness of the characters' lives. The only time the greyness switches to a bright fluorescent color is when Ana is shown dancing in discotheques (the colors are blue and flicker brightly), when Ana and Ruza take a trip to the Alps (the whiteness of the snow) and when Ruza dances at her own birthday party, under fluorescent flickering bright lights.

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[23] *Fräulein* in the German-speaking world denotes not only a girl at the cusp of becoming a woman but also denotes a waitress.

The final shot is of the main character Ruza, who, filmed in an aerial shot switches on the light. Her heavy breathing and her obvious disorientation signal that she might have woken up from a bad dream. The framing of Ruza from a bird's perspective particularly emphasizes the condition of her helplessness that her inner exile creates.The camera eye captures her in a helpless position, as if the dream images had overcome her and pressed her down or as if the simple awakening to the everyday dreariness is enough to make her gasp for air. The colors are mostly tinged with an overshadowing greyness that adds to the atmosphere of heaviness and joyless-ness. As viewers, we are not certain whether the images before Ruza in fact relate to her or were her dream images. The ambiguity and liminality that is transmitted through images that depict the atmosphere rather than an action in fact refer to Mila, Ana and Ruza. Because Štaka chooses affection and time images, as well as close-ups of the knife and the cutting while being accompanied by intradiegetic Baltic music, they don't drive the narrative forward or automatically connect to Ruza. Rather, this montage expresses a pure quality of affect, which alludes to the uprooting of all three characters from the Balkan and the being "cut-off." They thematize the exilic narrative on an affective level, as they relate to all three characters in a transversal manner.

This montage of the twigs, the blade, the black screen with the title and the monochromatic curtain can be read as an Eisensteinean dialectical montage. In the 1920s, the Soviet Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein already distinguished between two types of montages. A montage of attraction creates an emotional, affective experience through vibrating compositions—for example, by means of geometrical forms, qualities of

brightness or light, and also the emotions expressed in those shots. An intellectual

montage tries to create a new thought, a new idea, a new way of thinking through that

clash of shots and the collision of "neighboring fragments" (Elsaesser quoting Eisenstein

25). Eisenstein saw the audience and the film in a dialectical relationship with each other,

by which he meant that both film and audience members reconstitute each other in a

dynamic, mutually interacting way. Robert Stam says of the Eisensteinean montage and

Eisensteinean cinema that, "Rather than *tell* stories through images, Eisensteinean cinema

thinks through images, using the clash of shots to set off ideational sparks in the mind of

the spectator, product of a dialectic of precept and concept, idea and emotion" (Stam 41;

emphasis in original). As the images of thought also have a sensory and affective basis,

Deleuze (*Cinema 2 161*) describes the Eisensteinean dialectics as a circuit of thought-

affect images that affect the viewers on an affective level as well. They spark a thought

but also an affective reaction. Hence, the affect- thought images impinge on the nervous

system of the viewers and induce a sensory shock. The images become internalized and

then externalized as they spark an idea or a thought, creating a loop from the image back

to the viewer. Deleuze terms this circuit and loop a dialectical automaton, where viewers

and film are mutually constitutive of knowledge production. He says, "The complete

circuit thus includes sensory shock which raises us from the images to conscious thought,

then the thinking in figures which takes us back to the images and gives us an affective

shock again. …this is the dialectical automaton…The whole forms a knowledge, in the

Hegelian fashion, which brings together the image and the concept as two movements,

each of which goes towards the other" (*Cinema 2* 161). Consequently, as the last shot is

of Ruza waking up, the knowledge that we as viewers would form is that the montage

beforehand was probably a dream sequence of Ruza's and most definitely relates to her.

However, as Štaka uses time images and affection images, the images do not have to

metaphorically or metonymically relate or stand in for a subject. Hence, there is no

necessary belongin-ness between Ruza and the montage, but of course it can be read in a

Hegelian fashion. At the same time, though, the images express pure affect and time

through sound and optic. That quality and expression, such as the Baltic time and place

long gone, the cut, the *Fräulein* (waitress or girl becoming woman) and the greyness thus

can relate to the viewers as well as the other characters. Štaka thereby comments on

cinema itself, namely that the movement image (the action and narrative progression) has

been replaced since modern cinema (after WWII) with the time image. There is no more

hero or heroine, whose progression viewers follow but rather, affective qualities and

atmospheres, expression of states and specific qualities of being take center stage. This

means that viewers and characters can be related or insert themselves in this quality and

atmosphere. Hence, the montage sets the atmospheric backdrop and the exilic atmosphere

(of being cut off, of working in the service industry, of dreariness and greyness in life) for

Mila and Ana, as well as the audience. In this montage, Štaka introduces *a* narrative of

the characters through affect, thus through the transmission of an exilic "being-uprooted"

and dreary atmosphere. Those affective images become windows to the character's

individual exiles, which constitute their first transversal becoming before the characters

have even been introduced and similarly constitute a transversal becoming and an

emphatic interconnection with the audience, as each shot provides an atmospheric

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window that viewers can look through, insert themselves and begin to engage in the various affective becomings.

Chronotopes of Exile

After the initial montage that sets the affective background, Štaka introduces the characters through chronotopes.[24] Chronotopes of exile or chronotopes of nomadic belonging are expressed in narrative, filming and mise-en-scène. Claustrophobically small spaces, moody lighting and tight framing, for example, all serve to convey feelings of exile, entrapment, narrow-ness, imprisonment, panic or "dysphoric imagining of the contemporary times" (153). Štaka introduces Ruza through an aerial shot of her waking up. As she frames her tightly, she conveys a mood of "constriction and claustrophobia" (126), which should express Ruza's inner as well as outer exile. As Ruza follows her morning routine, Štaka closely frames her blowdrying her hair in her small apartment. A close-up of her wrist shows the imprint of a watch, which indicates Ruza's life and rhythm as being measured by a clock rather than her own bodily time and rhythm. Ruza is shown tightening her belt, which emphasizes the discipline and whittling down of her own bodily space. A tiny elevator that leads Ruza to the streets encapsulates her almost like a second skin and induces a very claustrophobic atmosphere. Štaka thus emphasizes Ruza's inner exile by encoding her in tiny spaces, confinement, a strict temporal structure (watch), mechanical movements and moody lighting in her mise-en-scène. Her inner

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[24] The term chronotope, as explained in Chapter 1, comes from the Russian formalist and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin, who used this type of unit of analysis to speak of the importance of space-time (chronotope) in narrative. Hamid Naficy appropriates the notion of chronotope, using it to describe the cinematic form, which transmits exilic feelings or feelings of safety (152ff). This cinematic form is an important feature of an accented cinema, as "dialectics of displacement and emplacement" (125) are expressed in space-time configurations.

exile of having to live according to someone else's rhythm, that of the work place, is thus

mirrored by her outer exile of a very small apartment and an even tinier elevator that she

takes. When Ruza briskly walks to work, Štaka tightly frames her as if the camera was

propped on her shoulder, emphasizing Ruza's inner hurry to be punctual. Štaka captures

Ruza's identity, which she built around a monotonous work life, a "Swiss-ness" of

punctuality, accuracy and impersonality, by emphasizing her inner exile through the

depiction of very closed chronotopes.

Ruza, a middle-aged unmarried woman, left Serbia before the war split up

Yugoslavia into a number of smaller states. She left for Switzerland because "she wanted

more," indicating her desire for economic improvement. She and her boyfriend at the

time had planned to migrate together but after she left, he did not follow. Ruza now

manages a canteen in a welding facility called *Härterei* (the literal translation in English

would be a facility that hardens material, a hardening facility). The employees of the

"Härterei," as well as the employed of the canteen are mostly former Yugoslavians,

immigrants to whom she refuses to speak in her native tongue. The fact that she works in

a welding facility *Härterei* alludes to the idea that Ruza's sense of identity has hardened

into a self-fabricated shell. The fact that it is a welding facility foreshadows the idea that

the many aspects of herself (e.g., her ethnic past and her intrinsic vitality) will be welded

together through the encounter with Ana. Even though her brother still lives in Belgrad,

she has only visited him once. She refuses to speak her native language and refuses to

entertain personal relationships with Mila, a fellow former Yugoslavian and her

subordinate in the canteen restaurant. Even though she is a legal migrant and a global

servant to Switzerland's economy, a *Fräulein* for the mostly foreign workers (most of them men who are from the former Yugoslavia), she thinks of herself as more of a Swiss national than a Serb. The fact that she feeds and cares for her own ethnic people by working in a canteen signifies her only ties to her nationality. Ruza has completely severed herself from her ethnic past, while identifying and incorporating the image, the qualities and affective composition of what she believes to be "Swiss-ness" (e.g., punctuality, a strong work ethic and accuracy).

Ruza incorporated an image of what she identified as Swiss-ness and became a model immigrant: if Switzerland is the center of money in Europe, Ruza made money the center of her life (she is seen counting money right at the beginning). She expresses the idea that economic independence makes up for a lack of personal relationships. If Swiss-ness is punctuality, Ruza identified with it and literally incorporated the rhythm of the watch (the wrist shows an imprint of her watch). If Swiss-ness is speaking only Swiss German in Zurich, she now only speaks German (also to Mila). Ruza's identification is predicated on an imago, hence an image that appears to the whole, stable and self-isomorphic "Swiss-ness," as if Swiss-ness was a monadic, coherent cultural and national entity.

Identification is a psychoanalytical concept that was discussed by Sigmund Freud in the early 20th century and subsequently by Jacques Lacan. Freud identified three identificatory processes, which Anne Friedberg, feminist film theorist, enlists in her article "A Denial of Difference: Theories of Cinematic Identification" (1990). The primary one is the identification with the object (no subject-object distinction), the

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secondary one is the incorporation for a lost object (usually the mother; for Lacan, *objet petit a*) and the tertial or partial identification is that of a common emotional quality. Identification usually works through a visual recognition (yet not solely). Jacques Lacan expresses this scopic dependency with the mirror stage, where the child misrecognizes the image of him/herself as whole and complete in the mirror. The incorporation of a complete whole image (imago) is a disavowal of the self's fragmentation and difference as well. Ruza thus not only sees the quality of Swiss-ness (tertial identification) as whole but also makes herself whole into that image of Swiss-ness. Because Ruza untied herself from her ethnic roots, the incorporation might also serve as a secondary identification of that lost object of her Serbian home. Friedberg emphasizes that identification always functions as recognition before it functions as misrecognition. She says, "…we still must avow that the process of identification is one of denying the difference self and other" (40) and that "…identification requires recognition before it functions as misrecognition (41). Drawing on Freudian and Lacanian explanations of identifications, she asserts that identificatory processes always work in tandem with recognizing the difference between self and other before disavowing that difference so that identification can indeed happen. Consequently, identification is always based on a misrecognized sameness within subject-object and self-other relationships. Ruza thus misrecognizes Switzerland as a whole complete imago and thus clearly disavows the infinitely different and split cultural and national Swiss-ness.

Chronotopes of Nomadic Belonging

Štaka juxtaposes the chronotopes of Ruza to Ana, who is introduced through very fluid, open and "thirdspace" chronotopes (Naficy 154). Thirdspace chronotopes "involve transitional and transnational sites, such as borders, airports, and train stations, and transportation vehicles, such as buses, ships, and trains" (154). In those transitional spaces where identities cannot root or sediment, where no long-lasting social relationships can be made and where time zones shift (as one place is left for another one), the self is always negotiated and never fixed. Hence, Ana's sense of self, which is a nomadic one, is mirrored by the space-time configurations that Štaka films her in. The first shot of Ana is in a moving car as she hitchhikes to Zurich. A close-up of her face looking at the landscape moving by quickly leads to another shot of a highway and thus another transitory place. Ana takes the train to Zurich, where she is seen putting her bags into a locker, indicating that her sense of belonging is portable and fits into a bag. Whereas Ruza is shown in confined places (her apartment, her canteen) that express her rigid identity (her "Swiss-ness") and her suppressed vitality, Ana is shown in transitory places that emphasize her nomadic unbelonging and subjectivity. Ruza creates an inner exile for herself through identifying with "Swissness," while disavowing her ethnic background. Ana, on the other hand, lives a nomadic identity beyond identification. She is a typical nomad as described by Rosi Braidotti (1994), which is inherently non-identificatory:

> …the nomadic subject functions as a relay team: s/he connects, circulates, moves on; s/he does not form identifications but keeps on coming back at regular intervals. The nomad is a transgressive identity, whose transitory nature is

precisely the reason why s/he can make connections at all. Nomadic politics is a matter of bonding, of coalitions, of interconnections (35).

Ana thus does not identify with her native language or her native country but freely switches between languages. Ana talks to young Swiss people, who ask her for a cigarette on the street, and makes a connection with them in order for her to have a bed to sleep in at night. She freely talks about the war with those people, yet does not identify herself with the war alone. Her sense of self is not rooted in modes of belonging that are static such as belonging to a monocultural or monolingual national, as Ruza does. Rather, Ana is presented as having "non-fixity of boundaries" (of categorizations of race, religion and so on) and has an "intense desire to go on trespassing" (Braidotti 36), which is also emphasized by Štaka's use of transitory places. According to Braidotti, nomadism is a "vertiginous progression toward deconstructing identity; molecularisation of the self" (16).

When Braidotti speaks of the molecularisation of the self, she refers to the Deleuzian framework of the non-centralized but highly interconnected and rhizomatic subject. As I have outlined in my Introduction, Gilles Deleuze's (2002) notion of a subject is explained through molar and molecular planes. And it is precisely on the molecular plane of affects where becomings and molecularisations occur. A molecularisation refers to the "becoming other" in Deleuze, which means becoming other than self (experiencing oneself as other) through an encounter with someone or something else. Experiencing oneself as other is possible by creating an emphatic proximity to the other and by encountering that other on a level of affective sameness (same movement, speed and rhythm). Those affective encounters are becomings that

"concern[s] alliance" (238) that are not based on sameness or filiation. Those alliances are also called assemblages, which are temporary connections and relations that are built on a desire to connect.

Thus, Ana is more interested in connecting with people not on the basis of a molar sameness (the same age, the same ethnicity, the same religion). She is interested in connecting on a molecular becoming level, hence entering into an affective encounter that would allow transversal becomings beyond molar differences and allow for a sharing of subjectivity (transsubjectivity) because of the sharable affects within this proximity of becoming. Ana does not look for security and stability in money, economic independence or a stable relationship. Consequently does not tie her sense of identity to the nation of Switzerland or the nation of Bosnia. Ana practices a nomadism that does not look for any permanent modes of belongings, permanent national ties or any permanent commitment to a place, language or job. Perhaps because she experienced the war, death and suicide, Ana lost all sense of permanency in life. This extends to her physical essence, her body, which is literally dying from leukemia.

Minor Transnational Engagements

When Ana and Ruza meet in the canteen for the first time, Štaka stages the first transnational engagement between them, which starts out vertical but begins to shift into a more horizontal engagement. The transnational engagement between Ana and Ruza can be framed within the notion of minor transnationalism, as defined by Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih in their book, *Minor Transnationalism* (2005). Their model of minor transnationalism defines transnational engagement not only between the major

community (host country) and the minor communities (exilic and diasporic communities), which denotes a vertical and hierarchical engagement but also "minor-to minor- networks that circumvent the major altogether "(8), which denotes a horizontal engagement. The vertical engagement is a "transnationalism from above" (13) that requires assimilation from the minor communities, which is predicated on the minor communities identifying and incorporating the major community's (host country) language, values and modes of belonging. A "transnationalism from below" (13), however, works horizontally between minor communities but similarly engages modes of identification between them. Lionnet and Shih still privilege identification which enables new avenues of collaboration, language usage and "new forms of identification that negotiate with national, ethnic, and cultural boundaries, thus allowing for the minor's complexity and multiplicity"(8). The problem with identification is that what one identifies with is never a monolithic entity and that one cannot become the same, hence can never be completely assimilated. At first sight, Ruza and Ana would certainly exemplify such a minor transnational engagement that circumvents the major culture (the Swiss host culture). However, since Ruza assimilated and literally embodies Swiss-ness, she poses as the major culture (she does not talk her ethnic language to Ana or Mila, creating a distinct distance and trying to assert a power relationship). Hence their first transnational engagement is initially vertically structured (visually and narratologically), whereby Ruza poses as the host country (Switzerland) and Ana poses as the minor community yet Štaka visualizes at the same time the shift to a horizontal engagement that also happens beyond identification. Thus, she begins to introduce a transnational

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engagement between major and minor communities as well as minor and minor (since Ruza is also minor but poses as major) that emphasizes transversal becomings rather than identification.

Ana, who enjoys a cup of coffee at the canteen meets Ruz and Mila there for the first time.When Mila cuts her finger, Ana spontaneously takes over Mila's job of handing out food at the buffet. While Ruza has just denied Mila's niece a job because Ruza wants to decide who gets to work in the canteen, Ruza is smitten with Ana and is so eager to hire and pay her that she runs after Ana, catching her on the staircase. In this transitional place of the staircase (a place that is neither here nor there but connects different stories of a building), Štaka stages the transnational engagement between Ruza and Ana. This is a transnational engagement that is literally structured vertically by the staircase, which indicates the vertical power relationship. At the same time, as this thirdspace chronotope indicates, identities or power structures cannot manifest and sediment in such a place. Because of the location, Štaka already prefigures how the transnational engagement between Ruza and Ana begins to shift towards a more transversal becoming.

Ruza is filmed from a lower angle and stands at the upper place of the staircase, which is supposed to indicate her superior power position. As she incorporated Swiss-ness, Ruza addresses Ana in German, which solidifies the vertical transnational engagement between major culture (Ruza) and the minor community (Ana). However, she is positioned on the left side of the frame, which indicates or prefigures a rupture in her power position. Ana is filmed from a higher angle, indicating her powerless position, as she is illegal, with no job and no money. Yet at the same time, she is framed on the

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right side of the frame, as the more powerful of the two. As a potential boss, Ruza offers to pay and even to hire her. As Ana refuses to take the job as she simply wanted to help out and is not local, Ruza is completely perplexed. Like a true nomad, Ana has no interest in settling down. Since Ana does not participate in this binary power structure of boss/employee, legal/illegal, older/younger, nor identify with Ruza as her boss or as someone who has made it as an immigrant, Ruza feels completely empowered as well and thus leaves the frame to the left side. The vertically set up transnational engagement (Ruza as Swiss boss, Ana as Bosnian) has left a vacuum and is visually signified by an empty spot that Ana leaves as she runs down the staircase while Ruza runs back up. This vacuum also creates a vacuum in Ruza, as she has seen something in Ana that reminds her of herself. That vacuum and emptiness indicates the long lost younger Ruza (Ruza sees Ana as herself when she was that young). When Ana has left, Štaka shows Ruza multiple times parting the blinds from her office at the canteen in order to see whether Ana returns to work, which indicates the scopic-dependent form of identification. Even though Ruza cannot understand Ana's nomadic way of life and is literally disempowered by it, she still identifies those qualities as some of her that she has lost over time (by identifying with Swissness, losing her ethnic ties). She thus incorporates those qualities as long lost objects and Ana as a long-lost object, which denotes the younger version of Ruza. Ruza's process of projecting her younger self onto the other (Ana) and then misrecognizing the other (Ana) as the self is called centrifugal identification. Friedberg (39) quotes here Jean Laplanche and J.B. Pontalis, who distinguish between centripetal and centrifugal identification. Centripetal means that the image of the other (as ideal or as

possessing an ideal quality) is introjected and incorporated. Centrifugal, in contrast, implies that the image of self is projected onto the other. In both cases, the self-other distinction collapses under the illusion of complete sameness. Thus as Ana leaves, Ruza yearns for her and this image of a younger version of herself. Ruza needs Ana to feel complete now as she provides the vitality and nomadic unbelonging that Ruza once had. Ana connects Ruza to Ruza's past self. Ana, however never needed Ruza as her sense of identity is not rooted in any sense of permanent belonging. She connected with Ruza on a molecular level, hence on an affective level, as for example the birthday party scene illustrates.

Transversal Becomings and Transnational Engagement through Music

When Ana does return to work in the canteen, she still refuses to get her papers "sorted out" and does not want to commit to a permanent job. As Ana does not identify with Ruza and her trajectory of a "good" legal migrant but rather lives nomadically and tries to connect, relay and detach, Ana does not care about Ruza not wanting a celebration for her birthday. When Ana throws Ruza a birthday party in celebration of her aliveness and her life, Ruza is completely perplexed and again appears disarmed by Ana's disrespect for Ruza's position as an authority figure and as a figure who is in a more powerful position. Despite the warning from Mila that Ana might get fired if she throws a party for Ruza, Ana organizes musicians that play Baltic music and thus stages a celebration not only for Ruza but a celebration of her ethnic ties. At the same time, though, as all employees are invited, it is a celebration of Ruza's birthday and a celebration of vitality across nations.

Once Ruza is persuaded to dance, the music brings out the vitality affects in Ruza, which she tried so hard to suppress. At this moment, Ruza molecularizes and begins to experience her own vitality and begins to experience herself as other through and experience a close proximity to Ana. As Ana has been shown dancing in discos at night Štaka not only parallels Ruza's shot to Ana at the party but also to Ana dancing at night in discotheques. The quality expressed in Ana's disco shots is similar excessive and hard to capture by one frame. The bluish iridescent light lends it an atmosphere of diving into the music and being shielded from the reality (such as her leukemia and the fact that she is homeless). Ruza, on the other hand, is filtered through bright iridescent colors, which are set off from their usual greyish shots and express the opposite quality of heaviness and dreariness. The light brings out a quality in Ruza that resembles a stepping out of her rigid put-together identity. Her vitality and alive-ness is emphasized not only by the fast-paced music and Ruza's quick feet but the fact that the frame cannot hold her. Whereas Ana becomes one with the music and dives into a blue light, emphasizing the rhythm of the music, the music lets Ruza's vitality erupt.

FIGURE 2.3.
Ruza dances to Baltic music at her birthday party. Aerial shot, with hair coming loose. The greyness sets off the iridescent bright white light.

FIGURE 2.4.
Ana dances in a disco at night in order to find a man who will take her home and provide a bed for her. Note the bluish bright iridescent light.

The lightness not only stands in contrast to the greyness of the clothes that Ruza wears, the greyness of the Swiss winter, as well the dullness of the canteen lighting but also reflects the affective change from somber sovereign Ruza to exuberant Ruza. The choice of color and the aerial close-up shot capture pure affect and the excessiveness of it as it overspills and explodes the frame (Ruza's hair becomes undone and flies out of the frame) and the fast-paced Baltic music augments the vitality affects. The two images show how on a molecular affective level, they connect and express an affective sameness of becoming other through music. It is through music that Ruza is able to experience her aliveness and her vitality not as a bodily imprint of a clock that measures her life rhythmically hour by hour but as a temporality that follows the rhythm of Baltic music, which also ties in to her past in Belgrad. Similarly, through music, Ana is able to experience herself as alive and not dying of leukemia. Štaka shows how they experience the samenss of vitality through music yet in a different composition, which is represented in color and sound. Yet, the pure expression of vitality is the same.

During the birthday party, the intradiegetic Baltic music adds another layer of shared commonality. As all three characters and some of the employees are from the Baltic region, it connects them on an affective level. Baltic music also reflects the

intradiegetic music, which was used in the initial montage and reflects the pre-migration

time of Ana, Ruza and Mila. Because music is similarly experienced like affect, namely

in tempo, intensity and movement,[25] everyone engaged in music and dancing, experiences

the same tempo and movement in music, which also translates into experiencing the same

affective composition of affect. Through the commonality of music, Ana and Ruza are

shown as entering into a communal expression of vitality, which is also layered with the

commonality of sharing a Yugoslavian past. In those moments they share vitality affects

through music and they share the temporal contours of those affects as well. They begin

to experience a shared subjectivity (transsubjectivity). Their own exiles become sublated

temporally by sharing a subjectivity transversally across their differences. Music thus as

an expression of vitality affects and facilitates an experiencing of oneself as alive and of

sharing this aliveness and vitality transversally with others, without having to identify

across molar differences that express age, nationality, gender or religion.

      Not only do Ruza and Ana show a molecular sameness because music brings out

their vitality, but also the other party guests begin to experience their vitality and connect

with others in transversal and transsubjective becomings. The employees at the party,

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[25] Vitality affect, as the "perception of one's own vitality, one's sense of aliveness" (Massumi 36) can be characterized in the same way that music is, through intensity, tempo or volume. Daniel N. Stern, an American psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, describes in his book *Forms of Vitality (2010)* how music has a structural homology to vitality affects and aliveness because it is, like affect and vitality, structured and perceptible in rhythm, volume, speed and intensity. He enumerates some codifications of vitality forms in music, such as intensity and force, achieved by "…the body's force plus gravity and intent that ultimately shape and express vitality forms" (Stern 82). Additionally, Stern enlists the changes in intensity (crescendo or decrescendo), as well as stress or accents within the "flow" of music. There is a dynamic in the flow of music, in terms of a faster, slower, louder or quieter movement. Last but not least, speed and rhythm are two important features of the expression of vitality forms that create and "shift the orbit of arousal" (Stern 83). Vitality affects thus can be characterized in the same way that music is characterized by intensity, tempo or volume. And just as music is experienced as structured moments in time, vitality forms are also "usually short-lived events with nuanced temporal patterning that arise in different contexts" (Stern 61).

who are from Switzerland and other parts of the former Yugoslavia, begin to form a circle of dance, which indicates a commonality of vitality and affect is shared communally across nations and beyond identification. The circular dance expresses further a temporary sharing and bonding beyond words or identification but through the communality of expressing vitality through music. It is indeed a transnational engagement between Swiss employees and Baltic-derived employees beyond identification but through becoming music and sharing the communality of vitality.

Removing Safety Nets: Dialogic Approaches

When Ana does return to work in the canteen, she still refuses to get her papers "sorted out" and does not want to commit to a permanent job. Ana connects with Ruza and treats her like a friend and takes her to the Alps. At one point, Ana convinces Ruza to come to the casino with her and play roulette. Even though Ruza is reluctant to play, she wins some money. When Ana does not stop gambling, Ruza gets increasingly more uncomfortable at the sight of Ana treating the hard-earned money from the work in the canteen not with the respect that Ruza expected. She leaves the casino in a hurry. As Ana runs after her to bring Ruza her winnings, Štaka stages an encounter between Ruza and Ana, which illustrates Ruza's molecularization on a narratological level, as well as on a cinematographic level. Štaka uses the parking garage of the Swiss casino at level 3 to emphasize the aspect of the money, which is part of Ruza's core identity, and to emphasize yet again a transitory thirdplace chronotope where sedimentations of identities (such as tying oneself to one image of self or money) cannot be upheld. Hence, in this place of transitoriness, Ruza's identity becomes completely unhooked from its

sedimentations of the fabrication of Swiss-ness and from the center of this sedimentation, which happens to be money.

From the beginning of the movie, Ruza is shown obsessing about money. The first thing she does when she gets to the office in the canteen is to unlock the safe to take out a tin box that originated from her country (with writing in her native language) and hold the wad of money in her hand. The box standing metonymically for her home country has been filled with the Swiss money, indicating that whereas the box seemed to provide emotional safety and personal value, the Swiss money provides financial security.

Instead of following a pure separation as described by film scholar Stefan Sharff (1992) in his book *The Elements of Cinema*, Štaka uses a circular camera movement that pans over the characters instead of framing them in a close-up and in a stable position. As Sharff describes cinematography as a musical composition or a poetry composition that works best when rules of harmony, syntax or score are followed, Štaka disturbs this harmony, which Sharff likens to disturbing a sonnet's form or a cantata's (75). The disharmonious cinematography echoes the real separation between Ruza and her identification with Ana, thereby emphasizing Ruza's complete breakdown and molecularization and thus rearranging her sense of identity and epistemology. Hence, the cinematography emphasizes the disharmonious relationship between Ana and Ruza because of Ruza's identification that disallows her to see Ana as an equal.

Separation, according to Sharff, consists of at least three consecutive shots and a A-B-A structure (59-75). The syntax of this cinematic form is to establish a physical

separation between the characters (A-B) and at the same to emphasize the simultaneous actions while those characters occupy a different space. One rule is to show a different perspective of A and B, which emphasizes the different spatial locations they occupy. At the same time, this separation establishes an intimacy and proximity with the viewers (64) because shot-reverse shot sequences show A and then the reaction of B to A, which may or may not conform to viewers' expectations. This classical sequence of A-B-A produces two characters in a dialectical, oppositional standpoint, which is supposed to be resolved at the end when both characters are placed in one single frame. Separation can establish an intimate dialogue or a tension-filled dialectics, yet it is always resolved in a Hegelian fashion at the end.

Štaka disturbs the dialectics of this pure separation as she violates the rules laid out by Sharff. A dialectical approach, as defined by rhetoric scholar Dmitri Nikulin implies that each argument is impersonal (hence absolutely true and its meaning is fixed can be reproduced by everyone) and the result of each argumentation is to find "a universal abstract truth" (87). The dialectic order is the opposite of a narration because it follows a step-by-step program until its truth, which is singular and absolute and final. A dialectic is monological (88) and it does not recognize a personal voice. Dialectic is "a way – often taken to be *the* way- to the truth of things. Dialectic has to be able to trace and fix each stage of reasoning and engrave it forever into a reproducible, universal, and anonymous (impersonal), argument" (88). If dialectics is monologic, then dialogic approaches are plurilogic and never reach a final absolute truth. Dialog is rooted in an unfinalizable (78) narration, where each participant has a personal voice, which is rooted

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in a personal discursive space. A dialogue is an interaction and engagement that welcomes and is interlaced with interruptions. An interruption cannot be foreseen because it can occur in response to someone's word and "no one can plan or assign in advance the proper time (*kairos*) for such interaction and interruption" (99; emphasis in original). A dialogue disallows arriving at a final judgment but is rather a continuous exchange of opinions, viewpoints that "presuppose a lack of ultimate transparency and understanding of the other and his word, and, on the other hand, allows for a continuation of a debate in which the non-erasable difference of an with the other is recognized through a form of disagreement" (99). Nikulin also says that the interruption and the rupture within a dialogic relationship is not something that separates from the other but unites without erasing the different subject positions and discursive positions. On the contrary, a rupture and an interruption opens up "a "window" to the other, and hence to co-being in dialogue as being with the other" (88). A dialogic approach hence does not favor identification with the other or the other's point of view but rather favors difference as a generative and transformative ground for an open-ended relation and conversation where "newness" can come in as a rupture and interruption.

Consequently, instead of using separation Štaka cinematographically performs a dialogue, as Nikulin describes it. A dialogic approach is always marked by its unfinalizibility, its open-ness to interruption from other and its emphasis on personal voice.

> Ana (A): Ruza! You forgot your winnings.
> Ruza (R): And you? You just threw your money away. Just like that.
> (A): I don't give a damn about money.

(R): I was like you once. So carefree, full of *joie de vivre*, an optimist. You've got no idea how difficult the beginning here was! It was lonely, damn lonely. Every day I wanted to pack my bags…and disappear, go back home. But I didn't. I stayed. I built something for myself. Now I don't need anyone anymore. I've made it. Do you understand?
(A): Who are you to tell me about life? What is it you want to tell me? That I should live your life? I'm not like you. You don't know me!
(R): How dare you talk to me like that?
(A): Ruza…I'm scared. Really scared. I have leukemia. (00:16:56- 00:14:50)

The camera work forms a dialogic relationship with Ruza's speech and interrupts her fabrication of her stable sense of identity and the progression of how to become a good migrant by visually affirming the opposite. Ruza tries to place herself discursively in a more powerful, vertically hierarchical relationship to Ana by emphasizing her power, her authority and her attitude about "having made it" in a foreign country but the camera does not hold Ruza in a fixed position but rather pans over her, framing her from the left (powerless side). Cinematographically Ruza's position is powerless yet narratologically she tries to assert her powerful position. Thus the cinematography exposes Ruza's definition of a fixed nationally assimilated Swiss identity as vulnerable and on a shaky foundation. The circular camera movement and the constant panning also disallows viewers from focusing on Ruza as a fixed entity, by discouraging the gaze from resting on her and identifying with her.

By panning from left to right and by switching direction and including pieces of Ana (for example, an arm) in the frame, Štaka also emphasizes and illustrates the imbrication of Ruza and Ana, hence the fact that Ana and Ruza are connected and involved with each other and do not occupy separate discursive positions and are not separated physically in different locations. Whereas Ana took Ruza to the Alps and talked

with her like a friend, Ruza did not correct the waitress when she referred to Ana as her daughter. Hence, whereas Ana feels connected to Ruza on a molecular level, Ruza feels she is part of Ana or Ana is part of her. In this instance, Štaka's cinematography affirms Ruza's belief that Ana and her are one and the same person. As Ruza for example talks about how she was once like Ana—"So carefree, full of *joie de vivre*, an optimist"—the camera pans and includes bits of Ana, as if Ruza and Ana were the same person (molar connection). When Ana questions Ruza's authority by asking, "Who are you tell me how I should live life?" Štaka frames Ana in a close-up medium shot before she visibly cuts to Ruza. The visible cut signals the dialogic interruption and the window that allows viewers to see Ruza's suprised reaction to that. Ana pulls away Ruza's epistemology of having identified with Ana, as having projected herself onto Ana and incorporated that into her self, is completely destroyed when Ana says, ""I'm not like you. You don't know me!". The visible cut to Ana's face and her close-up on the right-hand side of the frame show the expression of her face as contained (not scared), serious yet self-assured and puts her in a powerful position. From that powerful position she reveals to Ruza that she has leukemia. The next shot is from Ana's shoulder (her hair is visible) to Ruza's expression. From Ana's point of view—and Štaka frames part of Ana with Ruza, in order to emphasize the imbrication— Ruza looks more scared than Ana, which indicates that she is not only scared for Ana but also that the identification with Ana was a complete misrecognition of sameness. The framing on the left- hand side emphasizes the powerlessness of Ruza as her safety net of her identity (the identification of Ana as a long lost mini-Ruza) has been removed.

Another close-up of Ruza framed on the left-hand side exposes the shock and the

powerless position she is in. Framed on the left-hand side, Ruza is gasping for air as she

tries to take in the news of Ana's leukemia and the fact that she is not at all like her,

meaning a healthy younger version of Ruza. The difference between the women on a

molecular affective level is further stressed by a cut to Ana, whose expression is that of

pity for Ruza, as she has thought that they were in fact one (on a molar level the same)

and of disgust, as Ruza has been so arrogant to essentialize and homogenize Ana in such

a way.

FIGURE 2.5.
"Dissolution" shot of this sequence,
which does not show both characters
but rather shows Ruza looking at the
empty space that Ana leaves when she
exits the frame. It is indicative of the
emptiness that Ruza feels.

Abruptly, Ana exits to the right and literally falls out of the frame so quickly that

the panning of the camera cannot contain her any more. Ana's falling out of the frame

prefigures her leaving Zurich as well and her nomadic discontinuities. The last shot of

this sequence is a shot of the empty space that Ana left with the camera framing Ruza's

left side of the head and hair, giving viewers a subjective view of Ruza's emptiness that

she sees and experiences in herself.

However, as Ana exits the frame, Ruza feels that the image that she has

internalized has been ripped from her, which cinematographically is shown as the empty

space left by Ana. This last shot of the sequence is not a resolution shot as described by

Sharff but rather a *dissolution* shot, as it dissolves Ruza's molar sense of identity as well

as Ruza's image of Ana as a mini-Ruza. The intradiegetic footsteps of Ana exiting the parking garage highlight the fact that Ruza has been left empty, alone and robbed of her stable sense of self that is not only tied to her identification with "Swiss-ness," the identification with Ana as a mini-Ruza but also the identification of money as the source of stability. This shot prefigures the epistemological abyss into which she falls, experiencing herself as other and Ana as other. It prefigures Ruza's molecularization of self.

Molecularization and Transsubjective Becomings

The epistemological abyss that Ruza experiences goes hand-in-hand with the binary logic of identification. As Ana has made it clear to Ruza that she is *not like* her, Ruza's epistemology crumbles. As Ana does not come to work anymore, Ruza looks through the blinds again hoping to see Ana and introject her again as a long-lost object and to fill the emptiness inside her. When Mila catches Ruza looking, she mentions that she misses her as well.

Figure 2.6.
Ruza's profile while working in the canteen resembles Ana's. Intradiegetic music of dice that roll on the casino roulette as well as a few piano notes create an atmosphere of molecular proximity to Ana.

As Ruza is not able to fill her sense of emptiness, with Ana absent, Štaka shows how Ruza's hardened self begins to molecularize and she in fact begins to experience

herself as other. She begins to let go of identification and develops a molecular proximity to Ana beyond identification which allows her to experience a transsubjectivity. Music is no longer needed for Ruza to molecularize her into a vital Ruza who can share affects and experience a shared subjectivity. Štaka visualizes this transsubjectivity through the use of a classic time image. Figure 2.5 shows Ruza in the canteen, which resembles Ana in the profile. The greyness of the sweater, the hair and the profile look alike and at that point, they have become indistinguishable. Štaka not only shows how similar Ana and Ruza look but she heightens the molecular proximity through intradiegetic music of a few piano notes playing that are interlaced with sounds of a casino ball rolling along the roulette wheel. By hearing the ball on the roulette wheel, Ruza is literally in two places and two times at once: with Ana in the casino and alone in the canteen. This classic time image has a crystalline structure, where time is experienced as a crystal and where sheets of past (the time in the casino with Ana) and peaks of present (her being in the kitchen) coalesce. Deleuze says in *Cinema 2* that every time image as a pure optical and sound image "enters into relation with a 'recollection image' that it calls up" (45-46). He also refers to this relation as the actual (present image) and the virtual (recollection). The recollection image is the virtual image, which is insinuated with the casino ball rolling, whereas the actual image is Ruza working in the present in the canteen. Together they form a circuit and relate to each other until they become indistinguishable and indiscernible.

Consequently, viewers experience this image as an actual image of Ruza or Ana (they are indistinguishable at first sight) and through the casino sounds, viewers

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experience it as a recollection image of Ana and a memory of Ruza. It is an image that

forms a crystal, as the virtual and actual image run after each other up to a point of

indiscernibility, at which we cannot distinguish between Ruza in the casino, Ruza as Ana

or Ana as memory of Ruza. Consequently, Ruza thus experiences herself as partly Ana

on a molecular affective level and as other while remembering Ana.

Figure 2.7.
Mila in the car on the way home. This shot resembles Ana's shot on the way to the hospital. Mila's molecular proximity to Ana engenders her longing to stay in Zurich.

Mila has a similar experience of molecularization of herself, right after she has

expressed to Ruza how much she misses Ana. As Mila leaves the canteen this night, Mila

is framed in a car looking out the window on her way home. The glass distorts Mila's

image, which also reflects that the image viewers have from Mila will be distorted as

well. The colors are dark and greenish as it is nighttime and convey a rather gloomy

atmosphere. Mila's life in Zurich indeed has been gloomy as she was always framed on

the left side relative to Ruza as well as to her husband, which indicates her subordinate

and less powerful position in comparison with both of them. Mila is yet again placed on

the powerless left side of the frame. As she comes home, Mila puts the money into a tin

that is meant to go towards a new winter coat and realizes that money is missing. When

she confronts her husband about the money, he shrugs it off and says that it all went into

the roof that they had to build on their dream house in Croatia. For the first time, Mila

stands up to her husband and tells him that she prefers to remain in Switzerland, as Zurich has now become her home. As she utters those words, Mila is framed on the right-hand side of the frame for the first time, with her husband standing behind her, indicating the shift in power relationships. At the same time, before her husband can respond, Štaka frames a chandelier that begins to rotate audibly and begins to illuminate the whole room. It is as if the chandelier intervenes and affirms Mila's powerful position and truth. Štaka thereby pays homage to Polish film director Krzysztof Kieslowski and his use of chandeliers in his movie *Bleu (1993)*.

The blue chandelier in *Bleu* signifies the death of the main protagonist Julie's daughter, who died in a car accident along with her father. Her name happened to be Anna (in French double n) as well. Julie, the only survivor, moves from the mansion at the countryside to a Parisian apartment, taking with her only the blue chandelier from her daughter's room. Whereas the chandelier in *Bleu* metonymically stands in for Julie's daughter Anna the chandelier in Mila's case metonymically stands in for a divine intervention that in fact happened to be Ana as well. Whereas Anna is died and intervenes in Julie's memory through the chandelier, Ana, who might die of her leukemia, intervenes via the chandelier as well. Because Mila entered into an affective encounter with Ana, Ana worked as a divine intervention, as she facilitated a molecularization in Mila as well. As Mila is able to experience herself as someone more powerful, standing up to the patriarch of the house, she has molecularized and experiences herself as other. The chandelier, which affirms Mila's assertion and disallows her husband's intervention, thus metonymically stands in for Ana as a divine intervention. As a divine intervention

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and thus as a metaphysical connection, the image of the rotating chandelier can be described as a liminal image, as it marks and conveys a "threshold to the metaphysical in the human experience" (Kickasola 38). The nod to Kieslowski and his liminal images that point to the higher powers that may govern lives and the affective similarity between Ana and Mila that Štaka establishes through the car shots (Mila on her way to her husband, Ana on her way to the hospital) leads to the assumption that both Mila and Ana share an understanding of a higher power. Ana has to yield to her fatal illness, leukemia, and the fact that her brother (who could have been a possible donor) committed suicide after the war. Mila had to yield to her husband's decisions and she also yielded to Ruza's authority. As there is no rational explanation for Ana's fate nor for that of Mila, Štaka parallels both Mila's and Ana's struggle against their fate (Mila standing up to her husband and Ana facing her disease) and sutures it to a higher power. At the moment of standing up to her husband, Mila becomes other and nomadically transgresses to a sense of identity that resembles Ana's, as she begins to untie herself from her Croatian national ties. She approximates Ana's living in the present, as opposed to living for a potential future home.

Figure 2.8.
Ana in the car on the way to the hospital. This shot resembles Mila's shot in the car. Ana speaks of longing being experienced as thirst.

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When Ana eventually shows up at the canteen again and Ruza takes her to the hospital, Štaka parallels the car shot with Mila's car shot. As it is daylight, the shot is tinged in a greyish bluish color instead of a greenish dark color, which is a mixture of the disco color (where Ana's vitality is emphasized) and the greenish color of Mila's shot (emphasizing the gloominess). This parallelizing also emphasizes that power positions are never fixed but changeable and fluid. The shot transmits the affective quality of both Ana's vitality and Mila's gloomi-ness. Whereas Mila's gloom turned into a powerful image of untying herself from a future Croatian home, Ana's vitality will in fact be compromised when she reaches the hospital. For the first time, Ana is framed on the left side just as Mila was previously, which prefigures her powerless position that she assumes in the face of her leukemia. While she can choose to never physically settle down, Ana cannot choose to never fall sick. Shooting Ana through the glass further distorts the image that viewers used to have of Ana. Having previously experienced Ana as the one in control, as nomadically switching between places, languages and beds to sleep in, viewers will experience Ana as vulnerable and dependent in the hospital. Whereas Mila's shot prefigures a reversal of the optic, Ana's shot prefigures an affirmation of the powerlessness, which allows her to become "other" and become Mila, become powerless.

When Ana speaks of longing while she longingly looks out the window, she molecularizes on the third line of flight that makes her become "like everyone…imperceptible, clandestine" (Deleuze *Dialogues II*, 95). Ana's becoming other is a becoming everyone, as her longing expresses a bodily feeling of thirst that can be

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shared by everyone. The longing equally refers to Ruza and Mila, as well as the longing

on the part of viewers. In this sense, she experiences herself as Ruza and Mila (and

everyone else), who also long to belong after being uprooted. Mila longs now to belong

to Zurich and Ruza's longing becomes a longing for her past in Belgrad, which she longs

to integrate into her life and her identity as the last scene will show. Whereas Ana

experiences herself as her sick self and powerless, she longs to experience herself as

other, as healthy. Whereas she longs to belong, she longs to choose where to belong and

not tie herself to any notion of national belonging.

In the last scenes of the movie, Ana is sure she cannot find her belonging in yet

another hospital, as it provides her with the same view, as she says to Ruza. Ruza, on the

other hand, finally can relate to Ana without having to project herself onto Ana and

incorporate her. Their engagement does not have to erase difference but rather they can

approximate each other in movement and posture, creating an emphatic proximity that

goes beyond identification. Cinematographically, Štaka evokes that transversal becoming

by framing both women sitting on the same bed in the hospital yet with their backs to

each other as illustrated in Figure 2.9.

FIGURE 2.9.
Ruza and Ana in the hospital.
Both have a different view from
the side of the bed they are
sitting on. They talk about the
different viewpoints (literally
and metaphorically) that one
can have.

Finally, within one frame, Ana and Ruza can be seen as having different views as they sit with their backs to each other. Ana has a view of the hospital window and Ruza has a view of the hospital room. The women also voice their different views and divergent viewpoints as they are literally talking about the view from the window of the hospital, hence expressing their different viewpoints. Ana says, "You know what, Ruza?" Ana says. "All hospitals smell the same but the view is different." Ruza's response is that, "The best view is the one you choose for yourself" (1:08:31- 1:08:55). Ana and Ruza enter into the proximity of affective becoming through the same bodily posture and the same turning of the head to each other at different points. Approximating each other in the same rhythm in their speech creates a molecular affinity and expresses a shared sense of subjectivity that is not based on molar sameness and isomorphism. They share a subjectivity despite their differences but experience an emphatic interconnected-ness. Ruza is now able to approximate Ana on a molecular level and engage in a transversal becoming without trying to identify and incorporate her. Ruza is able to experience a shared subjectivity *beyond identification*, whereas Ana longs to become other yet again.

In a strange twist of the plot, whereas Mila and Ruza used to experience their present life as dreary and dull (Ruza is shown lonely, counting money in her office; Mila is shown looking at the sink as the water drains, suggesting the draining away of the last remaining days of her life as well), Ana is now the one, who experiences the present the most painfully, as she knows she will have to undergo yet another treatment for leukemia. Her vulnerable and powerless position is indicated through her position on the left side of the frame. Whereas throughout the movie, Ana is seen living life to the fullest—Štaka

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shows her dancing in discotheques and taking Ruza to the Alps—Ana is the one who runs away from a painfully experienced present in the hospital and the reality of her life-threatening disease. Whereas Mila and Ruza have experienced themselves as other and molecularized in their ties of belonging, it is too painful for Ana to experience herself as sick self and she therefore longs to tie herself to another place.

Štaka evokes this difference in their materially lived and affectively experienced present in a last sequence of dialogic shots. Štaka shows a shot of Ruza's feet (in contrast with the aerial shot that began the movie), by which she indicates that Ruza has gained more control and more power over her life. As Ruza pins up photographs to the wall, Štaka evokes Ruza's longing to tie her self back to her ethnic past. The photographs also evoke a past-ness in the narrative, which allows Ruza to experience herself as past and present without being cut off (as the initial shot of the tree being cut off signals). Whereas the chronotope of Ruza was claustrophobic and panic-inducing, which Štaka evoked through very tight framing and Ruza's very mechanical morning routines, Ruza is framed having more space now. Ruza has shifted from the identification of Swiss-Ruza to a more nomadic self that can also include ethnic Belgrad- Ruza. Juxtaposed to that is the final shot of Ana, who, unbeknownst to Ruza, has left the hospital. At yet another transitory thirdplace chronotope (at the roadside), Ana hitches a ride to Geneva. Ana ties herself not to any place but in fact runs, in order to avoid her present sick self. As a car stops for Ana to jump in, the movie abruptly stops, cutting off Ana's ties to Zurich, so she can experience herself anew somewhere else as something else, constantly molecularizing and in search of other transversal becomings and transsubjective experiences.

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Trans-identification in Transnationalism

Štaka's feature film *Das Fräulein* zooms in on the lives of three women from the former Yugoslavia. The film shows the intrapsychic ways of dealing with immigration, assimilation, identity and national belonging. Štaka's contribution to a new definition of transnationalism lies in the portrayal of the relationship between Ana, Ruza and Mila, which exemplifies the discourse of identification across nations as well as the discourse of difference/sameness and a transversal engagement. Štaka complicates the notion of identity and identification that is still used when talking about transnationalism by emphasizing that identification for Ruza has led to a mere fabrication of a "Swiss" identity that is inherently unstable and makes her inherently unhappy, weighs her down and gives her life a monotonous rhythm in life.

On a narratological level, Štaka presents Ruza as introjecting Ana, as well as projecting herself onto Ana. On a cinematographic level, however, Štaka in fact disallows any identification. By utilizing affection images (close-ups), abrupt cuts, circular camera movements and a "broken" separation technique, Štaka disallows viewers from identifying with Ana or Ruza. The camera likewise consistently prevents Ruza from identifying with Ana, even though her incorporated narrative is that of identification. Štaka lets viewers experience the often painfully experienced present of Ruza's or Mila's exilic through exilic chronotopes. Štaka explores affective encounters and transversal becomings as well as temporary transsubjective experiences between Ruza, Ana and Mila through a disjunct montage and the affective component of music at the birthday party. By focusing on the atmosphere (color, lights), the affects (affectation image) and the

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camera movements, Štaka films an affective landscape of exile, forcing us viewers to "feel our own otherness" (Marciniak 31), instead of creating an identificatory point with the characters on screen. Štaka thus introduces what I call a trans-identification paradigm.

Similar to Yasemin Yildiz's postmonolingual paradigm, discussed in the previous chapter, a trans-identification paradigm denotes a two-folded-ness. Firstly, the prefix trans- signifies a temporal break, which signifies a "beyond" the emergence of identification theories. A beyond also refers to the fact that whatever one moves beyond, such as identification, is still present but becomes also ruptured by nomadic, non-identificatory practices. As Ruza moves beyond her identification with her Swiss-ness and with Ana, Ruza is able to experience a transsubjectivity with Ana and a transversal becoming beyond identification. Secondly, trans- also signifies then a rupture and interruption of identificatory practices, as nomadic practices connect, assemble, attach and detach without settling. As Ana attaches and detaches on a molecular level with Ruza and Mila, she disrupts and interrupts their sedentary formations of identity. Mila, for example, realizes through Ana that she does not want to tie her identity to a future home in Croatia anymore. Ruza realizes that she wants to reconnect with her ethnic past, which leads to a rupture in her hardened shell of Swiss identity.

As a trans-identification paradigm also ties in with a transnational paradigm, Štaka's aesthetic choices of telling the story of three women from the former Yugoslavia contributes to a discussion on what transnationalism is and how living in exile *affects* subjectivities and *effects* certain identity formations.

The transnational engagement between Ana and Ruza can be framed within the notion of transnationalism as defined by Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih's (2005) model of minor transnationalism, which privileges identification transversally between majority and minority groups, as well as between minority groups, which enable new avenues of collaboration, language usage and "new forms of identification that negotiate with national, ethnic, and cultural boundaries, thus allowing for the minor's complexity and multiplicity" (8). Consequently, their transnationalism works vertically (between major and minor nation states) as well as horizontally (between minor groups), forming a rhizome of engagements of assimilation, opposition or both. The horizontal and vertical engagement, however, does not solve the problem of identification, either. A transidentifcatory transnationalism emphasizes an oscillation between the persistence of identification with a concomitant resistance to it. At first sight, Ruza and Ana certainly exemplify such an engagement between themselves that circumvents the major culture (the Swiss host culture). However, since Ruza has assimilated and literally embodies Swiss-ness, she poses as the major culture (she does not speak in her ethnic language to Ana or Mila, rather establishing a clear distance, trying to assert a power relationship). The engagement between Ana and Ruza can thereby be seen as a transversal and transnational engagement that changes from a vertical engagement (Ruza as Swiss-ness engages with Ana) to a horizontal engagement since Ana actively refuses to insert herself into a powerless subject position.

As Ruza's sense of identity molecularizes, Ruza ultimately changes from her practices of identification to a practice of relation: she relates her past to herself again

through pictures, she begins to use her ethnic language, she can accept her vitality that she experiences through the engagement with Ana on a molecular/affective level. Consequently, the transnational engagement between Ruza and Ana is not only horizontal, completely circumventing the major culture (as Ruza does not identify with Swiss-ness alone), but it changes to a trans-identificatory approach that dicourages identification by stresses transversal becomings and experience of transsubjectivity through shareable affects. Štaka visually presents those shareable affects with affection images, circular camera movements, parallel shots between Mila and Ana (glass shot) or Ruza and Ana (vitality/music shots).

The benefit of transidentificatory practices lies in the honoring and the non-erasure of all differences across molar and molecular planes, as well as the unfinalizability of a dialogic engagement across molar differences (age and gender) and molecular differences (affective differences). As Ana and Ruza are able to engage with each other in a transversal and horizontal manner, their differences are honored and seen as a source of transformation for Ruza. The affective encounter with Ana allows Mila and Ruza to experience themselves as other and experience a transversal as well as transsubjective becoming. This leads to a different form and mode of belonging that for Ruza includes an honoring of her ethnic roots and an honoring for Mila of her present home in Zurich. Ana, on the other hand, begins to painfully experience her molecular unbelonging, as she tries to untie herself from an integral part of her body (her leukemia). Štaka's contribution thus lies not in resolving "otherness" through identifying with one character but in fact brings us closer to our own otherness through Mila, Ruza and Ana,

as they molecularize into otherness. By sharing that affective experience with viewers, we transversally become part of this transnational engagement beyond identification. We begin to become painfully aware of our own otherness that perhaps longs to unbelong or run away. Or to tie oneself back to a past long gone. Štaka lets us experience our own thirst of longing to belong and unbelong and contributes to a transsubjective transnational engagement that stresses transversal becomings beyond identification.

Conclusion: Sticky Notes

> The lived spaces and temporalities of home, work, school, blame, adventure, illness, rumination, pleasure, downtime, and release are the rhythms of the present as a compositional event—one already weighted with the buzz of atmospheric fill…..Everything depends on the dense entanglement of affect, attention, the senses and matter. …All the world is a bloom space now. A promissory note….Affect matters in a world that is always promising and threatening to amount to something. Fractally complex, there is no telling what will come of it or where it will take persons attuned.
> —Kathleen Stewart (340)

Sara Ahmed says that things become sticky as a result of repetition. A "transnational other" is not intrinsically dirty or disgusting or a threat but materializes as such because the other has repeatedly been so rhetoricized. Hence, such affects of being "othered" (which equals bad) are attached through narratives and glued to a certain body through a repetition of narratives or images. As the body becomes sticky with those affects (e.g., disgust and impurity), the effects of such affective narratives produce the body. In a mutually constitutive relationship, however, the stickiness can affect the other bodies that are rhetoricized as pure. There is always a slight danger, therefore, that if the circulation of a particular narrative stops, then the self might slide into the other, with the object possibly becoming the subject. The dirty one might lose its dirtiness, the woman might lose her womanliness, the legal one might lose its legality. All these entities might in fact slide into an ontological affective sameness. Thus "we can think of stickiness as an effect of surfacing, as an effect of the histories of contact between bodies, objects, and signs…stickiness is an effect. That is, stickiness depends on histories of contact that have already been impressed upon the surface of the object" (90).

If the current discourse on the "transnational other" is shaped and dependent on the colonial and migrational histories, which repeatedly produced the "other" (woman, ethnic other, sick person) as bad, then the "other" is already very sticky with a historical layer of unpleasant affects. As Europe's colonial as well as migrational history has made the migrant laborers sticky with such unpleasant affects, this affective landscape persists until the present day, as the borders are still being strengthened in order to deter the "bad", which are third nationals (those not part of the European Union) from attempting entry. Whereas this affective landscape of Europe cannot be made less sticky very easily, the filmmakers and authors I discussed, try to intervene in this landscape with their circulation of the female "transnational other" that not only suffers from those affects but also has the capacity (intrinisic vitality) to show how she is not worse in her "otherness." In fact, she shows how her otherness in moments of shared subjectivity and transversal becomings can become sameness.

The filmmakers and authors stick their interventions like Post-its (sticky notes) onto the current sticky affective discourse. They overlay the current affective narrative with another narrative and imaginary as in a palimpsest, in order to neutralize the stickiness of the "bad" affects that adhere to them. Hence, the political efficacy of those interventions lies in the resistance to as well as a rupture within those narratives. Through an innovative aesthetic, they circulate a different affective narrative and different affective images, producing a transnational feminist imaginary in which the transnational "other" is neither disgusting, nor foreign—nor does it have to be kept outside the nation or the boundaries of the (European) self.

In this dissertation, thus, I have tried to show how the aesthetic choices in filming and writing can intervene into conceptualizations, imaginaries and discourses of the border, the images of the refugee or the monological and monocultural notion of a nation, while at the same time producing Sticky-Notes of a an affective transnational feminist imaginary in which the female transnational other in fact can become ontologically and affectively the same.

Fariba is able to share a moment of transsubjectivity with Anne despite their differences with regard to sexuality, as well as national and religious belonging. Hence, they share a moment of ontological affective sameness. Yet, Fariba is not allowed to stay in Germany. Ruza is able to experience her inner exile (that she built through an identification with "Swissness") through the encounter with Ana. As Ana connects with her on an affective molecular level rather than a molar level, Ruza is able to experience herself as "other" (other than what she identifies herself with), which allows her to connect to herself as well as others, thus breaking her inner exile. Ana, on the other hand, runs away from the inner exile of her sickness. Irene is able to find a nomadic mode of belonging for herself in Berlin. As traumatic experiences repeatedly drive her into an inner exile, she is finally able to reimagine Berlin not as a past *Heimat* but perhaps as a place to which she can nomadically and temporarily attach. The ontological sameness that she experiences between Germany and the other country, however, is precisely why she is unable to permanently attach to any stable notion of home. The Japanese narrator "I" in "Wolkenkarte" oscillates between experiencing her/himself as an outsider and an insider to the nation of Switzerland. Unable to pronounce words in Swiss-German

fashion, s/he experiences an inner exilic subjectivity. As s/he breaks open the imaginary of a monolingual nation, s/he has pushed back and positioned her/himself as an insider/outsider, which s/he shows is the position of everyone.

The interventions that I tried to trace in the films and texts lie precisely in the power that affect commands. It can unite and disunite, it can stick and act as a glue but it can also unstick and unglue. As affect allows for transversal becomings and experience of affective sameness or a shared subjectivity along the sameness of affect, the "other" appears then not as other but as the same. Hence, by exploring the aesthetics of Maccarone, Štaka, Müller and Tawada, I have tried to show that depicting exilic subjectivity renders affect a powerful variable that makes politically efficacious contributions to a discourse of the subject, the "transnational other," border discourses, posthumanism and postcolonialism, as well as transnationalism and feminism. Whereas the stickiness of historical constructs of the "bad" other cannot be erased (Fariba has to leave Germany, Irene is still haunted by experiences as the surveilled other, the "I" is both bad foreigner and good native, Ruza is at the same time a good Swiss and a bad Serbian) at least they can be interrupted and ruptured, shown as metonymically sliding into each other as they temporarily have moments of sharing affects, experiencing themselves as other and with the other in transsubjective becomings.

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