



GEOGRAPHY OF THE IMAGINATION AND SPATIALITY IN DAVID GREIG'S *EUROPE*

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Abstract:

In the last few decades spatial literary studies have witnessed an unprecedented expansion in the discourse related to boundaries and border-crossing particularly with the advent of postmodernism and postcolonial theory and practice. Since the 'spatial turn' in 1980s, writings of Michel Foucault, Edward Soja and Henri Lefebvre have contributed to the theoretical critique pertaining to the reassertion of space in cultural and literary studies. This study aims to reveal insight into the spatial structures presented in David Greig's *Europe* and their potential implications for the contemporary world. Examining Lefebvre's theory of space, this study attempts to explore how his conceptualization of space helps in interpreting the relationship between space and subject in David Greig's *Europe*. I return to Lefebvre via two other space theorists: Foucault and Soja to explore the multiple representations of spatiality in Greig's *Europe*. The research tries to answer the following questions: What are the spatial features depicted in the play? How do spatial paradigms work for the construction of geographical imagination in the play? How does space affect social relationships?

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During the last decades globalisation has led to the increase in workforce mobility worldwide and the erasure of national borders, thus, deepening social interaction and linking distant communities. Although globalisation entails multinationals' expansion, global economic gains, cultural intermingling and political co-operation, it has simultaneously resulted in social injustice, unemployment, exploitation of labour, and human trafficking. In the last few decades spatially-oriented literary studies have witnessed an unprecedented expansion in the discourse related to boundaries and border-crossing particularly with the advent of postmodernism and postcolonial theory and practice. Generally speaking, temporality and spatiality have always been part of literary studies. Since the 'spatial turn' in 1980s, writings of Michel Foucault, Edward Soja and Henri Lefebvre have contributed to the theoretical critique pertaining to the reassertion of space in cultural and literary studies. As a term that is used extensively in spatial criticism, Geocriticism refers to "an exploratory critical practice, or set of practices, whereby readers, scholars, and critics engage with the spaces that make life, through lived experience and through imaginary projections"(Westphal xii). It is a term that refers to the interdisciplinary approach of studying literature in relation to space. It explores the analysis of real and metaphorical spaces and their relation to one another in literature and real life.

David Greig is one of the most influential dramatists of the 'New Generation' who has offered great contributions in revitalizing Scottish and British theatre in the twenty-first century. Fascinated with various forms of social mobility in a postmodern society, his dramatic oeuvre evidences an undisputable commitment to issues of globalism, internationalism and identity. In an interview with Neil Cooper, he is quoted saying, "theatre cannot change the world, but it can allow us a moment of liberated space in which to change ourselves" (220). Greig portrays the human condition in the new global order as crossing borders and barriers in most of his works such as *One Way Street* (1995), *Europe* (1996), *The Cosmonaut's Last Message to the Woman He Once Loved in the Former Soviet Union* (1999), *Outlying Islands* (2002), *San Diego* (2003), and *Kyoto* (2009). His protagonists are either natives, refugees or immigrants who have needs that are not fulfilled. In a milieu of postmodern chaos, Greig is primarily interested in highlighting the repercussions of contemporary displacement. In *Europe*, Greig demonstrates how Europe has become a place of unrest particularly after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Balkan civil wars in the 1990s. It has

become a haven for the refugees. This research is based on the hypothesis that David Greig's *Europe* articulates the role of spatiality in constructing geographical imagination and depicting the dilemmas of globalised modernity by focusing on various types of real and imaginative places. My main argument is that Greig's metaphorical representation of the mappable place in *Europe* evokes a sense of placelessness and incorporates the defeat, frustration and suffering caused by refugeehood and immigration in the contemporary world. I contend that through spatial references in this play Greig perspicaciously discusses the negative aspects of globalisation and calls for an immediate response to the contemporary refugee dilemma. The research attempts to answer the following questions: What are the spatial features depicted in the play? How do spatial paradigms work for the construction of geographical imagination in the play? How does space affect social relationships? Examining Henri Lefebvre's theory of space, this study attempts to explore how his conceptualization of space helps in interpreting the relationship between space and subject in David Greig's *Europe*. I return to Lefebvre via two other space theorists: Michel Foucault and Edward Soja to explore the multiple representations of spatiality and decipher the dialectics of spatial features in Greig's *Europe*. Through textual analysis and disclosing the impressive aesthetics of theatrical strategies, the researcher attempts to trace the ways in which heterotopia features in the depiction of displacement in a postmodern fragmented world.

Many critical reviews have discussed Greig's dramaturgical engagement with politics, with Scotland, and with the Middle East; however, spatiality in Greig's theatre has gained little attention. In "Utopian Gestures: David Greig's Texts for Theatre", Dan Rebellato contends that "Greig's work displays a persistent thread of non-rationality, even of religious imagery" (8). He addresses Greig's engagement with spiritual meaning in his theatre. In Nadine Holdsworth's article "David Greig" published in *Modern British Playwriting 2000-2009*, in relation to *San Diego*, she asserts that "all the characters are yearning for a sense of self-worth [...] that they try to fulfil through therapy, their careers or religious faith" (176). She discusses Greig's focus on religiousity and ritual enactments as a form of healing in his theatrical works. In her article "Travelers in Globalisation: From Near to Elsewhere and Back", Marilena Zaroulina examines the theme of globalisation in David Greig's *San Diego* and *Complicité's A Disappearing Number*. She argues that traveling as a form of mobility means a form of displacement since the

plays exhibit globality and mobility while past and present merge. Her article proposes that “the process of travelling and subsequent exposure to the elsewhere and the other paves the way for the emergence of a different kind of understanding of belonging that is closer to contemporary notions of utopia and debates about cosmopolitanism” (72). In a study entitled “Politics of Location: Spatial Images and Imaginings in David Greig’s Plays”, Lebriz Sonmez discusses Greig’s stageworks as a combination of “political content and allegorical style” (19) focusing on mimetic and diegetic places in his selected plays; nevertheless, the means of analyzing space aspects are limited and space theories are superficially applied. Sonmez depends entirely on the application of certain terminology related to space theories. The relationship between place and subjects has not gained much attention in his PHD dissertation. Moreover, the study does not give a full coverage of space as a dynamic entity; and utopic/heterotopic locations have not been examined. Therefore, the study at hand aims to contribute to filling this gap by expanding the potential for space as utopia/heterotopia in Greig’s *Europe*.

This paper aims to analyse the real and imagined spatial structures presented in Greig’s *Europe* and their interchangeable relationships with subjects and the potential implications for the globalised world. Geography of the imagination refers to perceived and/ or conceived spatial aspects in the play under study that uncovers the pervasiveness of the mental images of space. To achieve its objective, the paper starts with a brief overview of utopia and heterotopia in Lefebvre, Soja and Michel Foucault’s works, with the aim of offering an analysis of spatial dimensions in the play. In his seminal work, *The Production on Space*, Lefebvre emphasizes that society and space are interrelated. Space is dynamic, alive and fluid rather than a static entity; it keeps being reproduced by people’s perceptions (293). He further asserts that there are “places that are prohibited (holy or damned heterotopias) for various reasons, and others that are open of access, or to which access is encouraged” (294). In this way, Lefebvre’s conceptualization of heterotopic sites is dissimilar to Foucault’s stance who asserts that accessibility is an essential principle of heterotopia. Lefebvre’s spatial vision is unleashed through his affirmation that “we are concerned with the logico-epistemological space, the space of social practice, the space occupied by sensory phenomena including products of imagination such as projects and projections, symbols and utopias” (12). He perceives utopia as an ideology that reveals how both the actual and the imaginary spaces are highly significant. The

thoroughness of his principle lies in the harmony between the mental and the social elements of space. He differentiates between types of spaces since the “isotopies” refer to similar spaces, the “heterotopias” denote mutually repellent sites and the “utopias” relate to the imaginary or the symbolic spaces (366). For him, utopic locations are “the most effectively appropriated spaces” that are “occupied by symbols” (366). Hence religious places, gardens, and parks exemplify utopic sites since they symbolize absolute nature. Whereas museums are regarded as heterotopias by Foucault, Lefebvre considers them utopias since they dismantle transcendence (366).

Furthermore, Lefebvre sets out to propose that *the representations of space* is the dominant space in current society. It is the space constructed out of symbolic and abstract representations. These representations are “the logic and forms of knowledge, and the ideological content of codes, theories, and the conceptual depicts of space” (Shields 163). Hence, they enact people’s mental constructs of space or abstract understandings. This element is the “conceived” space that encapsulates symbolic representations. Lefebvre’s second consideration of space is what he calls *spatial practices*, which “embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation” (33). This spatial aspect refers to the “perceived space” that involves everyday routine since it relates to individuals’ participation in a spatial event. Spatial aspect takes place in the perceived space and is “directly sensible and open, within limits, to accurate measurement and description” (Soja 66). The third aspect of Lefebvre’s tirad is *spaces of representation* that entails the space of “inhabitants” and “users” (39). It relates to the “lived” space or the actual physical space (40). Lefebvrian theory of space, thus, is based on the concept that space has no singular aspect since there could be three interacting elements of space: sensory, imagined and lived. In his book, *The Urban Revolution*, Lefebvre offers a flexible concept of heterotopia delineating how the city during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has transformed from being the margin to being the centre since it has harbored populations from multiple origins (12). For him, the heterotopic site is the one that occupies the peripheral position regardless of being rural or urban, hell or heaven. He uses the term ‘urban society’ to substitute for the concepts of city and village. In this way, he accounts for both the enormous

emigration to big cities after the economic expansion and the nostalgic escape into the rural areas in search for unsophisticated life.

Edward Soja points out that “firstspace” is concrete space that “relates to the physical space and tends to privilege objectivity and materiality, and to aim towards a formal science of space” (75). “Secondspace” refers not to the perceived but to the imagined experience. Lefebvre’s lived space is called “thirdspace” by Soja; it relates to both the realistic and the imagined space and is “inhabited and used by artists, writers and philosophers” (Lefebvre 67). Soja defines “Thirdspace” as “an other way of understanding and acting to change the spatiality of human life, a distinct mode of critical spatial awareness that is appropriate to the new scope and significance being brought about in the re-balanced trialectics of spatiality-historicity-sociality” (10). Thirdspace denotes the subject negotiating ambivalent experiences of “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, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history” (Soja 57).

Michel Foucault also highlights this contradictory vision, arguing that “we are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed” (2). He contends that in the postmodern era space is marked by heterogeneity where “sites are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another” (3). Foucault suggests that among these sites there are two types of places viewed as either utopias, that is, ideal unreal places, or heterotopias, that is, counter-sites; however, these two representations are having a reciprocal relation. In his lecture *Of Other Spaces*, he sets out to propose that heterotopias are “real places – places that do exist and are formed in the very founding of society which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted” (3).

Foucault presents six principles that constitute his spatial discourse. The first principle refers to the universality of heterotopic spaces since all cultures have them but in multiple ways. The second assumption underlines the adaptability of the function related to heterotopias in society, hence cemetery, the museum and the garden have functions determined by societies.

This principle sheds light on the social function of space and links the Foucauldian theory with Lefebvre's perspective. The third trait is that "the heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several places, several sites that are in themselves incompatible" (6). The fourth characteristic is that "heterotopias are most often linked to slices in time", hence there is an "absolute break with traditional time" (6). Some heterotopias are linked to the accumulation of time such as museums and libraries, that is, eternal heterotopias. Temporal heterotopias, on the other hand, are like fairgrounds. The fifth principle highlights the system of opening and closure of heterotopic sites that makes them either penetrable or inaccessible (7). The final assumption is that "heterotopias have a function in relation to all the space that remains" (8). This function is either to create a space of illusion or to create another real space much more perfect than our real disordered space (8). While Foucault thinks that utopias are unreal sites, Lefebvre insightfully asserts the functionality of heterotopia on both the symbolic and the realistic levels. He manages to account for various transformations of heterotopic sites and the way in which individuals situate themselves in certain places. Indeed, Lefebvre, Soja and Foucault offer illuminating directions in mapping out the contours of space that will be crystallized in the analysis of the spatial aspects in Greig's *Europe*.

The central themes of the play are xenophobia, exile and dislocation of residents and immigrants in an unnamed European city. The action primarily occurs in two intersecting heterotopic spaces, that is an European town that has no cartographical dimension and a train station. Sociologist Bauman points out the repercussions of globalisation since it "specializes in breaking those boundaries too weak to withstand the pressure, and in drilling numerous huge and unpluggable holes through those boundaries that successfully resist the forces bent on dismantling them" (96). The middle-class living room and the one set of traditional plays are replaced by a railway station in *Europe*. The play foregrounds some global issues such as rampant consumerism, unemployment, unprecedented refugee crisis and protest movements in a globalised world. In his interview with Neil Cooper, Greig succinctly puts it, "*Europe* wasn't a prescient play when it was talking about asylum-seekers and so forth; it's just that nothing's changed. If it was Bosnia then, it's Iraq now. If it does enter the canon or something, it's only because people are still having horrible wars". Set in a border-town railwaystation, the play echoes the ongoing turmoil not only in the Balkans but anywhere else in the world. Obliterating

the boundaries has made Europe a haven for floods of refugees who wanted to escape from civil wars, hunger, massacre and who dream of a better future.

Europe as a Foucauldian heterotopia

In Foucauldian ideology of space, Greig reimagines Europe in two ambivalent visions: as a haven taken as a destination by refugees and as a prison for natives. Müller rightly contends that Europe is differently shaped by the individuals' perceptions as "a harbour of civilization, morals, decency and humanity, an enormous virtual gaming table, the site of atrocities and traumas, and an imaginary dreamland that opens itself up to the imaginative traveller"(165). The play opens in an empty railway station where two refugees, Sava and his daughter Katia, are seeking shelter. Katia describes the place she comes from as not existing anymore, "The place I came from isn't there anymore. It disappeared" (37). Due to war and poverty, Katia's heterotopic hometown, that lies in between the two locations of the constructed and abstracted, has become unrecognizable; it has become "the sort of the place people come from, not the sort of place they go to, particularly"(38). In an interview with Caridad Svich Greig states, "I feel that all my work concerns lostness in some way or another" (52). Through the characters of Sava and Katia, Greig sheds much light on the problem of homelessness and alienation since their mobility is manifested by illegally crossing the borders in search for a secure place.

On the other hand, Adele represents the natives who encounter problems in their unnamed hometown that result in anguish and frustration. Suffocated in her native town, she is portrayed as dreaming of exploring new spaces in other European cities. Exploring new geographies marks Adele's utopia. Preferring to live in her own mindscape, Adele always goes to the roof of the train station to have a panoramic view of the trains coming to and leaving her city. It seems that this place, to some extent, reflects her desire to liberate herself from daily routine and fears. Looking down from above helps Adele to generate a map of the larger international context. This spatial shift sets up a dialectical relationship; for instance, it is this particular place that helps Adele to develop an intimate relationship with Katia. Adele's husband, Berlin, refuses to leave, hence displaying deep attachment to his place and loyalty despite his jobless status. In this sense, physical place as heterotopia affects people's personal relationships even including familial ties. Through the character of Berlin, Greig depicts the

political and economic problems affecting European countries that have joined the EU recently. Due to the system of capitalism, machines have replaced manpower hence resulting in unemployment. Despite being unemployed local workers, Berlin and his friend Horse choose not to leave their hometown; they prefer to stay and fight these harsh circumstances in their own way. They resort to violence in dealing with foreigners who have invaded their territories suggesting that they will “give all the foreigners’ jobs back to the locals” (20). Unfortunately, adopting an extremist attitude against foreigners is their way of expressing anger.

The way in which Europe is presented as a place conforms to most of Foucault’s principles. First, because Greig stages his play in an unspecified town in Europe, Europe as a site occupies a central position in the spatial map of the play. Because of possessing no spatial particularity, the anonymous European town gains universality as it points to more than one international city. As regarding the unspecificity of location, Rebellato points out that, “the refusal of these writers always to specify the location of their plays” may be seen as “a refusal to let ethical judgement stop at national boundaries” (*From the State of the Nation to Globalisation* 258). Rebellato here emphasizes postmodern fragmentation and suggests that the location is the whole world understood as one space.

Foucault’s second applicable concept is related to the function of the heterotopic space that is determined by the needs of people and changes across time. Greig highlights how refugees represented by Sava and Katia manipulate the space of the railway station and transform its function into a safe haven. At another striking level, the train station functions as a place for protest when Fret, the stationmaster, hangs banners that show protest such as “save our station” and “stop the closure” (59). The dramatist skilfully portrays the flexibility with which the station resumes its normal function after performing its new heterotopic functions established by subjects.

The third relevant concept is that the heterotopic place consists of multiple sites. The train station in *Europe* encompasses wooden benches, public toilets, the main hall, the roof, Fret’s office, wall signs,..etc. As refugees continue to live in the station, they find a slice of everything. Adele describes to Katia the train from the station roof, “I’ve stood up here to watch ...a train full of everything. Every kind of thing from everywher’s inside it” (42). The train encompasses multiple cultures from different nations. Arguably, the train station as a

heterotopic space affects social relationships. After showing hostility and intolerance, Fret and Sava develop friendship as they have common concerns. As railway workers, their whole lives are deeply attached to trains. They even have the same destiny at the play's tragic end. Foucault describes heterotopia as a place in which relationships "designate, mirror and reflect each other" (24). In this regard, Fret's experiences reflect Sava's memories. When Sava asks about an explanation to the radical changes that happened to the station, Fret answers, "Now it's wearing away. It's eroding in the wind. Losing tiny particles of substance every day, getting smaller, breaking up" (77). Their dialogue reveals how they are upset because of the current changes refashioning Europe such as violence, racism and chaos. For Katia and Sava, the train station symbolizes safety. Sava claims that, "I've found myself here. In a station. A station is a place to finish a journey as well a place to start one" (82); thus expressing his deep uprootedness. For Katia and Adele, the station provides them with secrecy and they become lesbians. In a desparate tone, Adele tells Katia, "You've lost your home and I've never had one. So we're both exile" (62). The train toilet as a hidden place has a liberating effect on them. The disconnected transport links parallel the torn-apart familial ties exemplified in Adele's relationship with Berlin. Wilkie rightly contends that:

The play therefore pursues the implications of disconnection— in transport links, in personal relationships, in versions of nationhood, and between competing social ideologies— for understanding a contemporary European sense of identity.(77)

In the above-mentioned quotation, Wilkie emphasizes the fact that the play is bound up in a network of close relations with space. As a heterotopia, the railway station has spatial features based on opposites: even the architechural design accords with its contrdictory nature since it displays a heterogeneous design that mixes Nazi, Hapsburg and Stalinist forms. In a Foucauldian sense, similar to museums and libraries, the train station is an eternal heterotopia that reflects the accumulation of time through references to various historic rulers in a way described in the stage directions as "a hybrid which has neither the romantic dusting of history, nor the gloss of modernity" (7).

The fourth applicable notion in Foucault's parameters of space is that heterotopia functions "when traditional time is broken" (6). In this respect, Greig depicts the train station as a temporary heterotopia that epitomizes the distortion of daily routine. In this place jobless

young locals are waiting for a train to escape poor economic conditions and cross the borders and refugees are having temporary shelter. Sava complains that they have “been blown around from place to place for a long time and this is where we’ve come to rest For now” (18). Harold Schweizer proposes that while waiting, we “enter a temporality different from that time in which ...we daily strive to accomplish our tasks... [and] awaken to the repressed rhythms of duration and thus also to the deeper dimensions of our being” (777). While refugees have a unified sense of breaking the rules, locals have a unifying sense of defying the authorities.

The fifth applicable notion is related to the fact that Europe is a bordered place that has checkpoints marked by a system of opening and closure. Floods of immigrants try to enter through its borders believing that Europe will provide them with a safe shelter. Recognized as such, the heterotopic space of Europe is supposed to be the zenith of liberty and security. In contrast, it does not meet the immigrants’ expectations. Sava expresses being marginalised by the exclusionary European forces, “You think you’ve entered but in fact that is only illusion and you’re excluded” (32). In heterotopic terms, Sava creates the abstracted space which intersects with the constructed space of Europe.

The final readily applicable principle is that heterotopic space reflects its relationship with “the space that remains” revealing itself as either a space of illusion or perfection. In this sense, Europe is depicted as a heterotopia of illusion that unveils xenophobia and racism directed against foreigners. Horse and Berlin join the neo-Nazi groups and fire-bomb the train station to express their protest while Fret and Sava are the victims of racist attacks. Greig creates spaces on stage in a manner that merges reality and illusion.

Europe as a Lefebvrian Utopic Space

Lefebvre’s triadic aspects of space are clearly visible in the play. In light of Lefebvre’s theory of space, Europe can be viewed as utopia operating on both the realistic and symbolic levels. It is occupying a central position in relation to other peripheral cities standing on heterotopic margins where thousands of refugees leave in search for a better life. Unified by their dreams of a better future, people from various geographical locations cross the borders to Europe as a shelter in hope of freeing themselves from the atrocities of war and poverty. Europe has symbolic associations for refugees like Sava and Katia who are “othered” by local people. For them, it represents freedom, civilization, and security. Sava expresses their dilemma in the

following words, “we’ve been blown around from place to place for a long time and this is where we’ve come to rest” (18). Having lost their homeland as a result of war and poverty, refugees like Sava and Katia cherish an imaginative Europe of civilization. They create their own imaginative utopic space or *representation of space* – to use Lefebvre’s concept. They configure an ideal image of Europe where “honesty will prevail, sense will win” (30). At another significant level, Europe as utopic space is reflected implicitly in Billy’s migration and in Adele and Katia’s travel in a train at the play’s end. Adele is fascinated by the idea of crossing the borders and living transnationally; she describes the train as “a chain of Amsterdam diamonds”(39). She creates her own perception of space as utopia since she links it to wealth and excitement. Moreover, as two old stationmasters, Fret and Sava express their own admiration of operating trains as ‘spiritual’, ‘religious’, ‘beautiful’, ‘smooth’ and ‘gorgeous’ experience (48). Their perception of trains is associated with the idea of connectedness, technical progress and European civilization. They believe that “Steel and tracks and trains [are] like blood muscle and arteries holding the continent together” (48).

The train station can be viewed as a sample of Lefebvre’s *spatial practice* as it is depicted as a place whose functionality has stopped. The noteworthy stage directions indicate that, “The predominant mood is of a forgotten place. Timetables, out-of-date posters and sadly decrepit information signs hang from the walls. A plain wooden bench sits in the middle of the main hall. The floor is of dirty concrete and is unswept” (7). Located on the town’s border or rather in a peripheral position in relation to the unnamed European city that occupies a dominating centre, the railway station functions as a “heterotopic other”. In *The Production on Space*, Lefebvre convincingly argues that, “from the analytic standpoint, the spatial practice of a society is revealed through the deciphering of its space” (38). The train station has become a deserted place since there are no trains coming as the blackboard reads “NO TRAINS” (3). The station’s inactive condition unmask the terrible socio-economic conditions of the European towns raising issues related to unemployment, recession and insecurity.

In relation to space, characters in *Europe* can be grouped into two categories: the “leavers” like Adele and Billy who dream of departure and escape ; and the “stayers” like Sava, Fret, Berlin and Horse who see Europe as a thirdspace, that is both utopian and heterotopian and hence choose to stay in their local town. The first group finds in the unnamed city in

Europe, that is Lefebvre's lived space or *space of representation*, an unsafe place that displays inequality and exploitation whereas the second group resides in between the perceived and the conceived space. While Billy describes their dilemma as, "we live in a dirty, nothing place" (25) and decides to leave, Sava expresses his aim of achieving dignity by staying at his place when he tells Fret that, "By staying I think we brought a sliver of dignity, a sliver of civilization to an otherwise damned place. We can't leave places to the wolves" (82). Characters like Berlin and Horse suffer as a result of inequality and marginalization. Because he has lost his town physically and spiritually, Berlin enunciates his rights for visibility when he declares, "We're also Europe" (90). Since they believe that the train station is "a criminal place" (82) and motivated by "a desperate attempt to put their town back on the map", Berlin and Horse resort to violence (Zenzinger 274). They decide to explode the train station to get rid of foreigners who invade their territory. These characters are portrayed in a way that reveals their internal consistency since their actions flow logically from the situation. As furnacemen, they look at the fire with a sense of admiration: "It was comforting. The heat. The light. The timbers cracking. Like working the furnace" (82). In this regard, burning the place signifies cleaning it from corruption. Acting out of their fears and hopes maintains their consistency and reinforces the credibility of the play.

Soja's thirdspace in *Europe*

Soja's thirdspace can be best exemplified in Morocco's character portrayal. A successful capitalist entrepreneur for whom the borders are open, Morocco seems to differ from the other characters in the play. His paradoxical nature manifests itself when he tells Katia that, "we're familiar with cities. We've crossed borders. We're at home only when we're away from home" (71). Morocco brings vodka in town through smuggling. He speaks of "magic money for just crossing a magic line" (33). Used as a stage prop, this vodka is given as a present to his friends and ironically used later in setting fire in the train station and killing Sava and Fret. Greig here draws the audience's attention to the interrelatedness between globalisation and violence. All the time Morocco is seen negotiating contradictory experiences related to his sense of belonging to Europe. He seems to reject his monotonous lifestyle in town. He tells his friends that "Nothing's more of a prison than a home. Nothing is a bigger threat to man's liberty than three meals a day and familiar faces at the dinner table" (67). He has a confusing

identity since he is considered “cosmopolitan” by Adele (51) but simultaneously beaten up by extremist local people. Una Chaudhuri coins the term “geopathology” to identify “the problem of place – and place as problem - [that] informs realist drama deeply, appearing as a series of ruptures and displacement in various orders of location” (55). Morocco’s geopathic framework is constructed by contradictory elements of identity that lay in the space between home and exile. Morocco’s unresolved identity manifests itself when he tells his friends that, “your memories are more valuable than money” (33). His ability of border-crossing through dubious ways gives him the power to get Katia the documents required to pass the border. In spatial terms, although he talks to Katia as a leaver, he talks to his friends as a stayer. Thus as a migrant, Morocco suffers, though as a town-dweller businessman he enjoys a powerful position. He concretizes Soja’s mode of thirdspace that combines the physical material forms and its symbolic representations. The multi-dimensional aspects of Morocco’s character coincide with the nonsingularity of the play’s spatial dimensions.

Indeed, Europe is ambivalently portrayed throughout the play. It becomes a city of contradictions, a space located in between the realistic homeland and the imagined one, and at the same time a destination for the refugees. Europe as utopia relates to the imagined, ideological or abstract space whereas Europe as heterotopia is connected to the geographical, factual or lived space. The duality of spatial aspects depicted by the playwright suggests an interchangeable relationship that adds to the fecundity of the concept of space.

Exploring the mutually interacting spatial mechanisms and the anti-naturalistic theatrical strategies in *Europe* foregrounds Greig’s preoccupation with the notion of space in a globalised context. In other words, Greig’s aesthetic innovation is the means to achieve an effective response to the challenges confronting people in the age of globalisation. In his interview with George Rodosthenous Greig emphasizes that, “almost all my work benefits from productions in which all the actors are on stage all the time – i.e. Brechtian, non-fourth-wall stagings” (6). Influenced by Brecht’s defamiliarisation effect, Greig acknowledges the presence of his actors all the time on stage to indicate that they form an intrinsic part of the space. Post-Wall conditions of recession in Europe are reflected through character portrayal. A sense of rigidity and stagnation is provided through Morocco’s character who is portrayed as a young entrepreneur “unshaven and wearing a dusty suit” (5). Billy also represents youth who decide to

try their luck elsewhere. This is contrasted with the image of the international express trains which constantly pass the station. The train motif signifies movement and mobility in an age of globalisation marked by the obliteration of national borders; nevertheless, the people in town live in stasis and stillness. Since trains no longer stop at the station, the unnamed town fails to connect to other parts of the world. This contrast suggests tension and anxiety. In a sense, Brecht asserts himself in the way Greig structures his play. In a cyclic structure, since it starts and ends in the train station, the play consists of two acts; and each act is divided into a number of scenes. The episodic form and the snappy structure of scene division parallel the passing of the train and echo the atmosphere of fragmentation in postmodern society.

To push the argument further, Greig manipulates the chorus at the beginning of each act to defiantly escape a naturalistic frame, create an alienation effect and enhance audiences' interpretation of the relationship between subject and space. The chorus helps the audience configure the image of the town depicted in the play as a border town bruised by negligence. Acting as intermediaries between the play and the spectators, the chorus of townspeople in a pessimistic tone grieves the loss of place:

4 What's happened to this place?

5 I don't recognize it anymore.

6 Maybe we lost it in a game of cards.

7 Maybe it disappeared into the forest.

8 Maybe it was stolen while our backs were turned.

ALL Only it isn't our place any more.(44)

Through direct address, the narrative presented by the chorus develops the theme of dislocation. This theme runs through the whole play and merges with its spatial references to form an essential part of the total meaning. The border town itself has become a heterotopic non-place where the collective voice of the community complains about their miserable conditions. Evocative interconnectedness between the loss of space and the loss of identity can be interpreted from the chorus's lamentation. Greig's *Europe* is not the play that offers entertainment or reinforces the dominant norms but rather it is that which provokes the audience to interpret the metaphoric implications of the heterotopic sites created on stage. Additionally, the suggestiveness of the characters' names like Berlin, Morocco and Sava

reflect the deep relationship based on interaction between the place and the identity of its dwellers. Berlin is the capital of Germany and the character who has this name is portrayed as a hardworking furnaceman. Sava is named after River Sava in Southeast Europe; a river that has gained international fame after Yugoslavia was dissolved in 1990s. Sava, as a character, is characterized by patience and peacefulness. Morocco as a character is named after an Arab country marked by generosity. In one instance in the play, he helps Katia obtain the documents necessary for her travel. Thus, since characters echo names of geographical locations, this reinforces the idea that people's lives are interconnected with space. Living in one space, despite belonging to multifarious geographical origins, seems to have a unifying effect on the identity of the people since they share the same experience of loss and insecurity.

Europe offers myriad verbal and non-verbal strategies that contribute to deciphering the relationship between subject and space. The dramatist skillfully manipulates elliptical dialogue, one-word answer to questions, short telegraphic sentences and rapid statements that echo and contradict each other to match the passage of time and signify the state of disorder and confusion in Europe. Hence, the implied meaning is far beyond the linguistic expression. The following dialogue provides a good example:

Horse: What would you do, Berlin, if you were . . . ?

Berlin: What?

Horse: In charge.

Billy: Of what?

Horse: You know.

Billy: President?

Horse: King.

Berlin: Dictator.

Horse: All of that. (pause)

Berlin: I'd . . . I'd sort it out.

Billy: How?

Berlin: I'd do the business.

Billy: You would have to face economical realities.

Horse: Harsh ones.

Billy: Stiff ones.

Horse: The cold winds of recession.

Billy: Too many workers not enough jobs.

Berlin: Yeah, well. I'm not, am I. I'm not president.(23)

Horse and Berlin's speech unmasks their plight as two young natives who suffer from recession and placelessness in a postmodern milieu. Intense pauses and silences are frequently used to suggest difficulty of communication between people. Greig creates a dialogue marked by brevity and stageability as it flows naturally leading to a powerful theatrical effect. Setting, spoken dialogue and physical actions are inextricably intertwined to draw the audience into the world of the play. Moreover, Greig uses allusion in the play's exposition to produce new meanings and denotations. He alludes to W.H. Auden's poem *Refugee Blues* and to Jack Derrida's essay 'The Other Heading'. While the former depicts refugees' loss of their homelands and personifies the dehumanization of man, the latter explores the urgent need for finding a proper solution for the refugees' dilemma. As a literary device, allusion here helps in bringing terrors related to the notion of placelessness to the foreground.

Stage directions provide the readers with an integral element of live theatre. They reflect the playwright's intentions particularly in depicting real and imaginative places in *Europe*. For example, stage directions describe the Calypso bar as "shabby and has counters and formica tables. The chairs are hard like school chairs" (19). This place is the second most commonly used place in the play. Symbolically, it is associated with entertainment since Berlin, Horse and Billy used to spend their time there. It is supposed to be used as a temporary heterotopia for relaxation. Nevertheless, the shabby place and the hard chairs exhibit the poor living conditions of the locals. Another striking example of descriptive stage directions is the way Morocco described as a businessman, "arrives in the town square. He is a dark man, unshaven and wearing a dusty suit and sunglasses. He has a heavy suitcase with him" (5). In this case, Morocco's costume reminds the audience of how capitalist entrepreneurs look like in an age of consumerism. Stage directions "international express train passes/passing" that appear almost at the end of each scene in the play act as a refrain which reinforces the rapid spatial and social transformations inflicting Europe.

Special effects also play an essential role in decoding the spatial references in *Europe*. The deafening sound of the train heard at the end of each scene emphasizes the passage of time, conveys spatial perception and points to the technical progress that draws European countries together. It also contributes to the musical and dramatic effect. Moreover, Greig manipulates lighting as a dramatic device in a striking way. The first scene starts in darkness and then lights come up when the sound of the international train is heard suggesting ongoing change in Europe. The stage image of wolves coming out at night to attack the town suggests threats provoked by the flux territorial divisions. Significantly, the play addresses spatial interconnectivity through using the railway imagery. Railways act as a metaphor for connectivity linking cities across the continent as Fret indicates, “Steel and tracks and trains like blood muscle and arteries holding the continent together” (53). Cities are no longer separated, a fact that is highlighted by Sava’s speech that “we’re not in some savage country on the other side of the world” (29), and Katia’s remark that she now sees in her own town the hatred she used to see elsewhere. Europe thus can be viewed as “a liminal concept, fluid and indeterminate” (Reinelt 365).

Based on juxtaposition and contradiction, the play challenges the audience’s perceptions of space. By shifting the locations from one scene to another, the sites are juxtaposed and the theatre itself – in its metaphoric implication – is juxtaposed to the world in a holistic way. Intertwining different characters’ voices in different places dismantles Greig’s pervasive drive towards relatedness and interconnection. An example occurs at the play’s end when Berlin’s narrative about the media’s analysis of the killings is interwoven with the young lesbians’ dialogue about the European cities they wish to visit. Another outstanding example of juxtaposition that adds a filmic atmosphere to the play is juxtaposing the train station’s explosion due to racist attacks and the sexual pleasure that Adele and Katia share unknowing that their fathers are killed in the fire-bombing. The coincidence of these contradictory scenes is successfully manipulated by the dramatist to vividly convey his critique of globalism that metaphorically kills the old generation represented by Sava and Fret whereas it gives freer outlook to life and even licentiousness to the new generation represented by the liberated Adele and Katia. Gestures play a crucial role in this scene when Adele “grabs Katia’s hand and points it in the direction of the train” (35) as if she wants her to identify the hopes and ideals of

crossing the borders. It is striking how the dramatist uses non-verbal signs to stress the fact that messages conveyed by these signs are as powerful as linguistic ones. For example, contrasting the image of the train with that of the fire gives a powerful dramatic effect to the finale. Another interesting point is that the sound of the train is simultaneously heard with the sound of the explosion. This suggests that connectivity due to obliteration of national boundaries in a globalised world is accompanied by disintegration and destruction of places. The resolution of the play comes with Berlin's warning that, "they know that, in our own way, we're also Europe"(85). This ironic warning implies that 'New Europe' must close its borders to stop violence. The manner in which Greig ends his play reveals the great extent to which he is obtrusively entangled in placing together contrasting scenes and linking up multiple locations with different characters for the purpose of endowing the play with a flexible spatial texture and rich associations. In fact, the key to Greig's dramatic genius lies in his ability to extend the significance of place into universal themes of human interest.

Finally, tackling David Greig's theatrical representation of space through his thought-provoking play *Europe* in light of Lefebvre, Soja and Foucault's space theories, helps one to decipher how the dramatist probes the ambivalent relationships between geographical boundaries and geography of the imagination highlighting the metaphoric implications of penetrating these boundaries. Highlighting the interactive relations between subject and space, the play explores postmodern fragmentation and displacement of immigrants and locals in Europe. The non-specific setting incorporated in the stage design encapsulates abstraction and proves that a single space is capable of producing several meanings. The obliteration of spatial particularity intensifies the universal truth of disintegration and xenophobia in a globalised world. Greig's representation of space in *Europe*, discloses that theatre space encapsulates multiple dimensions beyond the embodied real space; it encompasses the imagined places that characters occupy. The dramatist offers the audience an alternative means through which they can generate a clearer sense of their own place and remap the world they live in. Through Lefebvrian lens, Europe stands out as a utopic space representing security, civilization and technical progress. Portraying Europe as utopia seems to be an essential coping mechanism to create a sense of hope for transformation. Through a Foucauldian perspective, Europe emerges as a heterotopia of illusion reflecting violence and intolerance. Depicting it as heterotopia

produces symbolic connotations generated by the multiperspectivism of the individuals' perceptions. From Soja's standpoint, Europe emerges as a thirdspace where the physical and the real merge with the metaphoric and the abstract to cast a new light on the flexibility of the concept of space. Greig's success as a dramatist lies in confronting the spectators with the real images of 'the new Europe' where unemployed natives, dispossessed workers and excluded aliens dwell in their own hybrid thirdspace negotiating a faint attempt to articulate their identity.

المستخلص

جغرافية الخيال والمكانية في مسرحية "أوروبا" للكاتب ديفيد جريج

أمل إبراهيم كامل

نبذة مختصرة :

في العقود القليلة الماضية، شهدت الدراسات الأدبية المكانية انفراجاً غير مسبوق في الخطاب المتعلق بالحدود وعبور الحدود وخاصة بالتزامن مع نظريتي ما بعد الحداثة وما بعد الاستعمار. فمنذ "المنعطف المكاني" في الثمانينيات، ساهمت كتابات فوكو وسوجا وليفيغر في النقد النظري المتعلق بإعادة تأكيد دور المكان في الدراسات الثقافية والأدبية. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الكشف عن النماذج المكانية المقدمة في مسرحية "أوروبا" للكاتب المسرحي ديفيد جريج وتضميناتها المختلفة بالنسبة للعالم المعاصر. بدراسة نظرية المكان لهنري ليفيغر، تحاول هذه الدراسة استكشاف كيف يساعد تنظيره للمكان في تفسير العلاقة بين المكان والشخص الذي يعيش فيه. وتستند الدراسة أيضاً على الإطار النظري لكل من ميشيل فوكو و إدوارد سوجا لاستكشاف تعددية الأنماط المكانية في المسرحية قيد الدراسة. ويحاول البحث الإجابة على التساؤلات الآتية: ما هي ملامح المكان كما تصورها مسرحية "أوروبا"؟ كيف تعمل النماذج المكانية على بناء الخيال الجغرافي في المسرحية؟ كيف يؤثر المكان على العلاقات الاجتماعية؟

الكلمات الدالة:

الإزاحة / الخلع من المكان، المغامرة، اللامكان، اللاجنون، المكانية

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