

insights into those positions, as well as his thoughts on globalization and the formation of literary canons. An expert on propaganda, Dr. Culbert spoke to *Focus* about Leni Riefenstahl's films and techniques, along with other players in the field of German cinema during National Socialism.

Taking over the editorship, Julia Baker will continue her work with *Focus* as journal editor-in-chief and conference organizer for 2004-5. She has already begun planning the ninth annual *Focus* graduate student conference entitled "Forgetting and Remembering: Memory Discourse in German Literature," which will be held October 29th and 30th, 2004 in the Max Kade German Cultural Center at the University of Cincinnati. Please contact us or see our website for more information. Laura Tráser-Vas joins her as incoming book review editor, and I am confident of Julia and Laura's future success in their positions.

I wish to thank a number of people for their support of *Focus on German Studies*. First, I would like express my gratitude to the Department of German Studies at the University of Cincinnati for entrusting me with the position of editor and its responsibilities. Department Head Sara Friedrichsmeyer and advisor Katharina Gerstenberger deserve heartfelt thanks for their continued support of the journal and annual conference. I would also like to recognize the Graduate Student Governance Association of the University of Cincinnati for their continued financial support. I wish to extend additional thanks to Volume 10's editor, Silke Schade, and Melinda Tracy for their helpful suggestions and support. Finally, it was a pleasure to share the responsibility of selecting, revising and proofreading this volume's articles with my fellow graduate students. Due to their assistance in the journal editing process and with the 2003 conference, we start a new decade of *Focus on German Studies*.

Aine Zimmerman

Toward an Event-based History:
Chronik der Wende, Die leere Mitte, and Good Bye Lenin

Christian Buss

Film can function as history: as a source or a document not only
of its own aesthetic history, but of history in general.

Vice versa, history can be presented as film.

Patrick Vonderau

If film is capable of functioning as a document of history while also acting as a text that self-consciously creates narratives of history, we must ask the question, what kind of histories can films present? Focusing on filmic attempts to represent the fall of the Berlin Wall, this paper demonstrates how recent films engaging in the memory work of unification directly suggest the impossibility of a sequential narrative of historical meaning as a way to make sense of German unification. Specifically, two recent films, *Die leere Mitte* (1998) and *Good Bye Lenin* (2002), problematize traditional documentary narratives, primarily through their exploration of 'otherness': ethnic, economic and temporal. Ultimately, the re-focusing of events along the lines of the status of 'others' in these films leads to the implicit invocation of a Deleuzian event-based history, in which every present is infinitely divided by its becoming a past event and a future. Beginning with the made-for-TV documentary, *Chronik der Wende* (1994), then moving to the film essay *Die leere Mitte*, and finally *Good Bye Lenin*, this paper argues that attempts to come to terms with the breakdown of entrenched borders leads to the instability of the traditional narrative of East vs. West. Reconfigurations of this narrative are initially affectively oriented around a myth of 'oneness' exhibited in *Chronik der Wende's* documentation of the first month of unrest. The inability to maintain this myth of instant unification is explored in *Die leere Mitte*, a film essay that attempts to re-view the events of 1989 and 1990 not within the hopeful matrix of "together" but alternately from the perspective of estranged 'others.' The frame of the outsider is revisited in the pop-cultural phenomenon of *Good Bye Lenin*, in which the melodrama

of the male lead's personal transformation negotiates and pacifies the problematic status of difference in the context of reunification. These negotiations reject linear history and instead implicitly invoke the Deleuzian category of the event as an alternative history.

History and Narrative

For Deleuze, the event is an event of the senses that arises from a particular state of affairs in the world. This sense is located, as Gottlob Frege described sense, between subjects and objects, resisting origin and particularity (78). The sense of the event breaks apart on the surface of the split between subjects and objects: it is, as Deleuze says, located between words and objects. The event's temporality resists teleologies of past-present-future (*Logic* 212). It exists in a time that has always just passed and is always about to come. The event is therefore always expressed in the infinitive, 'to die,' 'to be sick.' Without movement, the event is inconceivable, temporally resisting specificity as it resists spatial location.

With respect to our recent history, Deleuze argues, the development of cinema provides a privileged site for comprehending a decisive shift in strategies of signification, understanding, and belief. This shift concerns the question of time, because it provides a complex moving-picture of duration, arising as it does from the basis of the filmic interval. Since the interval functions as an irreducible limit of the cinema, "the flow of images or sequences bifurcate and develop serially, rather than continuing a line or integrating into a whole. The time-image produces a serial rather than organic form of composition. Rather than differentiation and integration, there is only relinking by irrational divisions" (Rodowick 112). This relinking describes a way of mapping the images: "In the first place, the cinematographic image becomes a direct presentation of time, according to non-commensurable relations and irrational cuts. In the second place, this time-image puts thought into contact with an unthought, the unsummonable, the inexplicable, the undecidable" (Deleuze, *Cinema* 214).

The cinematographic image is thereby privileged as a primary device of time analysis. In memory, the past exists virtually as a collection of past instants or percepts unorganized in any

particular way with relation to each other. For Deleuze, they exist as a dissociated set of singularities. Furthermore, this past is not something apart from the present but something that is contained within the present. As figured by the cinematographic image, the entire past (as memory) is part of each present. This cinema of time produces an image of thought as a nontotalizable process and a sense of history as unpredictable change.

However, the ever-changingness of the past-as-present-as-future of the Deleuzian event is complicated by traditional narrative strategies. Following Barthes, narrativity is a process of resistance against the ambiguity of linguistic codes. Narrative devices therefore attempt to create homogeneity out of multiplicity (58). Deleuzian historicity brings into question the very possibility of such unity, not by problematizing linguistic signification, as Barthes does, but within the very status of the film image's serialization, its flickering movement. The analysis of film's seriality demands an exposure of the breaches of homogeneity. However, Deleuze posits a totalizing effect of the cinema that, I argue, cannot be maintained. For Deleuze, this destabilizing is the inevitability signaled in *Logique du sens*: "meaning is never a principle or origin; it is produced [...] It is to be produced by new machineries" (89). This "always to be produced" but never "already produced," is called into question by narrativity. Instead of what Deleuze takes as the final moment of film, the exposure of breach, the act of cinematic viewing induces instead a sort of oscillation at the borderline of totality and its negation: multiplicity. Returning to the site of the Deleuzian breach, the cinematic image, the purpose of film analysis becomes clear: to explore the borderlines, examining the rupture of imposed unity in order to more completely develop a 'Chronik' of contestation between narrative totality on the one hand and its impossibility on the other.

Within this project, I argue that specific external factors and the complicated status of history in German debates on the fall of the Berlin wall and reunification expose just such a rupture. This break directly suggests the impossibility of historical telos, of a sequential narrative of historical meaning that is posited as the end-result of the status of the cinematic image. Beginning with the made-for-TV documentary, *Chronik der Wende*, and then moving to the film essay

Die leere Mitte, and finally *Good Bye Lenin*, successive attempts to come to terms with the breakdown of entrenched borders lead to the instability of the traditional historical narrative of the reunification of East vs. West. However, these ruptures are not exposed uniformly, but are at times successfully suppressed, as within early documentary efforts to come to terms with the fall of the Wall.

Attempts to build narrative unity are initially affectively oriented around a myth of 'oneness,' as demonstrated in *Chronik der Wende's* documentation of the first months of civil unrest. This narrative develops the period from October to December of 1989 as the end of a European era and the return to a myth of German unity that is configured as inevitable: "They were days that changed global dynamics forever. The two separate German states ceased to exist and the Iron Curtain came down, ending the war which had pitted this country against itself". This formulation, in which the legitimacy of two countries, East and West Germany, is rejected in favor of a narrative that posits the entire period from 1945 to 1989 as the battleground. The fall of 1989 is then a return to the 'normalcy' of a unified German nation. The trope of re-unification is constantly repeated with mildly variant blueprints, some positing their narratives as "protocols of a [unitary] German revolution" as in the title of Mascolo's documentary. Others narrow in on the developments of the 48-odd hours just preceding the opening of the wall, claiming them as "the period that changed the world forever" as in Hertle's *Als die Mauer fiel*. Yet the narrative is repeated in terms of unification and transformation located in a discrete temporal space between October and December of 1989. Within these narratives, and *Chronik der Wende* in particular, the shock of the temporal is always evident, with talking heads alternately amazed or excited at how quickly the world has changed. This "how quickly" signals not only an anticipation of how much can happen in a short period, figured in days and hours, but also serves to foreclose questions of before and after. October through November is not symptomatic of external factors. They remain a closed set. These months contain all causative and explanatory markers of 'unification'. Narratively, this film operates by moving from major moment to major moment, barreling from initial protests to nightly news reports of the day's occurrences. Interviews of those present are used to highlight the

singularity of the experience: "That day changed my attitude and that of all of the others there. It was a day of total disillusionment, the credibility of the system fell like Humpty Dumpty," says one enthralled witness. Such interviews are often followed by a black screen which chronicles occurrences for which there are no visual images. Instead the screen reveals text in telex style, with a relentless ticker-tape's pitter-patter accompanying each day's revelations: "Saturday, December 9 1989, the SED elects a new chairman: Gregor Gysi." Throughout, there is a resistance to the backward glance, mimicking the political predispositions that only look forward in an attempt to subside international fears of a unified Germany's power. For example, Helmut Kohl states in a speech excerpted in the film: "Ladies and gentlemen, I promise you that Germany will not go it alone. This is a vehement denial that Germany intends to shun Europe. It is also a strong rejection of retrospective nationalism". The hermetically sealed narrative of *Chronik der Wende* thereby circumvents the deeply problematic questions of German identity formation that characterize more critical media and literary engagements in German unification. As Jarausich states regarding alternative readings of the fall of the Wall:

The unforeseen return of the nation-state through unification blocked these escape routes and forced Germans once again to confront themselves as a people. The subsequent crisis of ideological beliefs has initiated another round of redefinitions of what it could or should mean to be German at the end of the twentieth century. (10)

The narrative and historical unity implied by this film forecloses such a debate, as its status as 'Chronik' suppresses categorical indeterminacy. However, later filmic engagements in the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the GDR are unable to resist such doubt and skepticism, particularly Hito Steyerl's *Die leere Mitte*. What allows such a break? I argue that it is the re-focusing of events along the axis of the problematic status of 'others' in the film.

Following the work of Homi Bhabha, cultural difference is always framed within narrative structure: The Other is cited, quoted, framed, illuminated, encased in the shot/reverse-shot strategy of a serial enlightenment. Narrative and the *cultural* politics become the closed circle of interpretation. The Other loses its power to signify, to negate, to initiate its historic desire, to establish its own institutional and oppositional discourse (31). As such, narrativity de-voices and builds over 'otherness,' asking it to hold itself as silent to unified meaning, exerting its discursive control. Critical here is that Bhabha establishes this silencing historically, locking the loss of the Other in terms of its inability to "initiate its historic desire," a silencing that exists beyond the cultural "here and now" but rather within historical movement. Heterogeneity is opposed historically, the direct implication of which is that Others are figured ahistorically, without the ability to build narrative history, and hence outside of time. The alternative posited by Bhabha is based upon the enunciation of "cultural difference" which

problematizes the binary division of past and present, tradition and modernity at the level of cultural representation and its authoritative address. It is the problem of how, in signifying the present, something comes to be repeated, relocated and translated in the name of tradition, in the guise of a pastness that is not necessarily a faithful sign of historical memory but a strategy of representing authority in terms of the artifice of the archaic. (9)

The enunciation of cultural difference thereby intervenes in narrativity by challenging our sense of the historical identity of culture, and as such displaces what Benedict Anderson has described as "culture written in homogeneous, serial time" (205). Not only is culture thus rewritten, but the very foundations of culture in historicity. With the explosion of heterogeneity it becomes impossible to maintain unity of intent that is so critical to a chronic history. Eruptions of the 'other' thereby destabilize history's status as part and parcel of reconfigurations of cultural status. The question then remains: what alternative is posited with this rejection of historical unity? Does

the historicity enacted within the enunciation of cultural difference coincide with the event-based history of Deleuze, in which past-present-future coincide?

Undoing the Narrative

In *Die leere Mitte*, a film essay that reviews the events of 1989 and 1990 not within the hopeful matrix of 'together' but instead from the perspective of marginalized 'others,' just such a reconfiguration is attempted. Ultimately, the inability to resolve the status of otherness within the narrative leads to a direct confrontation with the failure to impose homogeneous structures on the issue of unification. Hito Steyerl's historical glance in *Die leere Mitte* instead refashions Berlin through a blending of past, present, and future, maintaining a distance from any object of future realization. In *Die leere Mitte* the past exists coterminous with the present, and utopian visions of the future retain parity with images of present-action worker unrest.

The film begins with an ellipsis: the film's framing shot is a black background onto which a seraph typewriter font is blended revealing a mere segment of a quotation from Siegfried Kracauer's *From Caligari To Hitler*: "To establish a tradition of lost processes; giving names to the hitherto nameless." The film then cuts to an image of the Berlin Wall. On the right side of the screen a man faces one remaining section of the Berlin Wall with hammer and chisel, chipping off a piece, perhaps to take home as a souvenir. The narrator's voice intones: "There are many ways to speak about borders ... there are many ways to erect new borders ... In 1989 the Berlin wall comes down." With this introduction, the film's narration mirrors countless documentaries of the fall of the Wall, beginning with images of the Wall itself before moving on to a chronology of dates, places and times. Historical moments are diachronically located as building blocks of a revolution or the realization of a dream of unification. However, the wall figured in this film is not the Wall as monument to the division of East and West, but rather the image of an incomplete Wall, with a large section torn down and replaced by temporary construction fencing. The visual effect is that of the voyeur looking beyond the curtain, but it is a peep show

of a revolution missed, with only ruins left in the aftermath. The sound of the man chiseling away at the wall is a solitary act, and not a joyous rebellion of the masses. What we are witnessing instead, as the voice-over implies, is the breakdown and simultaneous creation of borders. Throughout the film, the image of the Potsdamer Platz as a site of construction, not just of buildings, but of borders, is constantly emphasized. Marked by the camera's peeking through holes in walls and gaps in fences, the film interrogates the supposed emptiness of the Potsdamer Platz, a space ready to become the new center of Europe, with its past as the "Death Zone" erased, and its legacy as a center for the National Socialist Party effaced. The film questions this emptiness, constantly interrupting the examination of present debates on the promiscuous construction at the Potsdamer Platz with reminders of the status of the site in German history. The film essay thereby refuses to fix itself temporally, for example serving as video witness to union protests while simultaneously looking backwards at the functions of a building that was being replaced during the Weimar Republic.

Visually, this branching is not accomplished sequentially, as with the rapid cuts from present to historical object of *Chronik der Wende*. Instead, the video relies heavily on a layering effect in which two or more cuts of video footage are streamed simultaneously, one image moving from an initial transparency to greater opacity until it fully replaces the other. The effect is ghost-like; we see a person standing in a field, but are also able to see through him. Similarly, the audio track resists a single voice: Mendelssohn's music at times overlays the voice-over, the tones of which remain present long after a shift to a different thematic center. As such, it becomes impossible to establish the moment of transition between time periods and scenes in the film: a Weimar Republic narrative is equated visually and auditorily with debates on construction along with discussions of the status of foreigners in Berlin. Even the historical specificity of the Berlin Wall is brought into question: while showing images of the GDR checkpoint with Trabis passing through, the voice-over speaks of the customs wall that stood from 1734 until 1869. Thematically, too, the film is quite complex, resisting linear disclosure while asserting a strongly defined set of foci, all proleptically circling around the central topic of the film: the status of 'otherness' in the idea space

of Berlin's center, the Potsdamer Platz.

Analysis of this film remains problematic as a central assertion of heterogeneity dominates and is instantiated both visually and thematically. A loose structuring is necessary here to get at the implicit project of the film. Reductively, eight thematic strains are presented, repeated and revisited throughout the film. They are as follows: the question of the borderlines that have been enacted at the Potsdamer Platz; Felix Mendelssohn's status as a Jew in Berlin; buildings, both their construction, destruction and cultural status in Berlin from 1770 to the mid 1990s; the role of anarchist squatters in the construction area; the status of foreigners in 1990s Berlin; protests regarding the rebuilding of Berlin post-1989; an African soldier's biography and Weimar music halls' exoticism.

Within the film, each of these foci engage in questions of inside vs. outside, from the borders of Berlin as dramatic spatial enactment of a break between those who belong and those who are excluded, to deeply personal investigations of Husseyn, an African soldier who fights for Germany in the first World War. These themes are not deployed sequentially, but as with the visual and auditory blending of the film, are often merged within a single segment of the film. One four-minute sequence of the film enacts this multiplicity of perspectives powerfully. The section begins with a voice-over describing late Weimar employment quotas which prohibited dark-skinned people from working in the Cabarets, while showing images of Friedrich Hollaender at a cabaret. The camera cuts to a close up of a model for the new "house fatherland" that is to be built in Potsdamer Platz while the voiceover quotes Siegfried Kracauer's description of the "rosy pink morality" that is central to the hiring practices of a retail shop. The sequence then shifts to a group of Trabis and several couples in traditional German dress parading by spectators on October 3, 1991, the official holiday of unification, before cutting to a long shot of the photographs of white Germans working in a poster for a new office building. Concurrently, the voice-over continues the narrative of racially determined work quotas in 1931. The film blends to an image of squatters' homes in the former death zone, marking the border between East and West Germany as their disembodied voices debate what they describe as the new forms of fascism of the 'Wessis.' This short sequence is interrupted

by the voice-over of a Chinese student, Dong Yang, presented in a full frontal close-up shot. He explains: "At first, they were happy after the fall of the Wall, but now outsiders are at fault. Financially they don't feel they are well off, the East Berliners and then the East Germans as a whole, so they look for the guilty, for someone to take the blame". He then repeats a story about being beaten by six Germans. As the story is told, screen images blend to the building model for the new House Fatherland, while an audio overlay plays a Mendelssohn Concerto. Dong Yang's voice-over is then replaced by the director's narration of Mendelssohn's difficulties crossing the customs gate at the Potsdamer Platz in 1743. Steyerl goes on to describe the various buildings that have stood in one corner of the Potsdamer Platz, from the Palais Mendelssohn to the Reichstag, and then documents a major protest action by the BAU union at the construction site for the new Reichstag. This sequence closes with shots of these protestors as Steyerl reads Kracauer's description of the spectators witnessing the burning of the Reichstag in 1933.

In this short sequence, anti-Semitism in 1743, Weimar discriminatory laws against blacks, the rise of National Socialism in 1933, the problematic status of 'Ossis' and 'Wessis' in the newly unified Germany, as well as mid 1990s German xenophobia are blended together, with images of one period auditorily linked to an entirely different time. The film thereby resists the possibilities of historical specificity. Instead it posits a trans-historical presence of marginalization that, although differing in details, cannot be asserted as belonging to any singular period. As such, the film intervenes in traditional narrative strategies, challenging our sense of the historical unity of visible culture, rejecting the possibilities of serial historical narrative. In the film, the present of post-unification Germany contains the past-life marginalization of Mendelssohn, of Mohammed Husseyn, and of the burning of the Reichstag. The film thereby repeatedly effaces the assertion of unification as a moment of radical change. Instead, the film reveals the aporia of marginality, in which the temporal and narrative specificity are rejected in favor of a temporal heterogeneity in which past, present and future are eternally in collision, as in the film's closing line: "One space is united. At the same time new borders arise. In this place they have a tradition that is broken again and again." In the world of the empty

center, history can only exist as a narrative of a tradition that can never be fully realized, but is instead always being reconstructed and refashioned; it is a tradition in a permanent state of becoming.

Narrative Competition

Central to the strategy of historical undoing in *Die leere Mitte* is the formal radicality, the non-linearity, and the regular use of blending between sequences, thereby visually and auditorily destabilizing the viewer's (and critic's) attempts to construct unitary, sequential meaning within the text. This raises the question of whether such formal narrative instability is a requirement in order to instantiate the historical transformations and heterogeneity of the Deleuzian event. A recent attempt to question the fall of the Wall in a popular German film brings the question to the forefront. The film *Good Bye Lenin* investigates the status of a "Grand Other," a mother who misses the fall of the Wall and reunification due to a heart attack-induced coma. This attack comes from the shock of witnessing the changes of the fall of 1989. As silent witness, she sees her son protesting the GDR government and falls into a coma, thereby missing the events of late 1989. When she finally comes out of the coma in the spring of 1990, doctors make it clear that her very life depends upon her not being exposed to a Berlin without borders. Her life, then, hangs on the maintenance of the past within the present. As the Web site for the film (www.79qmDDR.de) suggests, the narrative tension of the film is built around the problems of rebuilding the past within the domestic home in the face of the inevitable injection of the present. This present is materially embodied in flying Lenin statues and the enormous Coca Cola billboards that are erected in East Berlin. This problematic is linked with the melodramatic coming-of-age narrative of the male lead of the film, Alex. As the film develops, the illusion of the GDR that Alex must build up becomes progressively more difficult to maintain. There are comical attempts to obtain old GDR brand pickles and to organize a traditional GDR birthday party, complete with Communist Party greetings and singing members of the Young Pioneers. Ultimately, the depth of this re-creation becomes deeply problematic for all family members, who ask him to give up the illusion. Alex, however, resists, opposing change and

the newness of a unified Germany, nominally in order to "save the mother." All signs, however, indicate that the necessity of this opposition "for the mother" fade as she regains her health and begins to push at the boundaries of her 'seventy nine square meters' of GDR.

When the mother is allowed to know what has happened, it does not lead to the warned-of death or even trauma. Instead Alex's girlfriend Lara is able to explain the fall of the Wall to the mother rather unproblematically. The camera captures this telling in a long shot taken through the window of a partially ajar hospital door, with Lara at the mother's bedside, explaining the situation to her calmly and coolly: "It is not such a big change, there are just no more borders." This scene is filmed obliquely, with muffled voices and a distanced perspective, and the discussion is ended prematurely when the camera interrupts the conversation by cutting to Alex, who remains unaware of the change. These filmic strategies shift attention away from this supposedly disastrous injection of the present into the mother's life. Visually and narratively, what has been figured throughout as the decisive event to be avoided is instead a mere filmic sidebar, a moment that almost disappears in its subtlety. The resulting ambiguity of this moment of telling, and the mother's very *ability* to handle the news of the fall of the Wall dramatically calls into question for whom the illusion of the GDR is being maintained.

In its closing sequence the film discloses how critical the problematic question of the GDR past, the unification present and the unclear future is for Alex and not for the mother. In the final scene, Alex and his family sit by the hospital bed, watching the false news report that he and his friend, an aspiring filmmaker, have created in order to break the news of the open borders to his mother. They have done this by hiring Alex's boyhood hero, the first German in space, Sigmund Jähn. In a melodramatic speech, Jähn, refigured as the new leader of the GDR, explains how the values of the GDR have come to be recognized as the correct world order, and how there exists an alternative to the opposition between East and West. During this speech, the film cuts from the television image to Alex sitting at the bedside watching the film, doubling the opening scene of the film in which we have seen an enraptured Alex

as a young boy watching the news of Jähn's travels in space. As the speech continues, the camera cuts back to the television and then to the mother, who, already knowing what has happened, instead watches her son, smiling at the extremes to which he has gone in order to rebuild the East Germany of his childhood. This lingering glance and smile signals that we are to read the film in terms of Alex's attempts to come to terms with the problematic status of his past in East Germany and his present in a unifying Germany. In this closing speech, its visual and narrative privileging demands Jähn's message of a synthesis between East and West, of a past being maintained within Alex's values as the resolution of the film. What is at stake is the very question of Alex's identity, which he attempts to form in his mania for GDR pickles and falsified news reports. The apparent resolution of the conflicts of his identity, of his past and his present, allows precisely the maintenance of the past in a process of becoming. As such, *Good Bye Lenin* extends the problematic of an event-based history from *Die leere Mitte* onto the development of the male lead in a traditional melodrama. The film thereby suggests that the only adequate means for Germans to come to terms with the past is not through 'Bewältigung' of the past, but instead through personal transformation. In the act of defining the self as mediated event of external transformation, the past and the present collide. Coming to terms with the end of the GDR, and the presence of otherness raised by this moment of rupture is only possible in such symbiotic temporal co-presence within the individual.

Conclusions

In as much as *Good Bye Lenin* and *Die leere Mitte* problematize our ability to narrate sequential history as opposed to *Chronik der Wende*, the films also lay bare the implications of the Deleuzian event. Whereas *Chronik der Wende* asserts a temporal and logical homogeneity, and with it implicates a teleological historical project, the frame of the Deleuzian event allows the assertion of heterogeneity as a fundamental condition of history. Causality is then rejected in favor of multiplicity, and present events are inseparable from their relational status within a matrix of occurrences that have no beginning and no end. The breakdown of racial and economic

borders, in *Die leere Mitte* and temporal borders in *Good Bye Lenin* are the fissures that provide the leverage with which official histories can be cracked open. The search for difference and 'otherness' then becomes the key to a fundamental shift in historical analysis of the fall of the Wall. More generally, the idea of history as film is made productive by exposing the implications of the Deleuzian event. Within the logic of the event, the purpose of film analysis is to explore borderlines, examining moments where uniform meaning is impossible. History as film, then, allows us to expose the unceasing contestation between narrative totality on the one hand and multiplicity on the other.

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'Zungen,' Borders and Border Crossings: Özdamar's *Mutterzunge* as an Attempt to Deal with the Effects of Globalization

Sonja Ellen Klocke

The fact that Emine Sevgi Özdamar was the first non-native speaker of German to receive the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize win 1991 has two implications. It can certainly be read as an increase in the interest about literature written in German by non-native speakers of German; simultaneously, it can be viewed as a reaction to globalization. Though 'globalization' seems to be the buzzword of the 1990s and today, it is not really new, "but rather only a matter of scale and speed – old hegemonies in new forms. Globalization can be seen as an agent of imperialism and an updated version of the modernization which was directed through colonial conquest" (Amandiame 90). Based on this idea I will argue that in Özdamar's *Mutterzunge* globalization and its effects manifest themselves within such tropes as migration, political systems, and most importantly language.¹ After a short introduction to globalization, I will demonstrate how Özdamar deals with the problematic inferences as well as the chances implied in globalization specifically for migrant women, who are caught in the twofold peril of being female and a foreigner.

Globalization is a vast and complex field that has been discussed extensively and has a wide range of meanings. It usually stresses the international spread of Western economic, social, and political methods of interaction, norms, and values. Moreover, a focus on cultural and sociological aspects of globalization can be detected. It often acuminates in the notion of a 'McDonaldization' of culture.² James Mittelman's explanation goes further than this and helps to clearly define it:

The manifestations of globalization [...] include the spatial reorganization of production, [...] massive transfers of population within the South