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Spaces of Contrast

A Spatial Analysis of Franz Grillparzer's «Der arme Spielmann»

ABSTRACT. Physical setting plays an important role in literary writings. After the spatial turn, scholars of literary studies also turned their eyes to the sociological significance of spatial description in literary texts. This essay presents a spatial analysis of Grillparzer's *Der arme Spielmann* and argues that in this novella Grillparzer uses the contrast in space as a vital indicator of the disparity between his characters. These spatial contrasts are mainly derived from characters' differences in terms of birth, class, wealth, education, job and so on. The difficulty of reducing those differences signifies the suffocating political atmosphere in nineteenth-century Austria.

When *Der arme Spielmann* was published in 1847, sixteen years had passed since Franz Grillparzer began to write this novella in 1831. Since its publication, it has been analysed and interpreted from diverse perspectives (Bernd 1988). In 1847, Adalbert Stifter acclaimed the emotional power of the tragic story of Grillparzer's poor street musician (see Bachmaier 2002: 134-136). Richard Brinkmann (1966) analysed Grillparzer's realistic reading and questioned how reliable the first-person narrator was when he recounted the musician's own account of his experiences. Though the protagonist is not adept at playing musical instruments, he uses music to such an extreme that he subjectively creates a world of his own in which he isolates himself from the world, «während sein unbeholfenes Geigenspiel für die Menschen nichts anderes als das groteske Gestümper eines Verrückten sein kann» (Müller 1966: 58-59). Roland Heine (1972) analysed the protagonist's existential crisis and his failure in terms of *Zusammenhang*, as disclosed from his disappointing performance of reciting Horace's poems to his failure in establishing social relationships with other people. Focusing on the

vital role of money in interpersonal relationships, Erhard Bahr (1988) held that Grillparzer used this plot to criticize contemporary Austrian society's extreme pursuit of wealth. This sociological and historical perspective was also taken by Thomas Baltensweiler (1999) who interpreted the water (and flooding) in Grillparzer's novella as a vital political and historical metaphor for the bourgeois revolution.

Some scholars have noticed the role of space in *Der arme Spielmann*. This story stands in close relationship to the city of Vienna. As Heinz Politzer commented, «*Der arme Spielmann* ist eine wienerische Geschichte: Innere Stadt und Vorstadt, Augarten, Leopoldstadt, Prater und Brigittenau stellen ihren Hintergrund» (1972: 373). Besides, the economic, cultural and historical implications behind these district names are worthy of attention. Moreover, at a macro level, the spatial significance of houses, shops, business offices, warehouses and courtyards also deserves careful analysis. W. C. Reeve (1978) noticed the spatial relationship in Grillparzer's dramas and *Der arme Spielmann*, and commented that the spatial contrast was a powerful social and psychological indicator, demonstrating the gap between upper and lower, order and disorder, and ideal and real.

Though it is not innovative to incorporate spatial analysis in literary studies (Sasse 2009), this essay presents a new spatial interpretation of *Der arme Spielmann* by focusing on the contrasts within spaces such as, for instance, the contrast between Jakob and Barbara. But before this analysis, it is necessary to give a brief account of the development of spatial studies. Georg Simmel (1950, 1995) had considered that the significance of space would recede as humankind entered to a *Geldwirtschaft*. In effect, space has regained its prominence with the development of post-modernism after it had been largely neglected by modernist sociologists (Schroer 2008: 129). Ever since the *spatial turn* (on the development of this term, see Döring 2010: 90-99), space is no longer considered a static and passive consequence produced by human beings; instead, space assumes a vital role in framing social relations. More importantly, in the second half of the nineteenth century, scholars began to probe the cultural and social implications of space, thus transcending its conventional geographical limit. Or as Stephan Günzel wrote, «Zum Inbegriff von Raumwissenschaft wird die Geographie jedoch erst, als sie

beginnt, sich nicht mehr nur für den Naturraum zu interessieren, sondern als Anthropogeographie auch für den Kulturraum» (2009: 9). The role of people and their behaviour in a space was to be stressed by later sociologists.

For a long time, history is recounted as a chain of chronological events linked by causes and effects. However, Edward W. Soja stressed the equal importance of spatiality, temporality and social being, three «abstract dimensions which together comprise all facets of human existence» (1989: 25). For Soja, space is traditionally viewed as a physical, objective, inevitable and reified form, but spatiality is in effect socially based, «the created space of social organization and production» (1989: 79). Earlier than him, Michel de Certeau has written in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (French in 1980) that space is susceptible to human activities such as walking. Given this new understanding and consciousness of spatiality, it will be realized that spaces in which we live will play a comparable role to race, gender and nationality in terms of sustaining current social institutions. Or, in Soja's words, those spaces will «aggravate all forms of discrimination and injustice» (2010: 19). Long before Soja, Henri Lefebvre has taken the Marxist approach and pointed out the mutual influence between social production and social space in *The Production of Space* (French in 1974). Lefebvre emphasized the power structure, or «the dialectical relationship between demand and command», which must not be neglected in any analysis of space, because space is «a social reality – that is to say, a set of relations and forms» (1991: 116). In other words, the command over space represents social power in daily life. Similarly, David Harvey wrote that the meanings of space and time change according to the material practices and processes of social reproduction which are mainly influenced by capitalism (1990: 204). Therefore, money, time and space «forms a substantial nexus of social power» (1990: 226). In this way, Harvey's notion of *time-space compression* illuminates the profound impacts of human activity, mainly capitalism, upon time and space which had previously been considered objective and neutral existence. On the contrary, both time and space reflect social struggle.

Martina Löw writes in her book *Raumsoziologie* (first German edition in 2001) that «Raum ist eine relationale (An)Ordnung von Lebenswesen und

sozialen Gütern» (2012: 154). This definition puts emphasis upon the «Prozeß der Konstitution» of space (2012: 151). Her conception of *social goods* covers both the material and symbolic aspects. She emphasizes the importance of people in a space, because their activities and relationships will influence how newcomers to that particular space are going to perceive and understand that space. Similar to social goods, social activities have two aspects, that is, *materiell* and *symbolisch*. This distinction drawn by Reinhard Kreckel is picked up by Löw who expands it to the *Handlungssituation* which consists of both material and symbolic components (2012: 192). But Löw stresses that «Die materiellen Komponente sind in der Regel die Voraussetzung für die symbolischen Komponente» (2012: 193). To illustrate this point, she raises stairs as an example and argues that a stair will produce different impacts upon people's perception of it and their behaviour in this particular situation (or space), in accordance with its material (wood or stone) and the corresponding symbolic implication (time, wealth or class).

Moreover, people do not necessarily assume a superior position over social goods during the constitution of space, in that both people and goods are elements to be perceived or defined in that space (2012: 158). Space is constituted by two different processes which usually take place simultaneously in daily life, that is, *Spacing* and *Syntheseleistung* (2012: 158-159). *Spacing* refers to the process of placing social goods and people; therefore, it «bezeichnet also das Errichten, Bauen oder Positionieren» (2012: 158). Moreover, *Spacing* not only indicates the static state of goods and people being positioned, but also the dynamic «Bewegung zur nächsten Platzierung» (2012: 159). Unlike *Spacing* that functions mainly at the physical level, *Syntheseleistung* refers to the «Wahrnehmungs-, Vorstellungs- oder Erinnerungsprozesse»; and during this mental process, goods und people will be integrated (2012: 159).

Since Martina Löw pays particular heed to the relativistic and dynamic side of space, it is natural for her to stress the activities of humankind in space. From the two concepts of Anthony Giddens, *diskursives Bewußtsein* und *praktisches Bewußtsein*, she holds that people's habitual activities are largely susceptible to diverse written forms of rules or laws regulating people's

behaviour (*diskursives Bewußtsein*) and *praktisches Bewußtsein*, «das das Wissen umfaßt (auch im körperlichen und emotionalen Sinne), welches Handelnde im Alltag aktualisieren» (2012: 161). Building upon an expanded understanding of Giddens's notion of *structure* «als Regeln und Ressourcen zu fassen, die rekursiv in Institutionen eingelagert sind» (2012: 167) und «losgelöst von Ort und Zeitpunkt» (2012: 168), Löw summarizes that «gesellschaftliche Strukturen ermöglichen raumkonstituierendes Handeln, welches dann diese Strukturen, die es ermöglichen (und anderes verhindern), wieder reproduziert» (2012: 170). Therefore, space and time structures have equivalent impacts upon people's daily activities and mentalities as other social structures such as political, economic and legal. At the level of function, similar to other structures, space structure on the one hand will influence people's activities; on the other hand, it must be realized through those activities. Repetitive routines will institutionalize space. For instance, in certain spaces such as a court room, lecture hall and medical consulting room, people are expected to adjust their bodily behaviour and mental state to fit with those environments. In effect, they will unconsciously prepare themselves accordingly before entering those spaces. In this way, space structure is reproduced and passed down to late-comers or generations. Accordingly, those features of a particular space, from the arrangement of furniture to the imbalance of power or social status, will be maintained.

Löw's sociological illumination of space covers several sets of dualities, that is, social goods and people, material and symbolic, past and present. One of the most outstanding points of her theory is that it highlights the balance of both synchronic and diachronic approaches to spatial analysis. Space is not only a product of current social life but also an inheritance that the public receives from previous generations. Therefore, this essay argues that her theory will shed new light on the understanding of the spaces described in Grillparzer's *Der arme Spielmann* (hereafter *DAS*).

This frame narrative begins with the first-person narrator's participation at the festival in July. «An diesem Tage feiert die mit dem Augarten, der Leopoldstadt, dem Prater in ununterbrochener Lustreihe zusammenhängende Brigittenau ihre Kirchweihe» (*DAS*, 9). To go from Augarten to Brigittenau

is to move along the Danube from southeast to northwest. In the eighteenth century, those places were suburbs of the still small city centre of Vienna. They protected the centre from the occasional flooding of the river. Metaphorically, they had functioned as a barrier between human civilisation and nature. However, the progress of urbanisation and expansion of the city of Vienna encroached on this area which was to be inhabited by the growing population. Historically, as a hunting ground exclusive to royal members in the seventeenth century, Augarten was opened to the public by the Kaiser Joseph II in 1775 (for a brief history of Augarten, see Berger 2004: 97-101). As the government's endeavour to provide entertainment to its citizens, this can also be interpreted as evidence for the fact that the Austrian government began to realize the vital role that the general residents played in the country. It was this crowd that was eager to attend the festival, as Grillparzer pointed out, «und wenn Vornehmere dabei erscheinen, so können sie es nur in ihrer Eigenschaft als Glieder des Volks» (*DAS*, 9). Grillparzer vividly depicted this noisy and happy scene. Meanwhile, he realized the disparity between the human sphere and nature, represented respectively by this wave of participants and the Danube:

Geräusch von Fußritten, Gemurmeln von Sprechenden, das hie und da ein lauter Ausruf durchzuckt. [...] Auch hier siegreich, ziehen endlich zwei Ströme, die alte Donau und die geschwollnere Woge des Volks, sich kreuzend quer unter- und übereinander, die Donau ihrem alten Flußbette nach, der Strom des Volks, der Eindämmung der Brücke entnommen, ein weiter, tosender See, sich ergießend in alles deckender Überschwemmung. (*DAS*, 9)

According to Löw's theory, a space is constituted by the arrangement of social goods and people through *Spacing* and *Syntheseleistung*. In this paragraph, the human activity, that is, the noisy movement of the first-person narrator and the public, and the flowing Danube, a natural phenomenon, form a space. If observed from a bird's-eye view, this space presents a dynamic picture, in that inside this space two flows cross over one another. If this spatial picture is viewed as a microcosm of Austria, then it becomes clear that inside this country there are forces that cannot exist in harmony because

they do not run to the same destination or work for the same purposes. If this particular geographical location can be named as *Spacing* in Löw's terminology, then within this space outdoors, the noisy sound of steps and conversation from a variety of participants is easy to perceive. Resembling the Danube, which absorbs and rushes away with whatever comes into it, this flow of humankind absorbs participants different in age, gender, occupation, wealth and social fame. Not only the participants' sound and bodies, but also their social classes, have mixed together.

While the Danube represents the material and objective fluidity of natural forces such as time, then the social hierarchy that pre-existed before those participants enter this space, can be seen as a subjective and synchronic existence produced diachronically. It is a result of the imbalance of capital and power accumulation. The hierarchical disparity and its corresponding differences in terms of social behaviour, mentality and lifestyle are defined and strengthened by diverse discourses. However, in this particular space, this disparity is temporarily suspended. But lying beside the river, which at that time was difficult for the Vienna government and citizens to control and escape from its flooding, the flowing of mixed social classes also shows signs of refusing to be hindered, a political implication or aspiration of Grillparzer that a new age shall be ushered into Austria. Thomas Baltensweiler held that «Das wilde Treiben des Volkes zeigt die Aushöhlung der Tradition an» (1999: 302). Furthermore, the two flows of humanity and nature in this space may, to a certain extent, represent the contradictory political standpoint of Grillparzer. Although he anticipated a new age in which the public could enjoy more freedom with less restrictions from its government, for instance, the freedom of publication and speech, he, as a man nostalgic for the age of *Josephinism*, would not want to see his motherland Austria turned upside down by radical revolutionaries who came from different social positions and fought together as a counter-force that would destroy the country whose existence had been accepted as natural for generations.

However, either before this festival (that is, before the death of the protagonist Jakob), or after it (when the first-person narrator visits Barbara

after Jakob's funeral), space and mobility are displayed through contrast. The incompatibility of spaces, or the difficulty of including different spaces, appears several times in this story. For instance, after walking slowly and with difficulty through the noisy crowd for a long time, the narrator finally arrives at the end of Augarten, but:

Hier ist nun noch ein, wenngleich der letzte Kampf zu bestehen. Ein schmaler Damm, zwischen undurchdringlichen Befriedungen hindurchlaufend, bildet die einzige Verbindung der beiden Lustorte, deren gemeinschaftliche Grenze ein in der Mitte befindliches hölzernes Gittertor bezeichnet. An gewöhnlichen Tagen und für gewöhnliche Spaziergänger bietet dieser Verbindungsweg überflüssigen Raum; am Kirchweihfeste aber würde seine Breite, auch vierfach genommen, noch immer zu schmal sein für die endlose Menge, die, heftig nachdrängend und von Rückkehrenden im entgegengesetzten Sinne durchkreuzt, nur durch die allseitige Gutmütigkeit der Lustwandelnden sich am Ende doch leidlich zurecht findet (*DAS*, 12).

Obviously, it is not impossible for people to walk in or out of these areas; however, the access turns out to be too narrow when more people wish to walk freely between spaces. This conflict functions also as an omen for the doomed relationship between Jakob and Barbara in terms of the gap in social status.

Social disparity exists constantly in spaces as well as activities taking place inside them, no matter how ardently and eagerly people endeavour to reduce it. The barriers built by discourses throughout history turn out to be extremely difficult to overcome. Jakob has moved from the upper class into which he was born, to the lower working class of Barbara. Unfortunately, he remains an outsider no matter how hard he tries to please those of lower class with the aim of being accepted by them. On the contrary, Barbara strives to move from her working class to a higher social status, an endeavour that is doomed after Jakob is deceived by his late father's former secretary who steals all Jakob's inheritance. The relationship between Jakob and Barbara also ends. In this sense, Jakob and Barbara resemble the two flows of human and river at the beginning of the story. On the ladder of social status, they move in opposite directions from the two ends of society;

however, they fail to reach the point of confluence, that is, marriage, which was also a hierarchical structure organized by equally hierarchical religious and social institutions. They cannot enter the space they hope. Instead, they run as two opposite but parallel lines that will never combine, an indication that in contemporary Austrian society, it was almost impossible to overcome the social obstacles that hindered the realisation of the public's aspirations (Nölle 1995). This is best illustrated in the spaces which are always divided into sections, for instance, Jakob's shared bedroom.

The musician lives in Gärtnergasse. As Reeve explained, this street «is linked by its very name with down-to-earth needs and with people who earn their living from the soil» (1978: 44). The street name itself indicates a sharp contrast in living condition with the noble birth of Jakob. The curiosity of the narrator towards the mysterious Jakob is partly due to the contrasts in Jakob. One of them appears when Jakob describes his bedroom. Jakob replies that his house number is «Nummer 34 im ersten Stocke» (*DAS*, 18). The narrator is shocked because it is not usual for a poor man to live «im Stockwerke der Vornehmen» (*DAS*, 18). However, as Jakob explains, that house «hat zwar eigentlich nur ein Erdgeschoß; es ist aber oben neben der Bodenkammer noch ein kleines Zimmer, das bewohne ich gemeinschaftlich mit zwei Handwerksgelesen» (*DAS*, 18). Reeve interpreted this as «a discordant note between a very tangible, crude reality and aspirations towards a subjectively determined ideal» (1978: 44). At an abstract level, that bedroom is a space for the co-existence of artists and blue-collar workers which had been traditionally interpreted as incompatible since the difference between them implies disparity in terms of wealth, education, taste and class. This is especially the case given Jakob's noble birth. Therefore he tries all means to maintain his artistic existence even when he has no alternative but to accept his meagre material condition. Therefore, he draws a thick chalk line in the middle of the co-habited bedroom and thus creates two spaces; as a result, «man kann sich kaum einen grelleren Abstich von Schmutz und Reinlichkeit denken, als diesseits und jenseits der gezogenen Linie, dieses Äquators einer Welt im Kleinen, herrschte» (*DAS*, 21). When he uses *fantasy* while playing music, with the result that both the narrator and the festival participants find his performance intolerable (*DAS*, 20), he again relies on

his *fantasy* to separate him from his poorly educated room-mates whose things are kept in total disorder. The difference in the way the musician and his artisan room-mates arrange their belongings also makes clear the outstanding contrast between them, an indication of their different outlooks on life derived mainly from their birth, education and career. In line with Löw's theory, this process of *Spacing*, together with the visual perception of the narrator (a process of *Syntheseleistung*), constitutes the particular space of the musician's bedroom. The bedroom, as a container, is divided into two sub-spaces. The chalk line drawn by Jakob is an imaginary wall separating his artistic world from the rest of the world. Like the two flows of festival participants and river, and the two zones with a narrow access at the end of Augarten, Grillparzer creates again a space of antithesis, in which people's activities form the basis for this contrast and contradiction. But this time, Jakob's space in the world is even more vulnerable and easily accessible out of the sheer fact that he does not have a space of his own at all in reality. In this way, Grillparzer further highlights the protagonist's incompatibility with the world and his peculiar and extreme tendency of dealing with real society through fantasy and imagination.

The contrast between Jakob and Barbara is best illustrated spatially as antitheses between music and word, dark and light, upper and lower. For instance, when Barbara is able to sing a song, that is, with the proper combination of both tune and lyrics (or words), Jakob is only fascinated with the melody (*DAS*, 33). The barrier that makes them incompatible includes glass and staircase at the physical and spatial level, to be analysed in the following sections. More fundamentally, they set off in opposite directions. While Jakob enjoys helping at the grocery of Barbara's father, Barbara dislikes it because what she aspires to is a marriage that will raise her into a higher social status and better fortune. In other words, Jakob steps down whereas Barbara strives to move up. This metaphorical implication is conveyed by Grillparzer through space full of details that might be easily ignored.

As Jakob recalls his first visit to Barbara's grocery (also her and her father's home), «Ich nahm mir ein Herz und ging eines Abend – auch diesmal ohne Hut – aus meinem Zimmer die Treppe hinab und festen Schrittes durch die Gasse bis zu dem Grieslerladen» (*DAS*, 35). Jakob's decision to

visit without his hat, a symbol of his birth and social status, indicates his awareness of social disparity. Moreover, the detail of body movement, spatially down the staircase, clearly demonstrates an act of descending to the lower class to which Barbara belongs. As Jakob sees and hears, «Der Laden war erleuchtet, und ich hörte Stimmen darin» (*DAS*, 35). While he walks and hesitates at the grocery's door *in loneliness and darkness*, Barbara sits indoors *under light*, laughing with her companion, the butcher who will marry her after the fall of Jakob's family. «Nach einigem Zögern beugte ich mich vor und lugte von der Seite hinein» (*DAS*, 35). Soon Jakob is pushed further inside by Barbara's father who returns home at that very moment. The entry of Barbara's father is characterized by noisy activities:

Element! Schrie er, da sieht man, wo die Pflaumen hinkommen und die Handvoll Erbsen und Rollgerste, die im Dunkeln aus den Auslagkörben gemaust werden. Da soll ja gleich das Donnerwetter dreinschlagen. Und damit ging er auf mich los, als ob er wirklich dreinschlagen wolle. (*DAS*, 35-36)

The activities or bodily movements of four persons inside the narrow space of the grocer's shop again form a contrast:

Ich sah das Mädchen hart vor dem Ladentische am Lichte sitzen und in einer hölzernen Mulde Erbsen oder Bohnen lesen. Vor ihr stand ein derber, rüstiger Mann, die Jacke über die Schulter gehängt, eine Art Knittel in der Hand, ungefähr wie ein Fleischhauer. Die beiden sprachen, offenbar in guter Stimmung, denn das Mädchen lachte einigemal laut auf, ohne sich aber in ihrer Arbeit zu unterbrechen oder auch nur aufzusehen. (*DAS*, 35)

The isolated and silent Jakob trembles, hesitates and has difficulty in standing upright because he constantly bends forward with his body. On the contrary, the butcher, with his robust body and a short stick in hand, Barbara busy with selecting beans (self-evidently by her fingers and *hands*), and her father with his strength and powerful voice, stand close to one another and have loud verbal communication. Specifically, these three persons are from the lower working class and have their occupation at hand and a clear vision in life. While well-born Jakob does not experience the pain of poverty (at least at that time), the other three must work hard to make a

living by their own hands. This explains why Grillparzer gives a detailed description of the *hands* or *hand movements* of the butcher, Barbara and her father. The butcher is holding a stick in his hand; Barbara is selecting beans with her hands; and her father, as Jakob recalls, «als ich mich plötzlich von rückwärts mit derber Hand angefaßt und nach vorwärts geschleppt fühlte» (*DAS*, 35). Therefore, in this space there co-exist the antitheses between artistic spirit and material pursuit, silence and speech, weakness and robustness, desolation and brightness, isolation and community, hesitation and determination, naivety and sophistication.

The relationship between Jakob and Barbara is doomed to failure, a fact that is spatially implied. Whenever Jakob and Barbara appear in the same room, Barbara either intentionally neglects or avoids Jakob, or she scolds him for various reasons, for instance, his clumsiness while dealing with customers at the grocery (*DAS*, 43), or when criticising his character as too weak and feminine (*DAS*, 45). The rarely seen moments of intimacy and care end with spatial barriers between them. The first occasion happens when Jakob wanders aimlessly to the grocery after he becomes the sole inheritor of his father's fortune. Through years of experience of selling cakes at the *Kanzler* café and dealing with various customers, Barbara understands the difficulties and dangers of real society. She predicts correctly that more greedy eyes, including her father's, are now focused on Jakob since his inheritance. Therefore, when Jakob walks out of the grocery and stands still in the street, he hears someone shouting, «Trauen Sie nicht gleich jedermann, man meint es nicht gut mit Ihnen» (*DAS*, 41). Though assuming correctly that it is Barbara's voice, he cannot see her because Barbara is closing the window of her home, through which she gives this warning out of concern that he will be cheated by avaricious and scheming people. However, this expression of concern is conveyed with the window between them, thus separating them into two spaces.

The second scene of intimacy that ends with a barrier isolating them into two spaces is the famous kiss which Jakob gives Barbara through the glass door (*DAS*, 45). This kiss is interpreted by Reeve as «his [Jakob's] ineffectiveness in life and the resultant inappropriateness of their possible union» (1978: 47). However, the activities of Jakob and Barbara before this kiss

deserve more detailed analysis. Jakob steps unintentionally into the *Hinterstube*, which he should not enter because it is also Barbara's and her father's bedroom. While busy with finding things from shelves, Barbara is singing Jakob's favourite song. Jakob is so overwhelmed by it, «ein Gesang der Seelen» (*DAS*, 44), that he cannot help but embrace Barbara from behind. Barbara is shocked and slaps Jakob heavily. However, this does not humiliate Jakob. Instead, his reaction, which feels like being struck by a thunderstorm and with lights dancing before his eyes, is almost an enjoyment as sublime as religious enlightenment: «Ich stand wie vom Donner getroffen. Die Lichter tanzten mir vor den Augen. – Aber es waren Himmelslichter. Wie Sonne, Mond und Sterne; wie die Engelein, die Versteckens spielen und dazu singen» (*DAS*, 44).

Perhaps as a gesture of redemption out of her complex emotion towards Jakob, she then gives Jakob a kiss on his cheek. While the grocery is a public area for business, this *Hinterstube* is a private realm for physical and mental relaxation. In this intimate and narrow space, the contrast between Jakob and Barbara is evident. What drives Jakob to action, such as his following Barbara and embracing her, appears to be artistic and spiritual, and his reaction towards Barbara's behaviour also turns inward, that is, his illusory mental vision. Nevertheless, the sensual and sexual implication is simultaneously hidden in his illusion and music.

On the contrary, Barbara's activity in this room shows more physical strength in a more outward manner, as indicated by her looking for things on a high shelf, singing a song, shaking her body free from Jakob's embrace, and giving him a heavy slap. For an observer, it is easy to see, hear and feel the bodily movement and emotion of Barbara, thus reflecting the connection that Barbara maintains with society. On the other hand, no one is able to perceive Jakob's turmoil of emotion because he keeps it inside himself, which undoubtedly cuts him off from the world and makes him a stranger to his surroundings. According to Martin Swales, «this split between the inward (*Innen*) and the outward (*Aussen*) [...] ultimately destroys his relationship with Barbara» (1977: 115). To put it in another way, in light of Löw's emphasis upon *Spacing* and *Syntheseleistung*, that is, the two processes of physical movement and mental perception, Barbara plays physically and outwardly a dynamic role

in the space, whereas Jakob appears, comparatively speaking, more static and difficult to be discerned.

This pattern of contrast and antithesis is sustained in the scene when Barbara brings Jakob's clothes back to him. Through Jakob's reminiscence, the narrator learns what Barbara does and says in the space of Jakob's room. She walks into the room with a basket under her arm, stands at the centre of the room, looks around the cold walls, sighs deeply, opens the drawer, puts Jakob's clothes inside it in good order and bursts into tears after slowly closing the drawer and sitting beside the wardrobe (*DAS*, 50-51). In this space that has witnessed the glory and fall of a rich family, Barbara sees, touches and feels. She is active in it. More importantly, her emotion of sadness is fully expressed by her bodily movement and words. Her understanding of real society is partly spatial, as is demonstrated by her spatial words when she tells Jakob the depressing fact that «Ich muß nun *hinaus unter* die grobe Leute, wogegen ich mich so lange gesträubt habe» (*DAS*, 51. My emphasis).

During this process, when Barbara expresses her emotion in a more outward manner, Jakob is mostly too feeble to move or react. Even when he does react, his movement is quiet and light as «Ich [Jakob] war leise in ihre Nähe getreten und faßte ihre Hand» (*DAS*, 51). As he recounts, «Mir war, als hätte ich Blei in den Gliedern» (*DAS*, 51). Only when Barbara is leaving is Jakob able to regain his strength. The spatial disparity, indicating the contrast between Jakob and Barbara, reaches its climax:

Ich eilte ihr nach, und auf dem Treppenabsatze stehend, rief ich ihr nach: Barbara! Ich hörte, daß sie auf der Stiege stehen blieb. Wie ich aber die erste Stufe hinabstieg, sprach sie von unten herauf: Bleiben Sie! und ging die Treppe vollends hinab und zum Tore hinaus. (*DAS*, 51)

Jakob's calling to Barbara is the only verbal utterance that he delivers from the time when Barbara steps into his home and is about to leave. At least, this will be the conclusion that the narrator and the readers will draw from Jakob's own recollection.

The role of spatial structure in influencing people's mentality becomes evident. This structure functions simultaneously with other structures

including class and gender. The class disparity between Jakob and Barbara has already demonstrated its impacts upon their ways of dealing with society. With regard to gender, the unfavoured position of Jakob in his once rich family has robbed him of his self-confidence, and his adherence to his music and his own fantasy makes him appear even more introverted and timid; as a result, externally, he does not demonstrate the conventional form of masculinity. By contrast, the difficulty of earning a living forces Barbara to be tough, vigilant and occasionally aggressive, and those traits are traditionally not deemed feminine. Their position at different ends of a staircase reflects their contrast in terms of birth, education, habitat, modes of behaviour and mentality. Superficially, Barbara's advice here is spatial, that is, suggesting Jakob should remain at the top of the staircase. But at a more profound level, Barbara knows only too well that Jakob cannot survive in the materially-driven working class to which she belongs. Barbara's spatial conception of Jakob is correct, and her last spatial suggestion is vital. Jakob's inheritance has been stolen by a fraudster because he failed to pay full attention to Barbara's advice of not trusting people easily; similarly, when Jakob does not follow her advice to stay at the top of the staircase, thus maintaining his usual habit of being an inactive participant in space, he loses his life in a flood when he goes *down* to save the children and banknotes (*DAS*, 55-56).

Jakob and Barbara can never reach a long-term spatial co-existence at the same level, because of their diverse antitheses analysed above. In particular, Barbara holds that Jakob must stay isolated spatially from other people. This is again implied by the three objects, that is, the guitar, the mirror and the crucifix, which hang in a kind of symmetry on the wall of Barbara's home with her husband, the butcher. The symmetry formed by three different objects clearly indicates the isolation of one thing from another (or the lack of *Zusammenhang*), while they represent the three features of Jakob: his musical pursuit (the guitar), his inability to observe, learn and work by imitation, his tendency to extreme self-concentration (the mirror), and his religious piety (the crucifix). In this way, physical objects function symbolically as records of personality and temporality, namely, the whole life of Jakob. Furthermore, Barbara's daily activity in this space, beneath these three objects, continues without too much turmoil. But once, when she

takes the guitar down and wipes away the dust, her extreme emotion bursts out in a flood of tears (*DAS*, 57). Whenever she is too close to Jakob spatially, she cannot control her emotion. That is why she can give Jakob suggestions in a calm manner when she and Jakob stand at different ends of a staircase, but she weeps with heavy sighs when he sits beside her (*DAS*, 51).

For a spatial analysis, social goods, people, the material and symbolic sides of space, and its process of constitution are of equal significance. More profoundly, these factors can only be fully understood by grasping the diverse discourses, both written and unwritten, which have shaped and influenced a society. This is well reflected in Grillparzer's spatial descriptions in *Der arme Spielmann*. Apart from the physical environment of a space, Grillparzer pays heed to his figures' activities within it. And those activities, including bodily and verbal, usually divide the space into contrasting subspaces, thus demonstrating the antitheses between figures. The spatial structure, together with other structures, is one of the fundamental reasons for the doomed relationship between Jakob and Barbara. In this sense, space reflects people as well as the complex interpersonal relationships, its dramatic tension largely derived from their disparities diachronically formed by the society in which they are born.

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