Shopping Malls and Shishas

Urban Space and Material Culture as Approaches to Transformation in Berlin and Moscow

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Berlin and Moscow are two cities that have undergone profound changes in their urban and social structures during the past ten to fifteen years. Representing both East and West, global processes are converging on these cities and shaping their specific profiles. The shopping mall and the shisha (the Arabic pipe with water and charcoal) – two relatively new trends in these cities – are themselves emblems of East and West, the Orient and the Occident. The form in which they appear – or rather how they are being used – in these places is a representation of the local manifestation of the global.[1]

The understanding of urban culture used in this context emanates not only from the anthropological concept of cultural practices (culture in the sense of cultural and everyday practices) but also from "the cultures of cities", as promulgated by Sharon Zukin (1993, 1995), denoting special urban forms of culture linked with architecture and buildings as well as ideas of "cosmopolitanism" (Hannerz 1993; Vertovec 2000) that refer to the cultural capital that a city's visitors and immigrants bring. The city is the space in which culture(s) develop very quickly and have great impact. This is especially true for societies in transition, where major cities can be considered to be "laboratories" of the new political, economic and social orders.

In contemporary cities, consumer cultures are as central and effective as they are transitory. "The post-industrial city is the location where globalization is distilled into its local froms in the most intensive and wide-reaching way" (Clammer 2003:100). Global and local meanings are appropriated via consumer products and (re)produced in urban space. In the main it is products with ethnic connotations that symbolise the interdependence of the local and the global (e.g. in the shape of the knowledge that consumer cultures require and produce) and the attributes of a world city. In Berlin, consumer products with an ethnic reference, such as the Döner Kebab, form part of the everyday life of the city. In Moscow, such products have increasingly started to appear in the last few years. While in Berlin it is the "Turkish" cultural products – which on close inspection are actually Berlin products – that dominate, in Moscow it is the products from the Caucasus and Central Asia that dominate the street scene, reflecting the culture of the variety of the former Soviet republics. Recently Asian – and especially Japanese – food has become very prominent in the urban picture. Sushi is offered in the most unlikely places, thus indicating an infatuation with Far Eastern culture/food and its adoption into local food practices.

Nowadays, consumption cultures contribute to both the uniqueness as well as the uniformity of large cities (see King 1995). This is particularly manifest in shopping malls that highlight the tension between public and private space, global uniformity and local practices of appropriation. At the same time, urban spaces are being turned into emblems of globalised consumable cultures. In this (everyday) context, culture with ethnic connotations (e.g. in the form of restaurants, markets, music scenes etc.) promises a variety of different cultural commodities and experiences (Welz 1996). "Ethnic culture" needs to be incorporated into

profitable contexts in the shape of consumable resources/products if it is to contribute to the city's image.

The relationship between the global and the local can be traced elsewhere too: Both cities have witnessed an increase in the number of shopping centres over the past few years. This type of consumer space represents globally recognisable shopping and entertainment worlds and symbols of the globalised economy. At the same time, shopping malls create new public spaces for leisure cultures which do not necessarily follow the commercial logic of consumer behaviour. In this way, the malls embody the ambivalence of local consumption practices and globalised consumer cultures. The case studies which are presented in this article focus on local and global aspects of consumer cultures in the urban topography as they are represented by specific products, spaces and forms of sociability connected with the consumption of goods. The different groups of social actors in the city – we examine Berlin and Moscow within the framework of an anthropological understanding of the world city (Hannerz 1993) – have different sorts of access to these spaces or practices. According to the model advanced by Ulf Hannerz, there are four categories of actors who, through their cultural, economic and everyday practices, as well as their transnational connections, turn a city into a world city: tourists, business people, artists and migrants (Hannerz 1993).[2] A topography of the different forms of space and access that is available or denied to the different actors highlights the opportunities and the constraints of public culture; who gains access and who is denied it.

Cultural and social spaces in or of the city are thus not only created by representation, but also – and especially – by cultural and social practices. Spaces of consumption, as well as cultures of consumption, are particularly interesting in the examination of urban developments. Although global cultural flows (Hannerz 1993) and the resulting "landscapes" (Appadurai 1996) make the world a smaller and more homogenised place, the cities, and particularly world cities, remain heterogeneous. In his study of London as a global city, Jörg Dürrschmidt talks about "the presence of the world in one city, and the world-mindedness of those cities" (Dürrschmidt 2000:13), thereby emphasizing the differences in and between big cities. While the present case studies – the shisha in Berlin and two shopping malls in Moscow – are representations of the globalised economy and finance and globalised consumer cultures, they also represent their city's uniqueness through local forms of appropriation of these flows and representations. By comparing the two cities, we can thus highlight certain phenomena of the globalisation process in transitional (world) cities. Looking at spaces in one city and practices in the other opens up a more critical and fruitful perspective on each city, and allows us to see cultural objects, everyday practices and urban spaces from an angle that would otherwise have been closed to us.[3]

The Berlin case study examines the Orient as consumable. It also examines its symbolic appropriation of urban space. One ethnographic object, the shisha, is tracked in different places in Berlin and Moscow. The popularity of this oriental accessory reflects the impact of material culture within urban space situated at the intersection of global cultural flows and local appropriation.

The Moscow case study compares a shopping centre/park in the historic city centre (Manezhnaya Ploshchad) with one of the many shopping malls that are now mushrooming at the city's periphery (Zolotoi Vavilon). Both places represent the transition to the market economy and Russia's growing inclusion in the globalised economy. However, the political/aesthetic connotations of the central space, as well as local everyday practices in both examples suggest a specific post-Soviet form of the construction and appropriation of these consumer spaces.

Consuming Shisha: Following the Orient within the Symbolic Geography of Berlin

In analysing transformations of urban culture in both Berlin and Moscow, the perspective on consumer culture offers a wide range of approaches and field sites – a spatial approach

Shishas on display, ethnic restaurant in Mitte, Berlin 2004. Photo: A.Färber.

would focus on the different consumer spaces within a neighbourhood or on certain shops throughout the city space, whereas a group specific approach would focus on the consumer culture of a certain milieu or generation, and a material approach would build several analytical perspectives around one consumer object and follow the object through the city. I chose to analyse recent transformations within the city's landscape of consumer culture through the material approach perspective, i.e. through the object of the shisha.[4] Through this object – the oriental *nargile* or shisha – the specific tension or fusion of global and local aspects within consumer culture can be traced in urban space with respect to social contexts and cultural practices. It is the "scenography of selling and consuming" (Raulin 2000:18) exemplified with one ethnographic object that offers insights into its inscription in different urban contexts. Within this scenography, the interference of

social and institutional conditions that make an ethnic consumer object a visible part of urban culture can be analysed. Thus, the "social life of things" (Appadurai 1986) may be internally linked with a "topography of things".

The Social Topography of the Shisha in Berlin
Everyday observations in the northern part of the district of Neukölln, in Berlin, have led to the conclusion that the shisha serves as a particularly good example for the analysis of urban transformation and consumer culture. The inner city district of Neukölln is – within the symbolic geography of Berlin – one of the neighbourhoods most often described as "the dark side of the city". Its high rate of unemployment[5] and the high proportion of immigrants among the population[6] are usually mentioned as indicators of this bad image. Approximately since the year 2000, the northern part of this district witnessed a marked change in the na-

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ture of consumer goods on offer locally. As many Turkish groceries and cafés had closed down, it was a visible testimony to the district's unfavourable economic and difficult social situation and further added to the bad image of the neighbourhood. Many of these vacant shop premises were taken over by Arab entrepreneurs, which led to a different range of goods and services. Besides sophisticated nut roasters, the most prominent new item they introduced into the neighbourhood was the shisha, which today is available in grocery shops or smoke-in cafés. In these cafés, Turkish men of the first generation of economic migrants (so-called "Gastarbeiter" of the 1960s) have been drinking tea and playing cards for the last two decades – after they had realised they would be staying in Berlin indefinitely. Nowadays you see both younger and older Arab men in these cafés drinking tea and coffee, playing cards and also smoking shishas. Many of these cafés have highly symbolic names, such as "Qahwa Umm Kulthum" which refers to the prominent Arab singer Umm Kulthum, or "Qahwa al-Qahira", that indicates Cairo as the capital of Arab culture. Whether displayed in the window or represented in the logo alongside Arabic and German lettering, the shisha helps to identify these cafés as spaces of oriental sociability.

My own everyday observations of this neighbourhood (I have been a local resident myself for the past ten years) show that these places are more or less exclusively for men of Arab origin. Only a small number of non-Arab customers actually frequent these cafés. Meanwhile, snack bars and restaurants in the area have started to offer shishas in special "family compartments", or on "family days". Just like in the cities of the Arab world, restaurants now explicitly make those mixed spaces and opening hours available for men and women to smoke shishas and spend their leisure time outside the private realm. Following the introduction of the shisha into the neighbourhood, grocery stores started to sell shishas and all the necessary equipment. Apart from the café managers who sometimes buy tobacco or shishas for their cafés, both Arabs and non-Arab – i.e. German – customers buy shishas and the special tobacco

for private use. An altogether new landscape of Arab shops, cafés and restaurants has thus been built on a very similar – formerly Turkish – infrastructure.

At first sight it seems as though the public and semi-public space of the streets of northern Neukölln has undergone a re-coding, in the sense that this part of Neukölln is steeped in an Arab-oriental imaginary. Consuming shisha relates to this oriental imaginary in its proper ambivalence. In addition to its exoticism, it is associated with an irritating abundance of time and with a public display of male sociability that highlights female invisibility and removal to private space.[7]

The evocation of this ambivalent imaginary was made possible by the new enterprises and the new shop owners of Arab origin. It was further made possible by the appearance of a certain product – the shisha – generating a cultural practice that is familiar to parts of the population of the area. Furthermore, it invited other local customers to take part in consuming the shisha, albeit most often in private space. This transformation, which may be seen as a sort of Arab-oriental refuge built into the city's landscape, is inscribed into the logic of the specific urban condition of marginalised neighbourhoods in Berlin.

It is important to note that this rapid and visible expansion of the shisha culture in the neighbourhood materialised at a time when Arab, oriental and Islamic cultural features easily translated into anti-Arab or anti-Islamic stereotypes – particularly after 11th September 2001, but also due to local frictions concerning Islamic teaching in public schools and the wearing of the headscarf by Muslim women in public institutions. Despite the polarising public debate about the question of "integration" that attracted a lot of media attention, a consumption and consumer culture that relied on an Oriental imaginary symbolised in the shisha proved to be extremely successful in the city's everyday culture. And this was true, as I found out by systematically following the object through the city; not only in places where Arab locals counted as the most important customers,[8] but almost all over the city.

However, I was surprised to come across shishas in neighbourhoods that are known for their stylish consumer culture, such as Mitte – a central part of Berlin which is famous for post-unification processes of gentrification.[9] Shishas are to be found in lifestyle shops and high-profile ethnic restaurants mainly frequented by tourists, people who work in the offices and cultural institutions that are located in the area, artists and also students from the nearby university departments. Here, the shisha serves, on the one hand, as an exotic consumer object within a wide range of ethnic lifestyle items from, e.g. North Africa or India. It even lends its name to a furniture and accessories shop, the "Shisha Styler". On the other hand, the shisha serves as an eye catcher in stylish ethnic restaurants offering Persian, Central Asian or North African food. The shisha is rarely smoked in these restaurants. When it is smoked, however, this never happens during the daytime, as in Neukölln or Wedding, but in the evening, thus producing a moment of leisure that is not part of everyday life. Whether on display in the window or as part of the logo, the shisha symbolises cultural difference; referring to the exotic and promising an experience of the extraordinary as a contrast to daily life. In the highly competitive landscape of stylish shops, restaurants etc., where rents are high and business is tough, the shisha is inscribed into the logic of a globalised culture of consuming cultural difference "as such" and in the form of cultural products or objects. In other words, the shisha offered in the shops and restaurants of this central district of Mitte is another visible part of the city's consumer culture. Although most of these businesses in Mitte are also run by immigrants, unlike those in Neukölln or Wedding, these cafés do not re-/create a kind of everyday life or a homely atmosphere. The shisha here forms part of the commercial logic of experiencing cultural diversity. Aided by cultural difference, this "consumption of culture" promises individual symbolic distinction – "sur mesure" or "à la carte" (Raulin 2000:14). It is a logic that is represented by one exotic product that competes with a range of others offering distinction and helping the consumer to escape

from the daily routine.

Apart from these clearly polarised social and symbolic spaces, following the ethnographic object of the shisha through Berlin leads to more differentiated urban, social and symbolic contexts. For example, in the case of Kreuzberg, an inner-city district with different forms of the above-mentioned social problems and gentrification, social and symbolic associations with the shisha are more ubiquitous.[10]

Kreuzberg can be counted as the most emblematic neighbourhood, with respect to an ambivalent symbolic association with Turkish immigrant culture on the one hand and alternative political culture on the other. Since unification, Kreuzberg has undergone gentrification processes similar to those of Mitte. However, until the mid-1990s, the district had mainly been symbolically upgraded, as Barbara Lang has shown in her ethnography of Kreuzberg (Lang 1998). Today it is said to be going through a "renaissance" due to its persistent alternative culture and, as I would argue, due to a landscape of differentiated and exotic consumer culture. The high proportion of several generations of inhabitants with a Turkish background (according to the statistics, 23% of the inhabitants do not have German citizenship and almost 10% of them have a Turkish background) means that a wide variety of ethnic enterprises (see Pécoud 2001) – grocery shops, other shops, restaurants, cafés and lounges selling multicultural items – are run by locals and attract customers from all parts of the city.

In Kreuzberg, however, the shisha is not part of the urban landscape to the same extent as it is in Neukölln, although those café managers who offer shishas inscribe it into the ambivalent Turkish-oriental imaginary of the neighbourhood by re-coding it into an area that offers "the authentic atmosphere" for consuming the shisha. This kind of lounge and bar is run by the so-called "third generation", who sell oriental consumer goods and practices as part of their cultural repertoire to considerable advantage. This commodification of difference is legitimised by the transformation of the cultural knowledge ascribed to them into the display of specialised knowledge. In a conversation with the manager

of a trendy lounge serving shishas, he emphasised the importance of choosing the tobacco (that he buys in grocery shops in Neukölln), that would set his venue apart from the others in the neighbourhood. He also knows that such a specialised offer resonates particularly well with the district's imaginary. This knowledge is part of turning his enterprise into a distinguished location. At the same time it is a highly localised form of knowledge, since it depends on the specific business idea and the environment that one wishes to be distinguished from (see Halter 2000:104). It is precisely this professionalisation and localisation of the consumer object that expresses the principles of a global culture of capitalism. Although global and local aspects converge on the shisha, in these places they follow the rules of differentiation of consumption.

The specific symbolic potential of the ethnographic object shisha, performed in its topography as sketched above, can be summarised as follows: Firstly, the symbolic content has to be taken into consideration. The shisha is deeply inscribed in an oriental imaginary – including its positive and negative associations. Negative aspects of this imaginary that resonate with actual global political and local social problems and fears are not always, or everywhere, brought forward. In places like Mitte, the spread of shishas even suggests complete detachment from political backgrounds in order to turn the shisha into a new oriental fashion and consumer product.

Secondly, the symbolic potential of place has to be taken into consideration. The oriental imaginary acquires very different connotations depending on the social constitution of the urban space or neighbourhood the object is found in. In order to highlight the existing social differences, the focus here is on the neighbourhoods of Neukölln and Mitte, which are at opposite ends of the Berlin social spectrum. In a socially highly stigmatised neighbourhood with very little cultural capital, such as Neukölln, the shisha becomes another symbol of an everyday practice that refers to the image of an enclosed community. As such it helps to create an exclusive feeling of being at home in a place where your presence is highly contested. Through the reconstruction of an ethnic culture, it facilitates identification with urban space. In a neighbourhood with high cultural capital, such as Mitte, the shisha is only one of the many objects that contribute to the consumption of cultural difference.

Social Frameworks of the Topography of Things

The shisha serves as an indicator of actual modes of transformation within urban culture that, at the same time, allows you to delve into the history of its local population and economic practice. It could even count as a symbol or the focal point of that transformation. To further contextualise the fieldwork account, the ethnographic perspective on material culture has to relate the symbolic content of the object and the symbolic potential of place to more global aspects of the character of urban space and urban culture. With regard to the concept of the culture of world cities, one can easily detect the three stages – or spaces in this case – of the market form that Ulf Hannerz has determined for ethnic cultural products: within "some subcultural community", in "its array of private settings" as non-commodified objects, where one might expect the shisha to have been used before it was introduced in cafés and grocery shops. The wide acceptance of it in the cafés points to an already present cultural knowledge and practice. This can be observed within an internally more differentiated community, "where it is profitable enough to commoditise subculturally distinctive items for consumption by community members", such as Neukölln, where the shisha is mostly smoked and offered for sale to Arab customers. And finally, the space where the product is detached from those former backgrounds, "having become more public … in the wider cultural market-place", as we have seen in places like Mitte, where the shisha has become one consumer object amongst many that offers distinction via ethnic cultural difference (Hannerz 1993:78ff).

It is important to note that economic initiative in this specific realm of ethnic consumer culture is often a product of migrants' restricted

professional possibilities. This is especially true for the transformation that has taken place in Berlin after unification and major de-industrialisation. Low-skilled immigrant workers have been hardest hit by de-industrialisation. Ethnic businesses which, in domains other than the shisha business, often rely on family-based work sharing, seem to offer a suitable space in which to make a living. At the same time, these businesses allow participation in urban culture and visibility in the public space. I would like to add another aspect to the evaluation of the ethnic consumer object in the market form. The institutional framework also comes into play and helps to differentiate and evaluate the modes of identification that urban society allocates to consumers and entrepreneurs.

The first shisha café to be opened in Neukölln six years ago, is managed by a 50-year-old Lebanese who has lived in Berlin for 30 years. A pharmacy had previously occupied the premises until the business folded. In our conversation, the manager insisted that his café was the first one to serve shishas in an original Arab atmosphere in Berlin. He kept telling me that opening the café was very much welcomed by the local political representatives. The local administration, as well as the local business community, considered the closure of an increasing number of shops along one of the main streets of Neukölln to be a real problem. The street started to look depressing with all the vacant shops; a visible manifestation of the sad social statistics and the bad reputation that was being reproduced in the local and national media, he narrated. He was only too happy to have been able to contribute to the neighbourhood's social atmosphere, so that it could once again be considered a place worth living in.

This self-representation of the café manager as being concerned about the image of the neighbourhood and the local social conditions is, in my view, a key to understanding the different layers that contribute to consuming the shisha in Berlin, in this particular space. On the one hand, he stresses the relevance of his contribution to the local culture or social environment, in a situation where an Arab-oriental culture that is almost exclusively accessible to (Arab) immigrants but not to tourists or the general public, is considered to be a threat to the public space. On the other hand, he points to the specific contribution that his café has made to the harmony of his local environment, thus entering a logic where – within urban governance – the local becomes the medium of harmonisation (see Welz 1994:224). It leads to another aspect of a specific Berlin urban practice and culture. What is described here as an individual, civil engagement to contribute to a locally based integrative culture – something that is almost more important than an economic interest in one's own business – is encouraged and structured by a variety of administrative forms of urban governance.

It is particularly in the marginalised areas where social and socio-cultural initiatives play a key role in regenerating the socio-spatial or cultural situation of these districts. The businessman seems to follow this logic. These new modes of urban governance have been implemented to prevent deeper social polarization in actually supporting creative urban culture. Formats such as that of "neighbourhood management" are meant to mediate between the local population and the district's representatives.[11] The key term is "empowerment" and a new mode of "quality policies" (Häußermann & Kapphan 2004:231), rather than routine policies, tries to respond to the social and cultural complexity of the urban condition. Thus, "quality policy" is meant to take social, cultural, economic and physical factors into consideration within an integrative development of problematic neighbourhoods: "The central aim of urban policies should be to return trust to the population in their own competence to play a role within society that is meaningful and accepted" (Häußermann & Kapphan 2004:230, author's translation). An empowered urban citizen should at least have the feeling of taking part in the development and implementation of local politics.

These modes of dialogue and this "new culture and institutions of non-hierarchical bargaining systems, forums and round tables" (Mayer 1998:72) are based on a construction of the civil subject that relies on a capacity of self-

Danilovskii Market, Moscow
2003. Photo: C. Gdaniec.

help and initiative. My argument is that this capacity of self-help and initiative is neither a mental disposition nor a cultural predisposition. It is a product of late modern, de-regulated urban governance that can be traced back to Peter Hall's concept of the "enterprise city" (1988) that is internationally oriented, and where the state retires from political forms of urban policies to instead mediate between different groups of interest. This de-formalised and de-regulated urban policy aims at setting free economic dynamics on the basis of individual initiative (see Heeg:2004). In this sense, urban institutions *prescribe* and *produce* subjects that take initiatives and civil responsibility. It is this logic of late-modern urban governance that the statement of the café house manager is based on.

In all the cases mentioned above – from the Neukölln-based shisha café manager to the trendy Kreuzberg-based third generation of young Turkish entrepreneurs – the importance

of taking the initiative was not put forward in the same way: In some cases, economic aims and motivation were stressed, whereas others, as in Neukölln, highlighted social responsibility for a neighbourhood.

Consumable cultural difference and integrative locality are two codes within which objects taken as ethnic culture seem to be working "successfully" in Berlin. As a condition for this representational structure, urban policy, institutional representation and daily practices have to resonate and interact. This is certainly the case in the "shisha business", where ethnic diversity is increasingly understood as a resource not only for the city's image, but also for its local economy and social harmony, where economic initiatives on behalf of migrants melt into formats and programmes that try to project the potentials of ethnic diversity against economic crisis and unemployment (start-up businesses), and where these initiatives meet a local demand for consuming and spending leisure time. A further resource includes the trendy wave of consuming lifestyle offered by the second and third generations of migrants to young Berlin customers and tourists alike.

Markets and Malls: Changing Consumption Cultures in Post-Soviet Moscow

"Russia [has been] ranked the number-one retail target", according to a recent *Moscow Times* article (Maternovsky 2004). The rate at which shopping malls are springing up all over the city, and especially along the city's periphery, certainly supports such an assertion. Such development has been accelerating since the year 2000, and is an indication of the increase of disposable income of a broad section of the population. Just as incomes are becoming less polarised, the city's spaces are being filled with more and more shops, restaurants, cafés and other consumer spaces that do not only cater for the rich. On the one hand, this is manifestation of Moscow's transformation from "the communist model city" into a city which is part of the globalised economy. On the other hand, it is a manifestation of the processes of economic

and cultural globalisation. Post-Soviet transformation processes are coinciding temporally and spatially with an increasing dominance of global economic structures.

In the Moscow part of the research project, consumer cultures are observed from a spatial perspective; not analogous to Berlin from the material culture approach. This choice was not only informed by the nature of the research object itself, but also by the decision to demonstrate two different ethnographic approaches. Spaces of consumption are a prism through which transformations in the economic, cultural and social spheres can be examined. This is why I have chosen markets and malls as places within the urban structure in which one can observe everyday practices of consumption and leisure, official representation strategies and manifestations of the post-Soviet migration phenomenon. Moscow's food markets – the former Kolkhoz markets[12] – have become symbols of the city's multi-ethnic composition and of post-Soviet immigration processes. The markets, together with their managers and traders, evoke strong "ethnic" connotations in the minds of many Muscovites, and are often associated with the "migration problem" (Vendina 1999; Malkova 1998). The markets represent everyday life and routine shopping practices. Although the food and the atmosphere contain "ethnic" references, they do not add any symbolic value to the actual goods or practices, as is the case with the "Turkish Market" in Berlin, for instance. Judging by the offer and use of more exotic products such as the shisha, the commodification of "ethnic" cultural products plays a different role, produces less obvious symbolic capital in Moscow than in Berlin, and is therefore not included in this article. Instead I will concentrate on everyday practices and official representation strategies, both of which are played out in the chosen shopping malls.

Consumer Culture and Public Space: Transformation of Urban Space
The shopping mall is perhaps *the* epitome of urban consumer culture in the late modern city. The market can be regarded as the original form

of consumer space. Arcades followed some centuries later as a more sophisticated form, and in the 1970s, the pedestrian zone or the shopping street emerged in Western Europe as the latest trend in modern shopping practices. The US-American shopping mall was first developed in the 1950s, although its world-wide impact came much later. While malls have started to fade out in the USA, their management companies have found a lucrative new market in Eastern Europe. It is therefore no wonder that the shopping mall is becoming *the* new form of consumer space in Russia. In December 2003 there were 48 "quality" shopping malls in Moscow, and 35 more were expected to be completed by the beginning of 2005 (Maternovsky 2003). These are only the big, western-style shopping malls, however. The number of so-called trade centres (*torgovye tsentry*) – ranging from specialised markets to spaces similar to malls – has risen enormously and can only be estimated. According to observers, shopping in malls has become so popular in Moscow that a decline in market shopping can be detected. A real estate expert was quoted as saying that: "Western-style shopping centres offer better service and are overall far more comfortable, while their prices do not differ from those in traditional markets" (Maternovsky 2003).

While the shopping mall is an emblem, a symbol and a myth, in terms of urban culture and consumer culture it is also the antithesis to the city. It can be utopia to some and dystopia to others. "In the mall urban life is reduced to a puppet dance of the consumers. The lost city returns as a stage set, beneath the roof of glass, steel and fantastically stretchable polyethylene and behind the fully air-conditioned entrances, safe from the wind, rain, snow and the lives of its inhabitants" (Zohlen 1999). Since 1991, Moscow's urban culture and public space have gradually been rediscovered; an urbanity characteristic of a metropolis is being redeveloped. Elements of this include anonymity, freedom, the public, a heterogeneous population, cultural and ethnic diversity, niches and risk. The emergence of the shopping malls creates another form of urbanity; or rather it takes its customers out of the city into some form of parallel universe. Functionality seems to prevail in the malls around the periphery of Moscow, providing a space not envisaged by Soviet city planners.

Some of the largest malls in Moscow, such as "Megamall" on the Outer Ring Road in the south-east, however, try to emulate a city – if not a different world – within and beyond the city. Their advertisements try to persuade you that "Megamall" can supply everything you need or wish for, and that you and your family can happily spend days there. This sort of mall is the type that seems to represent US-American suburbia and the globalised consumption culture. While these malls are indeed very similar all over the globe, they do have their local specificities. The existing anthropological and sociological literature on consumption and shopping malls tends to either focus on the architectural and town planning aspects of the malls (e.g. Zohlen 1999), or the practices and strategies of the mall visitors, which might involve strategies of resistance (e.g. Bareis 2003) or a certain self-reflexivity modus of identification (e.g. Falk & Campbell 1997). Some studies do concentrate on both aspects: the nature of the "shoppingscape" as well as its uses, which range from the pragmatic to the leisurely (Lehtonen & Mäenpää 1997:137). In the current research, both trajectories play a role as a prism for the transformation of urban culture in Moscow. Practices of consumption and leisure in these new semi-public spaces of the malls, and their appropriation by the city's inhabitants and visitors, are as important as the architectural/planning issues. Both aspects demonstrate manifestations of the global in the local, or vice versa.

It can be argued that the current transformation in Moscow is as much a result of globalisation processes as of post-Soviet restructuring, and certain aspects pertain more to one rather than the other (e.g. Lentz 2003). In the Russian capital, we can witness the formation of public space in a way that did not exist during Soviet times, as well as the privatisation of public space. Places of trade and consumption are particularly good examples of this. There was little private space in Soviet Moscow, even within

the home, and much of the public space served for representational rather than individual or private use. Flats were small and families of at least three, but often around five people, had to share a one- to three-room apartment. As a result, individuals – and especially the young – had to resort to using public spaces, such as the street and parks for their private affairs. This could be termed an unofficial, private use of public space which ran parallel to an official use of public space for representational purposes or collective activities. This dichotomy of public-private space persists, although is of a different quality (see also Lentz & Lindner 2003). The new public spaces that are being used for socialising and consuming are in fact private properties – cafés, restaurants and shopping centres – and therefore a symptom of economic globalisation. More private space is being created for the better-off in terms of elite or more affordable housing, so that members of a family can live separately and own a car – again a result of the globalised economy and neo-liberal economic policies. Some traditional Soviet cultural practices persist alongside these developments, however, which are often borne out in public spaces due to a lack of private space at home and lack of disposable income. The metro stations are still focal points for shopping and socialising, especially after work. Although more and more cafés and restaurants are appearing in both the city centre and on the periphery, the number of people who appropriate public space for their private lives does not appear to be diminishing. This is a paradox very much in evidence in contemporary Moscow, and is typical of globalising and transitional cities.

The Moscow case indicates a specific – perhaps a very Russian – way of appropriating global flows. A number of researchers in the social and cultural fields have argued this particular point (Pilkington 2002a; Rozanova 2003; O'Connor 2005). For instance, Melissa Caldwell, in her ethnographic study of local food practices in Moscow and the appropriation of McDonald's, writes that "Russians blur the boundaries between the personal and the public, the local and the foreign" (Caldwell

2004:7). Her observations are that Muscovites of all ages view McDonald's food as part of the Russian cuisine. On its part, the fast food giant capitalises on the Russian notion of "our" (nash) food and culture, and uses it in advertising, service and production practices. These findings are particularly telling in this context as McDonald's is, of course, emblematic of so-called "glocalization" processes (Robertson 1995; Ritzer 1998; Talbott 1996).

Two case studies help to elaborate how Moscow's public and privatised space is being used for representational purposes on the part of the city authorities, how it is transformed by neo-liberal, globalised economic practices, and how it is being appropriated through the cultural practices of visitors and inhabitants.

Two Case Studies
The first case study concerns the *Manezhnaya Ploshchad* complex, which consists of an underground shopping centre called *Okhotnyi Ryad* and an above ground landscaped square. The building site of Manezhnaya Ploshchad was described by real estate specialists in 1996 as a "hole in the ground – hole in the budget".[13] It was one of Mayor Yurii Luzhkov's "grands projets" which had to be finished in a hurry for the 850-year celebrations held in Moscow in 1997. The construction required far more capital investment than was anticipated by the developers, which meant heavier cash injections by Moscow city who were only supposed to own half the project (one of the typical 51%–49% deals between city and developers). Retailers were reluctant to lease space and prices had to be lowered. The available shops were eventually occupied by businesses, but there has since been a high turnover of retailers.

During Soviet times, the square next to the Manezh exhibition hall and opposite the Moskva Hotel was used as an assembly point for the military May Day parades in the adjacent Red Square. This large asphalted space was a "dead" space right in the heart of the city: open, public, generally uninviting, and only used for official events. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, this function was no longer necessary and it was important to consider how

this central place could be developed. The city centre needed livening up in order to provide spaces for social and cultural interaction, as well as for trade and business. City centre space is now a focus for events or constructions which represent the city in the image it tries to create and that attracts visitors. Manezhnaya Ploshchad is important for both. There was an acute shortage of retail space when the Soviet system collapsed, and this sparked off a building frenzy. The city authorities were also keen to model a new, post-Soviet image of the Russian capital that represented Moscow as Russian and global. The resulting shopping centre and park is a representation of Moscow as a world city that hosts international retail and fast food chains in a globally recognisable setting, and which emphasises its own cultural heritage and uniqueness. This phenomenon is typical of current globalisation processes in cities undergoing political and/or economic transformations. The shopping centre, *Okhotnyi Ryad* (a reference to the historic trading rows on Red Square), is situated underground. Classical

Okhotnyi Ryad Shopping Centre, Moscow 2003. Photo: C. Gdaniec.

fountains and sculptures rub shoulders with international postmodern building designs. The roof of the shopping mall displays sculptures of Russian fairy tales and a globe that reminds us of historic world journeys of discovery and conquest. With the addition of benches, this place has been turned into an inviting space for rest and leisure.

A survey we conducted on the Square in September 2003 suggests that Manezhnaya Ploshchad mainly functions as a tourist attraction and hardly at all as a shopping facility. Most respondents were either visiting Moscow or showing their guests from out-of-town around the capital. Contrary to the pessimistic predictions during its construction and its early days of existence, both the mall and the park are popular with the visitors. While it is considered "clean" and "beautiful", few people said they would come here if it was not located next to the most important sight of the city. The shops themselves were too expensive, they said, and they were only window-shopping. The main activity of visitors seems to be strolling around or going for a walk. Young people used the Russian term "gulyat", which actually has more connotations than the English translation – including socialising and drinking (see Pilkington 2002b). For instance, the young people we spoke to used the space for "hanging out" (*tusovatsa*) with their friends; taking advantage of the possibility of spending time in a neat and comfortable environment without spending too much money. The latter term denotes activities that partly overlap with those described by "gulyat", but more specifically refers to a group and to partying. This is, on the one hand, an indication that some social practices have not changed since the Soviet era and that public space still plays a crucial role for the realisation of cultural practices in view of a scarcity of private space at home. On the other hand, it reflects a youth cultural practice of appropriating representational or consumer space for their non consumer-oriented leisure activities.

The Manezhnaya Ploshchad development thus seems to fulfil its representational purposes more than its economic logic, considering the amount of subsidies necessary to run and maintain the shopping centre. Yet, its representational function exists mainly at an abstract level of the city's image production. The way that visitors view and use the place shows a certain disregard of the official representational aspects in favour of expressing their own cultural practices. Although the respondents seem to be engaging in unspectacular activities in this place – showing their visitors from the Russian provinces the capital's central attractions, window-shopping, going for a Sunday afternoon walk, taking pictures of each other in front of the fountains – the official prestige that Manezhnaya Ploshchad carries does add a symbolic value to their practices. Wedding couples visiting the tomb of the Unknown Soldier in the Kremlin's adjacent Alexandrovski Garden, also stroll across the Manezhnaya Ploshchad square. Tourists have their pictures taken in front of the capital's main attractions and the youth come here rather than meet in their neighbourhood.

The second case study is a shopping mall on the city's outskirts, bearing the evocative name of "Zolotoi Vavilon" (Golden Babylon). It advertises itself as the "capital of rest and shopping" (*stolitsa otdykha i pokupok*), and does indeed appear to be an oasis of light, warmth, colour and comfort within a sea of standardised high-rise blocks of flats.

The mall is situated next to a metro station, and supplements the shops and cinema dating from the Soviet era (this micro-region was built during the early 1980s), and the numerous kiosks that have sprung up along the street in post-Soviet times. The shops and other facilities here serve a large population that lives within a considerable radius. This mall is first and foremost a space for meeting consumer needs in an environment of real shortage, but also provides a semi-public space in which local inhabitants can socialise and consume culture, albeit at a limited level.

The imperative of the mall developers is of course economic, although in the setting of a Soviet housing development with barely enough social or cultural amenities, the mall acquires functions, or rather possibilities, beyond mere consumerism. Again, this is a phenomenon

similarly to be found in other countries, but in the Moscow context it highlights the ongoing fundamental transformations. Not unlike on Manezhnaya Ploshchad, the shops in this mall are relatively expensive, so that visitors mainly window-shop. They do, however, buy groceries in the *Perekryostok* supermarket, take their families out to dinner in one of the restaurants, play the gambling machines or watch a film in the six-screen cinema (findings based on a survey in March 2004). Again, it is the youth who most appropriate this space in a non-consumerist way, by "hanging out" with their friends at McDonald's before or after school, often making one drink or meal last for the whole socialising period. The existence of the mall in this area and the choice of chain stores and restaurants, as well as the prevalence of US-American films, is proof of the effects of globalisation in Moscow. But this has a two-fold expression in the attitudes and practices of the population. Some feel more urbane and part of a post-Soviet Russian culture (expressed in shopping habits, socialising habits such as frequenting cafés and restaurants, dress codes and attitudes), while others feel disadvantaged and experience a continuation of the Soviet shortage culture. Their lack of disposable income almost becomes more severe as a result of the opulence on display (e.g. old age pensioners buying a few items in the supermarket). Such polarisation is an effect of economic globalisation that is becoming more and more manifest in cities around the globe, and in particular in world cities such as Moscow. It is also, however, a reflection of the post-Soviet transformation.

Conclusion

In answering the question of how transformation has been manifested in the urban culture of Berlin and Moscow since the fall of the Berlin wall/collapse of the Soviet Union, it seemed important to analyse the relationship between global and local structures and symbolic practices. Consumer cultures easily lend themselves to research and even more so in a comparative perspective. Comparing Berlin and Moscow highlights not only the character of each city, but the competitive tension between big cities today.

Following the shisha in Moscow has thus demonstrated two ideas. As far as the object shisha (*kalyan*) is concerned, what Hannerz describes as the second phase of ethnic cultural products in the world city, namely its commodification within the realm of immigrant communities, does not visibly exist in Moscow. Instead it is sold at almost any tobacco kiosk and offered on the menu of the trendiest restaurants, bars and clubs. Here, it is a consumer object in the sense of the third phase of Hannerz' market form model. Looking towards Berlin from Moscow, it becomes obvious that shisha, as an exotic consumer object promising cultural distinction, may be taken as a more global phenomenon than expected.

In contrast, the global similarity seems to be obvious in the case of new urban consumer spaces, such as malls. The comparison of Manezhnaya Ploshchad with Potsdamer Platz in Berlin seemed therefore logical. Potsdamer Platz was also built to fill a historic void in the city centre and represent the "new" capital city of Berlin as a "world city". It represents the space of globalised (consumer) cultures but, just as Manezhnaya Ploshchad, it produces different local forms of how this space is used and appropriated by visitors and inhabitants alike.

From this comparative perspective, and with ethnographic approaches to material culture and urban space, the similarities of transformation processes in cities in late modernity may be exemplified. At the same time, the appropriation of global cultural forms in local contexts may be described without understanding the local as a product of global processes, or without mystifying the local (Welz 1994:224). Berlin and Moscow are two individual cities; two urban societies that, at first glance, indicate more differences than similarities. With the help of this methodological combination, however, we reveal some of their subtleties.

Notes

1. This article is based on a research project at the Department of European Ethnology, Humboldt University Berlin (funded by the German Re-

search Foundation/DFG, Feb 2003–Jan 2005): Urban culture and ethnic representation – Berlin and Moscow as emerging "world cities"? We would like to thank Wolfgang Kaschuba and Peter Niedermüller for valuable discussions of our work. Our thanks also to Franka Schneider for her assistance with the research and editing.

2. Anthony King (1995) added a fifth social category of actors to the world city model: urban planners and urban researchers who are actively involved in shaping the representation and discourse of the world city.

3. There are two researchers in the project, one working on each city: Alexa Färber on Berlin and Cordula Gdaniec on Moscow.

4. In my field research in Berlin, the coffee-to-go represents a second research object that enables us to describe a symbolically and socially contrasting field of consumption.

5. At about 22% it is one of the highest rates in Berlin (OECD 2003:29ff).

6. The proportion of non-German citizens in this district is approximately 21% (OECD 2003:29ff).

7. The well known Orientalism-debate serves as a major background for the discursive structure of this case, too, I would like to refer here to the main sources as Edward Said (1978) and Aijaz Ahmad (1992) as a critical response.

8. It was not therefore astonishing to find shishas for sale in grocery shops and offered for smoking in cafés in other Berlin neighbourhoods with a comparable social structure – especially with respect to the number of inhabitants with a background of migration, such as in Wedding, where consuming the shisha meets the needs of local immigrant customers.

9. For an ethnographic analysis of those transformations at one of the most prominent places in Mitte, Hackesche Höfe, see Romelli (2002).

10. Prenzlauer Berg would be another example, where, on the one hand, consuming shisha has to relate to the symbolic capital of this East Berlin neighbourhood that mainly relies on the presence of bohemian and sub-cultural scenes from before and after 1989. On the other hand it has to compete with ethnic business that, since 1989, has been predominantly Vietnamese (Bui 2003) and is now increasingly becoming a differentiated landscape of ethnic restaurants. For a sociological analysis of processes of gentrification see Häußermann, Holm & Zunzer (2002).

11. For Neukölln see e.g. the initiatives concerning a "territorial employment treaty" that is supported by the EU and embraces entrepreneurs and civic engagement. Also, an area for "neighbourhood management" has been identified since 2002 (see OECD 2003:29ff).

12. Where produce from the collective farms used to be sold; usually in purpose-built market buildings.

13. MC Securities Ltd., Report, 30/07/1996.

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