

Reimagining the World and Other Spaces: Jeanette Winterson's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* as a Literary Heterotopia

Khaoula Hmidi

Faculty of Letters, Arts and Humanities of Manouba, - Tunisia

ABSTRACT: This paper probes into the construction of heterotopic spaces in Jeanette Winterson's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. Taking cue from Michel Foucault's treatise on heterotopia, the novel's spatial patterns are explored as emplacements or as Foucault fittingly terms "counter-sites," that mirror and hold out against the matrix of domination and monological belief systems. I examine the extent to which the spaces that Jeanette, the protagonist, inhabits and absconds from contest and breach mechanisms of power, bringing out the deft synergy between space and power dynamics. The Foucauldian reading of the term will be used as a tool to understand how space, (re)configured as a site through which disciplinary power is exercised, gives some leeway to other alternative sites where power is disputed. I interpret some spaces as heterotopias of exclusion and crisis and others as heterotopias of deviation, illusion, and compensation, following Foucault's typology. These escape routes, I argue, are not meant to disavow the protagonist's lived experience but rather create a more hospitable and inclusive space where new ways of thinking, being, and becoming are crystallized.

KEYWORDS: Jeanette Winterson; *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*; Michel Foucault; Heterotopia; Counter-sites

1. INTRODUCTION

In 1985, Jeanette Winterson won the Whitebread Award for her first novel *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. The novel, published as a paperback in 1985, was a roaring success and a real coup for Winterson, catapulting her into stardom. As a coming-out novel which recounts the journey of a protagonist named Jeanette, *Oranges* queries and 'queers' religious dogma and long-standing traditions. The bildungsroman chronicles Jeanette's profound metamorphosis from a dutiful daughter who lives by the book and scrupulously executes religious duties to a social misfit and wily renegade who, to her heart's content, departs from the straitjacket of social norms. Sceptical and wary by turns, Jeanette, the heroine, jettisons the social restrictions foisted upon her. Cast out by her adoptive family for the obstinate unruliness she exhibits, Jeanette pushes her way through trials and tribulations, carving out a niche for herself.

The narrative plays fast and loose with the conventions of space, gesturing towards contravening and redefining traditional arrangements of space. This creative endeavour carries the purpose of trespassing the limits of space and time and fashioning new ways of being and becoming. On this note, in a prefatory remark to her informative conference proceedings book *Winterson Narrating Time and Space* (2009), Margaret J-M Sonmez argues that what keeps striking readers afresh while peering through Winterson's literary work is Winterson's contravention of the prescribed bounds of time and space (10). In *Oranges*, customary notions of space are questioned and pushed to the fringes, and other spaces are brought into the limelight. Very often, these surging sites serve as liberatory zones. While much ink has been spilled over the novel's feminist and postmodern overtones, little research has been carried out about Foucault's bearings on Winterson's fiction, notably regarding *Oranges*. Notwithstanding the concept of heterotopia has been implemented in architecture and urban studies, little has been charted in feminist and queer studies. Reading Winterson's stance on space against the backdrop of the dissimilarity between the 'here and now' and the 'then and there,' the inner and outer, the real and the 'new' real brings it into conversation with Foucault's thinking about space. The way Foucault defines space suggests that it does not work in a vacuum; it is rather a significant byproduct of social and political relations and structures. This way, it has become a site of power struggles. In a similar fashion, Winterson's uncompromising stand on normative cultural standards and prohibitive religious injunction time and again leads to the exploration of alternative spaces and perspectives at odds with the impeding space that society delimits. These emerging worlds testify to characters' refusal to abide by stringent institutional rules. In this connection, Sonmez makes a fitting remark about characters' diligent search for spaces that disengage them from a gruelling existence and repressive mores. As she explains:

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Most of Winterson's characters are the very emblems of change occupying or searching for appropriate spaces in harmony with their own thinking. Standing for a world that is alternative to the present one, they occupy spaces in a way that stands against uniformity. (18-19)

In *Oranges*, Jeanette, the protagonist, serves as a catalyst for change for her unswerving devotion to the cause of hunting for an "appropriate space" in accord with her own code of conduct.

Before examining the different ways in which *Oranges* chimes well with Foucault's theorization about heterotopic spaces, a brief account of his study on the concept of heterotopia is apropos.

II. HETEROTOPIA FOUCAULT'S CONCEPT OF HETEROTOPIA

The term "heterotopia", sprang from the Greek words "heteros" meaning other or different, and "topos," denoting place, was first introduced by the French philosopher Michel Foucault in his seminal book *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences* (1966). Elsewhere, Foucault referred almost in passing to the term on some radio talks about the interplay between utopia and literature. The most significant mention of the concept was during a lecture he delivered to a horde of architects in 1967, which was then published in paperback in 1984 under the title "Des Espaces Autres." Foucault's theory of space has been widely acknowledged, extending far beyond urban studies and geography, having a considerable bearing on cartography, organization studies, pedagogical spaces, and, most notably, literature. Though lambasted for being condensed and opaque, the text never fails to attract wide attention and spur enriching discussions on the significance of space to human sciences. The title was variously translated as "Of other spaces" by Jay Miskowiec, Michiel Dehaene and Lieven De Cauter (2008), and as "Different spaces" by Robert Hurley (1998).

In "Of Other Spaces," Foucault frames his discussion by starting with drawing a distinction between the importance of time and space, highlighting the reason why space took a back seat to time in the nineteenth century. The obsession with history, Foucault opines, lost momentum at the beginning of the twentieth century, thanks to the burgeoning interest in space. Tracing the way space has evolved, Foucault argues that there was a remarkable shift from constructing space in the Middle Ages as a hierarchical organizational structure which divides things into two mutually exclusive entities to a contemporary understanding of it as ungraded, relational, and deconsecrated. Foucault takes this as a starting point to introduce the very fulcrum of his argument whereby he argues that there are two irreducible sites which, though connected to all other sites, are set in opposition to them. Utopias and heterotopias are the two major sites Foucault points up. Foucault draws contrast between these two emplacements, postulating that unlike utopia which designates an unreal place that provides a blueprint for a perfect non-existent society, heterotopia is a real place, a relational site that calls into question, interrupts, and invalidates all other real spaces. On this note, Foucault writes:

They (Utopias) present society itself in a perfected form, or else society turned upside down, but in any case these utopias are fundamentally unreal spaces. There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places—places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society—which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias. (3-4)

For Foucault, heterotopic spaces are counter-sites in which all other real sites are questioned and altered: they suggest alternative ways of seeing, being, and relating to the world. Foucault continues his discussion by stating that a heterotopic space has six distinctive features. A heterotopic space works on the principle that it is divided into two major categories: heterotopia of crisis and heterotopia of deviance. Heterotopias of crisis are spaces where individuals, going through a time of great confusion, transformation, and suffering, are placed. In other words, they are temporarily isolated from the rest of society and would restore to their former position after enduring this life-changing and challenging experience. Foucault contends that at the dawn of the twentieth century, heterotopias of crisis lost momentum, giving way to another type of heterotopia called heterotopia of deviation. Heterotopias of deviation are driven by othering, that is, these spaces shelter people whose behaviour is out of sync with societal norms and expectations. Foucault defines them as sites where non-conformists, renegades, and dissenters reside, giving the example of prisons, mental institutions, and cemeteries. The second principle states that the function of heterotopia within society is susceptible to continuous change. By way of illustration, Foucault gives the example of the cemetery which was in the past placed in the city centre to betoken the immortality of the soul, whereas nowadays, considering its ecological hazards, it has been relocated on the outskirts of urban areas. The third principle rests on the belief that heterotopias are spaces in which various, yet incompatible sites are embedded within its layers. The fourth principle underscores how disruptive of chronological time heterotopias are. That is, objects from past, present, and future are accumulated in one space, thereby creating a perennial effect that surpasses the transience of time. The fifth principle is that access to a heterotopic space is not granted to all and sundry; inclusion and exclusion require certain criteria to be met. While being hospitable towards others requires that they abide by rules and norms, othering them might

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be the natural follow-on to them being different or disrespectful of disciplinary regulations. Making one final point, Foucault wraps up with the sixth basic principle of heterotopia. For his part, Foucault postulates that a heterotopic space might have an illusionary or a compensatory nature. In relation to the rest of space, heterotopias operate as an alternative space which brings back order to disorder or spaces that disclose the ugly face of reality and reveal how illusory the real world is.

In view of the foregoing, heterotopias are construed as a space outside the everyday life, a portal to a new vision and alternative ways of seeing and experiencing the world. In respect of everyday space, heterotopia describes a world out of true and with a view to challenging preordained ordering. It is a separate, yet an inclusive enclave that celebrates difference and otherness. It is worth noting that heterotopic spaces are more than a site in which individuals act as free agents; they read as therapeutic places that unfetter individuals from the mundane and the conventional. It is the emancipatory nature of these sites that bestows peculiarity on the concept of heterotopia.

III. HETEROTOPIA IN ORANGES

3.1. The Hospital as Heterotopia of Deviation

Reared to be “a missionary child, a servant of God, a blessing,” (*Oranges* 5) Jeanette reveals from the get-go the conundrum she is caught up in. Although Jeanette hesitantly agrees to cling to the mechanical teachings of her foster-mother and the church, she gradually grows weary of the claustrophobic space she is ensnared in. Jeanette’s stubborn refusal to be pigeonholed early on in her childhood as a person “full of the spirit” (*Oranges* 17) is amplified by her temporary hearing loss. Her hearing deficiency is symptomatic of deliberate deafness to her mother’s orders and the pastor’s remarks and her rebuttal of the dull confines of a barren real world. Jeanette’s anomalous behaviour is deemed inappropriate on two counts: she is no longer guided and controlled by the Holy Spirit, and she sets out in direct disobedience of her mother’s rules and regulations. Jeanette’s hearing lapse prompts her mother to send her to hospital. No sooner had Jeanette exhibited symptoms of a “child not full of the Spirit” (*Oranges* 18) than her mother decided to keep her in the Victoria Hospital. Jeanette’s vexing pathology, deemed as diabolic by her mother and community, brings about her seclusion and exclusion from her social circle. For Jeanette’s mother and the pastor, Jeanette’s confinement would purify her mind and stave off her demonic visions. Jeanette reveals that she is treated as a social misfit not only by her mother but also by her community: “everyone in the hospital turned to peer at me” (*Oranges* 18). Interning Jeanette in “a cold room full of equipment” (*Oranges* 18) reveals the heterotopic nature of the hospital. As a space existing both within and outside the social order, the hospital is connected to, yet separate from, other regulatory mechanisms of power. That is, like other disciplinary apparatuses, it is a space of surveillance and control, a heterotopia of crisis where individuals who are going through so much suffering and confusion are kept, yet it has its own prescribed rules and norms. The hospital is construed as a space of surveillance, isolation, and punishment. Predicated, as it is, on the principle of holding captive individuals whose behaviour is figured as deviant, the hospital is a heterotopic emplacement where anomalies are recalibrated. It is presented as isolated and bounded, curbing Jeanette’s freedom and disrupting her everyday life. It is related, set in opposition to Jeanette’s social life order. Standing aghast at how austere and forbidding the medical ward is, Jeanette reflects: “The Victoria Hospital was big and frightening, and I couldn’t even sing to any effect because I couldn’t hear what I was singing. There was nothing to read except some dental notices and an instruction leaflet for the X-ray machine. I tried to build an igloo out of the orange peel but it kept falling down and even when it stood up I don’t have an eskimo to put in it” (*Oranges* 18). If anything, these lines denote the disciplinary nature of the hospital. Singing and building an igloo are demonstrative of Jeanette’s endeavour to feel at home and reproduce normal life patterns. Even so, the hospital, with its special ordering and exclusionary rules, disrupts Jeanette’s day-to-day routine. Construing the hospital as a space where different kinds of social ordering are explored is redolent of Kevin Hetherington’s definition of heterotopia as “a site of alternate social ordering” (*The Badlands of Modernity*, 13). By imposing a rigid code of conduct and giving a panoptic oversight of everything that goes on, the hospital serves as a space of discipline and coercion that forces strict “ordering” and encroaches on Jeanette’s personal liberty. Jeanette describes the hospital ward as a claustrophobic space, akin to a prison cell where she is kept under the constant surveillance of a nurse who watches her out, watching for any rogue behaviour. Quibbling over the nurse’s inhospitality, Jeanette posits that she throws her igloo in the dustbin and orders her not to sing. This can be interpreted as an act of intimidation and restriction. This way, the hospital can be considered, to borrow a phrase from Foucault, as a “heterotopia of deviation”. In his essay “Of Other Spaces,” Foucault contends that heterotopias of deviation are spaces “in which individuals whose behaviour is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm are placed” (5). Some of the prime examples he advances are the prisons, convalescent homes, and hospitals. These spaces require specific rituals and enforce compliance with restrictive regulations. Cutting Jeanette out of home testifies to her community’s strict code of conduct and willingness to seclude anomalous behaviour. As a site of control and order, the hospital seeks to rehabilitate, purge Jeanette’s ‘diluted’ soul from sin, and bring order to her disorderly life. Othering Jeanette for displaying a non-conformist attitude can be understood as an endeavour to contain the potential threat posed by her besmirched spirit.

Winterson constructs the hospital as a heterotopic site that simultaneously solidifies and unsettles dominant power. In *Oranges*, the hospital serves not merely as a disruptive power which reinforces dominant social order but as a counter-hegemonic site that disrupts the order of spaces characters wearily inhabit. Jeanette’s short stay in the hospital is quite an occasion: though crazed with

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despair, Jeanette capitalizes on her time away from home to gain clearer insight into her true self. Despite her temporary confinement, Jeanette soon acquires a taste for literature. It is thanks to her friend Elsie that Jeanette is given the possibility to expand her vision. Talking about Elsie paying her frequent visits to the hospital and recounting intriguing stories about philosophy and literature, Jeanette jovially says, "When Elsie wasn't reading the Bible, or telling stories, she spent time with the poets. She told me all about Swinburne and his troubles, and about the oppression of William Blake" (*Oranges* 20). Interestingly, Elsie's recital of literary passages pours meaning into Jeanette's vapid existence and imbues it with purpose and direction. Hearing Elsie's declaiming a couplet that reads as "All things fall and are built again/ and those that build them again are gay" (*Oranges* 21) excites Jeanette's curiosity. Jeanette becomes rather intrigued by the peace of mind the space bestowed upon her. Particularly enthralled by Elsie's presence and her percipient outlook on life, Jeanette avows her desire to assert herself and go against the grain. Another gripping line which conveys Jeanette's exquisite keenness to tread her own path is a statement she issues when her mother pops to visit her in the hospital. "I don't want to swallow it, I want to build with it," (*Oranges* 27) is how she replies assertively to one of her mother's orders. Jeanette's acute response throws into sharp relief her gradual departure from a range of dreary platitudes assumed by her mother. Besides providing companionship, Elsie incites Jeanette to outgrow her early childhood education, enticing her away from religious indoctrination. Thrilled to bits with the excitement Elsie brings to her jaded life, Jeanette recognizes Elsie's role in bolstering her confidence. The hospital, thus, morphs into a transformative space that endows her with much wisdom and clarity of vision and a site of resistance where Jeanette, in a room of her own, unwrites religious proscription and societal prescriptions and inscribes her own version of truth. Her stay in the hospital serves as both a break with tradition and an eye-opening experience that brings much clarity to Jeanette's restless mind.

Though the hospital, at some point in the novel, is interpreted as an extension of other disciplinary regimes, it is, at regular intervals, assessed as a space where power is suspended and whittled down and a liberatory site that disengages her from the dull confines of home and onus of religious duties. There are other instances in the novel where the hospital serves as a site of resistance. After being expelled from home by her mother for having lesbian tendencies and "Unnatural Passions" (*Oranges* 16), Jeanette takes a job at a mental hospital. Particularly important is Jeanette's transition from being a patient to a worker within the same system of power. This highlights her metamorphosis from being a 'dis-eased' person and an object of social surveillance to an active, self-reliant agent who has her say. Within the safe confines of the hospital, Jeanette finds hearths and homes, taking refuge in reading literature and watching life-altering films in her spare time. The leisure activities Jeanette takes up serve as a sobering reminder of how parochial the world she used to inhabit is and how liberating the world she is making a dash for seems. The hospital, previously perceived as a claustrophobic space, is transformed into a breeding ground for self-improvement and self-discovery, thereby transposing Jeanette into a room of her own, far removed from her mother's erroneous teachings and conventional bromides. Believed to have caused Jeanette's transition from deviant to different, the hospital mutates into a portal of alternative possibilities where new, nay transformative forms of being and becoming take place. It is noteworthy to mention that a space's function is primarily determined by the way characters relate to it. Jeanette's skewed perception of the hospital attests to the multifaceted nature of the hospital as a counter-site: it functions in relation to, yet distinct from other habitual spaces, it mirrors and every so often deranges and rearranges existing social spaces, it is a site of subjugation and ever and anon that of liberation.

3.2. The Church as Heterotopia of Illusion

In *Oranges*, heterotopic sites extend the reach of hospital to include other spaces where power, identity, resistance, and spatial reconfiguration are at play. Chief among these is the church which pulsates with heterotopic features. From the outset, Jeanette, the adopted daughter, grants that she pledges allegiance to her adoptive family's Pentecostal church. Early on, she avows unstinting devotion to missionary work. "Sunday was the Lord's Day, the most vigorous day of the whole week" (*Oranges* 2) is how Jeanette accentuates how venerated the day of worship is in one of the novel's opening gambits. In her missionary zeal, Jeanette immerses herself with gay abandon in writing evangelistic reports. Jeanette's daily grid consists of giving flawless replies to Bible quizzes, praying, and listening to her mother talking about biblical testimonies and "her own conversion story" (*Oranges* 4). Jeanette's great sense of religious devotion is also conveyed through working up enthusiasm to accompany her mother and Pastor Pratt, "one of the most famous and successful missionaries that our group of churches had ever sent out" (*Oranges* 34), to missionary campaigns. Jeanette's proselytizing zeal extends to some training sessions she attends over the weekends to refine preaching programs. For Jeanette, abandoning herself to work is akin to abandoning herself to the Lord. Jeanette's collaboration with her mother and other church members for a noble cause denotes a real sense of community in her surroundings. Perceived as the space where Jeanette can 'work hard, play hard,' the church brings her utter contentment: "I comforted myself with the thought of the summer camp our church went on each year" (*Oranges* 34). For her, the church has a little atmosphere, teeming with life and connecting her to her religious upbringing. Extolling the virtues of the church, she at some point posits: "It was a proud day when they hoisted the flag, with SEEK YE THE LORD embroidered in red letters. All the churches had flags, made by disabled missionaries. It was a way of helping out their pension and giving them spiritual satisfaction" (*Oranges* 35). In view of this, Jeanette gladly brags about the virtuous and charitable deeds of the church, rejoicing in the humanitarian aid it provides to the disabled and the needy.

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By and by, the church evolves from being a pleasant haven into a drag on Jeanette's spiritual growth. This shift marks a transition from being a hospitable environment to a zone of subjugation. No sooner had she experienced the first flush of belonging than the Pentecostal church reared its ugly head. Much to her dismay, Jeanette realizes that the church, behind its flashy glitz and glamour, has a strong urge to control every nook and cranny of her life and perpetuate strict dictates. Jeanette's sexual indiscretion marks the harbinger of conflict between an adolescent who yields to the temptation of worldly pleasures and the church which perceives such indulgence as a deadly sin. Deemed as roguish and grubby, Jeanette has been exorcized and later sacked from her job as a missionary. The church's resolute stand on Jeanette's same-sex desire shatters her illusion of taking the church as her second home. This feeling of estrangement is amplified when the Pentecostal community turns against her, classing her as an evil fiend. In its constant endeavour to tame Jeanette's overpowering desire and take draconian measures against those who go against the grain of its divine power, the church functions as a heterotopia of illusion, literalizing Foucault's sixth principle. In "Of Other Spaces," Foucault holds that a heterotopia of illusion, as its name suggests, seeks to "create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned as still more illusory" (9). In *Oranges*, the church maintains the illusion of order and morality through a set of religious rites, mainly exorcism. On closer inspection, it serves as a time-honoured space inimical to change and divergence, exposing the delusional nature of its moral truth. Disillusioned, Jeanette uncovers the delusionary facet of the church, that of claiming absolute power while carrying a sense of apprehension and animosity towards those who refuse to fit into the conventional mould.

3.3. Home as Heterotopia of Exclusion

Although home is not qualified as a heterotopic site in Foucault's treatise, reading it with a focus on its topographical design underscores its heterotopic principles of inclusion and exclusion. Jeanette's adoptive home reads as, to use Foucault's terminology, a heterotopia of exclusion, a space that keeps restrictive rules intact and reproduces the same behavioural patterns with a view to controlling, oppressing, and deterring in(difference) and undutifulness. Echoing the fifth defining features that Foucault attributes to heterotopia, Winterson constructs home as an emplacement that requires specific performance to gain access to. In a manner redolent of Foucault's fifth principle, home functions according to a "system of opening and closing" (7) that grants entrance to only those who exhibit proper religious etiquettes. Entrance to these heterotopic emplacements, as Foucault argues, requires careful purification. In *Oranges*, compliance with rules, as evidenced by certain gestures made by characters, is a prime prerequisite to gain access to home. This is primarily conveyed through the day-to-day routine, Sunday rituals, and mundane tasks performed by Jeanette who, in a bid to live up to her mother's normative expectations, has no say in the running of domestic life. "Home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in," is a gripping line written by the American poet Robert Frost to underscore the welcoming and hospitable nature of home. In *Oranges*, the classic description of home is overturned. The narrative begins with Jeanette, the protagonist, speaking about her adoptive parents: "like most people I lived for a long time with my mother and father. My father liked to watch the wrestling, my mother liked to wrestle" (*Oranges* 1). Although the sentence reveals that Jeanette seems to lead a normal life, it speaks volumes about how high-powered and predominant her mother is and how inactive and supine her father is. By throwing into sharp relief the noticeable difference between Jeanette's mother and father, Winterson takes the lid off power imbalances within Jeanette's home. This dichotomy between the bossy mother and the "meek" father contributes to explaining the lopsided relationship between mother and daughter. Jeanette evinces the absence of emotional kinship with her mother, thinking of her connection with her mother as anything but cathectic.

A prima facie encounter with *Oranges* reveals how gaining access to Jeanette's adoptive home necessitates compliance with some forms of sacralization and customary rites and the set of rules and regulations ordained by her adoptive mother. An iron-handed matriarchal figure par excellence, Jeanette's adoptive mother is represented as the one assuming full control of and holding sway over domestic space. Home is transfigured into an austere milieu where Jeanette is expected to act with proper decorum and abide by customary rules. As much of her existence is informed by seeing the world in black and white, the mother perceives the domestic space as a dyad of two mutually exclusive entities: the sacred vs. the unconsecrated. The parlour, for instance, is a consecrated ground to which no one except Jeanette's mother breezes in. This is illustrated by Jeanette's remark: "my mother got up early on Sundays and allowed no one into the parlour until ten o'clock. It was her place of prayer and meditation" (*Oranges* 1). This statement echoes Foucault's idea of heterotopia of exclusion as a space that is not accessible to all and sundry; ingress into it requires a process of sanctification and purification. This idea is substantiated by the peremptory instructions the mother issues. By riveting much attention on the mother's outlook on life and religious rituals, Winterson reveals how the domestic space bears much resemblance to the church. The house walls are adorned with religious paintings, laying bare how ubiquitous and stern the religious rites carried out by the mother are. Pondering how stringent the abode is, Jeanette comments: "Sunday was the Lord's day, the most vigorous day of the whole week; we had a radiogram at home with an imposing mahogany front and a fat Bakelite knob to twiddle for the stations. Usually we listened to the Light Programme, but on Sundays always the World Service, so that my mother could record the progress of our missionaries" (*Oranges* 2). Indeed, Sunday rituals constitute one constitutive part of customary practices the mother engages in to enforce order inside the house. They are also suggestive of the mother's missionary verve. This statement

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discloses not only how methodical her mother is, but also how the mother's maternal devotion to kin relationship pales in comparison to her proselytizing zeal. As a high-handed figure who rules the roost and exerts pressure on Jeanette, the mother disfigures and transfigures home from a space of nurturing warmth to a mechanism of discipline and power. Having the ambiance of an enclosed space, the adoptive home morphs into a site of oppression which takes a heavy toll on Jeanette's freedom of expression. In a space which pays much heed to religious indoctrination while showing reckless disregard for heartsease, Jeanette is coerced into fulfilling familial obligations and leading an ascetic life.

The house, divested of the traditional role ascribed to it, is transformed by the mother into a space of surveillance and strict discipline. More so, any endeavour to go against the tide is at best repudiated and at worst punished. No sooner had Jeanette divulged her lesbian identity than her mother ousted her from home as a punishment for straying away from the prescribed course of action and stepping out of the circumscribed space she has long been bogged down in. Her lesbianism is deemed as a troublesome ailment that must be exterminated. Jeanette's expulsion from home is understood not only as a disciplinary measure against unruly behaviour, but also an endeavour to keep the domestic space consecrated and unmuddled, echoing once more Foucault's cogitation on the fifth defining characteristic of heterotopia as a site which requires purification rites to ingress and egress. Nowhere is Jeanette's bitter disappointment and dispiritedness better expressed than in the following sentence: "My MOTHER WANTED me to move out...I made her ill, made the house ill, brought evil to the church" (*Oranges* 125). This statement is indicative of what a failure to cling fast to stringent rules and religious tenets might culminate in. In her journey away from her adoptive home, Jeanette, willy-nilly, embarks on yet another errand in search for freedom, self-determination, and above all, a safe and hospitable abode. As the narrative moves forward, the adoptive home transmogrifies from the one accommodating route for control and oppression to a trajectory clearing the way for subversion and resistance. Mulling over the past and weighing staying entombed in a claustrophobic, if not downright stony space against venturing into the exploration of the 'road not taken and the forgotten angle,' Jeanette proclaims how important her adoptive home is in her journey of self-discovery. Interestingly, Jeanette's journey onwards, in pursuit of a space in tune with her heart's desire, ever and anon drags her back to the space she departs from. Straddling a space that congeals her identity and another space which gives impetus to the formation of a well-balanced subject, Jeanette, on balance, ensconces herself in a liminal position where her former self, de(form)ed by her adoptive home, and her new self, constructed by other spaces, are assembled to form 'a subject in process'. Sadder but wiser, Jeanette acknowledges the fact that the domestic space that has kept her for so long walled off from the thrills and chills of social life is the very space that contributes to her spiritual maturity. For Jeanette, her adoptive home opens a new route for the exploration of alternative ways of seeing and being in the world, transporting her into a buoyant space at the interstices of belonging somewhere and belonging 'now-here.' By positioning herself beyond the pale of religious edict, Jeanette repositions herself as an ever-evolving subject, hankering after a space where there is "no guarantee of shore. Only a conviction that what she wanted could ever exist, if she dared to find it" (*Oranges* 154).

3.4. The Library, Fantasy and Storytelling as Heterotopia of Compensation

Jeanette's regular visits to the library, in concert with storytelling, bring much solace to her. It is by meandering around the recesses of these alternative spaces that she finds a happy hunting ground, and it is within the shelves of the library that she grows sceptical of what once "was valid for all time. Its value went not up nor down" (*Oranges* 34). On Jeanette's part, the library is a peaceful sanctuary that ferries her away from the hubbub of missionary life. By dipping herself into books, Jeanette finds answers to a plethora of unanswered questions that keep gnawing at her and preying on her mind. For instance, while perusing through a fairytale book *Beauty and the Beast*, Jeanette gains a better insight into the institution of heterosexuality, an institution that Jeanette, of her own volition, revolts against and refuses to fulfil its requirements. In *Oranges*, the library experience provokes the idea that there is more to life than meets the eye. That is, it is much more than a salutary reminder of what Jeanette desires or would have had as it is a space that seems to have the power to reconnect her with her authentic self and where she transmogrifies into a rhapsodic subject. Her placement within the library places her within a dynamic continuum within which she experiences, to use Foucault's words, "a sort of mixed, joined experience," of the limited and the unbounded, where she undergoes new ways of relating to the world within the same physical space. The different features of the library, though moored to an actual space, provide a congenial and warm atmosphere for Jeanette, transporting her to a place without place and a time out of all times. This finite and infinite experience, as experienced by Jeanette, falls neatly into Foucault's reading of the library as a heterotopic space which, by juxtaposing the real and the virtual, transmutes into a counter-space that offers rich, unique, and trans(formative) experiences. In a space that juxtaposes incommensurate books and artifacts, Jeanette luxuriates in the excitement of moving from one experience to another. The library, thus, transforms into a fleeting and transitory space that makes the interpenetration between Jeanette's past, present, and future possible. As a heterotopic space, the library serves as both a sobering reminder of the path Jeanette is eager to tread and a warning against what might lead her astray.

On par with the liberatory potential of the library, fantasy and storytelling serve as therapeutic and transformative counter-spaces. These stories function as the conduit, or to borrow a phrase from Pascual, "a series of asymmetric spirals," (24) between a space Jeanette is confined to and other spaces she would have lived in or wants to inhabit. In this connection, in "Lusting Towards Utopia:

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Jeanette Winterson's Utopian Counter-spaces from *The Passion* to *The PowerBook*," Jennifer A. Wagner Lawlor, in passing, comments on how liberating these counter-sites are:

The claustrophobia of that original adoptive home is countered in Winterson's fiction by the freedom of the world and other places (the title of a later short story collection), the freedom of spaces elsewhere from home, or to flip it around: freedom for this author maybe searching for one's real home elsewhere. (65-66)

Jeanette finds her "real home" in the variegated stories she weaves. As mini narratives ensconced within the main narrative, these stories overthrow the centrality of the main structure, re-integrating and re-inscribing Jeanette into a space that constantly pushes her into the periphery. In this connection, Öztürk Yağcı writes:

Such interpolation of diverse narratives into the piece manifests Winterson's rejection of the central role of any genre or truth. Rather than designating her novel as one thing or the other, Winterson instead draws attention to the infinite possibilities that the text might offer once freed from labels and reworked. (79)

Indeed, what has been obfuscated by her mother's small-minded opinions is illuminated by the beam of light these "diverse narratives" proffer. Quibbling over the angst-ridden life she finds herself enmeshed in, Jeanette glumly blurts out: "The daily world was a world of Strange Notions, without form, and therefore void. I comforted myself as best I could by always rearranging their version of the facts" (*Oranges* 36). Detaching herself from the crippling teachings of her earlier years, Jeanette unwrites the battery of clichés and inscribes her new, nay idealized version into the canvas of steadfast beliefs. The searing anguish Jeanette undergoes catapults her into inventing stories and musing over alternative life scenarios. By dint of fantasy and storytelling, Jeanette breathes a new life into a vapid existence. Whenever she feels embroidered in the meshes of defunct practices, she hunts high and low for a pleasant hideaway that would bring her inner angst to a halt. To make good her escape, Jeanette recounts stories which bear a strong resemblance to her real life or some raucous tales which bring her much clarity and wisdom. For instance, the story she fashions early in the novel about "a beautiful and brilliant princess" (*Oranges* 5) is analogous to the missionary life Jeanette leads. Both the princess and Jeanette are mired in the matrix of authoritative systems wherein they are expected to conduct themselves properly and serve the greater good without due regard to their innermost needs. Even more compelling, in this regard, is the story she recounts about a prince and a princess, the aim of which is to teach Jeanette a life lesson about the importance of searching for "balance and harmony" (*Oranges* 48). With every story she tells, Jeanette emerges wiser and bolder, daring to fly in the face of strict social codes. After being banished from home, Jeanette goes full steam ahead with a quest for her true self, venturing forth into the unplumbed depths of her psyche. The two stories embedded later in the narrative corroborate Jeanette's metamorphosis from an obedient youngster to an opinionated and free-spirited grown-up. As the narrative draws to a close, Jeanette invokes the story of Sir Perceval and Winnet. These two made-up stories illustrate Jeanette's departure from a dismal place into a better place where she feels a sense of belonging and purpose. Like Sir Perceval who embarks on an adventurous voyage on the lookout for the Holy Grail and Winnet who trudges through hardships on the hunt for a safe harbour, Jeanette undertakes a roller-coaster journey in pursuit of her holy grail which is self-assertion and self-independence. Adamant and undeterred, as she is, Jeanette emulates Sir Perceval and Winnet in their dogged determination to prove their credentials as tenacious and self-assertive subjects. In her recourse to fantasy and storytelling, Winterson confounds the real with the fantastic, muddling the ordered ordering of reality, querying and 'queering' the veracity of big-headed beliefs. In blurring the boundaries between the real world and the world she contrives, Jeanette shakes her mother's Manichean vision to its foundations. Thus, the conflation between reality and fantasy serves not only as a narrative modality, but also as an act of survival and self-assertion. Commenting on Winterson's motive behind lumping reality and fantasy together, Mara Reisman, in "Integrating Fantasy and Reality in Winterson's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*," posits that:

By narratively juxtaposing reality (Jeanette's history) with fairy tales and "fantastic" spaces, Winterson complicates the "truths" of each setting, disrupts the binary imperative, and reveals the spaces where change can occur. The biblical, fantasy, and personal narratives are the sites in *Oranges* where the nature of wall-like belief systems are scrutinized and where meaning and identity are affirmed, contested, and then either reaffirmed or deconstructed. (11)

Reisman's argument resonates with Foucault's description of heterotopia and establishes the link between Foucault's third principle and Winterson's (de)construction of space in *Oranges*. In "Other Spaces," Foucault propounds that one salient feature of a heterotopic space is the act of "juxtaposing in a single real place several places, several sites that are in themselves incompatible" (6). In *Oranges*, Winterson's reconceptualization of space hinges on the few stories and phantasmagorical fantasies she intersperses into the fabric of the narrative. She imbricates within the same narrative structure incompatible yet complementary entities. It is noteworthy to mention that the conjunction of opposites within the same structure is what contributes to the formation of Jeanette's identity. Though constituting a far cry from the world Jeanette dwells in, these counter-sites contest the existing order and fill the void left by the here and now with the excitement of the 'then and there,' a far-off zone which disentangles her from the dreary doldrums of normative spaces. By juxtaposing, as Reisman avers, "Jeanette's history" with 'Jeanette's story,' Winterson refashions a new spatial topography, that of a heterotopic space. Jeanette's escapade into these counter-sites is no mere escapism; by means of these heterotopic spaces, Jeanette metamorphoses into a polymorphous subject, a renegade who stems the rising tide of heteronormative culture and religious dogma. In setting the tone for alternative realities and possibilities, these spaces read as

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heterotopias of compensation. When discussing heterotopias of compensation, Foucault opines that a heterotopic space might function as an illusion or a compensation. While the function of the heterotopia of illusion is to create an illusionary reality whose aim is to highlight the illusionary nature of the real world, the heterotopia of compensation is meant to “create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous as well arranged, as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled” (9). Indeed, these alternative spaces bring back order to Jeanette’s disordered world and jumbled life.

IV. CONCLUSION

In her shuttle back and forth between heterotopic sites, Jeanette seesaws between belonging somewhere, as demonstrated in the library experience and storytelling, belonging ‘now-here,’ as illustrated in her exposure to the hospital, and belonging nowhere, as shown in her encounter with the church and her adoptive home. These counter-spaces, albeit incongruous, shape Jeanette’s journey, epitomizing the very essence of heterotopia as a space that (de)forms, reconstructs, and transforms the self. By having recourse to heterotopic sites that amplify, contest, or alter the normative set of relations that define conventional sites, Winterson provides an alternative framework for thinking about space and power. The narrative itself is informed by heterotopic logic: it transmutes into an eclectic space, or what Al-Shara aptly terms, “a set of Babushka dolls” (242) where discordant elements are stitched together: the pious and the profane, the real and the fantastic, the mundane and the peculiar. By knitting together disparate narrative modalities, Winterson constructs a heterotopic tapestry. That is, a space that reflects, yet disrupts the structures it (re) builds. In a fashion which eerily echoes Foucault, the text mutates into, so to speak, “a floating piece of space, a place without place” (9) where Jeanette ploughs her way through the borders of commonplace, “into a personal place, unknown and untried” (Winterson 1985, 14).

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