

**Narrating Space and Motion
in Contemporary Asian British Novels:
A Cultural Narratology of Motion**

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1 Introduction

1.1 Narrating Space and Motion in Contemporary Asian British Novels

In the twenty-first century, issues of motion and mobility in general and transnational migration under the conditions of contemporary globalization in particular have reached an extraordinary degree of political, social, economic and, above all, cultural relevance all around the globe (cf. Castles, de Haas and Miller 2014: 1-20; Urry 2007: 3-16; Ette 2005: 9-26; Ette 2012: 1-49). Living in “[t]he Age of Migration” – as Castles, de Haas and Miller (2014 [1993]) label our contemporary age, one cannot deny the impression that “all the world is on the move” (Urry 2007: 3) a certain self-evident character: it is not only since the emergence of the current, so-called ‘refugee crisis’ in the European Union that socio-political, economic and cultural questions raised by the motion and mobility of economic migrants, refugees and displaced persons on the one hand, and tourists, business executives and elite intellectuals on the other figure prominently in the headlines and on the political agendas of major parties across the political spectrum of both sending and receiving countries (cf. Castles, de Haas and Miller 2014: 1-20; Urry 2007: 3-16). How can an all-too detrimental brain drain in the former group of countries be avoided, given the fact that economic migrants frequently provide their families back home with a livelihood via remittances (cf. Castles, de Haas and Miller 2014: 1)? How can culturally highly heterogeneous groups of migrants be integrated into the societies of recipient countries without forcing them into one-sided assimilation? What further socio-political measures are necessary in order to ensure the peaceful and prosperous co-existence of indigenous and migrant population groups in the recipient countries (cf. *ibid.*)?

These are just some of the pressing social, political and cultural questions that each and every country affected by transnational migration faces in one way or another. Figuring prominently in contemporary literature as well, these issues surrounding the cultural phenomena of motion, mobility and transnational migration are reflected upon, represented and (re)negotiated in this medium of fictional enactment (cf. Ette 2005: 9-26; 2012: 1-49). Given this fundamental sociocultural and literary importance of motion, mobility and migration in our contemporary world marked by the

latest phase of globalization (cf. Ette 2012: 22-26), it is all the more striking that narratology – both in its classical structuralist phase and in its various postclassical branches – has refrained from treating motion and mobility in a systematic fashion. Whereas this persistent marginalization of motion and mobility has been addressed in literary and cultural theory in general by German Romance scholar Ottmar Ette in his “foundations for a poetics of motion” (2012: 26; my translation; cf. *ibid.* 26-49, and Ette 2005: 18-26)¹ and Stephen Greenblatt in his “mobility studies manifesto” (Greenblatt 2010: 250; cf. *ibid.* 250-253), the particular discipline of narratology has by and large remained strangely silent on this issue. Granted, the extratextual cultural and, in particular, the textual fictional interdependence of space and motion has long since been recognized in both literary and cultural studies in general (cf. Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 14, 20-21) and cognitive narratology in particular (cf. Herman 2002: 263-264, 266): space enables, hinders or prevents movement, while agents’ movement across space alters the very spaces they traverse (cf. Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 14, 20-21).

However, no-one – at least to my knowledge – has yet elaborated an integrated theoretical, contextualist and methodological framework for the narratological analysis of the narrative enactment of motion in contemporary fiction. Taking this general desideratum of a context-oriented narratological toolbox for motion, in short, a cultural narratology of motion, as a starting point, this study sets out to develop such a culturally grounded narratology of motion for the narrative enactment of “real-and-imagined” (Soja 1996: 11) movements in contemporary Asian British novels. Due to their common thematic focus on migration as concretely lived human experience that emerges from identifiable motivational constellations and has certain psychological repercussions regarding the way migrants experience their new spatial surroundings, contemporary Asian British novels constitute a particularly apt primary text corpus for this research endeavour (see the justification of this choice below, pp. 8-9 of this dissertation). Taking into account both the narrative representation of actual physical movement across space and the complementary aspect of mental mobility, this study intends to elucidate the narrative enactment of space and motion in these novels and, in particular, its experiential dimension. The prime research question this study will

¹ On a general plane, the identification of the urgent desideratum of developing a “poetics of motion”, that is, “a sufficiently precise terminological vocabulary for motion, dynamics and mobility [in literature and culture]” (Ette 2005: 18; cf. *ibid.*: 18-20) goes back to the programmatic introduction of Ottmar Ette’s 2005 volume *ZwischenWeltenSchreiben – Literaturen ohne festen Wohnsitz* (Kadmos 2005). In contrast to Ette, however, I have narrowed down the focus of my methodological project in this study to the field of classical and postclassical approaches to narratology.

address is thus as follows: how is the experience of space and motion narrated in contemporary Asian British novels?

As I intend to show in the following by means of a concrete primary text example – the narrative enactment of the two protagonists Ormus Cama and Vina Apsara’s transnational migration from Britain to the USA in Salman Rushdie’s *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]),² the central research question this doctoral dissertation is concerned with can be operationalized into (at least) four different aspects. First, there is of course a genuinely narratological dimension to this research interest inasmuch as it is necessary to ask by means of which narrative techniques of representation the experience of space and motion is enacted in contemporary Asian British novels. It is, for example, intriguing that the passage quoted below focuses almost exclusively on the narrative representation of Ormus Cama’s consciousness while he is sitting on an airplane to New York:

Ormus Cama, watching from across the aisle, is caught up in a fantastic fiction of his own; except that it’s no fiction. There is a world other than ours and it’s bursting through our own continuum’s flimsy defenses. If things get much worse the entire fabric of reality could collapse. These are the extraordinary thoughts he’s having, trembling intimations of the end of things, and there’s one accompanying puzzle: How come he’s the only one who can see the vision? An event on this cosmic scale? Is everybody sleepwalking? Don’t they even care? (*TGBHF* 347)

What is remarkable about this passage is the fact that the narrative representation of the protagonist’s mental mobility supplants the recounting of ‘actual’ events in the course of this migratory movement across “story space” (Chatman 1978: 96; cf. *ibid.* 96-107). As the narrative thematization of Ormus’s mental mobility predominates over the narration of the ‘actual’ spatial movement in the storyworld throughout the nine pages dealing with his transnational migration from England to the US (cf., for example, *TGBHF* 347, 347-348, 350, 351-353), it is more than legitimate to conclude that the focus of its narrative enactment clearly lies on the imagined, rather than the real component of this “real-and-imagined” (Soja 1996: 11) journey.

Second, my research interest explicitly foregrounds an experiential dimension inasmuch as it poses the question of how the characters concerned experience their spatial environment and their movement across it in terms of both affect / emotionality and cognition. From this experiential perspective, the predominance of the narrative thematization of protagonist Ormus Cama’s mental mobility in the selected primary text example could accordingly be explained by drawing attention to the main affective and

² This novel’s title will be abbreviated to *TGBHF* in all subsequent text notes.

cognitive characteristics commonly associated with air travel: monotony, passivity and boredom. Relieved from the cognitive and physical necessity of assuring his own spatio-temporal progression towards his destination by his decision to go there by airplane, he can indulge in mental mobility instead. Put differently, he tries to overcome the tedious monotony commonly associated with contemporary air travel by embarking upon imaginary journeys in his mind. Thus, the lack of newsworthy events in his 'real' spatial environment on the airplane leads to a pronounced focus on the imagined content of his mental mobility. Thereby, the simultaneously "real-and-imagined" (Soja 1996: 11) nature of spatial movement is foregrounded narratively.

Third, it is possible to broach this study's central research question from a cognitive vantage point by asking, more fundamentally, how readers are incited to imagine a character moving across space over time by the mere presence of words on the pages of a literary text at all (cf. Grabes 1978: 405-422). Cognitive narratology (cf., for example, Grabes 1978: 405-428; Herman 2002: 263-299, particularly 263-264) provides us with the insight that this imaginative act is always the product of a complex interplay of textual cues and the reader's extratextual cultural world knowledge. The selected primary text example shows that even a minimum of textual cues suffices to evoke the idea of a character travelling in a vehicle from A to B in the reader's mind: as the preceding chapter of this novel was set in London, mentioning the locative prepositional phrase "on the red-eye to New York" (*TGBHF* 346) is enough to trigger the mental image of the two protagonists – Ormus Cama and his female companion Vina Apsara – sitting on a plane to the American metropolis. More precisely, even without the lexeme 'airplane' being mentioned explicitly, the reader can infer from the novel's contemporary setting (late 1960s/early 1970s) in tandem with their 'real-world' knowledge that the protagonists are travelling from England to the US in a modern passenger aircraft.

Fourth, there is a contextual dimension to this research question because narrative enactments of characters' experience of space and motion are always embedded in extratextual cultural models of space and human motion across it (cf. Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 20-26; Neumann 2009: 116-117). As, however, the narrative representation of human motion across space does itself reverberate upon such cultural models, the traditional realist presupposition of a simple mimetic relationship between text and context has long since been replaced by the fundamental recognition that literary texts co-create their contexts (cf. Nünning 2000: 360; Nünning 2006: 169; Nünning 2008a: 14-16; Neumann 2009: 116-117, 135; Hallet and Neumann

2009a: 22-23; Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52-87). With regard to my specific research interest, it is expedient to subdivide the general notion of 'context' into two interdependent and interacting dimensions: space and history.³ Regarding the spatial dimension, two interrelated questions are of particular interest. In what larger relational networks and topological macro-configurations is the narrative representation of specific cultural spaces and characters' movements among them in a particular novel embedded? How do these intratextual macro-level networks and resultant "storyworld" (Herman 2008 [2005]: 569; cf. *ibid.* 569-570) topologies relate to their extratextual cultural counterparts, i.e. to macro-structural geopolitical topologies in the real world?

As we shall see in Section 3.4 of this dissertation, the particular migration on the part of Ormus Cama and Vina Apsara narrated in the selected primary text example, which leads them from London to New York, is embedded in a pattern of *transmigration* (cf. the title of Brooks and Simpson's (2013) monograph *Emotions in Transmigration: Transformation, Movement and Identity*) that involves three countries in three different continents: India, Britain and the USA. In a detailed examination of this transmigratory movement pattern, it would therefore be necessary to scrutinize the protagonists' culturally prefigured semanticization of these cultural spaces both prior to and after their transnational migration (cf. Hallet 2009: 85-93).

Obviously, the historical dimension of the narrative enactment of space and motion involves the question of how literary texts (re)configure the extratextual cultural contexts in which they are set. In the case of Salman Rushdie's novel *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]), this narrative reconfiguration consists in rewriting the history of Western rock music from the margins, that is, from the point of view of fictitious protagonists from India. Thereby, this novel decentres ethnocentric Euro-American accounts of this history by means of a deliberate focus on its essentially transcultural nature as a phenomenon that emerged from the productive fusion of heterogeneous cultural elements (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 270-271). Thus, Rushdie's novel concretizes the programmatic exclamation "East is West!" (*TGBHF* 353) by foregrounding the essentially transcultural character of ingenious songwriter Ormus's compositions, that is, by highlighting that they emerge from a complex process of "transculturation" (Ortiz 2003 [1940]: 102; cf. *ibid.* 102-103) of heterogeneous musical styles, instruments and performers (cf., for instance, *TGBHF*

³ With this subdivision, I am evidently referring to Lefebvre's insight into the historicity of space (cf. Lefebvre 1991 [1974]: 46-53) and Soja's embedding of the dialectical interrelationship between spatiality and historicity (cf. Soja 1996: 72) as one pillar of his overarching "trialectics of being" (Soja 1996: 71; cf. *ibid.* 70-73).

367, 378-379). Consequently, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* narratively enacts the transcultural fusion of geographical entities that have traditionally been constructed and semanticized as dichotomous domains by imperialist discourse (cf. Said 2003 [1978]: 1-2, 4-9) in a metaphorical *third space* as defined by Bhabha (cf. Bhabha 1994b: 53, 56): the realm of contemporary rock music.

It is therefore no coincidence that the narrative enactment of Ormus and Vina's joint transmigration from India via Britain to the USA ends with the evocation of the cognitive "co-presence" (Hallet 2009: 102; cf. *ibid.* 89, 102-107) of Bombay and New York City in the mental third space of Ormus's imagination:

Ormus Cama sees the mighty pincushion of Manhattan puncturing the haze of the high dawn air and begins to smile the smile of a man who has just discovered that his favorite fiction turns out to be no lie. As the plane banks and drops he recalls my father Vivvy Merchant's love of Queen Catherine of Braganza, through whom Bombay and New York are forever yoked together. But this recollection fades almost at once: because from the start it was the cloudscrapers of the isle of the Manhattoes that pricked Ormus's heart, he shared my mother's dream of conquering the sky, and never itched for the thronged streets of Queens, its bazaars bustling with the polyglot traffic of the world. [...] But New York, for Ormus, was from the beginning a doorman, an express elevator and a view. You could say it was Malabar Hill. (*TGBHF* 354-355)

From a jointly contextualist and cognitive perspective, it is, first of all, evident that, in order to understand the evocation of the cognitive co-presence of the two cultural spaces in question, the reader must have a certain degree of extratextual topographical 'real-world' knowledge at his disposal (he must know, for instance, that Malabar Hill is a posh residential area in Bombay). In order to recognize that Ormus's imaginative feat of cognitively short-circuiting his hometown Bombay and his destination New York is grounded in the history of British imperialism, the reader must furthermore possess the background knowledge necessary to accomplish the historical contextualization this passage calls for. In concrete terms, understanding the allusions to the history of the British Empire it contains requires the reader to know two things: first, that the Portuguese colonial port Bombay was part of Catherine of Braganza's dowry when she got married to King Charles II of England in 1661, and, second, that, three years later, English troops seized the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam, henceforth called New York. Thus, Ormus's imaginative act of short-circuiting the Indian with the American metropolis upon arrival in the latter is embedded in the history of colonial (and postcolonial) patterns of motion and mobility that have been shaping the face of our globe since the emergence of European colonialist expansion in the late fifteenth century (cf. Ette 2005: 18-26; 2012: 7-26, 29). In addition, the three dimensions I consider constitutive of human motion – agency, spatiality and temporality – come

together in Ormus's cognitive act of short-circuiting Bombay and New York counterfactually inasmuch as his arrival in the latter metropolis incites him to *consciously* imagine these two cityscapes as *co-existing* directly – and therefore *simultaneously* – side by side in the mental *space* of his imagination (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107).

Building upon a provisional definition of human motion as an agent moving across space over time, I would like to conclude my introductory primary text analysis by drawing attention to the central role these three constitutive dimensions of human motion – agency, spatiality and temporality – play in any attempt to contextualize the narrative enactment of Ormus and Vina's transnational migration from Britain to the US with regard to its embedding in the overall representation of movements across space in this novel. As far as the dimension of agency is concerned, its central significance arises from the fact that Vina and Ormus are travelling to the US out of free will and with a clear purpose in mind: they want to climb the tricky stairway to musical stardom by launching themselves as rock musicians in the United States. By migrating to the hub of contemporary cultural activity, they intend to boost their joint career and, thereby, make their dream of artistic self-actualization in the glamorous sphere of rock music come true. In terms of spatiality and its historicized cultural contextualization, it is important that the two protagonists' dream of becoming global rock stars can come true only by migrating west, that is, to the United States, because this circumstance constitutes one significant indicator of the underlying structure of this novel's storyworld topology and its relationship to the extratextual topology shaping the power constellations of global culture in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Thus, the dimension of temporality enters the picture inasmuch as the historical context in which this novel is set does evidently reverberate upon the overall direction chosen by these two protagonists for their transmigration, viz. from east to west, or, more precisely, from India via Britain to the USA, because, at the end of the day, it is the attractiveness of the latter cultural space as a destination for individual self-actualization that motivates them to migrate there (cf. *TGBHF* 346-355, 250-252, 270; see also Sections 2.4, 3.4, and 4.4.2 of this dissertation).

All in all, this introductory analysis of a pertinent primary text example shows three things: First, it highlights the fact that a systematic examination of the narrative enactment of human motion in general and migration in particular must proceed multiperspectively, that is, it must take into account the four different but complementary research perspectives on this phenomenon explicated above: the

narratological question of the concrete narrative techniques deployed for its representation; the experiential issue of how the characters concerned experience their movement both affectively and cognitively; the cognitive question of how readers are incited to imagine a character moving across space over time at all, and the contextualist issue of the spatial and historical contexts in which the narrative representation of movement across space is embedded in the particular novel in question.

Second, this introductory primary text analysis tentatively demonstrates how insightfully the phenomenon of human motion and its narrative enactment can be analysed if one focuses on the three dimensions agency, spatiality and temporality. Accordingly, the complex and intricate interplay of these dimensions in the emergence of human motion both in extratextual cultural and textual fictional contexts will occupy centre-stage throughout this dissertation. Third, this tentative introductory primary text analysis was meant to give the reader a first, rough idea of the particular suitability of contemporary Asian British novels for the context-oriented narratological enquiry into the narrative enactment of space and motion in contemporary fiction to be conducted in the course of this study.

Accordingly, the following section will elaborate why I have chosen contemporary Asian British novels as a primary text corpus for this dissertation and simultaneously specify the criteria by means of which I have selected the three particular novels that shall be examined in detail in Chapters 5 to 7 of this dissertation: *The Impressionist* (Kunzru 2002), *A Life Apart* (Mukherjee 2011 [2008]) and *The Pleasure Seekers* (Doshi 2010). To begin with, contemporary Asian British novels constitute a particularly suitable research object for a context-oriented narratological investigation into the narrative enactment of human motion and its consequences because they combine several thematic foci that are of central relevance to my research interest – most importantly, the general phenomenon of travel in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, an era that is often marked by new experiences of time and space while on the move, including “time-space compression” (Harvey 1990 [1989]: vii, 265) and, more specifically, the individual character’s experience of transnational migration and its effects under the conditions of contemporary globalization. Accordingly, contemporary Asian British novels in general and the three texts selected for in-depth analysis in particular combine a contentual focus on the narrative enactment of characters’ transnational migratory movements and their attendant mental mobility with a foregrounding of macro-structural storyworld

topologies in their interrelationship with extratextual cultural topologies. Thus engaging with sociocultural issues of globalization in its historical or contemporary manifestations, these novels tend to highlight the consequences of transnational migratory movements in terms of individual identity formation, hybrid spaces in between and transculturation processes in particular.

Eventually, the authors' biographical and geographical background and the respective novel's year of publication had to be considered as well, because I restricted my primary text corpus *a priori* to contemporary *South Asian British* fiction published roughly since the beginning of the new millennium. As well, I decided to select only novels written by a generation of Asian British authors who – born in the 1960s and 1970s⁴ – are considerably younger than Salman Rushdie. This way, I intend to shed fresh light on the different ways this younger generation (re)negotiates fundamental issues related to transnational migration in their literary works – always in the knowledge that any contemporary Asian British author is necessarily obliged to position her literary work in relation to the overwhelming presence of Rushdie's magical-realist oeuvre in one way or another (cf. Upstone 2010: 1-36; Chaudhuri 2001a: xxiii). Due to the impossibility of ignoring Rushdie's omnipresence, this study will use his novel *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]) as a primary text example in order to illustrate the usefulness of its central theoretical, contextualist and methodological innovations. Finally, while the lack of secondary literature on the three novels selected for detailed examination⁵ constitutes a serious problem to my overall research endeavour, it also opens up the opportunity to road test the productivity of the contextualized theoretical and methodological framework to be developed in Chapters 2 to 4 of this dissertation in relatively straightforward fashion.

⁴ Born in England in 1969, Hari Kunzru qualifies as an Asian British author due to his mixed Indo-English parentage. Neel Mukherjee – born in Kolkata, India in 1970 – migrated to Britain in order to complete his university education there. Living and writing in London today, he can legitimately be described as an Asian British author as well. With Tishani Doshi – born in Chennai, India in 1975 – this label is somewhat problematic, as she received her university education in the US and returned to India afterwards. However, I include her in this study for two reasons: first, she is of Welsh-Indian parentage, and second, her debut novel *The Pleasure Seekers* (2010) is set in the contemporary Asian British context.

⁵ While there are a few analyses of Hari Kunzru's *The Impressionist* (2002) – cf., for example, Griem (2007: 89-103); Nyman (2009: 93-107); Upstone (2010: 144-163) – my search for secondary literature on *A Life Apart* (Mukherjee 2011 [2008]) yielded no utilizable results. In the case of Tishani Doshi's *The Pleasure Seekers* (2010), I am indebted to my colleague Jaya Shrivastava for sending me a pertinent article that she co-authored with Sagarika Chattopadhyay, entitled "Transitional Identities and the Unhomed Space in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* and Tishani Doshi's *The Pleasure Seekers*" (Chattopadhyay and Shrivastava 2012: 113-125).

Before coming to the research overview on the phenomenon of ‘narrating space and motion in contemporary Asian British novels’, I want to delimit the thematic scope of this study by stating clearly what it is not concerned with. First, this doctoral dissertation is not about the specific genre of travel writing (whether historical or contemporary, colonial or postcolonial).⁶ Rather, it explores the narrative enactment of the experience of travel (in whatever concrete forms) and its consequences in contemporary Asian British novels. Second, the concept of diaspora will be present in this study only implicitly; that is, it will merely hover in the background whenever related issues such as processes of individual identity formation, transculturation and the emergence of spaces in between are discussed as direct results of transnational migration (cf. Chapter 3 of this dissertation).⁷ Third, this dissertation is not concerned with defining contemporary Asian British novels as a distinct genre, nor with situating them in the wide and complex field of the “literatures of the world” (Ette 2012: 1). Fourth, this study is not about the historical and contemporary phenomenon of globalization itself, but about the way(s) in which contemporary Asian British novels renegotiate both historical and contemporary manifestations of globalization by enacting one of its prime facets – transnational motion, migration and mobility – in the medium of narrative fiction.

Evidently, this research perspective has to take the historicity of globalization itself into due account. Following both Ette (cf. 2012: 7-26) and Osterhammel and Petersson (2007: 24-27), this study thus conceives of globalization as a discontinuous, historically rooted long-term phenomenon (rather than merely a recent development) that can be subdivided chronologically into “four phases of accelerated globalization” (Ette 2012: 7; cf. *ibid.* 7-26).⁸ Finally, this study deliberately opts to employ the most general term for the human act of moving across space over time – motion – in order to capture the whole range of its different extratextual cultural and textual fictional

⁶ For the latter subgenre – postcolonial travel writing, see the collected volume *Postcolonial Travel Writing: Critical Explorations* (2011), edited by Justin Edwards and Rune Graulund.

⁷ For the specific field of diasporic literature in the Indian context, see the collected volume *Literature of the Indian Diaspora* (2011), edited by Om Prakash Dwivedi.

⁸ In their monograph *Geschichte der Globalisierung: Dimensionen, Prozesse, Epochen* (2007), Osterhammel and Petersson divide the phenomenon of globalization into four stages: the first (ca. AD 1500-1750) involved European colonial expansion in the wake of Columbus’s first voyage to the Caribbean; the second involved the emergence of a global economy (ca. 1750-1880); the third was characterized by the heyday of nationalism and imperialism as well as by the two world wars (ca. 1880-1945); and the contemporary age (ca. 1945 to the present) is marked, among other factors, by decolonization and the intensification of globalization processes since the 1970s (cf. Osterhammel and Petersson (2007: 24-27). For a similar periodization of the four different phases of globalization, cf. Ette 2012: 7-26.

“configurations” (Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 64),⁹ encompassing, most importantly, different types of transnational migration, such as voluntary and involuntary migration, with the latter type being compartmentalized into further subtypes such as, for example, displacement, flight, deportation and other kinds of forced migration.¹⁰ Moreover, motion also comprises movements on various planes of a novel’s storyworld topology, such as, most prominently, micro- and macro-level movements. Finally, the concept of motion as I use it in this study takes into consideration the interrelatedness of spatial and mental mobility as well.¹¹ To conclude, it is thus meant to capture the whole ontological range of real-and-imagined movements enacted narratively in contemporary Asian British novels.

1.2 Research Overview and Central Desiderata

Building on the research question formulated in Section 1.1 of this dissertation, this subchapter will give a brief overview of pertinent research that has already been done on different aspects this research question entails in selected disciplines concerned with the study of literary and cultural phenomena. Because any attempt to find plausible answers to the question of how the experience of space and motion is narrated in contemporary Asian British novels must take into account relevant insights from various disciplines – postmodern cultural geography and the spatial turn, research on motion and mobility in the study of literature, the emerging field of mobility studies in the humanities in general, classical and postclassical branches of narratology and research devoted to the specific literary context of contemporary Asian British fiction, the following overview shall briefly outline pertinent contributions from each of these disciplinary (and interdisciplinary) contexts. Subsequently, the central desiderata with which this dissertation will be concerned shall be formulated one at a time from the

⁹ By using Ricoeur’s term “configuration” (Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 64; cf. *ibid.* 64-70) not only for narrative but also for extratextual cultural arrangements of human motion across space, I intend to highlight their reciprocal intertwining (see also Chapter 2 of this dissertation).

¹⁰ For introductory overviews of the different concepts intended to capture various types of migrants and travellers, such as refugee, exile, immigrant and tourist, in relation to diasporic literatures in different contexts, see Nyman (2009: 9-27) and Dwivedi (2011a: 15-32). See also Caren Kaplan’s study *Questions of Travel: Postmodern Discourses of Displacement* (1996).

¹¹ Although most of them have by now become obsolete, the entry on the noun “motion” in the online version of the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* lists, in addition to the meanings related to physical movement, several meanings that involve mental mobility in the widest sense as well (cf. entry on the noun “motion” in the *OED*, last retrieved 30.10.2015).

blind spots, that is, the research lacunae, identified in this necessarily highly selective overview.

Initiated by American urban planner and cultural geographer Edward Soja in the late 1980s,¹² the spatial turn¹³ supplies three recognitions that are of prime relevance to my research interest: First, it replaces the traditional container model of space with an innovative conceptualization that foregrounds the ontological character of space as the complex outcome of a sociocultural production process – that is, its essentially man-made nature – rather than relying on the traditional presupposition of space as a pre-existent, politically neutral and static ontological entity marked by a strange indifference to, and detachment from, the lived realities of human beings and societies in contexts both historical and contemporary (cf. Lefebvre 1991 [1974]: 26-27; Soja 1989: 10-12; see also Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 11-16). Second, this concept of space as a dynamic and relational entity produced by human beings and collectives (cf. Lefebvre 1991: 46; Soja 1989: 11; see also Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 11-16; Beck 2014: 29) grants human motion across space a decisive role in this sociocultural production process, because, if space is indeed a historically dynamic, relational configuration of places, then the movements performed by human beings among these places are not merely connectors but factors of production implicated in the process of generating and transforming the very spaces they traverse on their way from point of departure to destination (cf. Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 14). Third, the peculiarity of space lies in its Janus-faced character as both a product of and a generative factor in the constitution of lived social realities as experienced by human beings: “As signature of

¹² In his ground-breaking study *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (1989), Edward Soja intertwines a critical review of extant approaches to such an assertive rediscovery of spatiality as a major object of analysis in geography and the social sciences with his programmatic call for a “spatial turn” (Soja 1989: 39). Further developed in his subsequent study *Thirdspace – Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (1996), Soja’s epistemological project of a “spatialization of critical theory” (Soja 1989: 12) takes its inspiration primarily from the path-breaking groundwork by French philosopher Henri Lefebvre in his magisterial *The Production of Space [La Production de l’Espace]* (1991 [1974]), and from Michel Foucault’s seemingly marginal paper “Des Espaces Autres” (Foucault 2006 [1967/1984]: 317-329; cf. Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 12-16).

¹³ For an elaborate survey of the spatial turn, cf. Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 285-329. For a collection of foundational texts on spatial theory in the humanities, see the volume *Raumtheorie: Grundlagentexte aus Philosophie und Kulturwissenschaften* (2006), edited by Jörg Dünne and Stephan Günzel. For further introductory overviews of this fundamental reorientation in the study of culture, see Hallet and Neumann (2009a: 11-32), and Beck (2014: 26-33). See also Section 2.1, pp. 9-23, of my unpublished diploma thesis “Imaginative Geographien und die Inszenierung postkolonialer Räume in gegenwärtigen Fictions of Migration” (Matschi 2010), which likewise contains a brief introductory survey of the spatial turn. In light of these surveys, I have reframed and limited my overview of the central innovations and (re)discoveries of the spatial turn to those issues that pertain directly to my research interest in this doctoral dissertation: the theoretical, methodological and analytical exploration of the narrative enactment of space and motion in contemporary Asian British novels.

social practices, space is [thus] both produced culturally and [itself] culturally productive: accordingly, space itself reflects extant power relations and perpetuates them” (Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 11; cf. *ibid.* 11-16; Lefebvre 1991: 26; Soja 1996: 66). It is in this insight into the character of space as an ideologically charged cultural construction rather than a pre-existent neutral container that the spatial turn converges with postcolonial literary studies (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 285-291; Neumann 2009: 115-116). With the development of spatialized concepts such as “imaginative geography” (Said 2003 [1978]: 54), “contact zone” (Pratt 1992: 1) and “third space” (Bhabha 1994b: 56), the latter field of academic enquiry has in fact been one of the initiators of and driving forces behind the spatial turn (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 285-291; Neumann 2009: 115-117).¹⁴

Building on this far-reaching and fundamental reconceptualization of space, Soja goes one step further in his monograph *Thirdspace – Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (1996) by elaborating an all-embracing ontological model designed to account for the production of three aspects he identifies as constitutive for human existence on earth: “spatiality, historicity and sociality” (Soja 1996: 71). As Soja conceives of the mutual relationships between these three factors as dialectical, he calls the resulting cumulative model “Trialectics of Being” (Soja 1996: 71; cf. *ibid.* 70-73). With this “ontological trialectic” (Soja 1996: 70), he aspires to rebalance the weighting of these three factors in the analysis of the production of the (historical and contemporary) socioeconomic, political and cultural realities human beings live(d) in in favour of the hitherto marginalized category: spatiality (cf. Soja 1996: 71-73). Although his trialectics of being generally posits the equal significance of each of these three factors, Soja argues that this temporary privileging of spatiality is necessary in order to reinstate the overall equilibrium among them in the long run (cf. *ibid.*). Because, in the past, the examination of the shaping of human existence was largely constricted to just one of the three dialectics that, taken together, make up the trialectics of being, viz. the “historicity – sociality dialectic” (Soja 1996: 72), Soja insists on the expansion of disciplinary and interdisciplinary research perspectives to the other two constitutive elements of his ontological trialectic: the “spatiality –

¹⁴ As these postcolonial concepts of space will be discussed in detail in Section 3.3.3 of this dissertation, I refrain from giving an in-depth overview here. For an investigation into the role of imaginative geographies and further postcolonial concepts of space in colonial and postcolonial literatures, cf. Birgit Neumann’s article “Imaginative Geographien in kolonialer und postkolonialer Literatur: Raumkonzepte der (Post-)Kolonialismusforschung” (2009: 115-138). See also the chapters on the postcolonial turn (2014 [2006]: 184-238) and the spatial turn (2014 [2006]: 285-329) in Doris Bachmann-Medick’s monograph *Cultural Turns: Neuorientierungen in den Kulturwissenschaften* (2014 [2006]) and Sara Upstone’s study *Spatial Politics in the Postcolonial Novel* (2009).

historicality dialectic” (ibid.) and the “spatiality – sociality dialectic” (ibid.). Only by scrutinizing the interplay of all three dialectical interrelationships does it become possible to grasp the full complexity of the simultaneously spatial, historical and social human existence on this planet, that is, its shaping and being shaped by geographies, histories and societies (cf. Soja 1996: 73). While Soja (cf. 1996: 70-73) has thus elaborated an all-encompassing model designed to account for the spatial, historical and social production of the lived everyday realities experienced by human beings in heterogeneous cultural contexts, no-one has as yet (at least to my knowledge) made the attempt to develop an (approximately) analogous ontological model for the emergence of human motion in extratextual cultural and textual fictional contexts. The resulting desideratum of elaborating a trialectics of motion, that is, a heuristic theoretical model explicating the intricate interplay of the three factors of production implicated in the emergence of human motion – agency, spatiality and temporality – is what I intend to tackle in my theory part (Chapter 2 of this dissertation).

Furthermore, Soja’s approach to the cultural generation of space is particularly insightful in other regards as well. First, he conceives of space as always “real-and-imagined” (Soja 1996: 11), because the individual’s jointly cognitive and affective human experience of space in extratextual cultural reality is inextricably intertwined with supraindividual cultural and imaginative semanticizations of space (cf. Soja 1996: 11; see also Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 15-16; Hallet 2009: 85-93, particularly 87 and 89). This becomes particularly evident in the case of geographical places like Los Angeles, which are marked by an extremely high degree of semantic charging (cf. Soja 1996: 11, 184-279). Following Lefebvre (cf. 1991 [1974]: 33, 38-39), Soja further argues that, in order to arrive at a sufficiently complex “epistemology of space” (Soja 1996: 73), it is necessary to examine the intricate interplay of three aspects of spatiality: “spatial practice, representations of space, and spaces of representation” (Soja 1996: 65; cf. ibid. 65-69; Lefebvre 1991 [1974]: 33, 38-39).¹⁵ This epistemological

¹⁵ According to Lefebvre, “[s]patial practice, which embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation” (Lefebvre 1991 [1974]: 33), “secretes that society’s space; it propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it. From the analytic standpoint, the spatial practice of a society is revealed through the deciphering of its space” (Lefebvre 1991: 38). “Representations of space” (ibid.), by contrast, are “conceptualized space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers, as of a certain type of artist with a scientific bent – all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived. [...] This is the dominant space in any society (or mode of production). Conceptions of space tend, with certain exceptions [...], towards a system of verbal (and therefore intellectually worked out) signs” (Lefebvre 1991: 38-39). Finally, “[r]epresentational spaces” (ibid. 39) – labelled “spaces of representation” by Soja (1996: 65) – designate “space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’, but also of some artists and perhaps of those, such as a few

“trialectics of spatiality” (Soja 1996: 74) constitutes the problem-specific equivalent of Soja’s all-embracing trialectics of being. More generally, Soja defines Lefebvre’s prime epistemological strategy in *The Production of Space* (1991 [1974]) as a consistent “thirthing-as-Othering” (Soja 1996: 60; cf. *ibid.*) that aims to deconstruct (and reconstitute) traditional conceptual binarisms by introducing an-Other, that is, a *third* alternative (cf. *ibid.*). In this vein, Soja introduces a double definition of Thirdspace as both a conceptual equivalent to “lived space” (Soja 1996: 65; cf. Lefebvre 1991: 40) – that is, to the spaces of representation – and as an all-embracing mode of spatiality transcending the theoretical differentiations upon which his Lefebvrian trialectics of spatiality rests (cf. Soja 1996: 62). In Soja’s opinion, Thirdspace constitutes the ideal vantage point for the creative rethinking of human spatiality and, what is more, for the formation of spaces of resistance against the hegemonic social order (cf. Soja 1996: 68)

Two aspects of Soja’s overall argument in *Thirdspace* in particular have provoked criticism. First, it has been pointed out that, in the final analysis, Thirdspace’s all-encompassing claim to applicability renders it virtually meaningless (cf. Latham 2004: 272-273). Second, Soja’s argument has been criticized for merely boiling down to the recognition that history, space and society constitute one another in trialectical reciprocity (cf. Latham 2004: 272-273). Although the first criticism rightly points to the vagueness of Soja’s second definition of Thirdspace, this conceptualization nevertheless has its merits because it highlights the confluence of real and imagined elements in the human experience of space. As for the second criticism, it must be remembered that the fundamental recognition of the trialectical reciprocity at work in the constitution of spatiality, historicity and sociality is anything but trivial, given the almost complete neglect of the spatial dimension in the social sciences for much of the past century.

Within the highly diversified field of literary and cultural studies, Ottmar Ette’s approach to issues of motion and space in literature and culture at large distinguishes itself by its mobilization of the spatial turn through a pronounced focus on the interplay of space and time in the phenomenon of human motion (cf. Ette 2005: 18-19). In order to capture this complex and intricate interplay terminologically, Ette contends, a

writers and philosophers, who describe and aspire to do no more than describe. This is the dominated – and hence passively experienced – space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects. Thus representational spaces may be said [...] to tend towards more or less coherent systems of non-verbal symbols and signs” (Lefebvre 1991: 39). As I intend to show briefly in Section 1.3, a roughly analogous model could, in principle, be drafted for human motion as well.

specifically motion-oriented descriptive vocabulary, a “poetics of motion” (Ette 2005: 18, my translation; cf. *ibid.* 18-20), that is, “a sufficiently precise terminology for motion, dynamics and mobility [in literature]” (Ette 2005: 18), is required. Because, however, various competing approaches to the study of literature and culture, such as, most prominently, historicism and the relatively recent spatial turn, have up to now mostly concentrated on either of these two dimensions of human motion separately, and hence at the expense of their interplay in this phenomenon, such an analytical vocabulary remains a desideratum in literary and cultural studies and beyond (cf. Ette 2005: 18-19; Ette 2012: 26-29). Given the ever-increasing significance of issues of motion and mobility in the twenty-first century in fields as varied as literature, culture, politics, technology, economics, sociology and migration studies, this desideratum is evidently all the more urgent (cf. *ibid.*).

This is why Ette elaborates “foundations for a poetics of motion” (Ette 2012: 26, my translation; cf. *ibid.* 26-32) in his path-breaking monographs *ZwischenWeltenSchreiben – Literaturen ohne festen Wohnsitz* (2005) and *TransArea – Eine literarische Globalisierungsgeschichte* (2012). Transferring the mathematical concept of the vector to literary and cultural studies, Ette deploys it as a substitute term for route or path in the description of the trajectories travelled by literary characters and ‘real’ human beings on their (voluntary or forced) way from their place of departure to their destination (cf., for example, Ette 2003: 39, 113; Ette 2004: 227, 250, 251). What is more, Ette expands its conceptual purview by introducing the concept of “vectorization” (Ette 2005: 11), which he defines as not merely a mobilization of all space-time relations in our contemporary world marked by the latest phase of “accelerated globalization” (Ette 2012: 30; cf. *ibid.*), migration and transculturality but, more specifically, the “storage of past (and even future) movement patterns, which appear and become experienceable again in current movements” (Ette 2005: 11; my translation). According to Ette (cf. 2005: 11-12; 2012: 29-30), the phenomenon of vectorization

reaches far beyond that which has been experienced on an individual level and that which can be experienced in the respective lifeworlds: vectorization also embraces the domain of collective history, the movement patterns of which it stores in the discontinuous, multiply refracted post-Euclidian vector field of future dynamics. Beneath the present movements, the past movements are rendered palpable and realized again: they are preserved as movements in the knowledge of literature – which is precisely what the concept of vectorization aims at. (Ette 2005: 11, my translation)

Drawing on collective history and mythology, Ette’s concept of vectorization thus highlights that “[n]ot only the words under the words or the places beneath the places, but also, first and foremost, the movements under the movements point to that

knowledge of life and of survival that literature – as an interactive medium of storage – provides to its readers. Literature is inextricably intertwined with motion and the paths of knowledge" (Ette 2005: 11-12, my translation; cf. *ibid.*; see also Ette 2012: 29-30). By foregrounding the resurfacing of the sedimentation of past real-and-imagined movements in (re-)enactments of spatial movement in contemporary literature, Ette's concept of vectorization thus pinpoints one central aspect of the interplay of history – or, more generally, time – and space in the artistic representation of motion in the fictional medium of literature.

In addition to this concept of vectorization, Ette provides a straightforward differentiation of five geographical scales of movement: "translocal movements" (Ette 2005: 23) between urban and / or rural places; "transregional movements" (*ibid.*) between regions, that is, "cultural spaces that are either smaller than a nation (such as Uckermark or Hegau) or position themselves as manageable units between different nation-states (such as the Dreyecksland between the Black Forest, the Vosges and northern Switzerland)" (Ette 2005: 23, my translation; cf. *ibid.*); transnational movements; "transareal movements" (Ette 2005: 23) between supranational world regions such as Western Europe or South Asia (cf. *ibid.*); and transcontinental movements (Ette 2005: 23, my translation; cf. *ibid.* and Ette 2012: 39-40). Moreover, Ette argues, "[m]ovements contribute decisively to the constitution and semanticization of (lived) spaces, because the relationship between the internal relationality within a given space and the external relationality connecting this space to others is of the utmost importance" (Ette 2005: 23, my translation; see also Ette 2012: 40). According to Ette (cf. 2005: 23), the analytical utility of his differentiation of five geographical scales of movement lies in the recognition that, as the semanticization of cultural spaces is determined essentially by the past, present and future movements related to it, the combinatory possibilities of these five geographical levels exert a shaping influence on political, cultural and literary phenomena.

In an earlier study tellingly entitled *Literature on the Move* (2003), Ette supplies a further central element of his poetics of motion by delineating five different topological movement patterns: "the circle, the pendulum, the line, the star and the jump" (Ette 2003: 39-48; cf. *ibid.*). Building on his recognition that "journeys can be comprehended [...] as movements of understanding in space" (Ette 2003: 39), he goes on to argue that, for this reason, it becomes possible, "starting from the specific staging of each location and the vectors that are lying in between, to distinguish several basic figures of travel literary movements that shall be outlined in the following with the help of five

basic types" (Ette 2003: 39; cf. *ibid.* 39-48). Accordingly, Ette takes recourse in the geometrical figure of the circle in order to describe "the basic figure of a circular travel movement in which the traveller returns to the place of departure" (Ette 2003: 39), a movement pattern that has "dominate[d] journeys overseas of the 18th and 19th century in European as well as in non-European travellers" (Ette 2003: 39; cf. *ibid.* 39-43). The pendulum designates "the commuting between two or several locations" (Ette 2003: 43), with the focus being "neither on the journey itself, nor on departure or arrival, but on the quasi-simultaneous existence in two spatially and temporally separated places" (Ette 2003: 43; cf. *ibid.*). While the line evidently denotes a "spatial movement of understanding" characterized by a simple "linear journey from a starting point to a destination point" (Ette 2003: 43; cf. *ibid.* 43-45), the star constitutes a more complex topological movement pattern inasmuch as it "starts from a definite center, which serves as a starting point for more or less circular journeys and leads to a stellate expansion of the travelled and registered space" (Ette 2003: 45-46; cf. *ibid.* 45-47). The jump "is, at least at first look, of a rather diffuse nature. It concerns a travelogue (and a model of understanding) in which neither a concrete starting point nor a concrete destination of the journey is given" (Ette 2003: 47; cf. *ibid.* 47-48). The central point Ette makes with all of these movement patterns is that the deep-structural geometrical figure (such as circle, line or star) performed by the protagonists on the topological level of a literary text's narrated world frequently resembles the hermeneutic movement of understanding the reader must perform in order to grasp (at least the essentials of) its meaning potential (cf. Ette 2003: 38-48). Therewith, he not only corroborates the insight that, in both extratextual reality and textual fictional representation, movements and the resulting topological patterns decisively shape the formation and semanticization of cultural spaces (cf. Ette 2005: 23; Ette 2012: 29) but also establishes an intriguing connection between the literary *enactment* of human motion and the recipients' performance of *cognitive* movements in their attempts to make sense of the respective text (cf. Ette 2003: 38-48).

Finally, Ette's foundations for a poetics of motion distinguish themselves by ordering not only the relations among different cultural spheres, but also among various spatial and temporal spheres according to the triadic structure of "multi – inter – trans" (Ette 2005: 20; cf. *ibid.* 20-22; Ette 2012: 32-38). According to this model, the relations between different cultures, for instance, can present themselves as a "multicultural co-existence of different cultures, which, in spatial terms, settle down, for instance, in different quarters or zones of a city" (Ette 2005: 20; my translation), as "an intercultural togetherness, which denotes encounters of all sorts between the members of cultures,

who do communicate with one another, but without calling their affiliation to one specific culture or cultural group into question” (Ette 2005: 20; my translation), or as a transcultural configuration essentially marked by “movements and practices that cross different cultures, i.e., [by] a constant leaping to and fro between these cultures, which is by definition devoid of any stable and fixable relationship to an individual culture or cultural group” (Ette 2005: 20-21; my translation; see also Ette 2012: 33-34).¹⁶

To conclude, Ette’s foundations for a poetics of motion provide important stepping-stones for my methodological project of a cultural narratology of motion because they interweave the development of a descriptive vocabulary for motion in literature and culture with a pronounced focus on the consequences of transnational migratory movements, such as, most importantly, the emergence of transculturality. Nevertheless, they expose themselves to constructive critique for five reasons. First, they ignore the third constitutive dimension of human motion – agency. By thematizing only the spatial and temporal dimensions of human motion, they largely efface the figure of the traveller herself, thus implicitly suggesting that the moving person’s agency does not matter at all, because she appears merely as an insignificant pawn shuffled around by historical and spatial conditions beyond her sphere of influence. While this is certainly true of historical (and contemporary) contexts such as slavery, indentured labour or other, contemporary forms of forced migration, there are equally important contexts – migratory or otherwise – in which Ette’s conceptualization of human motion proves to be too reductionist. Second, Ette therefore does not embed his conceptual innovations for the analysis of motion in literature and culture in a theoretical model capable of explaining the full complexity of the combinatorial interplay of spatiality, temporality *and* agency in the emergence of human motion in extratextual cultural and textual fictional contexts. Third, the specific question of *how* – that is, by means of which literary techniques – the phenomenon of human motion is enacted in literary texts is not even posed in the explication of his foundations for a poetics of motion. Fourth, despite his use of the vector as some kind of catch-all category for directed movement in literature and culture, Ette refrains from reflecting upon the theoretical, conceptual and, above all, methodological implications of transferring this concept from mathematics to the study of literature and culture. Fifth, his differentiation of multi-, inter- and transculturality exhibits a certain streak of reductionism inasmuch as it is grounded in but one feature – that of the absence or presence as well as intensity of cross-cultural contacts across space. This, however, does not do justice to

¹⁶ For the corresponding model of structuring spatial and temporal relations, see Ette (2005: 21-22), and Ette (2012: 37-38). As further different conceptualizations of transculturality will be discussed in Section 3.1 of this dissertation, I refrain from providing a survey of them here.

the complexity of transcultural configurations which are often marked by more than one characteristic quality (cf. Helff 2009: 78-82).

The collected volume *Raum und Bewegung in der Literatur: Die Literaturwissenschaften und der Spatial Turn* (2009), edited by Wolfgang Hallet and Birgit Neumann, illuminates the interlocking of space and motion in literature and culture from various different perspectives, including narratological,¹⁷ cognitive and postcolonial ones. In his contribution to this volume, Hallet examines the “constitution of space” (Hallet 2009: 81) as an inherently “semiotic process” (Hallet 2009: 81; cf. *ibid.* 81-93): Drawing on both our individual multi-sensory experience of space in extratextual cultural reality and our supraindividual cultural world knowledge, we constantly produce space in our minds by semiotizing it, that is, by cognitively organizing and interpreting it as a semiotically structured entity (cf. Hallet 2009: 85). This cognitive capacity, Hallet (cf. 2009: 82) stresses, is indispensable for coming to grips with the myriad sensory impressions pouring in upon our minds in our everyday spatial environment and thus also for oriented movement in space (cf. Hallet 2009: 82, 85-93; see also Böhme 2005a: xix). According to Hallet, literary texts distinguish themselves – among other things – by their ability to enact processual “resemioticization[s]” (Hallet 2009: 92) of space, for instance by foregrounding the complex cognitive processes at work in our quotidian, culturally prefigured semioticizations of space or by deliberately defamiliarizing them, thus setting a deautomatization of their cognitive processing in motion (cf. Hallet 2009: 91-93, 107-109). These literary resemioticizations can then reverberate upon the reader’s ways of dealing with space, even if often only in the form of a heightened awareness of the intricate and multi-layered complexity of the cognitive mechanisms at work in seemingly trivial acts like performing oriented movement across space over a certain time-span in everyday life (cf. Hallet 2009: 108-109).

In addition, Hallet (cf. 2009: 89, 102-107) highlights a further particular capacity of literary texts: their ability to trigger a counterfactual short-circuiting of two or more distant cultural spaces and / or temporal levels (past and present, for instance) in the mental space of the reader’s imagination:

In the literary text, actions are moreover structured spatially; that is, they are sequenced, related, contrasted, etc. in narrative discourse [...]. Thereby, literary texts are capable of representing cultural spatial

¹⁷ As Ansgar Nünning’s primarily structuralist narratological contribution to this volume, entitled “Formen und Funktionen literarischer Raumdarstellung: Grundlagen, Ansätze, narratologische Kategorien und neue Perspektiven” (Nünning 2009: 33-52), will be discussed in Section 4.2.2, I do not sum it up here.

constellations and movement practices between spaces that elude perception in empirical reality. Distant continents then suddenly find themselves in direct vicinity, two objectively separate experiential places (such as that of childhood and that of adulthood) move close together or merge, the time between an inhabited and a yearned-for place shrinks to few lines or words in the text. Thus, literary texts are capable of representing and generating a spatial thinking that is not grounded in empirical perception, but in imagination. (Hallet 2009: 89, my translation)

This short-circuiting of heterogeneous places and cultural spaces, Hallet continues, causes their cognitive “co-presence” (Hallet 2009: 102) in the reader’s mind: “In each case, the space currently experienced always simultaneously contains the other, currently not present space” (Hallet 2009: 102, my translation). Based on this recognition, Hallet suggests an innovative, essentially spatialized definition of colonialism: “This co-presence – the political, cultural and semantic interdependence of centre of power and empire – can even claim validity as a definition of colonialism per se” (Hallet 2009: 102, my translation). The representation of space in Andrea Levy’s *Small Island* (2004), for instance, functions precisely according to this principle: “[...] the cultural prefiguration of spatial perceptions and meanings thus represents a reciprocal imagination of the colony by means of the centre and vice versa” (Hallet 2009: 104, my translation; cf. *ibid.*). With this sophisticated observation, Hallet draws our attention to a cognitive principle of literary representations of space that, as we shall see in the course of this dissertation, constitutes a recurrent phenomenon in contemporary Asian British novels as well.

In her contribution to this volume, Birgit Neumann conceptualizes literary texts as culturally productive and thus literally “*poietic* media of appropriating, interpreting and creating space, which represent, reflect upon, constantly reset and potentially transform the spatial orders of their time and the values inscribed in them” (Neumann 2009: 117, italics and translation mine). Following up on that, she elaborates on the distinctive qualities of the spatial models to be found at the heart of the representation of space in colonial as opposed to postcolonial literatures:

Colonial literature operates, above all, with binary spatial models in order to hypostatize allegedly unambiguous boundaries between “us” and “them”, or identity and alterity as well as to enact essentialist notions of culture and collective identity. Frequently, contrastive semanticizations of space that structure space “into two disjoint subspaces” (Lotman 1972: 327) and thereby establish a separation of one’s own and foreign spaces in the context of hierarchical distinction [between identity and alterity] are deployed to this end. (Neumann 2009: 125, my translation)

In deliberate opposition to this historical cultural backdrop, postcolonial literatures employ two now also ‘classical’ literary strategies of disrupting such spatially dichotomized notions of a clear-cut, essentialist dividing line between (former) colonizer

and colonized: remapping and the fictional creation of third spaces (cf. Neumann 2009: 129). The former literary strategy aims to establish a postcolonial counter-discourse to European imperialism that appropriates the latter's epistemological "prerogative of interpretation" (Neumann 2009: 130; my translation):

By replacing the usual insider view of the English "mother country" with the postcolonial outsider's perspective or by drafting literary cartographies of territories that have not been accessed at all in literature yet, novels such as Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Christopher Hope's *Darkest England* and Andrea Levy's *Small Island* subject "the hierarchical world map of asymmetry" (Bachmann-Medick 2006: 293) between centre and periphery to a fundamental revision. (Neumann 2009: 130, italics in original, my translation)

The latter strategy serves the epistemological purpose of questioning the alleged ontological character of cultures and cultural spaces as homogeneous, bounded, stable and static entities subject to a clear hierarchy by "foreground[ing] their cultural complexity, that is, the production of relations amidst heterogeneity instead" (Neumann 2009: 133; cf. *ibid.*). In conclusion, Neumann argues that

[i]n colonial and postcolonial literatures, the representation and examination of spaces functions as a central means of negotiating questions of cultural hierarchies, political power and pertinent auto- and hetero-images. Representations of space in literature are intertwined most closely with cultural orders of space. They structure not only the perceptions and ways of experiencing space, but also dispositions of political acting and thus exert considerable influence upon the reality of intercultural contacts. (Neumann 2009: 135, my translation)

All in all, Neumann thus provides a plausible answer to the central question of the interrelationship between spatial models in literature and spatial orders prevalent in extratextual cultural contexts. She also examines prototypical spatial models enacted and renegotiated in colonial and postcolonial literary texts. What she does not do, however, is elaborate a systematization of her reflections on the divergent spatial models underlying colonial and postcolonial literary texts into a typology of different macro-structural topologies of their respective narrated worlds.

Having given a necessarily highly selective survey of different approaches to space, motion and their reciprocal intertwining in the study of literature and culture, I now turn to the equally relevant interrelationship between motion and mobility in literature, culture and society. In order to apprehend their close conceptual relationship, it is first necessary to make a fundamental terminological distinction between motion, which refers to movements that are actually carried out, and mobility, a concept that, according to Sager (2008: 244), denotes "potential transport and [...] the capacity of an individual to overcome physical distance" (*ibid.*). Thus, while motion emphasizes the actuality of the movement in question, mobility foregrounds the aspect of potentiality

(cf. Sager 2008: 244-245).¹⁸ The two aspects are necessarily interrelated, however, because in extratextual society, a given level of mobility can only be upheld if a sufficient number of movements are actually carried out, that is, in economic terms, if the travels actually performed justify the costs of maintaining the infrastructure required to guarantee this level of mobility (cf. Sager 2008: 245-247). On the whole, Tore Sager's reflections on motion and mobility thus highlight the fundamental interdependence of these two parameters in extratextual society. Following up on this straightforward conceptual distinction, I will give a brief overview of literary and cultural studies approaches specifically concerned with the category of mobility in the following.

In his programmatic "Mobility Studies Manifesto" (Greenblatt 2010: 250; cf. *ibid.* 250-253), Stephen Greenblatt highlights the necessity to interweave the analysis of "cultural mobility" (Greenblatt et al. 2010) with actual motion, urging humanities scholars to take "mobility [...] in a highly literal sense" (Greenblatt 2010: 250):

Only when conditions directly related to literal movement are firmly grasped will it be possible fully to understand the metaphorical movements: between center and periphery; faith and skepticism; order and chaos; exteriority and interiority. Almost every one of these metaphorical movements will be understood, on analysis, to involve some kinds of physical movements as well. (Greenblatt 2010: 250)

In addition, he calls for context-based inquiries into the dialectical relationship between individual agency and "structural constraint" (Greenblatt 2010: 251), that is, into the context-specific, tension-filled interplay between supraindividual societal, economic and cultural power structures on the one hand and the individual's (yearning for) freedom of action, which manifests itself, among other things, in the human wish for autonomous, free (physical and intellectual) mobility on the other (cf. *ibid.*). This dialectic, Greenblatt (cf. 2010: 251) argues, cannot be dissolved by means of an all-embracing theoretical model. Instead, its functioning must be retraced in concrete historical and contemporary circumstances, for this is the only epistemological strategy capable of explaining the frequently antagonistic interplay between power structures granting mobility to certain (groups of) individuals while condemning others to immobility and the disruption of "seemingly fixed migration paths [...] by the strategic acts of individual

¹⁸ The sociologist Vincent Kaufmann labels potential movement "motility" (Kaufmann 2002: 1), defining it as "the way in which an individual appropriates what is possible in the domain of mobility and puts this potential to use for his or her activities" (Kaufmann 2002: 37), as opposed to mobility, which, in Kaufmann's terminology, refers to observable movement (cf. Kaufmann 2002: 1, 37, 43; see also Urry 2007: 38-39; Sager 2008: 244-245). In order to avoid unnecessary terminological confusion, however, I will stick to Sager's straightforward conceptualization of the difference between motion and mobility (cf. Sager 2008: 244-245) throughout this dissertation.

agents and by unexpected, unplanned, entirely contingent encounters between different cultures” (Greenblatt 2010: 252; cf. *ibid.* 251-252).

Finally, Greenblatt stresses the importance of supplementing the examination of mobility and rootlessness in the study of literature and culture with careful attention to their conceptual antipodes, that is, with immobility and rootedness (cf. Greenblatt 2010: 252). Pointing to the impossibility of comprehending one without the other, he contends that “one of the characteristic powers of a culture is its ability to hide the mobility that is its enabling condition” (Greenblatt 2010: 252), thus producing the impression of locality commonly perceived to be one of the characteristic features of cultures (cf. *ibid.*). Accordingly, Greenblatt concludes, “[a] study of cultural mobility that ignores the allure (and, on occasion, the entrapment) of the firmly rooted simply misses the point” (Greenblatt 2010: 252-253; cf. *ibid.*). With these programmatic theses, Greenblatt has pinpointed, in the form of overall guidelines for mobility studies in the humanities, three important issues I will have to grapple with throughout this doctoral dissertation: the interrelatedness of actual physical motion and figurative or metaphorical mobility, the conflictual interplay of individual human agency and overarching societal power structures, and the equally tension-filled interrelationship between the mobility and stability of cultures (however illusory the latter may turn out to be upon closer inspection).

Bringing together the social sciences and the humanities in an innovative, transdisciplinary approach to the relationship between representation and mobility, the collected volume *Researching and Representing Mobilities: Transdisciplinary Encounters* (2014), edited by Lesley Murray and Sara Upstone, examines this relationship by means of exemplary analyses of literary, artistic, scientific and everyday practices in which these two concepts intersect in various ways. In essence, the fundamental and innovative hypothesis uniting the essays collected in this volume is that the interrelationship between mobility and representation is a mutually productive and beneficial one inasmuch as a pronounced focus on mobility liberates representation from the stranglehold of a static imitation of ‘reality’, just as representations of mobility contribute to the construction of mobility itself (cf. Murray and Upstone 2014a: 3-9; 2014b: 191-193):

Mobility [...] becomes integral to a complication of representation, and a freeing of space from static representation and of representation from rigid spatialities. Representation as we conceive of it here is not about “capturing” practice in specific time and space but much more than that; this mobilisation of “representation” presents it as something that is active and reflective in time and space. (Murray and Upstone 2014a: 5)

In their conclusion to this collected volume, Murray and Upstone (cf. 2014b: 191-193) accordingly sum up one major result in the argument that all of these essays have shown that “space is inherently mobile – that if we accept that space is not a container but rather – as Lefebvre and Soja have famously argued – the sum of its practices, then how people move through space is central to this understanding” (Murray and Upstone 2014b: 193). In a nutshell, they condense the central insight gained throughout this volume in the following conclusion: “Movement both produces representation and is represented, in what amounts to a dynamic positive feedback loop, the result of which is both the representation and the production of an active spatiality” (Murray and Upstone 2014b: 193). While this collected volume has thus brought together the spatial turn and the “mobility turn” (Adey et al. 2014a: 3; cf. *ibid.* 1-20, and Urry 2007: 3-60) in its multi-faceted investigation into the interrelationship between mobility, representation and space, none of the essays assembled therein broaches the topic from a narratological perspective. Hence, the methodological question of how the narrative enactment of human motion in fiction can be apprehended in terms of the literary techniques of representation remains unaddressed. Nor do any of these essays develop a heuristic theoretical model to come to grips with the phenomenon of human motion in extratextual cultural reality and textual fictional representation.

Turning to the highly diversified field of narratology, I intend to show in the following that neither classical structuralist nor postclassical branches of narratology¹⁹ have addressed the central desideratum of developing a narratological semantics for motion in a systematic fashion. More generally, issues of motion and mobility have all too often been persistently peripheralized in extant narratological approaches. Accordingly, neither the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory* (2008 [2005]), edited by David Herman, Manfred Jahn and Marie-Laure Ryan, nor the online resource labelled “Living Handbook of Narratology” (Hühn et al.),²⁰ based on the two-volume *Handbook of Narratology* (edited by Hühn et al. 2014 [2009]), feature separate entries on motion, movement or mobility.²¹ The same holds true for the revised version of Gerald Prince’s *Dictionary of Narratology* (2003 [1987]). Given the crucial significance of issues of motion and mobility on both global and local planes in our contemporary

¹⁹ For the pluralization of narratology into various highly specialized subdisciplines, cf. the collected volume *Narratologies: New Perspectives on Narrative Analysis* (1999), edited by David Herman. For a systematic tabular overview of these different branches of narratology, see Nünning (2000: 351-352; cf. *ibid.* 349-355).

²⁰ Available online at <http://www.lhn.uni-hamburg.de/>, last retrieved 20.10.2015.

²¹ Despite its claim to offer an all-embracing overview, neither the fourth edition (2008) nor the latest, fifth edition of the *Metzler Lexikon Literatur- und Kulturtheorie* (2013), edited by Ansgar Nünning, contains separate entries on motion and mobility.

world, this blatant lack of interest in these issues on the part of narratology is a fundamental shortcoming.

In the case of classical structuralist narratology, this blind spot can be explained by referring to both the discipline's aversion to the cultural contextualization of literary texts (cf. Nünning 2000: 358) and its myopic obsession with temporal categories of analysis (cf. Herman 2002: 263; Nünning 2009: 34). Both factors prevented structuralist narratologists from taking the equally relevant parameters of space and motion in literary texts into due consideration.²² Consequently, no-one deemed it necessary to develop a sufficiently sophisticated analytical toolbox for the narrative representation of space and motion in the heyday of classical structuralist narratology (cf. Nünning 2009: 34; Herman 2002: 263). In the case of the highly diversified field of postclassical narratologies (cf., for example, the eponymous collected volume (1999), edited by David Herman), cognitive narratology has formulated the recognition that, as a complement to the temporal definition of narratives in classical narratology (cf. Herman 2002: 263), "narratives can also be thought of as systems of verbal or visual cues prompting their readers to spatialize storyworlds into evolving configurations of participants, objects, and places" (Herman 2002: 263). Within these dynamic and relational configurations, the movements performed by characters between the different places that make up the storyworld acquire central significance, because they function as prime connectors between them (thereby structuring the spatial dimension of the storyworld) and, what is more, propel the plot forward (cf. Herman 2002: 266, 298-299; Zoran 1984: 314-322).²³

As far as I know, the specific question of which narrative techniques can be deployed for the narrative representation of motion has not been addressed systematically in either classical or postclassical narratological approaches. If at all, this question is usually dealt with only peripherally, for example from a quantitative corpus-linguistic perspective (cf. Herman 2005: 125-149)²⁴ or in order to highlight the role that

²² For an exception to this neglect of space and motion in the structuralist phase of narratology, cf. Jurij Lotman's (1977 [1971]: 217-245) model of a spatial narratology (cf. Frank 2009: 65-68; see also Mahler 1999a: 35), which will be discussed in detail in Section 4.2.2 of this dissertation.

²³ As Herman (cf. 2002: 266) points out, "Gabriel Zoran (1984) argues that plot, commonly taken to be the sine qua non of narrative, 'must be seen as more than simply a structure in time. It includes routes, movement, directions, volume, simultaneity, etc., and thus is an active partner in the structuring of space in the [narrative] text' (Zoran 1984: 314)" (Herman 2002: 266).

²⁴ Cf. Herman's article "Quantitative Methods in Narratology: A Corpus-Based Study of Motion Events in Stories" (2005: 125-149). Though it also deals with the narrative representation of motion in fiction, this article uses a methodological approach to this problem that evidently differs fundamentally from mine inasmuch as it relies solely on corpus linguistics and cognitive

the narrative representation of movement tends to play in problematizing the traditionally clear-cut dichotomy between narration and description (cf. Ronen 1997: 274-286; Herman 2002: 266, 296-299), whereby the conventional inventory of narrative techniques of representation is mobilized – in a figurative sense (cf. Ronen 1997: 274-286; Herman 2002: 296-299). This is why I will deal with the specific issue of narrative techniques of representing motion in Sections 4.3.2 and 4.4.2. As for the reliance of narrative texts on the experiential dimension of human existence, Fludernik has introduced the concept of “experientiality”, defined as “the quasi-mimetic evocation of ‘real-life experience’” (Fludernik 1996: 12) in narrative texts in order to account for this dimension (cf. *ibid.* 12-13). Because, however, her conceptualization of experientiality relies primarily on cognitive-narratological parameters (cf. Fludernik 1996: 12-52), I will refine it tentatively through a more pronounced focus on the affective side of human experientiality (cf. Sections 2.2 and 4.2.1 of this dissertation). Because the contributions that different classical and postclassical narratological approaches can make to the development of a narratological toolbox for motion in fiction will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4 of this dissertation, I will restrict myself to presenting a brief summary of Nünning’s delineation of the project of a “cultural and historical narratology” (Nünning 2000: 345; cf. *ibid.* 345-373) in the following. His conception, I argue, provides important guidelines for my endeavour to develop a narratological semantics for motion that also takes into account contextualist aspects of this phenomenon – in short, for a *cultural* narratology of motion.

With the label of a jointly “cultural and historical narratology” (Nünning 2000: 357), Nünning designates an “integrated approach” (*ibid.*) that combines the analytical toolbox of narratology with the central recognitions and research strategies of cultural history in order to illuminate both the history of narrative techniques and the diachronic variability of the functionalization of these narrative techniques across literary and cultural history (cf. Nünning 2000: 357): “Conceptualizing narrative fictions as active cognitive forces in their own right, cultural narratology explores the ways in which the

narratology instead of making the attempt to apprehend the full ontological complexity of the phenomenon ‘human motion’ and its narrative enactment (See Section 1.3 for an outline of my context-oriented narratological approach to this problem). Cf. also Nünning’s article (2008a: 11-32) on the multiply prefigured representation of reality in the travelogue. The latter article posits that, from a structuralist narratological point of view, there are three dimensions of the literary representation of reality in the travelogue – “the paradigmatic axis of selection [...]; the syntagmatic axis of combination and relationing [...], that is, the narrative configuration [...], and [...] the discursive axis of communication [...] and perspectivization” (Nünning 2008a: 21). Based on this model, Nünning’s article analyses the various ways in which the text-specific configuration of these three axes impinges upon the respective travelogue’s overall meaning potential (cf. *ibid.* 19-26). What Nünning’s article does not do, however, is tackle the desideratum of elaborating a narratological semantics for the narrative enactment of the event of human motion itself.

formal properties of novels reflect, and influence, the unspoken mental assumptions and cultural issues of a given period” (Nünning 2000: 360). Thus, this conceptualization of narrative texts explicitly recognizes their ability to co-create the cultural contexts from which they emerge. Evidently, such a jointly narratological and contextualist approach is grounded in the fundamental insight into the “semanticization of literary forms” (Nünning 2008c: 652; cf. *ibid.* 652-653), that is, it not only recognizes narrative techniques as formal features of a literary text but also conceptualizes them as narrative modes that are always inevitably implicated in processes of cultural construction (cf. Nünning 2000: 360-361). As a major example of the mutually beneficial combination of narratology and cultural history, Nünning refers to Said’s postcolonial concept of “structures of attitude and reference” (Said 1993: 61 et seq., 73, 89, 114, 134, 157), arguing that its application to concrete literary texts could be enriched by a more precise identification of the textual features it is meant to capture as well as by a more accurate “narratological characterization of the narrative strategies that are involved in the reflection, or generation, of the cultural fictions of imperialism” (Nünning 2000: 364; cf. *ibid.*).

While Said merely states that the features to be searched for are “setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, *not* the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original” (Said 2003 [1978]: 21), Nünning refines this list by stressing that it requires a narratological “analysis of narrative structure, plot, point of view, narration, focalization and characterization [as] a prerequisite for determining the role that novels dealing with the empire may have played in the making of imperialist mentalities” (Nünning 2000: 365; cf. *ibid.*). Only by paying close attention to the text-specific configuration of such genuinely narratological parameters, Nünning concludes, does it become possible to formulate reliable hypotheses regarding the cultural functionalization of novels and other literary genres for the overall European imperial project (cf. Nünning 2000: 365). Evidently, the same holds true for the renegotiation of such imperialist functionalizations of literary texts in postcolonial literatures. While issues such as the renegotiation of identity and / versus alterity (cf. e.g. Sommer 2001; Fludernik 1999a: 71-96) have figured prominently in contextualist narratological analyses of postcolonial fiction, to my knowledge no-one has as yet made the attempt to develop a narratological vocabulary for the culturally contextualized analysis of the narrative enactment of motion in general, and migratory movements in particular, in contemporary Asian British novels.

In the same vein, it must be noted that, while Dennerlein has elaborated a “narratology of space” (*Narratologie des Raumes*, 2009) in her doctoral dissertation, a corresponding narratological semantics for the narrative representation of motion in fiction remains an urgent desideratum in the study of literature and culture. Once again, motion is conspicuous by its absence in narratology. In contrast to Dennerlein’s decontextualized conception of a narratology of space, which mainly builds upon the traditional notion of narrative space as a container in which the characters’ actions take place and, concomitantly, recent insights into the cognitive processing of textual information on space in the reader’s mind (cf. Dennerlein 2009: 196-205), I will deliberately integrate contextualist elements into my conception of a narratological toolbox for the narrative enactment of characters’ movements across the storyworld, thus turning it into a *cultural* narratology of motion.

Finally, I will give a – necessarily highly selective – survey of research on contemporary Asian British novels²⁵ in order to show that, while the *effects* of transnational migration – such as, most prominently, the narrative renegotiation of traditional concepts of identity and alterity – have received ample attention in recent studies concerned with the field of Asian British writing, the *event* of transnational migratory movement itself – and its narrative enactment – is usually bypassed as a mere contextual precondition for the emergence of “hyphenated” identities *sensu* Mishra (cf. 1996: 433 et seq.). In his doctoral dissertation *Fictions of Migration: Ein Beitrag zur Theorie und Gattungstypologie des zeitgenössischen interkulturellen Romans in Großbritannien* (2001), Roy Sommer combines concepts from postcolonial literary studies and narratology in order to develop a context-oriented, decidedly intercultural theoretical and methodological approach to the literary enactment of identity, alterity and their variable interrelationships in contemporary British *fictions of*

²⁵ Because this brief research overview is concerned exclusively with studies on Asian British *fiction* (however contextualized they may be in their methodological orientation), I at least want to mention several publications dealing with the Asian British context from historical, sociological, and / or cultural studies perspectives. For a history of the Asian presence in Britain prior to the post-Second World War waves of postcolonial migration in this direction, cf. Rozina Visram’s monograph *Asians in Britain: 400 Years of History* (2002). See also the sourcebook *South Asians and the Shaping of Britain, 1870-1950* (2012), edited by Ruvani Ranasinha et al. For a jointly historical and sociological enquiry into Asian migration to Europe in past and present, cf. the collected volume *Asian Migrants in Europe: Transcultural Connections* (2014), edited by Sylvia Hahn and Stan Nadel. See also the collected volume *Migration: The Asian Experience* (1994), edited by Judith Brown and Rosemary Foot. For a jointly sociological, cultural studies and, above all, intersectional approach to the question of diasporic identity formation in the Asian British context, see Avtar Brah’s study *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (2002 [1996]). Finally, Ziauddin Sardar’s monograph *Balti Britain: A Provocative Journey through Asian Britain* (2008) interweaves personal and collective history in a highly enjoyable, if necessarily subjective account of the state of affairs in contemporary Asian Britain.

migration (Sommer 2001; cf. *ibid.* 20-77, 194-198), a genre label he has coined as an alternative umbrella term to black British literature in order to foreground one significant common characteristic of many African British, Caribbean British and Asian British novels: the undeniably central importance of the *effects* of the experience of migration to their protagonists (and, of course, to their authors) in terms of their individual processes of identity formation (cf. Sommer 2001: 6-8). Accordingly, he expands the meaning of “migration” beyond its “literal meaning of a spatial movement” (Sommer 2001: 6) to include the general sense of “oscillating between two dichotomous cultural poles, be it between old and new homes, between first-generation immigrants and the *black Britons* born in Great Britain, between different minorities or between minorities on the one hand and the majority’s culture on the other” (*ibid.*; italics in original). While this conceptual expansion enables him to broach several highly relevant issues directly *related* to the phenomenon of migration, the *actual event* of transnational migratory movement and its narrative enactment unfortunately recedes into the background of analytical focus.

In the introduction (Murphy and Sim 2008a) to their collected volume *British Asian Fiction: Framing the Contemporary* (2008), the editors Neil Murphy and Wai-Chew Sim likewise posit the foregrounding of processes of identity formation as a central thematic focus of contemporary Asian British novels. Examining several literary texts that “explore the dynamics of multiethnic belonging and affiliation in Britain” (Murphy and Sim 2008a: 5), the contributions to this collected volume testify – just like Sommer’s dissertation – to the predominant place that issues of identity, alterity and their shifting boundaries occupy in many studies concerned with the vibrant field of contemporary Asian British writing (cf. Murphy and Sim 2008a: 5-7). In the same vein as Sommer (cf. 2001: 6, 9-16), they moreover problematize an uncritical, homogenizing application of postcolonial notions of hybridity (cf. Bhabha 1994b: 28-56) to contemporary British Asian fiction by pointing to the fact that such an approach based on a “ready-made critical apparatus” (Murphy and Sim 2008a: 2) most often leads to a neglect of the artistic individuality of each and every one of these novels as manifest in its “formal and aesthetic features” (Murphy and Sim 2008a: 1; cf. *ibid.* 1-3). All in all, it is thus the *impact* of contemporary phenomena such as globalization, cosmopolitanism and transnational migration on the discursive renegotiation of identity concepts in these literary texts that occupies centre-stage in the contributions to this collected volume (cf. Murphy and Sim 2008a: 7, and 1-9), and not the experiential event of transnational migratory movement itself.

In the concluding chapter of her monograph *British Asian Fiction: Twenty-first-century Voices* (2010), Sara Upstone confirms Murphy and Sim's (cf. 2008a: 1-3) hypothesis that homogenizing conceptual labels developed for first-generation migrants' postcolonial literature, such as hybridity, prove to be a largely inadequate analytical framework for the examination of literary works written by the latest generation of Asian British authors (cf. Upstone 2010: 209). As well, Upstone highlights the fact that their frequently dominant preoccupation with questions of identity formation in an allegedly "post-ethnic" (Upstone 2010: 212) society does not mean that twenty-first-century Asian British authors can be accused of succumbing to the lure of uncritically celebrating the utopian potential commonly associated with such labels as "post-ethnic". On the contrary, she contends, they often treat this issue in a considerably more pessimistic light, for instance by foregrounding the fact that the renegotiation of individual identities under the banner of identity markers other than race is by no means tantamount to an overall dissolution of discrete identities. Instead, it frequently merely signals a shift towards new essentialisms centred, for example, on the assertion of masculinity. In a nutshell, the old problem appears in a new guise (cf. Upstone 2010: 212-216). As this very brief overview of relatively recent studies concerned with contemporary Asian British fiction²⁶ has shown, the examination of identity issues in these novels takes precedence in these studies over the context-oriented *narratological* analysis of the narrative enactment of the experience of human motion in general and transnational migration in particular to the extent that the latter remains a blind spot in research on contemporary Asian British writing.

To conclude this brief research overview, I have identified two core desiderata in its course, one theoretical, the other methodological. First, no-one has as yet (at least to my knowledge) developed a heuristic theoretical model that accounts for the multidimensionality of human motion in both extratextual cultural reality and textual fictional representation. Second, the development of a cultural narratology of motion – that is, a context-oriented narratological semantics for the narrative representation of the experience of human motion – in contemporary Asian British novels likewise remains an urgent desideratum in the study of literature and culture. In addition to these two pivotal desiderata, three further, related desiderata that will be of fundamental relevance in the further course of this dissertation can be singled out from

²⁶ Further recent studies concerned with contemporary Asian British fiction include, for example, Jutta Weingarten's doctoral dissertation *Narrating Generations: Representations of Generationality and Genealogy in Contemporary British Asian Narratives* (2014), and Devon Campbell-Hall's doctoral thesis *Writing Asian Britain in Contemporary Anglophone Literature* (2007). See also Dave Gunning's monograph *Race and Antiracism in Black British and British Asian Literature* (2012 [2010]).

the secondary literature discussed in this research overview: first, a specifically *narratological* investigation into the complex reciprocity of spatial and mental mobility²⁷ in the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels; second, the analytical elucidation of the relationship between the narrative enactment of transnational migratory movements and the narrative evocation of transculturality in these texts, and, third, the contextualized scrutiny of the emergence of narratively enacted storyworld topologies as well as their relationship to both extratextual cultural topologies in ‘reality’ and to the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British fiction. Starting out from the five desiderata identified here, the following section will delineate the theoretical and methodological trajectory I have chosen to take on my way towards a cultural narratology of motion for contemporary Asian British novels.

1.3 Towards a Cultural Narratology of Motion: Main Hypotheses, Objectives and Structure

Subsequent to the research overview provided in the preceding section, this section will delineate how I intend to tackle the five desiderata identified above. As has become clear in the course of my necessarily highly selective research overview, this doctoral dissertation proceeds from the argument that there is a theoretical, methodological and conceptual gap between the general significance of issues related to motion and mobility in contemporary society, literature and culture and the relative neglect the category ‘motion’ has suffered from in classical and postclassical narratology. Taking this deficiency as a starting point, my doctoral thesis sets out to explore possibilities and limitations of bringing together research on, on the one hand, motion in literary and cultural studies in general and, on the other, classical and postclassical narratology in a joint methodological project labelled cultural narratology of motion. In the following, the

²⁷ In her contribution to the collected volume *Researching and Representing Mobilities: Transdisciplinary Encounters* (2014; edited by Lesley Murray and Sara Upstone), Sara Upstone broaches the problem of this intricate interplay in postcolonial literature from a decidedly postcolonial perspective by demonstrating how mental mobility compensates for physical mobility in space in cases where the individual protagonist is denied the latter by external historical circumstances (cf. Upstone 2014: 39-56). What she refrains from doing, however, is complementing her postcolonial reflections on the problematization of Western concepts of mobility in postcolonial fiction from the 1980s with a genuinely *narratological* analysis of the complex and intricate interplay of physical and mental mobility in these novels. Consequently, the latter task remains a desideratum in the study of literature.

fundamental theoretical hypotheses upon which this project rests shall accordingly be stated alongside the central objectives this study pursues in its endeavour to analyse how the experience of space and motion is narrated in contemporary Asian British novels.

First, I argue – building on the provisional definition of motion offered in Section 1.1 above as movement by an agent across space over time – that, in both extratextual cultural and textual fictional contexts, the complex phenomenon of human motion can be analysed productively through the lens of a trialectics of motion, that is, by scrutinizing the combinatorial interplay of its three constitutive dimensions: agency, spatiality and temporality. In order to avoid the impression of assuming an altogether too simplistic mimetic relationship between human motion in extratextual cultural reality and the literary enactment of this phenomenon in narrative fiction, I furthermore contend, following Nünning (2008a: 11-32), that the literary enactment of motion additionally involves genuinely narratological dimensions, such as, most importantly, the “[...] selection, [...] combination [...] and [...] perspectivization [...]” (Nünning 2008a: 21) of movements in the literary text (cf. Nünning 2008a: 19-26). Consequently, the question of how the three constitutive dimensions of the cultural phenomenon of human motion relate to these narratological dimensions of its literary representation will be of paramount importance to my overall methodological endeavour of developing a cultural narratology of motion. From these two main hypotheses, the two prime objectives this dissertation will pursue can be deduced. First, it will elaborate a trialectics of motion, that is, a heuristic theoretical model whose central purpose lies in explicating the emergence of the cultural phenomenon of human motion from the multi-layered combinatorial interplay of the three formative dimensions agency, spatiality and temporality. Second, it will build upon this innovative model in order to develop a specifically narratological toolbox to analyse the narrative enactment of this phenomenon, that is, a cultural narratology of motion attuned to the context of contemporary Asian British novels. The productivity of this cultural narratology of motion for the analytical description of the narrative enactment of this phenomenon shall then be tested by means of three exemplary primary text analyses.

Third, this study is grounded in the hypothesis that the emergence of transculturality in contemporary Asian British novels likewise lends itself particularly well to an examination by means of the analytical grid of a trialectics of motion – the complex interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality – precisely because its narrative evocation tends to occur in conjunction with the narrative representation of

transnational migratory movements. Accordingly, the third principal objective it pursues consists in a contextualized scrutiny of the narrative evocation of transculturality in contemporary Asian British novels, with a particular focus on its interrelatedness with the narrative enactment of transnational migratory movements. In the same vein, it is justified to assume – following Ette (cf. 2005: 23; 2012: 29; see also Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 20-24) – that storyworld topologies – defined as narratively evoked topological macro-configurations of fictional storyworlds – come into being as a result of the narrative enactment of agents' movements across the storyworld. Therefore, my fourth main goal in this study is to subject the emergence of narratively evoked storyworld topologies in contemporary Asian British novels to a contextualized examination, that is, to an examination focused on the interrelationship between these textual fictional topologies and extratextual cultural topologies. Finally, the fifth principal objective consists in scrutinizing the narrative enactment of the intricate interplay of spatial movements conducted by characters across the storyworld with their mental mobility in contemporary Asian British novels. Throughout this dissertation, I intend to show how productively the mathematical concept of the vector – introduced to the study of literature as a metaphor for motion by Ette (cf. 2003: 113; 2004: 227, 250, 251; 2005: 11-20; 2012: 29-32, 39) – can be applied to the narrative enactment of motion and mental mobility in general, and transnational migratory movements in particular, in contemporary Asian British novels.

In the following, I will delineate how I intend to translate these five major goals into a concrete structure for this doctoral dissertation. To begin with, the theoretical metastructure this study will follow shall be sketched briefly. While the theory part of my dissertation (Chapter 2) will elaborate a jointly ontological and epistemological model of *movement practice* (conceptualized in analogy with Lefebvre's "spatial practice" [1991: 33; cf. *ibid.* 33-46]), the methodology part (Chapter 4) will be concerned with transferring its central tenets to the realm of *literary representations of movement*, inevitably modifying this trialectical heuristic in the process of its travelling to the domain of narratology. Chapter 4 will also focus briefly on the complementary phenomenon of *movements of representation*, conceived of as both diachronic changes in literary representations of movement and intertextual relations among them in various different literary texts.²⁸

²⁸ With this triadic metastructure of my doctoral dissertation, I am evidently tentatively transferring Lefebvre's "conceptual triad" (Lefebvre 1991: 33; cf. *ibid.* 38-39) of "the production of space" (Lefebvre 1991 [1974]) to the phenomenon of human motion. While the first element – movement practice – stands in a conceptual relationship of analogy to Lefebvre's "spatial practice" (Lefebvre 1991: 33), my conceptualization of the other two components – representations of movement and movements of representation – differs from Lefebvre's in that

In concrete terms of textual structure, this study will proceed as follows in its endeavour to tackle the research question of how the experience of space and motion is narrated in contemporary Asian British novels. Chapter 2 will lay the theoretical foundation for the cultural narratology of motion by developing a trialectics of motion, that is, a heuristic theoretical model designed to account for the multidimensionality of human motion. More precisely, it will explore the role(s) played by each of the three dimensions that I consider constitutive of human motion – spatiality, agency and temporality – in the processual emergence of this phenomenon in extratextual cultural reality (Sections 2.1 to 2.3 of this dissertation). In a second step, the central insights gained in the course of these three sections shall then be synthesized into a trialectics of motion in Section 2.4 of this dissertation.

Following up on that, Chapter 3 will contextualize this heuristic model of a trialectics of motion with regard to further cultural issues related to human motion in the contemporary age, as well as to its narrative enactment in contemporary Asian British novels. First, Section 3.1 will tentatively reconceptualize the phenomenon of transculturality through the lens of the trialectics of motion developed in Chapter 2. The following section – 3.2 – will then provide a brief introduction to the historical, social and cultural context in which contemporary Asian British fiction is written, and, what is more, reflect upon the possibility of conceptualizing it as a transcultural mode of writing. Thereupon, Section 3.3 will contextualize human motion in three further regards: first, in respect of transnational migration as one principal type of spatial movement in the twenty-first century (Section 3.3.1); second, with regard to the construction – and deconstruction – of borders and boundaries in its interlocking with processes of identity formation (Section 3.3.2), and, third, in regard to spatialized results of transnational migration (Section 3.3.3). Finally, Section 3.4 will investigate the emergence of macro-structural movement patterns and corresponding topologies from the narrative enactment of transnational migratory movements in contemporary Asian British novels.

Based on the heuristic trialectics of motion and its contextualization, Chapter 4 will elaborate the methodological core of this doctoral dissertation, that is, the cultural narratology of motion proper. To this end, Section 4.2 will delineate prolegomena for a cultural narratology of motion by examining, from a decidedly narratological

it is restricted *a priori* to the domain of the literary enactment of human motion and the diachronic changes and intertextual relations perceptible in this highly specific realm, respectively. Finally, with the designation 'movements of representation', I am of course echoing Soja's term for the third component of what he calls Lefebvre's "trialectics of spatiality" (Soja 1996: 74; cf. *ibid.* 65-68, 73-82), which is "spaces of representation" (Soja 1996: 67; cf. *ibid.* 67-68), rather than Donald Nicholson Smith's translation "representational spaces" (Lefebvre 1991 [1974]: 33).

perspective, the role played by each of the three constituent dimensions of human motion in the narrative enactment of this phenomenon: agency (Section 4.2.1), spatiality (Section 4.2.2), and temporality (Section 4.2.3). Grounded in the recognition that the human experience of moving across space over time is always ultimately anchored in the human body as its ineluctable reference and vantage point (cf. Fludernik 1996: 13, 30; Beck 2014: 41-43), Section 4.3 will focus on the affective and cognitive dimensions of the narrative enactment of human motion by correlating the former with the issue of the narrative saliency of the movements represented, and by bringing together the latter with the genuinely narratological question of the specific narrative techniques deployed in their narrative enactment. Finally, Section 4.4 will integrate the preceding reflections into a narratological semantics for human motion in three steps. First, Section 4.4.1 will reflect upon the *implications* of transferring the mathematical concept of the vector to narratology as a conceptual metaphor for motion. Second, Section 4.4.2 will correlate this metaphor with analytical categories from structuralist narratology in order to develop a descriptive vocabulary for the narrative enactment of real-and-imagined movements that brings together the cognitive and narratological facets of my research object with its experiential and contextual dimensions. Third, Section 4.4.3 will elaborate further on the contextual dimension of my research interest by examining the emergence of narratively evoked storyworld topologies from the narrative representation of such movements in contemporary Asian British novels.

Using the theoretical, contextualist and methodological framework developed in the preceding three chapters, Chapters 5 to 7 will then conduct motion-oriented primary text analyses of three selected Asian British novels: Hari Kunzru's *The Impressionist* (2002), Neel Mukherjee's *A Life Apart* (2011 [2008]), and Tishani Doshi's *The Pleasure Seekers* (2010). Finally, Chapter 8 will wrap up the central results of this study and offer some thoughts on the possibilities and limitations of transferring the cultural narratology of motion to other literary contexts.

Before embarking upon the theoretical, contextualist and methodological reflections that will form the gist of this study, I at least want to briefly broach the issue of the text-context nexus in regard to the cultural narratology of motion aspired to. Building on Neumann's hypothesis that literary texts co-create their contexts (cf. Neumann 2009: 116; Nünning 2000: 360; Nünning 2006: 169), I will take recourse in Ricoeur's "threefold mimesis" (Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52; cf. *ibid.* 52-87; see also Chapter 2 of this dissertation) in order to justify the intended transfer of my general

theoretical reflections on human motion in extratextual cultural reality to be developed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation to the genuinely narratological realm of the narrative representation of human motion in literary texts to be conducted in Chapter 4. In essence, I argue that a trialectics of motion – that is, a heuristic model that accounts for the multidimensionality of human motion – is indispensable as a theoretical bedrock upon which the cultural narratology of motion aspired to shall rest. In the same vein as Nünning (cf. 2008a: 14-16), I thus contend that Ricoeur's model of the threefold mimesis is transferable from temporality to human motion, because literary "configuration[s]" (Ricoeur 1984: 64) of human motion are likewise "prefigured" (ibid. 54) by extratextual cultural notions of motion, just as they themselves are capable of "refigur[ing]" (ibid. 71) extratextual cultural 'reality' through the recipient's act of reading (cf. Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52-87; Nünning 2008a: 14-16). Accordingly, the trialectics of motion shall account primarily for the prefiguration of literary representations of human motion, whereas the cultural narratology of motion shall cover the domain of its narrative configurations. As it could only be dealt with via an empirical study of readers' reactions to the narrative representation of human motion in various literary texts, the issue of refiguration will not be considered in its own right in this study.

With its double-edged objective of developing transferable analytical categories for the narratological description of narrative representations of human motion and of contextualizing them with regard to the literary practice(s) of enacting this phenomenon in contemporary Asian British novels, my project of a cultural narratology of motion is deliberately situated at the interface of classical structuralist narratology and Nünning's postclassical approach of a "cultural and historical narratology" (Nünning 2000: 345; cf. ibid. 345-373).²⁹ Therefore, I conclude the introduction to my dissertation with a self-conscious caveat concerning the conception of this study as a whole: it is marked by a fundamental conflict arising from the tension inherent in this double-edged objective, because on the one hand, I strive to design my cultural narratology of motion as sensitively to the specific literary, historical and sociocultural context of contemporary Asian British novels as possible, while on the other, I nevertheless want to make its fundamental conceptual innovations transferable to other historical and sociocultural contexts. Being aware of the resultant, ultimately indissoluble friction, I will oscillate between these two poles in the following theoretical, contextualist and methodological considerations.

²⁹ For a tabular overview of the main differences between classical structuralist narratology and the various postclassical branches of narratology, cf. Nünning (2000: 358).

2 Triangles of Motion – Human Motion as a Multidimensional Phenomenon

This chapter will develop the theoretical foundation for my cultural narratology of motion by sketching a trialectics of motion, that is, an innovative heuristic model designed to account for the fundamental multidimensionality of human motion in both actuality (movement practice) and fictionality (literary representations of movement).³⁰ This trialectics of motion rests upon the fundamental research hypothesis that human motion and its narrative enactment³¹ can be analysed productively by scrutinizing the combinatorial interplay of three formative dimensions: spatiality, agency and temporality.³² The first three sections shall thus be concerned with explicating how a contextualized analysis of each of these three principal dimensions of human motion can help illuminate this complex phenomenon. The concluding section will then synthesize these components into the heuristic trialectics of motion aspired to and exemplify its usefulness in the analysis of the narrative enactment of human motion by means of a concrete literary example. Therewith, this study will accomplish pioneering work for the emergence of a “vectorial turn” (Ette 2005: 19) in literary and cultural studies: deliberately going beyond the spatial turn, this innovative theoretical heuristic correlates spatiality, agency and temporality in a single motion-oriented framework for the first time.

In this endeavour, I am following Bachmann-Medick’s postulate that, in order to qualify as a “cultural turn” (Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]), any fundamental reorientation in the study of literature and culture must not only (re-)discover genuinely new or long-neglected subject areas but also provide innovative analytical concepts

³⁰ Cf. Section 1.3 of this dissertation for a brief enquiry into the possibility of conceptualizing the phenomenon of human motion in analogy with Lefebvre’s ground-breaking theoretical framework for the analysis of the sociocultural production of space (cf. Lefebvre 1991 [1974]: 38-39).

³¹ In the even more complex issue of the narrative representation of human motion, further dimensions come into play, such as the selection, combination and perspectivization (cf. Nünning 2008a: 19-26, particularly 21) of individual movements, the narrative techniques of representation deployed in their enactment and the overall narrative saliency attributed to them (cf. Nünning 2008a: 19-26, particularly 21; see also Chapter 4 of this dissertation).

³² Evidently, the trialectics of motion to be developed in this chapter stands in an analogical relationship with Soja’s ontological “trialectics of being” (Soja 1996: 71; cf. *ibid.*: 70-73), which is constituted by the trialectical interplay of “Spatiality, Historicity, and Sociality (summary terms for the social production of Space, Time, and Being-in-the world)” (Soja 1996: 71). In contrast to the latter’s problematic all-embracing purview, my trialectical model merely represents a *heuristic* approach to the phenomenon of human motion in contemporary literature and culture.

that should ideally be applicable beyond the narrow confines of the respective subject area (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2014: 25-26):

It is possible to speak of a turn only if the new focus of research changes from the content level of new fields of investigation to the level of analytical categories and concepts, if it no longer restricts itself to identifying new *objects* of research, but turns itself into a *means* and *medium* of gaining innovative insights instead. (Bachmann-Medick 2014: 25-26; my translation)

Accordingly, I will develop and operationalize analytical categories through which the first steps towards a transformation of human motion into a medium of knowledge enhancement in literary and cultural studies can be undertaken. Due to the transdisciplinary nature of the research object – human motion – the realization of this goal requires the integration of central recognitions from mobility studies (cf. e.g. Urry 2007; Bergmann, Hoff and Sager 2008; Murray and Upstone 2014), postmodern cultural geography and the spatial turn (cf. e.g. Soja 1989 and 1996; Lefebvre 1991 [1974]), postmodern anthropology (cf. e.g. Augé 2008 [1995]; Ingold 2011b and 2011d [2000]) and postcolonial studies (cf. e.g. Said 2003 [1978] and 1993; Spivak 2010 [1985]; Bhabha 1994; Upstone 2009) alongside Bakhtin's concept of the "chronotope" (Bakhtin 1981a [1973]: 84; cf. *ibid.* 84–258), Ricoeur's "threefold mimesis" (1984 [1983]: 52; cf. *ibid.* 52-87) and Ette's "poetics of motion" (2005: 18; cf. *ibid.* 18-22; see also Ette 2012: 26-32) into a coherent, contextualized and problem-oriented heuristic framework designed to illuminate the intricate phenomena of motion and mobility in contemporary literature and culture. In accordance with their relevance for the interplay of the three constitutive dimensions of human motion – spatiality, agency and temporality – I want to reframe these various insights by bringing together these three complexes of reflection on literature and culture in my prospective conceptualization of a vectorial turn as an agentive-spatio-temporal turn³³ that deliberately goes beyond both the relatively recent spatial turn and the earlier historicist "temporocentrism" (Casey 1997: xii) to which the spatial turn was a reaction.

Before delving into the first dimension of motion to be considered here – spatiality – I shall briefly focus on the question of why it is so difficult to grasp the phenomenon of human motion conceptually in the study of literature and culture. For one thing, this complex intricacy of human motion is rooted in its fundamental processuality, that is, in the fact that, to a certain extent, it eludes our desire for

³³ In his discussion of Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope, Frank explicitly acknowledges its potential to think the current spatial turn one step further "in the sense of a *spatio-temporal turn*" (Frank 2009: 75; cf. *ibid.*). However, no one (at least to my knowledge) has as yet included the dimension of individual human agency into attempts to refine the terminological vocabulary and analytical tools provided by the proponents of the spatial turn.

definitional fixation precisely because of its perpetual being-on-the-move: as a virtual *perpetuum mobile*, human motion by its very nature resists the human desire for stable ordering, systematic classification and once-and-for-all taxonomization, because, as Ette (cf. 2005: 18-19) rightly points out, any such act of terminological definition involves the deliberate confinement of a particular phenomenon to a henceforth clearly demarcated conceptual space. In other words, epistemological categorization always implies a conceptual spatialization, which in turn means that other dimensions of the phenomenon in question are neglected or even ignored completely. In the case of human motion, this process of spatial fixation is particularly problematic, for it leads to the filtering out of not only the temporal dimension (cf. Ette 2005: 18-19), but also the agentive dimension, both of which are largely responsible for the dynamism characteristic of human motion.³⁴ Therefore, privileging the spatial dimension of human motion over its two other equally important constituents is an act of epistemological violence that destroys precisely the dynamic nature that distinguishes human motion from other phenomena (cf. Ette 2005: 18-19).³⁵

What results from the preceding reflections thus could be called ‘the observer’s paradox regarding human motion’. In order to analyse this phenomenon fruitfully, we are forced to develop problem-oriented categories, models and theories, yet it is frequently the elusive dynamics of the very object of our analysis that tends to get lost in this process of theoretical and methodological fixation. While it is certainly true that categorization requires a certain level of stability (after all, a definition needs to delimit the conceptual reach of the term it defines in order to be useful), any attempt to come to terms with the specific phenomenon of human motion should nevertheless make its concepts as dynamic, mobile and transferable as possible (cf. Ette 2005: 18-19, 26). Therefore, my heuristic trialectics of motion explicitly takes into account all three formative dimensions at work in both the narrative and real-world configurations of motion.

³⁴ My justification for the necessity of a trialectics of motion expands Ette’s justification for his desideratum of a “poetics of motion” (Ette 2005: 18) by explicitly integrating the dimension of human agency into the overall picture (cf. Ette 2005: 18-19 and 2012: 28-29).

³⁵ Ette compares this act of epistemological violence to another telling example of contentual reduction when he states that “the suppression of motion and its semantic reduction to the spatial dimension leads to fundamental distortions that cannot simply be ignored, because this would be tantamount to dismissing the act of cutting out one dimension in the process of transferring a three-dimensional globe onto a two-dimensional map as irrelevant and concealing the inevitable difficulties of cartographic projection” (Ette 2005: 18-19; my translation).

As a down-to-earth concretization of this relatively abstract trialectical model, I introduce the concept of ontological vectoriality,³⁶ defined as the combinatorial interplay of spatiality, human agency and temporality in the extratextual ‘real-world’ or textual fictional configuration of a concrete individualized movement.³⁷ On the perceptible surface of extratextual cultural configurations of movement, vectoriality takes the shape of a conjuncture; that is, the complexity of the multifactorial processual interplay behind the movement perceived is routinely obscured by the direct presence of the act of moving itself. In other words, we only see an agent moving across space over time. What we usually do not perceive directly, however, is the complex multitude of interacting factors that enable and motivate this particular person to move. This is why a heuristic epistemological model – such as the trialectics of motion proposed here – is required to disentangle the intricate combinatorial interplay of the different factors that render human motion possible in the first place, among them, most prominently, spatiality, human agency and temporality.

I intend to point a heuristic way out of the fundamental dilemma resulting from the stark contrast between the stasis of conceptual definitions and the dynamic nature of human motion. Although I am fully aware that this tension can never be completely resolved, I nonetheless hold the view that a pragmatic but comprehensive approach to the problem of human motion comes closest to an ideal solution. With this in mind, I will now explicate the implications of the first constitutive dimension of human motion – spatiality – for my ultimate goal, the development of a cultural narratology of motion.

³⁶ The scientific concept of the vector has been transferred from mathematics and physics to the study of literature and culture by Ette (cf. 2003: 113; 2004: 227, 250, 251; 2005: 11-20; 2012: 29-32, 39). Cf. also Ette’s concepts of “vectorization” (2005: 11; cf. *ibid.* 11-12; Ette 2012: 29-32) and “vectoricity” (2012: 216, 240, 268). For a methodological reflection on the *implications* of transferring the mathematical (and physical) concept of the vector to the study of literature and culture, see Section 4.4.1 of this dissertation.

³⁷ Obviously, the central common feature between my concept of ontological vectoriality and the mathematical concept of the vector in Euclidian space is their three-dimensionality (cf. Hummel 1965: 16-17 for the latter), or, more precisely, their coming into being as the result of the combinatorial interplay of three dimensions: spatiality, agency and temporality in the former case and length, width and height in the latter.

2.1 The Spatial Dimension of Motion

This section will focus on the multi-faceted role that the spatial dimension plays in the emergence of human motion from a cultural studies perspective. In accordance with the general epistemological thrust of the trialectics of motion aspired to, the contribution of this first constitutive dimension to the elucidation of human motion shall be scrutinized not in isolation, but in its manifold interactions with the two other formative dimensions of this research object, agency and temporality. Therefore, this section will lay particular emphasis on explicating the interrelations between spatiality and the final product – motion – and between the spatial dimension and its agentive and temporal equivalents.

To begin with, this study is based on the assumption that space³⁸ and motion are co-constitutive of one another (cf. Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 20-21). More precisely, the role spatiality plays in the formation of human motion is itself a double-edged one inasmuch as space both enables and hinders motion at the same time:³⁹ space renders human motion possible by providing the physical frame conditions for it; simultaneously, however, it is these physical surface configurations that represent the most important source for what I call external friction, that is, the partial hampering or complete obstruction of the traveller's mobility by tangible obstacles such as huge mountain ranges, rocks, avalanches, rivers or yawning abysses.⁴⁰ From an *experiential* point of view, the question of whether space facilitates or hinders human motion is frequently dependent on the individual agent's current perspectival positionality. This is why one and the same spatial entity can function as either facilitator or frictional factor

³⁸ See Section 2.2 of this dissertation for a brief thematization of the 'space and / versus place' nexus from the perspective of human experience.

³⁹ Contrary to popular belief, the physical friction caused by the spatial frame conditions is not an altogether negative phenomenon: fulfilling a double-edged function vis-à-vis human motion, friction not merely hampers motion, but also renders it possible in the first place (cf. Cresswell 2014: 113): "On the one hand [...], friction is a force that slows things down or stops them. On the other hand friction is necessary for things to move. If you try and run on ice in shoes with smooth soles you will simply fall over. If, however, you use rubber soles and walk on tarmac it is friction that creates the possibility of movement. In other words, friction hinders and enables mobilities" (Cresswell 2014: 113).

⁴⁰ In Böhme's view, the experiential aspect of space as a source of physical friction constitutes a suitable basis for a provisional definition of motion as "a material movement of bodies in space necessitating the exertion of physical force" (Böhme 2005a: xv; my translation). This is precisely what makes human motion on earth essentially different from the movement of physical objects in a vacuum or under Newtonian conditions: "[...] Under the conditions that we as bodies are subject to on this earth, each and every movement in space requires a physical effort, an exertion of force, i.e. work. There is nothing that moves 'by itself', and, as soon as the physical force that keeps me or something moving has been exhausted, the body comes to rest – with a certain time-lag, yet inevitably" (Böhme 2005a: xv; cf. *ibid.*).

to human motion. To give a concrete example, a high mountain represents a huge obstacle to the smooth performance of one's individual movement if the agent is located at its foot. If, however, the wanderer is standing on top of it, the same mountain facilitates movement by accelerating the walker's pace on her way down. Conversely, movements also contribute decisively to the (trans)formation of cultural spaces (cf. Ette 2012: 29, 39-41), because the act of breaking a way across a hostile spatial environment through collective human effort in order to enable human motion necessarily transforms this space to considerable extent. To put the same contention more radically, each and every movement across space contributes to the continual transformation of the latter's cultural surface configuration (cf. de Certeau 1984 [1980]: 97; see also Dünne 2015: 44).⁴¹

In general, the relationship between space and movement can thus be conceived of as a reciprocal one: while spaces prefigure and shape movements across them, these movements shape the very spaces they traverse (cf. Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 20-21; Dünne 2015: 44, 49).⁴² In analogy with Beck's distinction between "subjective constitution of space and spatial subject constitution" (Beck 2014: 40), I therefore refer to the intricate relationship between space and movement as a dialectical interplay between the spatial constitution of movement and the movement-bound formation of space. This conceptualization of the interrelationship between space and motion distinguishes itself through its compatibility with one of the central tenets propounded by postmodern cultural geography – the fundamental relationality of space (cf. Lefebvre 1991 [1974]: 46; see also Soja 1989 and 1996; Beck 2014: 29) – precisely because it explicitly acknowledges that agents' movements *generate* the relational configuration of places connected by paths that is space (cf. Dünne 2015: 44, 49).⁴³ In the same vein, Hallet and Neumann posit that "movement in space fulfils a

⁴¹ As for pedestrian movements in urban contexts, de Certeau characterizes their transformative nature as follows: "They [pedestrian movements] cannot be counted because each unit has a qualitative character: a style of tactile apprehension and kinesthetic appropriation. Their swarming mass is an innumerable collection of singularities. *Their intertwined paths give their shape to spaces*. They weave places together. In that respect, pedestrian movements form one of these 'real systems whose existence in fact makes up the city.' *They are not localized; it is rather they that spatialize*" (de Certeau 1984 [1980]: 97; italics mine).

⁴² More radically, Ette contends that, from a cultural studies perspective, space is *generated* by the past, present and future movements performed across it in the first place (cf. Ette 2012: 29, 39-41).

⁴³ With its consistent foregrounding of "the pathways along which life is lived" (Ingold 2011b: 145), Ingold's argument against space (cf. *ibid.* 145-155) can, in fact, be interpreted as a vigorous plea for a *motion*-oriented reconceptualization of space. While Ingold rightly points to the eminent significance of movement for human existence, he does not sufficiently take into account the importance of the spatial environment as a simultaneously enabling and frictional factor vis-à-vis human motion, nor does he acknowledge the dialectical relationship between mobility and immobility arising from the contradictory but coexistent human needs for freedom of movement and stable grounding in one particular place.

constitutive function in the social production of space: only through movement are meaningful relations among different spaces – including imagined ones – established; that is, differences, similarities and asynchronies among them are rendered comprehensible” (Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 14; my translation). In other words, it is human *agents* who, in the act of moving, set up these semiotic interrelationships between heterogeneous cultural spaces that, taken together, make up the spatial dimension of human existence.

Concerning the fundamental ontological relationship between spatiality and agency in the context of human motion, it is legitimate to assert that, on the one hand, the environment a human being lives and acts in exerts a considerable influence on his agency in general (space-to-subject relation; cf. Bamberg 2008 [2005]: 9-10; Beck 2014: 40, and Hallet 2009: 87-90). In particular, the spaces treated as epitomes of heterotopias by Foucault (2006 [1967/1984]: 317-327), i.e. hospitals, prisons, psychiatric wards and retirement homes, do have a notorious reputation for restricting a person’s radius of action severely. On the other hand, human individuals and collectives are capable of accomplishing path-breaking reconfigurations of actual space (“subject-to-space relation” [Hallet 2009: 88; cf. *ibid.* 87-90; Bamberg 2008: 9-10 and Beck 2014: 40]), as demonstrated spectacularly by architectural examples like the Sun King’s Palace of Versailles, Disney World, Las Vegas, Dubai or Los Angeles (cf. Soja 1996). Therefore, one justifiable conclusion to be drawn from this constellation here is that the dialectical interrelationship between spatiality and human agency mirrors the equally dialectical interplay between the spatial dimension and human motion (in its role as the product of the trialectical interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality).

In order to bring together this fundamental insight into the spatiality-agency dialectic with the *narrative* dimension of the constitution of spatiality, I will correlate it with a conceptual transfer of Ricoeur’s ground-breaking reflections on the fundamental intertwining of the human experience of temporality and the narrative representation of time to the spatial dimension (cf. Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 3-87). This way, it becomes possible to penetrate the role played by narrative (and other forms of cultural representation) in the processual constitution of spatiality analytically. In the following, I will therefore tentatively combine a spatialized reconceptualization of Ricoeur’s “threefold mimesis” (Ricoeur 1984: 52; cf. *ibid.* 52-87) with the preceding reflections on the dialectical interplay between spatiality and agency.

Regarding the conceptual transfer of Ricoeur's model to the spatial dimension, it is, first of all, necessary to keep in mind that, while several scholars (cf. Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 22-23; Nünning 2009: 42; Frank 2009: 65; Hallet 2009: 109; Lange 2014: 168) have recognized the possibility of conceptualizing the relationship between the human experience of spatiality and the narrative representation of space in analogy with the corresponding correlation between experiencing time in real-world contexts and the narrative representation of temporality, no-one has as yet elaborated such a transfer of Ricoeur's threefold mimesis to the spatial dimension in detail. Accordingly, this study shall contribute to filling this research lacuna by delineating basic lines along which such a fundamental transfer could be conducted.

Following Ricoeur (cf. 1984: 54-71), I argue that the reader's cognitive act of imagining what the spaces represented in a novel may look like is prefigured by their real-world knowledge about spatial entities and structures (Ricoeur's "prefiguration" [1984: 54-64]).⁴⁴ Consequently, if a novel mentions a character entering a room, the reader can imagine the basic structure of this room (most probably four corners, at least one door, usually also one or several windows and so on) on the grounds of her extratextual cultural knowledge of what rooms generally look like.⁴⁵ The narrative representation of space – that is, "the conception, structure and presentation of the entirety of objects such as settings, landscapes, natural phenomena and things in different [literary] genres" (Nünning 2009: 33; my translation) – in a particular novel is then processed by the reader's mind, that is, the actual shape the cultural spaces and places evoked in this novel take in his imagination is determined by the complex cognitive interplay of the reader's cultural pre-knowledge and the narrative information provided by the literary text. Thus, just like the temporal dimension, space is represented narratively through a specific "emplotment" (Ricoeur's "configuration" [1984: 64; cf. *ibid.* 64-70]). More precisely, the numerous settings and further spatial entities of a novel are conjoined, mostly by characters' movements between them, and thus brought into specific relations with one another (cf. Nünning 2009: 42).

According to Nünning, the heuristic surplus value of the category of relating lies in its emphasis on the recognition that "the entirety of all structural relations of

⁴⁴ In their introduction to the collected volume *Experiencing Space – Spacing Experience: Concepts, Practices, and Materialities* (2014), the editors Berning, Schulte and Schwanecke (cf. 2014a: 1-17) describe the interrelationship between space and human experience in general as one of mutual influencing (cf. *ibid.* 5) without, however, establishing an explicit link to Ricoeur's model of the threefold mimesis or taking the narrative dimension of human spatial experience into sufficient consideration.

⁴⁵ For a detailed analysis of the cognitive process involved in the semiotic constitution of space and its resemiotization in literary texts, cf. Hallet (2009: 81-113, particularly 81-93).

contrast and correspondence between the individual elements [i.e. settings and other spatial entities] always amounts to more than the mere sum of the elements combined with one another” (Nünning 2009: 42). Therefore, the qualities of the “superordinate aesthetic organisation of fictional space” are not determined by the features of the individual elements; instead, “the structure of the superordinate spatial plane is a network created by the relations between the settings and objects” (Nünning 2009: 42). In other words, it is the *agentive* movements performed by characters in the storyworld that establish these relations between various settings and further spatial entities. In the final analysis, these movements thus account for the relationality of any storyworld, just as travellers’ movements in extratextual cultural reality bring about the networks that link heterogeneous places in space with each other, thereby producing the very spaces the travellers traverse (cf. Lefebvre 1991 [1974]: 26, 42; Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 14-15, 20-21; Beck 2014: 26-33).

The new knowledge about spatiality the reader has gained in reading this particular novel may subsequently influence her attitudes towards particular cultural spaces or even incite her to transform her own spatial surroundings in a specific way, for instance by redecorating their house in the style of a fairy-tale castle (Ricoeur’s “refiguration” [1984: 71; cf. *ibid.* 70-71]). It is in this third stage of Ricoeur’s threefold mimesis that the dimension of human agency enters the process most visibly, for, as the example of redecorating one’s house in the style of a fairy-tale castle indicates, such a transformation of one’s private spatial surroundings requires the intentional and volitional decision to do so in the first place. Whatever the concrete motivation behind it, such a concrete spatial reconfiguration thus is the result of the actualization of the individual’s autonomous agency in their real-world environment.

All in all, this fundamental tripartite process is repeated with every act of reading a novel (or any other narrative text) in what may be labelled a perpetual ‘hermeneutic feedback loop’ (cf. Ricoeur 1984: 71-87, particularly 72; Lange 2014: 168-171, particularly 170). As it extends to all kinds of spatial structures – be they real-world or fictional ones – cultural topographies and topologies are naturally also implicated in this process, with extratextual cultural topographies prefiguring literary ones, which, in turn, potentially refigure their real-world equivalents (cf. Ette 2005: 23; Ette 2012: 29; Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 23-24).

Proceeding from the fundamental recognition of the multidimensionality of space⁴⁶ – which is all the more true in the case of cultural spaces because, in addition to the three Euclidian dimensions, they exhibit various social, cultural, epistemological and other dimensions (cf. Böhme 2005a: xv; Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 11-32) – I assert that the two further dimensions of my trialectics of motion impinge directly upon sociocultural configurations of spatiality inasmuch as time and human agency are constitutive factors in the shaping of “lived spaces” (Lefebvre 1991 [1974]: 39). To put it in Böhme’s words, it is “the movements we perform *with* our body and as body in space that tap that which we conceive of as space historically, culturally and individually” (Böhme 2005a: xv; cf. *ibid.*; italics in original).⁴⁷ Movement across space also fulfils a further crucial function with regard to human experience of spatiality inasmuch as it is responsible for opening space up, for the possibility (and necessity) of orienting oneself in space (cf. Böhme 2005a: xv-xvii).

Adding my insight into the emergence of human motion from the trialectical interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality to the picture, it is legitimate to conclude that the actual socioeconomic and cultural configurations of such lived spaces are a direct result of myriad interacting ontological vectorialities. In keeping with this recognition, a thorough dynamization of Bakhtin’s concept of the “chronotope” (1981a [1973]: 84) through the integration of agency constitutes an urgent desideratum, which will be explored in the next section, on the agentive dimension of human motion. In order to obtain a holistic picture of the emergence of chronotopes, this operation is indispensable because, while Bakhtin does analyse the interdependence of space and time in literary texts, he does not pay sufficient attention to the dimension of human subjectivity, its particular experientiality of the space-time complex and its agency, all of which are highly pertinent to any attempt to come to grips with the literary representation of human motion.

The necessity of dynamizing Bakhtin’s concept of the chronotope arises from the fact that characters’ *movements* across the storyworld play a crucial role in both the unfolding of a novel’s plot and the configuration of its overarching chronotope (cf.

⁴⁶ As Böhme points out, the multidimensionality of space in the study of culture differs essentially from the concept of the n-dimensionality of space in physics: in contrast to the latter discipline, the former conceives of spatiality as “*lived space*” (Lefebvre 1991 [1974]: 39; italics in original), thus laying special emphasis on the necessity of experiencing space as a *conditio sine qua non* for the human capacity to apprehend and conceptualize it (cf. Böhme 2005a: xv).

⁴⁷ In the final analysis, Böhme argues, the “peculiar persistence of [this] non-scientific experience of space and movement” (Böhme 2005a: xvi) can even be utilized for a tentative definition of space: “Space is that exterior quantity the movement across which requires ‘physical effort and work’”, thus forcing us to experience “the compactness and inertia, the resistance and gravity of things, as well as our own” (Böhme 2005a: xvi; cf. *ibid.*).

Bakhtin 1981a: 250). If, in addition, one takes into account Nünning's recognition that Ricoeur's threefold mimesis is applicable to the experience of human motion and its narrative representation as well (cf. Nünning 2008a: 14),⁴⁸ it becomes possible to correlate Bakhtin's chronotope with Ricoeur's model (cf. Lange 2014: 169)⁴⁹ via the mediating instance of the narrative enactment of human motion in literary texts. Therefore, I contend that, by combining these two conceptual frameworks, my project of developing a trialectics of motion can be advanced decisively.

To this end, it is, first of all, necessary to point out that Bakhtin himself was fully aware of the complex interrelationships between fictional textual chronotopes and extratextual cultural ones.⁵⁰

The work and the world represented in it enter the real world and enrich it, and the real world enters the work and its world as part of the process of its creation, as well as part of its subsequent life, in a continual renewing of the work through the creative perception of listeners and readers. Of course, this process of exchange is itself chronotopic: it occurs first and foremost in the historically developing social world, but without ever losing contact with changing historical space. We might even speak of a special creative chronotope inside which this exchange between work and life occurs, and which constitutes the distinctive life of the work. (Bakhtin 1981a: 254)

The underlying recognition Bakhtin has here can be reformulated more clearly and accurately with reference to Ricoeur's terminology. To begin with, the aspect of prefiguration manifests itself in this context in that every individual human being has acquired a certain world knowledge of actual chronotopes (time-spaces) and their textual counterparts in the course of his life before reading a specific literary text (cf.

⁴⁸ As Nünning rightly points out, narrative configurations of individual movements are multiply prefigured by culturally dominant discourses, presuppositions and ideologies as well as by circulating images, other narratives and further media products, while, in turn, they themselves contribute to the historically accumulated amalgam of cultural elements shaping the reader's perception of journeys undertaken by herself or by any of her contemporaries (cf. Nünning 2008a: 12-19).

⁴⁹ In her article "Time in the Novel: Theories and Concepts for the Analysis of the Representation of Time" (Lange 2014: 157-175), Lange affirms the "integrative quality" (ibid. 169) of Ricoeur's model, i.e. its capacity to accommodate, for instance, Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope "at the level of *mimesis* II" (ibid.). Her approach to the combination of Ricoeur's threefold mimesis and Bakhtin's chronotope differs from mine in two respects. First, it takes an inverse argumentative direction inasmuch as she examines the narrative representation of time by additionally including its enactment via space (cf. Lange 2014: 165), while I analyse the narrative representation of space by examining its inescapable interconnectedness with time. Second, I dynamize Bakhtin's chronotope by integrating the agentive dimension in order to render it applicable to narrative enactments of human motion (cf. Section 2.2 of this dissertation).

⁵⁰ Because Bakhtin's chronotope essay (1981a [1973]: 84-258) was published ten years prior to the first volume of Ricoeur's *Time and Narrative* (1984; title of the original French publication: *Temps et Récit*, vol. 1; 1983), it was of course impossible for Bakhtin to know of Ricoeur's ground-breaking three-volume study. This makes the resemblance in their fundamental argument for the complex interrelatedness of literary works and their cultural contexts all the more striking.

Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 54). Second, this literary text exhibits an idiosyncratic selection, arrangement and perspectivization (cf. Nünning 2009: 39-44), or, to adopt Ricoeur's term, a specific "emplotment" (Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 65) of chronotopes, which constitutes configuration, the second constituent of his threefold mimesis (cf. *ibid.*: 64-65). Finally, the third component, refiguration (cf. *ibid.*: 70-71), comes into play through the act of reading this text and the subsequent interaction between the textual emplotment of chronotopes and the actual chronotopes that shape the reader's extratextual cultural reality (cf. Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 54-77 and Bakhtin 1981a: 253-255). To sum up the gist of their arguments, literary chronotopes are thus likewise prefigured by extratextual cultural ones and, through the act of reading, capable of reverberating upon the latter as well.

The crucial point missed by both Ricoeur and Bakhtin, however, is that this dialectical relationship between literary and extratextual cultural chronotopes emerges from the intricate interplay of the reader's mental mobility (activated, for instance, when she is incited to imagine fictional storyworlds by the literary text she is currently reading) and their actual spatial movements in the extratextual cultural context within which she exists. In short, the agentive time-spaces⁵¹ that thus emerge – be they narratively configured or extratextual cultural ones – can hence be described as individual results of the complex interplay of the three dimensions that make up the trialectics of motion.

As a corollary, this insight into the decisive role of real and imagined movements in the processual configuration of (literary and extratextual cultural) agentive time-spaces generates a further, even more far-reaching recognition: human motion is a crucial factor in the explication of the historicity of space or, conversely, the spatiality of history. To summarize the preceding line of thought by rephrasing Ingold's argument (cf. Ingold 2011b: 145-155; Ingold 2011d [2000]: 189-208) in a slightly modified fashion, movements *effect* both the historicity of space and the spatiality of history. As movements are always performed by agents across space over time, it is, in other words, their ontological vectorialities that account for the dialectical interrelationship between spatiality and history.

In addition, the relationship between real and imagined movements is one of mutual intertwining, not only in the sense that mental mobility triggers spatial

⁵¹ I am using the term agentive time-spaces in order to highlight the necessity of dynamizing the Bakhtinian chronotope by integrating the complementary dimension of human agency (cf. Section 2.2 of this dissertation).

movement and vice versa but also because the planning of each and every journey necessitates the cognitive prefiguration of the route to be taken and the mode of travel to be used in the traveller's mind: "As a cognitive artefact or assembly, the route plan pre-exists its physical enactment" (Ingold 2011b: 152). Due to this inextricable interlocking of real and imagined elements in the conduct of spatial movements, this study refers to real-and-imagined movements in analogy with Soja's concept of "real-and-imagined places" (1996).

Soja's concept is of particular significance for my research interest – the contextualized narratological examination of the narrative enactment of space and motion in contemporary Asian British novels – in (at least) two regards. First, it highlights the fact that spaces (and places) are always real-and-imagined because literature is co-constitutive of 'real' spaces inasmuch as it supplies the spatial *imagination* and, thus, makes spaces accessible to cognition (cf. Hallet 2009: 90-93, 109). Therefore, the text-context relationship must not be conceptualized as a clear-cut opposition (nor as one of mimetic representation) but, instead, as a productive interrelationship of mutual influence: just as literary texts are written in certain spatial and historical contexts, they themselves contribute substantially to the (re)shaping of these contexts (cf. Hallet 2009: 109; Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52-87; Nünning 2006: 169). Second, a cognitive component enters the picture because real spaces can always be conceived of as imagined in the sense that one must have an idea of a certain space or place in order to grasp and process it cognitively. Human experience is thus always prefigured by imagination and symbolization (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, and *ibid.* 81-93, 107-109). Obviously, these reflections lend themselves to being transferred to real-and-imagined movements.

The relevance of this concept of real-and-imagined movements to issues of contemporary migration can be illustrated by a concrete example: the cognitive co-presence of country of origin and recipient country in the migrant's mind (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107). Having migrated from their home country to their destination, migrants cannot help but compare these two cultural spaces with regard to the socioeconomic living conditions they offer, their spatial configurations and the culturally dominant mentalities, customs and mind-sets their inhabitants exhibit. In other words, it is the biographically momentous experience of migratory movement that makes them put home and destination side by side in the mental space of their individual imagination. Subsequent to their actual spatial movement, they thus perform an imagined journey backwards in order to compare these two cultural spaces

qualitatively. Only by acknowledging the inextricable intertwining of actual and mental elements in these phenomena does it thus become possible to elucidate such real-and-imagined migratory movements and the resultant cognitive co-presence of heterogeneous cultural spaces in the migrant's mind.⁵²

The fact that this cognitive co-presence can occur at various spatial levels calls for a differentiation of geographical scales of movement. Ette distinguishes five such scales: translocal, transregional, transnational, transareal⁵³ and transcontinental (cf. Ette 2005: 23). This useful differentiation, I argue, can be amplified further in (at least) two ways. First, the initial category of translocal movement can be differentiated further by taking a closer look at the actual nature of the places involved, that is, by asking whether these are precise points, houses, squares, villages, towns or entire urban conglomerates. Accordingly, it becomes possible to distinguish between transpagan (between villages), transmunicipal (between towns) and transurban movements (between cities). Second, what is even more important to acknowledge is the fact that a considerable percentage of human travel takes place between locales pertaining to *different* geographical scales, that is, between a village and a town (pagano-municipal journeys), between a town and a city (municipal-urban journeys) or between a city and a nation (urban-national journeys), such as, for instance, a tour of the U.S. undertaken from Hong Kong or Mumbai. What Ette draws our attention to, however, is that scrutinizing the myriad potential interrelationships between these disparate geographical scales of journeys is even more important than merely identifying the scales involved, be it in an extratextual cultural context or in a literary representation of a specific journey (cf. Ette 2005: 23).

Apart from the amplifications proposed above, Ette's basic model exposes itself to fundamental critique from a postcolonial angle for two reasons. First, it is informed by a profound Eurocentrism because both the geographical categories (translocal, transnational and so on) and the concrete examples used (Uckermark, Hegau, Dreyecksland) stem exclusively from the European context. Second, Ette's model does

⁵² Depending on the number of attendant acts of political, social and cultural border-crossing, phenomena of migration and, in particular, transmigration are capable of multiplying the number of heterogeneous cultural spaces that are imaginatively co-present in the migrant's mind beyond a simple dichotomy (cf. Chapter 7 of this dissertation).

⁵³ Ette uses the term 'area' to designate supranational 'world regions' that are situated, in terms of geographical expanse, between nation-states and continents, such as, for instance, Eastern Europe or the Caribbean (cf. Ette 2005: 23). In contradistinction to areas, the term 'regions' is reserved for "cultural spaces that are either smaller than a nation (such as Uckermark or Hegau) or position themselves as manageable units between different nation-states (such as the Dreyecksland, which is positioned between the Black Forest, the Vosges and northern Switzerland)" (Ette 2005: 23; my translation).

not pay attention to a specifically postcolonial strategy of reversing the scales identified by Upstone (cf. 2009: 56, 113, 139), which consists of articulating resistance against neo-colonial Eurocentric patterns of domination by means of a clear focus on ever-smaller spatial entities: starting out from postcolonial representations of the nation, Upstone (2009) consistently retraces this strategy by focussing on the journey, the city, the home and, ultimately, the individual human body as spatial entities in which postcolonial authors inscribe their creative resistance against the neo-imperialist persistence of Western hegemony in today's globalized economy and culture (cf. Upstone 2009: 56, 139). However, Upstone's postcolonial strategy of reversing the scales is itself problematic because it risks losing sight of the complex *macro-structural* interlocking of late-capitalist patterns of economic exploitation all across the globe, which manifests itself, for example, in global flows of 'cheap' labour, the outsourcing of production facilities to countries with extremely low labour standards and the increasing dissociation of places of consumption from those of production.

In order to complete my motion-oriented survey of the spatial dimension, it is finally indispensable to expand upon my initial reflections on the double-edged aspect of spatiality in the context of human motion by taking a closer look at the manifestations of frictionality:⁵⁴ after all, spatial conditions constitute the major source of physical friction⁵⁵ encountered by a traveller on the move. More precisely, I develop an

⁵⁴ In essence, the concept of friction / "frictionality" (Ette 2005: 191) has been used in two different ways in the study of culture, one metaphorical, the other literal. In his genre-theoretical classification of the travelogue, for instance, Ette uses a metaphorical concept of friction to characterize it as an essentially hybrid genre "marked by a characteristic oscillating between fiction and diction, a jumping to and from, that does not permit [... one] to make a solid assignment. Between the poles of fiction and diction, the travelogue rather leads to a *friction*, insofar as clear borderlines are also to be avoided as attempts to produce stable amalgams and mixed forms. In contrast to the novel, the travelogue is a hybrid form not only referring to the ingested genres and its variety of speech, but also in regard to its characteristic of evading the opposition between fiction and diction. The travelogue wears off the boundaries between both fields: it is to be assigned to a literary area that we might term *frictional literature*" (Ette 2003: 31; italics mine; see also Ette 1998: 308-312). In a similarly figurative vein, Junker deploys this concept as a metaphor for "the *friction* between classes and races" (Junker 2010: 28; italics mine) in his study *Frames of Friction: Black Genealogies, White Hegemony, and the Essay as Critical Intervention* (2010). See Lowenhaupt Tsing (2005) for yet another metaphorical usage of the concept of friction. In contrast to this deployment of 'friction' in different metaphorical senses, Cresswell's "generative typology of frictions" (2014: 109; cf. *ibid.* 107-115) rests entirely upon scientific distinctions adopted from the discipline of physics. In my experiential typology of frictionality, I combine both aspects of friction – the metaphorical and the palpable one – in my distinction of abstract and concrete forms of frictionality.

⁵⁵ In her 2005 study *Friction – An Ethnography of Global Connection*, Lowenhaupt Tsing uses the concept of friction as "a metaphorical image" for "the awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnection across difference" (Lowenhaupt Tsing 2005: 4-5). In its role as "the grip of encounter" (Lowenhaupt Tsing 2005: 5), "friction reminds us that heterogeneous and unequal encounters can lead to new arrangements of culture and power" (*ibid.*). Despite certain overlaps, the conceptualization of friction proposed by Lowenhaupt Tsing differs from mine in one important point: whereas she deploys friction exclusively as a metaphor, I include

experiential typology of frictionality that takes into consideration the entirety of concrete (and abstract?) obstacles travellers are potentially confronted with along the way to their destination. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the noun “friction” denotes “[t]he resistance which any body meets with in moving over another body” in physics and mechanics (entry on “friction” in the online version of the *OED*).⁵⁶ In the following, I will use this basic scientific definition to explore the experiential and cultural dimensions of frictionality.

Initially, I differentiate between external and internal forms of frictionality: the former comprises all types of friction rooted in the traveller’s external *spatial*, social and cultural environment, whereas the latter refers to those kinds of friction that stem from inside the traveller’s mental constitution, including, most importantly, psychic inhibitions.⁵⁷ Concerning external forms of frictionality, one can then distinguish between natural and man-made sources of friction, with the former subcategory being epitomized by stones, rocks, mountain ranges, deep gorges, yawning abysses, wide rivers, lakes or vast oceans, whereas examples of the latter include high walls, fences, turnpikes, heavily secured state borders (with their barbed wire fences, watchtowers, checkpoints and heavily armed border guards) and so-called gated communities.

Among the man-made obstacles to human motion and mobility, there is a second important group, namely that of abstract frictionality. This latter category comprises all the legal, societal, economic, religious, cultural and educational⁵⁸ barriers to the ideal of freedom of movement that are themselves non-physical, intangible and therefore not directly palpable in and of themselves. Nevertheless, these *abstract* forms of friction are usually enforced by means of the *concrete* spatial presence of human beings and man-made barriers, such as guards, further security staff, police squads, walls, fences, turnpikes, gates and so on. Endowed with *symbolic* power, these entities render such restrictions of freedom of movement directly perceivable in everyday life. Hence, abstract frictionality is commonly actualized *by means of* concrete frictionality in both extratextual cultural and literary contexts. In the context of human motion and its narrative enactment, a contextualized analysis of cultural frictionality thus requires, in a first step, the disentangling of its experiential *surface* manifestations – *concrete* friction – from the underlying *deep-structural* power constellations, that is, from *abstract*

instances of literal physical friction as well in order to account for the entire variety of factors that may impede a traveller’s journey.

⁵⁶ See entry on “friction” in the online version of the *OED*, accessed under www.oed.com/view/Entry/74631 (last retrieved 16.04.2014).

⁵⁷ As it pertains directly to the agentic dimension of human motion, the latter subcategory – internal forms of frictionality – will be treated in more detail in Section 2.2 of this dissertation.

⁵⁸ One particularly pertinent example of educational frictionality is illiteracy.

friction. In a second step, their co-operative interplay must then be scrutinized. With this differentiation of concretely palpable forms of frictionality on the *topographical* surface from their underlying *topological* origins, I deliberately go beyond Cresswell's "generative typology of frictions" (2014: 109): whereas Cresswell grounds his typology solely in *physical* categories,⁵⁹ my typology of frictionality additionally takes into account both the *cultural* dimension of socioeconomic power constellations appearing in the guise of seemingly natural *spatial* surface configurations and the *psychological* factors that effectively constitute instances of *internal* friction (such as moral or psychic inhibitions; cf. Section 2.2 of this dissertation).

In order to exemplify the usefulness of the category 'frictionality' for coming to terms with human motion in contemporary contexts, I will now correlate it with Ingold's distinction between "*network[s]* of transport" and "*meshwork[s]* of wayfaring" (Ingold 2011b: 151; italics in original; cf. *ibid.* 149-153). In essence, Ingold's differentiation between "network" and "meshwork" (Ingold 2011b: 151; cf. *ibid.* 149-153) is applicable to the two modes of travel that embody the experiential dichotomy between these concepts in paradigmatic fashion: air travel and walking.

Whereas the former epitomizes what Ingold labels "transport", that is, "destination-oriented [...] carrying *across*, from location to location, of people and goods in such a way as to leave their basic natures unaffected" (Ingold 2011b: 150; italics in original), one specific subtype of the latter – "wayfaring" (Ingold 2011b: 149) – distinguishes itself precisely by its nomadic, destination/less quality. In addition, wayfaring implies *active* physical movement on the part of the agent, whereas transport involves the traveller's *passively* being moved from point A to point B by a high-technology vessel. From a jointly experiential and topological point of view, air travel thus consists in smooth point-to-point journeys across a defrictionalized space continuum (cf. Calvino 1983 [1979]: 253; Ette 2003: 27-28). Therewith, it epitomizes

⁵⁹ Cf. the following explication of his typology: "Friction is not a singular category. We might think instead of a generative typology of frictions. Again, we can start by drawing analogies with the concept(s) of friction in physics. *Static* friction describes the friction between two bodies that are not moving relative to each other. In this case the friction acts to hold the two bodies in place and produces no heat. *Rolling* friction is a kind of friction that exists where a rolling object is in contact with another surface. These surfaces are not slipping against each other at the point of contact so this is a form of static friction. *Kinetic* friction describes the form of friction which occurs when two surfaces are slipping against each other. This may be between a static and a moving surface or between two moving surfaces – in which case it is called *fluid* friction. [...] All of these forms of friction are defined by the relative mobilities of the surfaces and whether or not a conversion of energy happens, which typically results in heat, light or sound. Kinetic forms do produce them and static forms do not. It is relatively straightforward to think of these forms in a social sense as social friction that holds things in place and social friction that is caused by the things, people, ideas, slipping against each other" (Cresswell 2014: 109; italics in original).

“time-space compression” (Harvey 1990 [1989]: vii; 265) by providing a dense network of connections among major hubs all around the globe, Ingold’s “network of transport” (Ingold 2011b: 151). At the same time, however, these global “mobility systems” (Urry 2007: 185) deprive the individual traveller of their autonomous agency while on the move. Condemned to immobility inside the vessel, the passenger is at the mercy of those operating the overall system (cf. Ingold 2011b: 152).

The experience of wandering, by contrast, is marked by the highly frictional, step-by-step treading across (sometimes extremely difficult) paths on the ground. Accordingly, it is the external frictionality of space that accounts for the seemingly unmediated, direct experience of one’s spatial surroundings in more or less natural landscapes. Moreover, the individual traveller’s high degree of autonomous agency while on the move is manifested in his self-reliant corporeal mobility out of doors. The various paths he moves along generate a “meshwork of wayfaring” (Ingold 2011b: 151).⁶⁰ Eventually, the potential absence of a final destination endows the experience of wandering with a certain nomadic quality (cf. Ingold 2011b: 150) that correlates with the erratic nature of the resultant meshwork. Thus, while modern modes of travel have expanded the reach of human travel while substantially reducing the impact of external frictionality, they have simultaneously also reduced the individual traveller’s autonomous agency considerably:

[M]odern metropolitan societies [...] have converted travel from an experience of movement in which action and perception are intimately coupled into one of enforced immobility and sensory deprivation [by means of highly complex global transport systems]. The passenger, strapped in his seat, no longer has the ‘all around’ perception of a land that stretches without interruption from the ground beneath his feet towards the horizon. It rather appears as so much scenery projected onto vertical screens, more or less distant, that seem to slide past one another due to the operation of parallax. This flattening and layering of the landscape [...] may have more to do with the effects of travel at speed than with the anchoring of vision to a fixed location. Indeed the essence of speed may lie less in the actual ratio of distance travelled to elapsed time than in the decoupling, in transport, of perception and motility. (Ingold 2011b: 152)

Nowhere is this disconnecting of spatial experience and mobility more evident than in contemporary air travel. As we shall see in Chapter 4, this experiential disconnection does have important and far-reaching consequences for the practice of

⁶⁰ For Ingold’s conceptualization of the interrelationship between paths, the emerging meshwork and notions of place, cf. also the following quotation: “[...] human existence unfolds not in places but along paths. Proceeding along a path, every inhabitant lays a trail. Where inhabitants meet, trails are entwined, as the life of each becomes bound up with the other. Every entwining is a knot, and the more that lifelines are entwined, the greater the density of the knot. Places, then, are like knots, and the threads from which they are tied are lines of wayfaring. [...] Together they make up [...] the *meshwork*” (Ingold 2011b: 148-149; italics in original).

representing airplane trips narratively in contemporary Asian British novels. While the preceding juxtaposition of contemporary air travel with walking was meant to tentatively demonstrate the causal nexus between modes of travel, spatial frictionality and the individual traveller's experience of space, the following section will delve deeper into the complex issue of human agency as the second constitutive dimension of motion.

2.2 The Agentive Dimension of Motion

This section is concerned with a problem-oriented exploration of the agentive dimension as the second constitutive parameter of my heuristic trialectics of motion. Generally defined as the ability to make decisions and put them into practice (cf. Beck 2014: 33), human agency⁶¹ occupies a pivotal role in the emergence of *intentional* human motion, for, whatever the individual motivation behind this decision, it constitutes the very factor that brings about the individual human being's act of moving across space over time. As the fundamental human capability to decide whether to perform a specific movement or not, the category of agency is intricately intertwined with the adjacent and partially overlapping concepts of human subjectivity and individual or collective identities.⁶² However, any balanced inquiry into the issue of human agency must take into account its Janus-faced character as a result of the

⁶¹ For a concise overview of different philosophical conceptualizations of the term 'agency', cf. Balibar and Laugier (2014 [2004]: 17-24). In their entry on "agency" for the *Dictionary of Untranslatables* (edited by Cassin 2014 [2004]), Balibar and Laugier centre their explication of the polysemy of this concept on two dichotomous definitions: "'agency' as a principle of action [versus] 'agency' as a decentering of action" (Balibar and Laugier 2014: 19). The former conceives of agency as "a general and undefined property of acting closely connected with causality and efficacy" (Balibar and Laugier 2014: 19), agency thus designating "the active force, the effective cause of action" (ibid.). The latter approach, by contrast, "questions the possibility of conceiving action in general terms of cause and effect or action and reaction" (ibid.). According to this conceptualization, "[a]gency is a quality of events that makes them into actions, but it is not necessarily their material cause" (ibid.). Leaving aside the fundamental ontological and epistemological issues raised by the concept of agency (cf. ibid. 17-24), this study adopts the common-sensical everyday conceptualization of this term as the human ability to make decisions and perform the requisite actions within a pre-existent socioeconomic, cultural and semiotic frame of reference (cf. Bamberg 2008 [2005]: 9-10; Beck 2014: 33). See also Section 4.2.1 of this dissertation for the narratological aspects of conceptualizing agency.

⁶² As the complex issue of individual and collective identities is implicated in the constitution of human agency indirectly, i.e. via the mediating instance of individual subjectivity only, it shall not be treated as a separate resource of agency here. Cf. Section 3.3.1 of this dissertation for the distinction between hybrid individuals' *transcultural* and *transdifferential* "identity configurations" (Welsch 2009: 9). The formation of collective identities will be treated in tandem with the constitution of borders in Section 3.3.2 of this dissertation. See also Hall (2004: 3-4) for the conceptual distinction between personal identity and subjectivity in the study of literature and culture.

“dialectics of modern subjectivity between ‘subjection’ and ‘subjectedness’ under societal structures” (Beck 2014: 39; my translation), that is, the ways in which it is being shaped by the dynamic interplay of the individual’s active, volitional performance and passive, involuntary conditioning through supraindividual societal norms, values, institutions and structures.

In the context of my research interest, ‘subjection’ refers to the active utilization and transformation of one’s spatial environment through movement, whereas ‘subjectedness’ indicates the limitations of individual agency in terms of the restrictions imposed upon individual mobility by spatial, socioeconomic, cultural and religious structures. In other words, both spatiality⁶³ and temporality (the latter in its manifestation as historical context; cf. Section 2.3 of this dissertation) shape the contours of human agency to a considerable extent, that is, as factors that either enable or constrain individual and collective human mobility. Thus, three central questions arise. To what extent is the individual subject’s agency conditioned by these societal power structures at both the micro- and macro-levels (cf. Beck 2014: 39)? How does the difference between ‘moving’ and ‘being moved’ affect the individual’s subjective experience of the journey? Given the pre-existent limitations on individual freedom of action, does it still make sense to stick to the concept of autonomous agency despite the fact that many historical and contemporary instances of movement consist of depriving the travellers in question of this very freedom, as with slaves, indentured labourers, refugees and asylum seekers?

In order to examine these questions, it is indispensable to expound three different aspects of agency: its resources, its limitations and the potential applications of this category to the study of literary representations of movement. Among the vast array of potential influences on human agency,⁶⁴ four issues are discussed in more detail here due to their particular significance for motion: human subjectivity,⁶⁵ corporeality or bodily embeddedness in space, human motivationality and the individual traveller’s experientiality of the journey in question.

Regarding the first of these resources, Beck’s innovative study *Raum und Subjektivität in Londonromanen der Gegenwart* (*Space and Subjectivity in*

⁶³ Beyond its role as the prime source of physical friction, spatiality can either enable or restrict human mobility via spatially actualized societal structures (cf. Soja 1989: 79-80).

⁶⁴ For an extensive Marxist discussion of the complex dialectical interrelationship between heterogeneous philosophical conceptualizations of agency and socioeconomic structures, see Callinicos (2004 [1987], in particular 1-37).

⁶⁵ Cf. Hall (2004) for a critical historical survey of the diachronic evolution of different concepts of human agency in relation to culturally prevalent notions of subjectivity.

Contemporary London Novels, 2014) provides four principal insights that are of central relevance to a motion-oriented conceptualization of agency. First, her theoretical framework rests upon the fundamental hypothesis that the sociocultural formation of individual subjectivity and the likewise sociocultural production of space constitute interdependent processes (cf. Beck 2014: 3-7, 17-19). On the one hand, human beings do not define their subjectivity exclusively via the construction of a coherent, temporally structured narrative of their life, but also by recourse to their current spatial and social positionality (cf. Beck 2014: 35).⁶⁶ On the other hand, however, the configuration of actual spaces is produced by individual and collective agents and can hence be transformed by the subjects acting in them (cf. Beck 2014: 39, 44). In order to make this intricate interlocking of the social production of space and subjectivity accessible to analytical scrutiny, Beck introduces a distinction between two complementary processes: “spatial constitution of subjectivity [and] subjective constitution of space” (Beck 2014: 40; my translation). While the first process denotes “the effect of spatial structures and inscriptions of spaces on the constitution of the subject”, its counterpart designates the reverse direction of influence, that is, “the formation of spaces by subjects” (Beck 2014: 40; my translation). As relational approaches to spatiality assume that spatial and cultural processes are inseparably interwoven, they conceive of the relationship between spatiality and the subject’s agency as a “duality” (Beck 2014: 39), that is, a process of mutual influencing (cf. *ibid.*). In addition, both a relational conceptualization of space in general and the concept of agency in particular highlight the fundamental possibility of transforming spatial structures, for instance through movement: “In principle, every spatial structure can be *dynamized* by the subjects acting within it. [...] The quotidian use of spatial structures produces an action-space that *mobilizes* the places brought about by the structure of power and thus destabilizes them” (Urban 2007: 70; italics and translation mine; see also Beck 2014: 44). As indicated in the preceding section, I hold the view that this dialectical relationship between space and subjectivity can be transferred to the intertwining of space and human motion in general: on the one hand, lived spaces are constituted through the movements actuated by human agents across them (movement-bound formation of space), while, on the other hand, these movements are also conditioned by the individual configurations of the cultural spaces travelled (spatial formation of movement).

⁶⁶ In fact, Beck does away with “the *overestimation* of the significance of narratives for the subjective endowment of life with meaning” (Beck 2014: 35; italics in original; my translation) by stressing the fact that there are human beings who tend to define their subjectivity more in terms of their “position in the present, in the spatial structure of the world [than in terms of] the construction of a continuity and causality between past events and the present” (Beck 2014: 35; my translation). Thus, her analysis amounts to the conclusion that spatiality and temporality are equally important in the formation of human subjectivity.

Second, Beck recognizes the central role played by human corporeality – the second resource of human agency to be briefly considered here – by foregrounding the fact that the human body constitutes the principal entity upon which the impact of space on the constitution of subjectivity is inscribed (cf. Beck 2014: 43). According to Beck (cf. 2014: 41), human corporeality is of particular significance both for the subjective formation of space and the individual’s agency regarding movement in three respects. First and foremost, the human body constitutes the irreducible and ineluctable vantage point from which all other subjects and concrete entities in space as well as space itself are perceived and evaluated in terms of their relative position, accessibility, dangerousness or attractiveness. Second, it is the body’s sensory organs that are responsible for the processual establishment of a simultaneously cognitive and affective relationship between the individual subject and its spatial environment, notably by charging the latter with certain qualities that in their entirety make up the particular atmosphere of the cultural space in question. Third and most importantly, it is the physical movement of human bodies in space that accounts for the mutability of lived spaces, for this physical movement alters the relational configuration of animate and inanimate concrete entities in space, thereby slightly modifying or even radically transforming the cultural space concerned. In the case of a radical transformation, the socioculturally produced order of this space is typically altered as well (cf. Beck 2014: 41).

Third, the issue of human subjects’ spatial mobility, however, not only reverberates upon the structuration of space but affects the category of human subjectivity itself as well: accordingly, Beck takes up Ferguson’s concept of “mobile subjectivity” (1993: 158) in order to accommodate the tendency of contemporary cultural theory to conceive of the human subject not as a monolithic unity (like in traditional conceptualizations) but as a “plurality of potential, relatively autonomous positions of the self” (Beck 2014: 57; my translation; cf. *ibid.*):

I have chosen the term mobile rather than multiple to avoid the implication of movement from one to another stable resting place. [...] Class, like race, gender, erotic identity, etc., can be a crucial but still temporary and shifting resting place for subjects always in motion and relation. (Ferguson 1993: 177)

Fourth, Beck (cf. 2014: 58) points out that the human drive for motion and mobility is counterbalanced by an equally strong need for grounding, that is, for a stable “anchoring [of the individual subject] within its lifeworld and the corresponding general conditions and discourses” (Deny 2009: 24; my translation). Nevertheless, this dialectic of mobility versus stability can be accommodated within the framework of “a fundamentally mobile conceptualization of subjectivity” (Beck 2014: 58; my translation),

because the general assumption of the subject's mobility does not preclude the possibility of its anchoring itself in clearly defined social positions and places (cf. *ibid.*). Thus, this assumption by no means renders the dialectical interrelationship between (the human need for) stability and mobility inoperative.

On the contrary, a mobile conceptualization of subjectivity highlights the fact that the actuality of a subject's past or current location must always be seen in relation to the potentiality of all the alternative locations it might have occupied at that particular point in time. Therefore, Beck concludes, it is "only by assuming both the fundamental mobility of subjects and the dynamic nature of spaces [that] it become[s] possible to problematize boundaries or their crossing and their effects on subjects at all" (Beck 2014: 58-59; my translation; cf. *ibid.*). This argumentative strand is formulated most radically by Hagenbüchle (2003: 598; my translation) when he argues that "for the postmodern subject, the quality of metamorphosis as the possibility of perpetual creative transformation and transgression has become constitutive" (cf. Beck 2014: 57). A case in point here is Pran Nath Razdan, the protagonist of Hari Kunzru's debut novel *The Impressionist* (2002), who changes his "identity configurations" (Welsch 2009: 9) according to contextual requirements and personal preferences with every major journey he undertakes, thus maniacally reinventing himself, or rather, his persona, like a caterpillar (cf. Section 5.2 of this dissertation).

All in all, Beck's interweaving of a mobile conceptualization of human subjectivity with a dynamic and relational understanding of spatiality thus provides important stepping-stones for my conceptualization of human agency in the context of the trialectics of motion. There are, however, two additional resources of particular relevance to a motion-oriented concept of agency that Beck does not pay sufficient attention to: human motivationality⁶⁷ and "experientiality" (Fludernik 1996: 12), that is, the interrelated questions of why human agents move and how they experience their movement and its overall effects. As a result, I will complement her concept of agency with selected foundational reflections on these two further resources that must be integrated into a sufficiently sophisticated approach to human agency in a heuristic theoretical model of the multidimensional phenomenon of human motion.

Regarding the first resource, human motivationality, I deem it appropriate to refer to the basic but useful everyday distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic

⁶⁷ Beck neglects the issue of human motivationality almost entirely, thematising it merely indirectly, that is, in her discussion of the conditioning of human agency by socio-spatial structures (cf. 2014: 39-45).

motivation: while the former concept designates a mode of motivationality in which the urge to move stems from inside the individual human subject, the latter encompasses all situations in which the individual is forced to move by external circumstances. In many cases, however, the act of moving results from an intricate amalgamation of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, for example when someone is determined to get a better job, which only happens to be available abroad. Hence, it is not always possible to assign a case-specific configuration of human motivationality to one or the other pole unambiguously.

In addition, the interrelationship between human motivationality and the second resource, experientiality, can be described most accurately as one of reciprocal influencing. On the one hand, the degree to which the impulse to move arises from either volitionality (intrinsic motivation) or external pressure (extrinsic motivation) predetermines the individual's affective experience of her spatio-temporal surroundings during the journey in question to a considerable extent. Accordingly, forced migration yields an experience of movement totally different from a leisure trip. Loosely drawing on the concept of momentum⁶⁸ in physics, I thus redefine the term as the degree of *intrinsic commitment* an individual agent exhibits vis-à-vis the performance of a particular movement.

On the other hand, the reverse direction of influence is equally plausible because the individual's experience of a journey as beautiful may trigger the wish to repeat it, whereas a dreadful trip is most unlikely to incite such a reaction. What is more, the case-specific configuration of human motivationality directly relates to the dialectic of mobility versus stability inasmuch as these conflicting human needs potentially correlate with intrinsic and extrinsic factors of motivation in different ways, each of which impacts upon the individual's *experiential* attitude towards motion and mobility. If, for example, individual subjects deeply rooted in their homestead are forced to migrate to a foreign country by external circumstances, they will most likely experience this migratory movement as a dreadful deprivation of their traditionally stable, safe and secure place in the world, hence producing feelings of irretrievable loss and displacement. If, in contrast, globally mobile postmodern intellectuals devoted to fluidity and rootlessness suddenly lose their cherished freedom of movement, their resultant experience will be one of involuntary confinement and devastating restriction

⁶⁸ According to the pertinent entry in the *OED*, the physical and mathematical concept of "momentum" denotes "[t]he quantity of motion in a moving body, now expressed as the product of its mass and its velocity" (quotation from the entry on "momentum" in the online version of the *OED*, accessed under www.oed.com/view/Entry/121018, last retrieved 07.05.2014).

of their individual radius of action. Contrary to such dichotomous but parallel cases of extrinsic motivation, the reverse line of thought holds true as well: If both the traditional dweller and the postmodern intellectual are granted the right to do as they please, that is, to practise their intrinsic motivation, their experience of stasis or mobility, respectively, will most definitely turn out to be a deeply satisfactory, agreeable experience. To conclude, a one-sided association of freedom of movement with personal fulfilment and happiness proves to be partial and selective. Consequently, it is necessary to take a closer look at the precise nature of the individual subject's *motivational disposition* before equating mobility with personal satisfaction and immobility with discontent.

As these (admittedly schematic) examples show, the second issue – human experientiality of space and movement across it – cannot be captured adequately solely by recourse to cognitive parameters. Rather, they suggest, a *comprehensive* concept of human experience that takes into account both its cognitive *and* its *affective* facets is required. In the following, I therefore want to make Fludernik's cognitive-narratological definition of experientiality as “the quasi-mimetic evocation of ‘real-life experience’” (Fludernik 1996: 12) applicable to the specific case of human movement by laying a more pronounced focus on the latter aspect – “real-life experience” – notably its affective side, here. In a first step, this endeavour calls for a sufficiently expansive definition of the concept of human experience. Such an inclusive conceptualization is offered by Tuan, who defines experience as “a cover-all term for the various modes through which a person knows and constructs a reality, [and which ...] range from the more direct and passive senses of smell, taste, and touch, to active visual perception and the indirect mode of symbolization” (Tuan 1977: 8). The continuum of different experiential modes thus stretches from direct sensuality to the mediated mode of cultural semioticization (cf. Hallet 2009: 85-93). While affect and emotionality⁶⁹ still remain implicit in this all-embracing definition of human experience, the following quotation renders the intrinsic interconnection between human motion, cognition and the processual emergence of human beings' *affective* semanticization of the spaces they live and act in transparent (see also Ette 2012: 31-32):

What sensory organs and experiences enable human beings to have their *strong feeling* for space and for spatial qualities? Answer: *kinesthesia*, sight, and touch. *Movements* such as the simple ability to kick one's legs and stretch one's arms *are basic to the awareness of space*. *Space is experienced directly as having room in which to move*. Moreover, by *shifting from one place to another, a person acquires a sense of direction*.

⁶⁹ I am using the terms 'affect' and 'emotionality' interchangeably throughout this study.

Forward, backward, and sideways are experientially differentiated, that is, known *subconsciously* in the act of motion. (Tuan 1977: 12; italics mine)

In addition to this basic *physical* ability to move, what matters decisively for the human subject's agency in the context of human motion is his spatial and sociocultural positionality. The former – the individual's position in space – is marked by an interdependence with the latter – his socioeconomic status as determined by profession, wealth, education, power and reputation. In accordance with the overall relevance of these sociological criteria, Adelson defines the latter, sociocultural variant of positionality as “the set of specific social and discursive relations by means of which the (embodied) *agency* of a subject is constituted at a given point in time” (Adelson 1993: 64; see also Breger 2009: 61).

Building on these reflections, I am strategically moving away from a one-sided concentration on cognitive parameters by taking into account the equally important role played by emotionality and affective semanticization in the processual emergence of a person's experientiality of her spatial environment and her movements across it. Accordingly, I assert that the affective component of human experience is just as relevant as cognition in the experiential dimension of moving across space over time: the physical and affective experience of being on the move, of overcoming the friction of the surrounding spatial conditions, of treading one's path across a resistant and hostile environment (cf. Böhme 2005a: xv-xvii) is not explicable solely by recourse to Fludernik's cognitive parameters. Instead, it additionally entails strong elements of emotionality, sensuality and corporeality (cf. Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 27), such as the mountaineer's initial discouragement in the face of Mount Everest and his final joy after reaching the summit.

This postulate of a balanced, interactive juxtaposition of cognition and affect as a pre-requisite for coming to grips with the human *experience* of motion will be now backed up by a brief discussion of the mutual intertwining of space and emotion in human experientiality. In true Sojaian fashion (cf. Soja 1996: 70-73), I intend to reinstate the requisite equilibrium in the interplay of cognition and affect in this phenomenon by temporarily privileging the hitherto neglected category: affect/emotion. Lehnert argues that there is a fundamental reciprocity between space and emotionality inasmuch as, on the one hand, the specific, historically accumulated aura of a cultural space may condition the empathetic individual's experience of that very space, while, on the other hand, the individual's subjective mood may be projected onto her current spatial surroundings as well (cf. Lehnert 2011a: 9-11). In the human experience of space, three realms are thus blended: sensory perception, cognitive processing and

emotionality, i.e. the feelings with which we approach spaces as well as the feelings that these spaces engender in us. According to Lehnert, the atmosphere of a particular cultural space arises out of the interplay between a pre-existent, historically accumulated aura of the space in question and an individual human subject endowed with a particular sense of empathy, i.e. with certain dispositions and sensibilities that make her susceptible to being moved by this aura (cf. Lehnert 2011a: 15), such as in the case of pilgrims visiting a holy shrine or relatives commemorating their loved ones at the site of a devastating terrorist attack or a horrific accident. Therefore, Lehnert conceives of atmosphere as “a never fixable state of in-betweenness, neither completely inherent in the object [i.e. the cultural space concerned] nor in the subject, but produced by these two entities together” (Lehnert 2011a: 16).

The character of atmosphere as a metaphorical space of liminality emerging from this complex interaction between object and subject likewise pertains to individual, clearly demarcated *places* as distinct from more expansive, overarching cultural *spaces*. In fact, Lehnert conceives of the relationship between space and place as a fundamentally dialectical one, with places being “bounded, often materially palpable and locatable in space, which, in turn, constitutes itself (perpetually anew) with the help of place[s]” (Lehnert 2011a: 12). In a similar vein, Tuan argues that

[t]he ideas 'space' and 'place' require each other for definition. From the security and stability of place we are aware of the openness, freedom, and threat of space, and vice versa. Furthermore, if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place. (Tuan 1977: 6)

This dialectic of space and place thus hinges upon the concrete uses to which these two interdependent entities are put by human beings (either individually or collectively) *and* human beings' subjective experiences within them. Thus, it is the inextricable intertwining of human agency and human experientiality that constitutes the fulcrum of the conceptual distinction between space and place. Accordingly, Lehnert complements the aspect of the functional utility of spaces and places with a dedicated focus on “different atmospheric, aesthetic and emotional qualities which they [spaces] unfold or which are inflicted upon them” (Lehnert 2011a: 12; cf. *ibid.*), thereby turning them into “experiential spaces” (*ibid.*).

This dedicated appreciation of the essential part played by affect and emotionality in the human experience of space and movement across it, however, is by no means tantamount to depreciating the equally central role of cognition in this process. Instead, following the innovative concept of “grounded cognition” proposed by Barsalou (2008: 619; cf. also Section 4.3 of this dissertation), I want to highlight the

complex intertwining of cognition and emotion in human experientiality as well as their ultimate anchoring in the human body as the single most important entity governing all human perception and knowledge production, which therefore ultimately proves to be impossible to transcend (cf. *ibid.* and Wilson 2002: 625; see also Stockwell 2002: 27). In conclusion, the impact of spatial conditions on the individual's (physical and mental) well-being thus always has a cognitive and an affective side to it. Conversely, both the cognitive and the affective dispositions and capabilities of an individual human being do reverberate upon her subjective experience of space.

Having inquired into four central resources of human agency – human subjectivity, corporeality, motivationality and experientiality – in detail, I now turn to the limitations on agency, that is, to factors that inhibit the 'free' exertion of this essential human capacity or, in the extreme case, even destroy its significance as a category in its own right completely. For the time being, we can thus provisionally distinguish between factors that generate or enhance a human subject's individual agency, on the one hand, and factors that inhibit, curtail or annihilate it, on the other. The latter group constitutes frictionality, which I use as an all-encompassing term for any sort of resistance to motion that may occur in real-world or fictional contexts. In keeping with its all-embracing conceptual character, the category of frictionality can be subdivided further into internal frictionality – caused, for instance, by an individual's psychic inhibitions, physical or mental disabilities, mental disorders or simply a lack of sense of orientation or any other skill required to plan and carry out a journey – and external frictionality. Under the latter, I subsume all physical and concretely tangible entities accountable for disruptions in the 'smooth' course of a trip, such as stones, rocks, avalanches, walls, fences and turnpikes, as well as abstract and intangible factors like societal, cultural or religious restrictions of mobility (cf. Section 2.1 of this dissertation for further typological differentiations regarding external frictionality).

In this context, it is important to note that the factors accounting for external frictionality correlate with modes of travel in various ways. Each of the most common modes of travel in the twenty-first century – car, train, ship and airplane – is characterized by a different configuration of physical factors such as velocity, *friction* and eco-friendliness as well as by a specific corollary travel *experience*. Most importantly, each of these modes is furthermore marked by a mode-specific combination of the degree of *agency* the individual traveller is granted and his corollary experience of space and time. While walking and driving a car, for instance, both endow the traveller with a relatively high degree of agency, railroad, air and sea travel

generally do not. In the case of walking, the spatial reach of the individual is comparatively low, and his experience of both their surroundings and the passing of time is tied to the necessity of overcoming the physical friction of the spatial conditions. By contrast, the spatial reach of cars and trains can be gauged as medium to high; concomitantly, however, the traveller's experience of space and time is marked by the rapidity of travelling and by the tedium of non-friction, i.e. by the relatively negligible impact of physical friction on the individual's comfort inside the vehicle. With rail and air travel, the individual experience of the passing of time is moreover wrapped in a systematic grid of timetables and interdependent processes designed to guarantee the smooth functioning of national and global "mobility systems" (Urry 2007: 185). These systems reduce the individual to the status of a powerless cog in a gigantic wheel in motion (cf. Urry 2007: 90-111, 135-156). Finally, the airplane distinguishes itself by its truly global reach; at the same time, though, it is also marked by the extremely low degree of individual agency it grants to the passengers and the total absence of physical friction palpable to the individual traveller (cf. Urry 2007: 3-16; 63-156).

Especially when dealing with collective human entities engaged in travel, it is furthermore necessary to take into account the case-specific distribution of agency among the individuals involved, for the power asymmetries arising from certain constellations may significantly predetermine their subjective experience of the journey in question. If, for example, parents make up their mind to migrate to another country, thus forcing their children to follow them, this highly asymmetrical distribution of agency within a family is likely to make the children's affective semanticization of this migration significantly different from their parents' subjective experience. However, the issue of the distribution of agency is highly relevant not only at the micro-structural level but also at the macro-structural plane of global power constellations. In fact, it is frequently global power asymmetries on the macro-structural plane that manifest themselves on the micro-scale, for instance in the stark contrast between destitute economic migrants from the Global South desperately trying to get to Europe or the United States and postmodern elite intellectuals or businesspeople effortlessly flying first-class all around the globe. Regarding the – essentially mutable – scope and pervasiveness of human agency, I furthermore deem it possible to reconceptualise de Certeau's binary distinction between "strategy" and "tactics" (1984 [1980]: xix, 35-38) as a continuum, for a tactic may turn into a strategy as soon as it is no longer practised merely by individuals but by entire social groups whose rise in terms of power increases proportionately with their numerical size. When human collectives come into play, the examination of human agency thus faces yet another complicating factor, the impact of

which multiplies the possible configurations of human subjectivities, experientialities and corporealities involved.

At the same time, the spatial and temporal dimensions of a journey do of course reverberate upon the traveller's agency and experience as well. With regard to the spatial dimension, such a repercussion can take the shape of push and pull factors (cf. Castles, de Haas and Miller 2014 [1993]: 28-31), that is, the tension between an agent's rootedness in her home and the (potentially much higher) attractiveness of a place far away exerts a considerable influence upon her will to move (or to stay). In terms of directionality, such external influences on individual or collective agency can thus be classified as either centrifugal, i.e. inciting an agent to move away from a certain place (push factors), or centripetal, i.e. causing the agent to move towards that place (pull factors). Therefore, an individual or collective agent's motivation to move or stay hinges upon the complex dialectics of 'attraction versus repulsion' by means of which different places of residence are gauged in terms of hospitability, accessibility or frictionality, economic prosperity, social mobility, political and religious liberties and cultural affinities to one's country of origin, to name but a few of the criteria according to which available places of residence are rated in respect of varying degrees of overall attractiveness (cf. Castles, de Haas and Miller 2014 [1993]: 28-31).

The pole of attraction, for instance, can come in the guise of an individual's strong sense of belonging, that is, an intrinsic rootedness in one's home country, or as irresistible, frequently economic and financial incentives to migrate to some other country. In conclusion, it thus becomes evident that the concept of supposedly autonomous agency must be problematized precisely because its alleged autonomy, that is, the individual's freedom of action, can never be dissociated entirely from contextual factors that influence, shape and thereby limit the individual's capacity to make decisions independently.

That being so, whoever thinks
The agent is his self alone,
his judgement is untrained,
does not see truly, foolish one.
(Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 18, verse 16)⁷⁰

⁷⁰ The Bhagavad Gita is contextualized by Geoffrey Parrinder, the author of the verse translation into English from which this quotation (Parrinder 1996: 129) has been taken, as follows: "The Bhagavad Gita, the Song (Gita) of the Lord (Bhagavat), is the most famous Indian poem and scripture. To many Hindus it is their chief devotional book, and in modern times interest in its religious and philosophical teaching has spread around the world. [...] The Gita comes in the sixth book of a great epic poem, the Maha-bharata, Great India story, the longest poem in the world" (Parrinder 1996: vii).

In accordance with the gist of this quotation, I want to problematize the concept of autonomous agency briefly by drawing attention to cases in which it is deprived of its analytical potential.⁷¹ To this end, it is necessary to bring to mind two of its central facets. For one thing, the concept of autonomous agency includes the ability to make a conscious decision against performing a certain movement or even against motion in general. Pertinent examples of the latter possibility are convents and monasteries, or stylites, who epitomize deliberately chosen immobility. For another thing, agency implies the prospective aspect of an intentional, wilfully controlled and self-conscious movement; in other words, it presupposes the individual's ability to make decisions for the future on their own. Thus, in Bruner's formulation, the gist of "the concept of agency [... is] the idea that behaviour is directed towards goals" (Bruner 1990: 9), "[f]or 'agency' implies the conduct of action under the sway of intentional states. So action [is] based on belief, desire and moral commitment [...]" (ibid.). It is precisely these two aspects of agency that are rendered (partly or completely) meaningless in historical and contemporary circumstances such as slavery, indentured labour and forced migration (e.g. in the case of refugees, asylum seekers and destitute economic migrants), because, in these constellations, the agency commonly attributed to the individual traveller is either completely absent (as in slavery) or rather limited (as in the case of asylum seekers or economic migrants).⁷²

Interestingly enough, the problematization of agency as a dimension of motion in its own right⁷³ can be correlated with the prefiguration of current movements by their historical predecessors (cf. Ette 2005: 11; Ette 2012: 29): as implied by the – unfortunately untranslatable – German term *Bahnung*, the path the traveller currently moves along has already been created by an individual or collective agent, sometimes centuries prior to the journey in question. Consequently, the route of the traveller's movement is predetermined by the trajectory of this pre-existent path. Taking this prefiguration (cf. Ette 2005: 11; Ette 2012: 29) into account, concepts such as *Bahnung* lay special emphasis on the passive nature of many movements based on pre-existent

⁷¹ I am grateful to Prof. Ottmar Ette and the participants in his "Romanistisches Forschungskolloquium – Forum für neue Forschungen" at the University of Potsdam on 22 April 2014, where I discussed my project proposal, for their critical feedback on the problematic aspects of the category 'agency', on which the following section is largely based.

⁷² For a postcolonial critique of the mobility paradigm, cf. Upstone (2014: 42-47).

⁷³ A further issue that may – under certain circumstances – contribute to rendering the category of agency problematic is the intricate interweaving of spatial and mental mobility both in real-world and fictional contexts, because, notably in situations of confinement, we are frequently confronted with an inversely proportional relationship between physical and mental mobility in terms of scope and intensity. Conversely, with regard to motivationality, the opposite case is likewise possible, inasmuch as a physically performed spatial movement may trigger a mental re-experiencing of this trip and vice versa.

Bahn(ung)en to be found, for instance, in the transport of prisoners from one jail to another or the deportation of slaves across the Atlantic Ocean in the Middle Passage.

In addition, my brief analysis of the limitations of agency must take into consideration a further formative influence on its constitution inasmuch as agency has come to be more and more “gendered” (Brooks and Simpson 2013: 158), since nowadays, the majority of migrants are female, primarily domestic workers, sex workers, entertainers, masseuses and mail-order brides (cf. Constable 2005a: 4; Brooks and Simpson 2013: 90-106, in particular 94-95). This “feminization of migration” (Brooks and Simpson 2013: 162) frequently goes hand in hand with a partial curbing or even a downright denial of migrants’ individual agency. Building on Spivak (2010 [1985]: 21-78, particularly 29-34), one can further argue that denial of agency commonly correlates with either stasis or the denial of autonomous mobility: they do not move; they are moved. A particularly notorious example of the utter denial of agency can be found in Spivak’s analysis of the subaltern woman’s subjectivity in her famous essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (2010 [1985]: 21-78),⁷⁴ which radically concludes that the subaltern woman’s agency is effaced by doubly oppressive societal and discursive structures in contexts both historical and contemporary: In the era of the Raj, she was silenced by both the British colonizers and indigenous patriarchy, while today, the silencing of the subaltern Indian woman is perpetuated by globalized Western and postcolonial Indian agents operating under neo-imperialist and persistently patriarchal conditions (cf. Spivak 2010 [1985]: 41-43, 61-65).

Having problematized the concept of agency, I now delineate possible applications of this category to the examination of literary representations of human motion by refining a concrete example: Bakhtin’s concept of the chronotope. In his seminal essay *Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes toward a Historical Poetics* (1981a [1973]), which will henceforth be referred to as the ‘chronotope essay’, Bakhtin creates the neologism “chronotope” (1981a: 84) in order to posit time and space as *interwoven* dimensions of literary texts:

We will give the name chronotope (literally, “time space”) to the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature. This term [space-time] is employed in mathematics, and was introduced as part of Einstein’s Theory of Relativity. The special meaning it has in relativity theory is not important for our purposes; we are borrowing it for literary criticism almost as a metaphor (almost, but not

⁷⁴ All references to Spivak’s seminal essay are to the revised version of “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (1985), contained in the collected volume *Can the Subaltern Speak? – Reflections on the History of an Idea* (2010: 21-78), edited by Rosalind C. Morris and published by Columbia University Press.

entirely). What counts for us is the fact that it expresses the inseparability of space and time (time as the fourth dimension of space). We understand the chronotope as a formally constitutive category of literature [...]. In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. This intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic chronotope (Bakhtin 1981a: 84).

Proceeding from the fundamental assumption that neither space nor time makes sense on its own, Bakhtin conceives of their relationship as a reciprocal one both in literature and in extratextual cultural reality: “Out of the actual chronotopes of our world (which serve as the source of representation) emerge the reflected and created chronotopes of the world represented in the work (the text)” (Bakhtin 1981a: 253). In literary texts *and* in extratextual cultural reality, time and space are therefore inextricably intertwined in the chronotope,⁷⁵ because, on the one hand, the chronotope allows time to “materializ[e] in space” (Bakhtin 1981a: 250) – i.e. the abstract nature and imperceptibility of time in itself are overcome only with the help of space – while, on the other hand, the chronotope simultaneously effects the dimensioning and semanticization of the otherwise amorphous and empty entity ‘space’, i.e. it causes time to endow space with dimensions and meaning (cf. *ibid.* 84 and Frank and Mahlke 2008: 206).⁷⁶

Taking this fundamental recognition as a starting point, Bakhtin exemplifies his concept of the chronotope through a detailed analysis of various historical genres, most of which predate the emergence of the ‘modern’ novel in the eighteenth century. What Bakhtin neglects almost entirely, however, is the importance of the ‘mobile character’ for the constitution process of literary chronotopes. This shortcoming proves to be a major drawback, because it is the “mobile character” that brings “different semantic fields and chronotopes [...] into contact with one another” (Frank 2009: 75; cf. *ibid.*). In the same vein, one can arguably claim that the moving character likewise constitutes the critical interface between different narratively enacted storyworld topologies inasmuch as his performative act of moving across and between them brings about their mutual intertwining, which may ultimately lead to the emergence of

⁷⁵ In fact, the intricate relationship between intratextual fictional chronotopes and their extratextual cultural counterparts is explicable by recourse to Ricoeur’s model of the threefold mimesis, for the triadic process of prefiguration, configuration and refiguration applies to them as well (cf. Section 2.1 of this dissertation).

⁷⁶ For a detailed discussion of the merits and shortcomings of Bakhtin’s concept of the chronotope, cf. Frank and Mahlke (2008: 201-242) and Frank (2009: 53-80, particularly 72-75).

transculturality.⁷⁷ In this particular regard, Bakhtin's chronotope model thus suffers from its insufficient acknowledgement of the individual character's agency, which renders it too static.

Accordingly, I intend to tackle the resulting desideratum of dynamizing Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope by integrating the dimension of agency in the following. In order to turn this concept into a fruitful analytical tool in the context of the cultural narratology of motion, Bakhtin's notion of "time-space" (1981a: 84) must be supplemented by the category of agency: otherwise, it would by no means be capable of reflecting the complexity of my trialectics of motion, which is constituted precisely by the intricate interplay of spatiality, temporality *and* agency. In addition, Ricoeur's threefold mimesis is of central relevance here as well, because narratively configured concepts of human agency are likewise prefigured by their extratextual counterparts, just as they themselves are capable of reverberating upon the latter.⁷⁸ The productivity of such an innovative approach to this seminal concept shall be demonstrated briefly by way of one pertinent example: the chronotope of the road (cf. Bakhtin 1981a: 243-244). According to Bakhtin (1981a: 243-244), the road constitutes a particularly insightful chronotope because it is a specific intersection of the temporal and the spatial axes that allows for the accidental encounter of individuals or groups from highly disparate social, economic, cultural, religious and educational backgrounds:

On the road ("the high road"), the spatial and temporal paths of the most varied people – representatives of all social classes, estates, religions, nationalities, ages – intersect at one spatial and temporal point. People who are normally kept separate by social and spatial distance can accidentally meet; any contrast may crop up, the most various fates may collide and interweave with one another. On the road the spatial and temporal series defining human fates and lives combine with one another in distinctive ways, even as they become more complex and more concrete by the collapse of social distances. The chronotope of the road is both a point of new departures and a place for events to find their denouement. Time, as it were, fuses together with space and flows in it (forming the road) [...]. (Bakhtin 1981a: 243-244)

Hence, its particular relevance lies in the fact that it can accomplish an – albeit temporary – breakdown of otherwise rigid social boundaries between heterogeneous societal strata. Thus, Bakhtin does acknowledge the informal and potentially even transformative effect of coincidental encounters on the road between members of

⁷⁷ The same interrelationship between moving agents and the degree to which discrete topologies are reciprocally interlocked holds true for extratextual cultural topologies.

⁷⁸ In fact, the applicability of Ricoeur's threefold mimesis to concepts of human agency is rooted in his deployment of a "semantics of action" (Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 54) in his explication of mimesis 1 (prefiguration; cf. *ibid.* 54-57; see also Beck 2014: 66-76, particularly 70, and Lange 2014: 168).

different social and cultural communities. The image of the road, he continues, is frequently also used in metaphorical locutions like ‘the course of a life’ (cf. *ibid.*).

In my reconceptualization, I take up this metaphor of the road in order to expand its conceptual scope to any mode of human travel, because, whether one is on an actual road, on the train or on an airplane, one always has the chance to accidentally encounter people from the most disparate backgrounds. Hence, the central characteristic feature of coincidental encounters on the road identified by Bakhtin, i.e. their capability of reducing social distances to zero at least for the moment (cf. *ibid.*), is transferable to any journey – irrespective of the mode of travel.⁷⁹ Hence, while Bakhtin’s contextualization of the chronotope of the road lends itself to conceptual transfer to other contemporary modes of travel, its scope of analytical applicability to literary representations of movement can be enhanced even further by highlighting the central role of agency and its resources in this specific example. After all, chance encounters on the road can evidently take place only under the condition that the travellers involved made up their mind to go on a journey and to take this particular route at some point prior to the encounter.

In addition to this agentic aspect, the individual traveller’s experientiality of this specific journey likewise proves to be of prime relevance for the actual or fictional configuration of this encounter. A historical case in point here might be the stark contrast in affective semanticization of such an encounter between a nobleman engaged in his obligatory grand tour and a destitute beggar accidentally trudging along the same road, or, to mention a contemporary example, between a globally mobile member of the intellectual elite and a desperate refugee fleeing from civil war, political persecution or economic deprivation. In both cases, it is the complex interactions between human agency, experientiality and subjectivity that shape the traveller’s individual configuration and semanticization of such a coincidental happening.

With the chronotope of the road, however, Bakhtin does draw attention to a factor I have neglected in my discussion of human agency so far: contingency. In addition to the chance encounters thematized by Bakhtin, there are further possible configurations that contingency may take in the context of human motion, such as sudden changes in exterior conditions (e.g. a break in the weather, unexpected obstacles like avalanches or landslides, or the outbreak of civil war), all of which may

⁷⁹ What is more, Bakhtin’s chronotope of the road can be combined with a structurally similar concept from cognitive narratology, viz. Landau and Jackendoff’s notion of the path (cf. 1993: 217-265, see also Herman 2002: 277-280), an aspect I elaborate in Section 4.4.1.

either lead to a short-term modification of a traveller's plans concerning the route to be taken, the mode of travel to be used and so on, or obstruct the continuation of the journey altogether. Again, the potentially disruptive impact of contingency on human agency renders the context-dependence of this dimension of human motion evident.

Rather than sticking to the ideal of autonomous human freedom of action as the allegedly 'true' nature of human agency, it is thus more reasonable to assume a continuum of extratextual cultural and textual fictional configurations of human agency⁸⁰ stretching between the theoretical poles of totally self-determined activeness and totally heteronomous passiveness, because such a model distinguishes itself by its capacity to accommodate the potentially *frictional* impact of spatially, socially and historically determined contextual factors on the individual's freedom of movement without having to abandon the category of human agency entirely. Allowing for a range of different degrees of human agency, this continuum is better able to account for the case-specific configurations of this parameter in essentially heterogeneous historical contexts than either the apotheosis of freedom of action in the ideal of complete autonomy or its total negation in approaches focusing exclusively on spatiality and temporality as constitutive dimensions of human motion. As the preceding reflections on the problematization of human agency have shown, there are, however, certain historical contexts in which this parameter is indeed deprived of its analytical potential, because, for instance in slavery, human beings are moved around like objects by their oppressors instead of moving out of free will. In order to complete the picture of my heuristic trialectics of motion, I therefore explicate the fundamental part played by the historical context in which a specific movement is situated in tandem with other manifestations of the third constitutive dimension of human motion – temporality – in the following section.

⁸⁰ Cf. Chapter 4.2.1 of this dissertation for specifically *narratological* aspects of textual configurations of agency, such as its distribution among different levels of the narrative text.

2.3 The Temporal Dimension of Motion

In this section, the conundrum of temporality⁸¹ is examined in its interrelationship with human motion. To begin with, it is indispensable to recognize that any engagement with the complex issues surrounding the category 'time' must proceed from two fundamental recognitions: first, the cultural constructedness of time concepts, and second, the plurality of various different "temporalities" (West-Pavlov 2013; cf. *ibid.* 158-174). If one accepts, with Soja, who defines "[h]istoricity [... as a] summary term for the social production of [...] Time" (Soja 1996: 71), that the concepts of temporality and time-orders are human constructs, it follows that there is a multiplicity of heterogeneous conceptualizations and regimes of temporality, some of which are historically grounded in the perception of particular aspects of 'natural' reality, such as the cycle of seasons or the irreversibility of the one-directional course of human life, whereas others are the product of specific socioeconomic ideologies as epitomized by the capitalist slogan 'time is money' (cf. Soja 1996: 70-73 and West-Pavlov 2013: 1-12, 13-28, 120-136).⁸²

Among these multiple temporalities, the conceptualization of temporality as a one-dimensional linear flow from the past via the present into the future, which is embodied emblematically in the metaphor of "the arrow of time" (Ricoeur 1984: 67), has clearly dominated Western thought since the Enlightenment, not least because it serves as the foundational time concept of modern science and technology. What is more, it is also at the heart of nineteenth-century historicism, which, predicated upon the postulate of a categorical "temporocentrism" (Casey 1997: xii), posited a teleological course of human history culminating in Western modernity, the scientific and technological accomplishments of which are based on "chronometrical time" (West-Pavlov 2013: 13), that is, on the rationally calibrated measurement of time by means of ever more precise instruments (cf. West-Pavlov 2013: 1-28). However, the concept of time as one-directional linearity co-exists with several alternative temporalities, among which the age-old notion of the circularity of time found in natural processes like the cyclical recurrence of the seasons is the most prominent (cf. *ibid.*: 13-14).

⁸¹ I am using 'temporality' as a general, essentially pluralistic umbrella term for various different (historical, philosophical, epistemological and so on) concepts, sociocultural orders and scales of time throughout this study (cf. West-Pavlov [2013] for a similar usage of the terms 'time' and 'temporality').

⁸² For an enquiry into time – or, rather, different concepts of time – as a travelling concept, cf. Lange (2012: 209-220).

From the point of view of an intercultural comparison of philosophical conceptualizations of temporality, it is intriguing that Hindu philosophy has always accommodated various, highly heterogeneous time concepts: these various – essentially different and frequently contradictory – conceptualizations of temporality in Hinduism range from time as human destiny to temporality as a mere “figment of the mind” (Klostermaier 2010 [2008]: 874). According to Klostermaier (cf. 2010 [2008]: 872-874), the *Rigveda* posits a “rotating wheel of time” with “twelve spokes” (Klostermaier 2010: 872), thus presenting a cyclical concept of temporality, whereas the *Mahabharata* conceives of time as “fate or even death [, ...] provider both of happiness and of misery [, whose] effects are inescapable” (Klostermaier 2010: 872). While the cyclical concept of temporality probably originates in the seasonal work-cycle in agriculture, the equation of time with the simultaneously creative and destructive forces of destiny reveals a fatalistic strand in Hindu philosophy, according to which “[e]verything in this world is preordained; all events happen by necessity, with or without human cooperation” (Klostermaier 2010: 873). According to Klostermaier (cf. 2010: 872-874), yet another concept of temporality is elaborated in Shankara’s *Advaita Vedanta*, which, postulating “the a-temporal Brahman [as] the only reality” (cf. Klostermaier 2010: 873), concludes that “[t]ime does not possess an independent reality of its own; it is only associated with events in time” (Klostermaier 2010: 873), hence the contention that “[t]emporality is a figment of the mind” (Klostermaier 2010: 874).

As can be seen from these examples, Hinduism has always embraced a multitude of co-existent, often contradictory concepts of temporality. It is this categorical openness to a plurality of temporalities that makes Indian philosophy stand out in comparison to its Western counterpart in the modern age, which, from the heyday of the Enlightenment to the triumph of historicism in the nineteenth century, evinced a gradual, increasingly narrow-minded constriction of time concepts to that of a teleological linear path of progress, leading from an agricultural past (exhibiting an imprecise cyclical time concept attuned to the annual cycle of the seasons) to highly industrialized European modernity with its gradually perfected instruments for the precise measurement of time (cf. West-Pavlov 2013: 13-80). The central postulate of nineteenth-century historicism – history is a one-directional teleological path from an obscure and primitive past to the blessings of enlightened European modernity – has colluded strategically (and, one might add, most devastatingly) with the economic exploitation of the chronometrical subdivision of time into ever-smaller units and their efficient utilization that is so characteristic of twentieth- and twenty-first-century

industrial modernity. It is their common denominator – the linearity of time – that, despite the fundamental critiques brought forth by philosophers, historians, anthropologists and literary scholars in the twentieth century, has prevailed in the minds of the general public in the West ever since (cf. *ibid.*).

Why is the basic recognition of the plurality of co-existing, yet highly competitive cultural temporalities I have just delineated roughly so vital to an understanding of the temporal dimension of human motion? More often than not, motion serves as a catalyst to raise awareness of these multiple temporalities and their mutual intertwining in the mind(s) of the individual(s) on the move. It is through the confrontation with cultural temporalities other than that of the traveller's own cultural background that she is given the opportunity to enter into a process of defamiliarization with the latter, thus potentially acquiring the capacity to question the epistemological premises on which her own culture's predominant concept of temporality rests (cf. Ette 2003: 21-22).

One now classical example of such a confrontation between heterogeneous temporalities brought about by movement is to be found primarily in colonial contexts: the "simultaneity of the non-simultaneous" (Jameson 1991: 307; cf. Bhabha 1994f: 218 and Frank 2006: 37-43), that is, the temporal co-existence of divergent temporal orders that was cast by the European colonizers as the contrast between their own alleged modernity and the backward traditionalism of the rest of the world. It is the consequent discursive strategy of the "denial of coevalness" (Fabian 2002 [1983]: 31; cf. *ibid.* 25-35; see also Fabian 2004: 349 and Frank 2006: 40)⁸³ to non-European ethnicities – according to the principle "They (there) are now as we (here) used to be centuries ago" (Todorov 1985: 201, my translation; see also Frank 2006: 41) – that enabled the colonizers to justify their ruthless economic exploitation and political subjection of these peoples under the guise of bringing them the blessings of rationalist-scientific modernization. Deplorably, this very same rhetorical strategy is still persistently deployed in a great deal of contemporary political discourse as well as in mass-media representations of the so-called 'Third World'. As indicated above, however, there are viable alternatives to such a lopsided and presumptuous approach to the incommensurability of heterogeneous cultural temporalities. Among other things, confrontation with other temporalities may induce a higher degree of (self-)reflexivity regarding the culturally prevalent modes of dealing with time.

⁸³ In his path-breaking critique of the ideological instrumentalization of time in anthropology entitled *Time and the Other – How Anthropology Makes its Object* (2002 [1983]), Fabian defines "denial of coevalness [... as] a persistent and systematic tendency to place the referent(s) of anthropology in a Time other than the present of the producer of anthropological discourse" (Fabian 2002 [1983]: 31).

Granted, one may well object to my hypothesis concerning the catalytic function of motion with regard to the variety of temporalities on the basis that, in the twenty-first century, movement is no longer necessary to develop a basic awareness of the co-existence of multiple temporalities because of the global availability of information on virtually any place on earth through the Internet. Against this widespread belief, I assert that there still is an ineluctable ontological difference between the theoretical processing of information on a given place (and its temporality) and the practical experience of going there in person. Whereas the impact of the former is restricted to the realm of cognition, the latter yields a direct physical, cognitive and sensory exposure to the foreign place, its culture and temporality. Notwithstanding the pervasive influence of the contemporary media landscape on our perception of foreign cultures, there is no equivalent substitute for the individual experience of having been there physically.

As can be seen from this example, two distinct but interrelated aspects have to be disentangled with regard to the temporality of human motion: the historical context in which a journey is undertaken by a human agent on the one hand, and the individual traveller's subjective experience of temporality during this trip on the other. The historical context co-determines the individual's scope of agency by either restricting freedom of movement (as, for example, in totalitarian dictatorships taking their own population hostage in order to prevent them from escaping harsh living conditions in countries such as North Korea or the former German Democratic Republic) or actively promoting global mobility (for instance, the granting of scholarships and stipends by emerging countries like China, India or Brazil to their students and young researchers in order to enable them to study at world-class universities in the U.S. or Great Britain). While this historical macro-constellation does have repercussions on the individual traveller's experience of the passing of time while on the move (compare, for instance, the stark contrast between a perilous flight across a closely guarded border and a tourist trip undertaken for the sake of mere pleasure), it is by no means the only factor influencing their experience of temporality. Further decisive factors include the respective traveller's personal physical constitution, mental disposition and other micro-level determinants of their mind-time. A human subject whose ability to react to external stimuli is retarded due to disability, chronic disease or old age, for example, will experience the passing of time in a way that is markedly different from an able-bodied, vigorous and single-minded go-getter.

Regarding the first relevant aspect of temporality – historical contextualization – it is, first of all, necessary to recognize that it requires an individual, case-specific approach that explicitly takes into account the particularities of each and every historical situation in which a traveller embarks upon a journey that may later be turned into a narrative. Despite the impossibility of generalizing beyond the specificities of a given historical context, it is nevertheless possible to offer general guidelines as to how the complex interaction between the respective extratextual historical context and the fictional narrative enactment of journeys embedded in this particular context occurs.

In contrast to the static and one-directional conceptualization of the interface between text and context implied by the Aristotelian concept of mimesis as the “imitation or representation of action” (Ricoeur 1984: 33), “cultural narratology proceeds from the assumption that it is more rewarding to conceptualize narrative fiction as an active force in its own right which is involved in the actual generation of ways of thinking and of attitudes and, thus, of something that stands behind historical developments” (Nünning 2006: 169). The fundamental problem posed by Aristotle’s reductionist definition of mimesis is solved for temporality by Ricoeur’s seminal model of the threefold mimesis: by subdividing the static Aristotelian definition of mimesis into a three-stage process – prefiguration, configuration and refiguration, Ricoeur succeeds in accounting for the complex interrelations between historical reality and literary enactment in a much more dynamic, precise and subtle way than the classical concept of mimesis.

As indicated in Section 2.1 of this dissertation, Ricoeur’s threefold mimesis distinguishes itself through its transferability to not only the other two constitutive dimensions of human motion – spatiality and agency – but also the resulting aggregate phenomenon of human motion itself (cf. Nünning 2008a: 14). Building upon my definition of human motion as the outcome of the trialectical interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality, it is plausible to conclude that Ricoeur’s model can – by extension – be applied to my concept of ontological vectoriality – defined as the conjuncture, that is, the combinatorial interplay, of these three formative dimensions in the extratextual cultural or narrative configuration of individual movements – as well. In the following, I will therefore briefly explicate Ricoeur’s model of the threefold mimesis in order to demonstrate its applicability to my trialectics of motion in general and the concept of ontological vectoriality in particular.

To begin with, Ricoeur's model is predicated upon the recognition that the reader's extratextual cultural world knowledge and cognitive capacities constitute vital prerequisites for their comprehension of literary texts. This is why he defines mimesis 1 – prefiguration – as the “ground[ing] [of the composition of the plot] in a preunderstanding of the world of action, its meaningful structures, its symbolic resources, and its temporal character” (Ricoeur 1984: 54).⁸⁴ Locating “the richness in the meaning of mimesis 1” in the fact that “[t]o imitate or represent action is first to preunderstand what human acting is, in its semantics, its symbolic system, its temporality” (Ricoeur 1984: 64), he asserts that “[u]pon this preunderstanding, common to both poets and their readers, emplotment is constructed and, with it, textual and literary mimetics” (Ricoeur 1984: 64). Via an analogical transfer of Ricoeur's concept of prefiguration, it thus becomes evident that empirical notions of human motion and its intrinsic ontological vectoriality originating in extratextual reality do play a significant part in the literary practice of enacting movements narratively. At the same time, literary texts are of course capable of not only representing these extratextual cultural concepts of vectoriality mimetically, but also of reconfiguring and resemiotizing them, for instance by foregrounding deviations from the smooth operation of human motion caused by friction or by thematizing the traveller's subjective mind-time instead of describing the landscape passing by. In effect, this means that the reader's knowledge of the cultural semioticization of human motion is an indispensable resource for them to understand any kind of literary resemioticization (cf. Hallet 2009: 81-93). If, for instance, a character's airplane trip is omitted completely from narrative discourse, the reader is able to interpret this “ellipsis” (Genette 1980 [1972]: 106; cf. *ibid.*: 86-112, particularly 93-95 and 106-109) as a reflection of the characteristic features of contemporary air travel only on condition that he or she possesses at least a basic familiarity with these experiential qualities, such as, most importantly, monotony and boredom. As we have seen in Section 2.1, Ricoeur's argument can be expanded to include not only temporality and human agency, but also spatiality and human motion.

While mimesis 1 constitutes the foundational bedrock of Ricoeur's model, the concept of mimesis 2 – configuration – fulfils a mediating function in that it links

⁸⁴ For a detailed explication of these three components of mimesis 1, see Ricoeur 1984: 54-64. As pointed out by Dowling, “[t]he reason that motives and goals become central to Ricoeur's argument at this point is that he views narrative emplotment as always grounded in what he calls a preunderstanding of the world of action” (Dowling 2011: 6). Despite his clear focus on the intersection of temporality and narrative, Ricoeur therefore explicitly acknowledges the central role of human (or anthropomorphic) agency for narrative emplotment by embedding mimesis 1 in what he calls a “semantics of action” (Ricoeur 1984: 54) centred around the issue of motivationality and goal-directedness of human acting in general (cf. *ibid.* and Dowling 2011: 6).

mimesis 1 (prefiguration) to mimesis 3 (refiguration): conceptualized by Ricoeur as the narrative *emplotment* of a random succession of incidents into a meaningful sequence of events (in short, a plot), mimesis 2 does so in three regards:

First, the configurational arrangement transforms the succession of events into one meaningful whole which is the correlate of the act of assembling the events together and which makes the story followable. [...] Second, the configuration of the plot imposes the “sense of an ending” (to use the title of Frank Kermode’s well-known book) on the indefinite succession of incidents. [...] Finally, the repetition of a story, governed as a whole by its way of ending, constitutes an alternative to the representation of time as flowing from the past toward the future, following the well-known metaphor of the “arrow of time”. It is as though recollection inverted the so-called “natural” order of time. In reading the ending in the beginning and the beginning in the ending, we also learn to read time itself backwards, as the recapitulation of the initial conditions of a course of action in its terminal consequences. (Ricoeur 1984: 67-68)

Whereas mimesis 1 refers to the extent to which the extratextual cultural context plays a significant part in the textual fictional configuration of a narratively enacted storyworld, mimesis 2 thus zooms in on the concrete nature and effects of this emplotment. To apply the thrust of Ricoeur’s argument to the problem of the narrative enactment of human motion, it is the configurational arrangement of various movements performed by fictional human characters among different places in the novel’s “story space” (Chatman 1978: 96; cf. *ibid.* 96-107) over (certain chunks of) story time that turns a random agglomeration of heterogeneous movements into a meaningful plot organized both sequentially (in terms of temporality) *and* relationally (in terms of spatiality). Therefore, the novel amplifies extratextual cultural experience (instead of merely imitating it) by endowing it with a sense of necessity and (more or less) logical consistency that is absent from the vicissitudes of human existence in the real world.

In contrast to mimesis 2, which refers to the fictional universe of literary representation, “mimesis 3 marks the intersection of the world of the text and the world of the hearer or reader; the intersection, therefore, of the world configured by the poem and the world wherein real action occurs and unfolds its specific temporality” (Ricoeur 1984: 71). Accordingly, mimesis 3, actualized in the recipient’s act of reading, is crucial because “it is the reader who completes the work inasmuch as [...] the written work is a sketch for reading. [...] The act of reading is thus the operator that joins mimesis 3 to mimesis 2. It is the final indicator of the refiguring of the world of action under the sign of the plot” (Ricoeur 1984: 77).⁸⁵ Again, these potential repercussions of the act of

⁸⁵ As Dowling (cf. 2011: 15-16) clarifies, Ricoeur defines mimesis 3 in a double sense. First, it denotes “a cognitive process, the movement from imperfect knowledge to a total clarity that lays

reading a literary text on the reader's way of acting in his extratextual cultural environment pertain to not only the experience of temporality, but also spatiality and motion. In addition to this virtually universal transferability to the complex interrelationship between parameters of extratextual human experientiality other than temporality and their respective narrative emplotment, it is its character as a never-ending hermeneutic feedback loop that accounts for the eminent usefulness of Ricoeur's threefold mimesis for my trialectics of motion: as Ricoeur himself emphasizes, this tripartite process virtually constitutes a *perpetuum mobile*, for "the hermeneutic circle of narrative and time never stops being reborn from the circle that the stages of mimesis form" (Ricoeur 1984: 76). The same verdict holds true for space, agency and motion inasmuch as narrative configurations of these parameters, which are always grounded in pertinent extratextual real-world notions, amplify the latter (by organizing them sequentially and relationally as well as by resemanticizing them), thereby opening up, in turn, the possibility of a transformation of their real-world counterparts from the perspective of human experience.

As far as the experience of human motion is concerned, it is important to note that this hermeneutic feedback loop of the three stages of Ricoeur's mimesis model applies to all types of this phenomenon, regardless of the mode of travel used or the geographical distance covered, albeit with case-specific variations in affective intensity of the respective experience. Accordingly, the act of hiking along a tricky mountain path may be recounted in much greater detail than a transcontinental flight in a jet, provided that it features occurrences that are of substantial relevance to the advancement of the novel's plot. At the same time, it is also possible that the precise course of a biographically momentous transnational migration via jet plane is elided completely because of a blatant lack of tellability, only to be thematized in detail retrospectively and indirectly, that is, by way of its tremendous effects on the protagonist's experientiality of their spatio-temporal and sociocultural environment.

In the latter case, the narrative technique of representation chosen – a Genettean ellipsis (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 86-112, particularly 93-95 and 106-109) – is probably grounded in the extratextual cultural semanticization of air travel as monotonous and boring, which, in turn, has its roots in the extremely high degree of

bare a new and alternative landscape of reality" (Dowling 2011: 15) epitomized by the Aristotelian concept of anagnorisis. Second, refiguration additionally refers to "an alteration in consciousness" (ibid.) brought about by the impact of reading a particular literary text on the reader's view of the real world (cf. ibid.). "Mimesis 3 in this sense bears some resemblance to those alterations in perception conventionally associated with paradigm shifts in the history of science" (ibid.). Or, one might add, refiguration likewise pertains to the alterations in perception triggered by the encounter with foreign cultures during a journey.

standardization pertaining to this mode of travel. These examples show that the complex interrelatedness of extratextual cultural semioticizations (cf. Hallet 2009: 85-93) of different modes of travel with their textual fictional resemioticizations (cf. Hallet 2009: 81-93) in the narrative configurations of characters' journeys across the storyworld merits close attention. More generally, all aspects of the narrative enactment of motion must be scrutinized in their multifaceted interactions with corresponding real-world instances of motion. In short, Ricoeur's model of the threefold mimesis offers itself as a useful analytical tool for the elucidation of the reciprocal interrelations between the narrative enactment of the individual ontological vectorialities of characters' movements across the storyworld over (a specific period of story) time and the ontological vectorialities of corresponding movements in real-world contexts.

The suitability of Ricoeur's model for my research interest – the development of a cultural narratology of motion grounded in a trialectics of (human) motion – does in fact reach beyond this micro-level dimension of individual movements' ontological vectorialities to the macro-level dimension of the shaping of extratextual cultural spaces by myriad such “real-and-imagined” (Soja 1996) vectorialities. This essential impact of the entirety of movements conducted across it on the sociocultural configuration of cultural spaces is, in turn, rooted in the central core of this dissertation: the insight into the intricate, yet fundamental interrelatedness of space, time and agency in the complex phenomenon of motion. This trialectical interdependence is illustrated by the correlation that exists between Ette's (spatial) postulate that a space is essentially characterized by the real-and-imagined movements (performed by agents and) related to it in the past, present and future (cf. Ette 2005: 23) and Ricoeur's (temporal) concepts of prefiguration, configuration and refiguration, because the latter enables us to describe the emergence of cultural spaces as a threefold mimesis in analogy with that of temporality: the current configuration of a particular space is always prefigured by historical, real-and-imagined movements and events that took place there, while, in turn, its present shape may cause human agents to either refigure other spaces in its image or transform this space in the image of another.

Adding the reciprocity of space and time postulated by Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope to the picture, it is thus possible to conclude that not only the (actual or fictional) individual movements themselves, but also the chronotopes they produce are implicated in a never-ending “hermeneutic circle” (Ricoeur 1984: 76) of the three dimensions of human motion – agency, spatiality and temporality – and their narrative

enactment. In short, these chronotopes themselves are likewise subject to the perpetual process of threefold mimesis.

As elaborated in Section 2.2, I assume the moving agent to be the central operator in the emergence of chronotopes both textual and extratextual, because it is through the representation of their movement across space over time that the reader or perceiver is acquainted with the actual or fictional space-time configurations Bakhtin labels chronotopes. Therefore, I refer to agentive space-time configurations from now on, a concept that is tantamount to a complementary extension of the Bakhtinian chronotope with the dimension of human agency (cf. Section 2.2 of this dissertation; see also Mahler 1999a: 11-36, particularly 28-32). With this concept, I intend to account for the fact that the mutual, tripartite interrelationship with extratextual cultural reality analysed so insightfully by Ricoeur pertains not only to narrative configurations of temporality, but also to those of agency and spatiality, in short, to the entire complex of agentive time-space that makes up the storyworld as relevant to narrative enactments of human motion.

In regard to historical contextualization, one particular aspect of the interrelatedness of space and time deserves further attention: the historicity of space⁸⁶ (which should not be addressed without at least mentioning its correlative, the spatiality of history and temporality in general; cf. Lefebvre 1991: 37, 218-219; Soja 1996: 70-73). Thus following Upstone in her contention that “[t]o reassert spatiality is [...] to privilege it as a context that must be read alongside temporality as a factor of equal significance” (Upstone 2009: 3),⁸⁷ I therefore complement Ricoeur’s reflections on the

⁸⁶ Cf. also Ingold’s essay “The Temporality of the Landscape” (Ingold 2011d [2000]: 189-208), in which he stresses the historicity of certain culturally configured “real-and-imagined” (Soja 1996) spaces, that is, landscapes: “To perceive the landscape is [...] to carry out an act of remembrance, and remembering is not so much a matter of calling up an internal image, stored in the mind, as of engaging perceptually with an environment that is itself pregnant with the past” (Ingold 2011d: 189). In addition to this deliberate conceptual interlocking of human perception of the landscape with (individual and collective) human memory, Ingold foregrounds the intrinsic interconnection between human motion, dwelling and the temporal nature of the world’s perpetual (self-)transformation: “[...] in dwelling in the world, we do not act *upon* it, or do things *to* it; rather we move along *with* it. Our actions do not transform the world, they are part and parcel of the world’s transforming itself. And this is just another way of saying that they belong to time. For in the final analysis, everything is suspended in movement” (Ingold 2011d: 200; italics in original).

⁸⁷ Paradoxically, one particularly relevant example of the space-time nexus, i.e. their reciprocal interrelatedness, can be found in the discursive neglect of spatiality in the nineteenth century: “[...] it is no coincidence that the time in which history comes to overshadow space – the nineteenth century – is also the height of empire and spatial violence” (Upstone 2009: 4). From a psychoanalytical point of view, it is thus precisely the excessively brutal spatial expansion of the European colonial powers in the heyday of imperialism that conditions the relative suppression of the category ‘spatiality’ in historical and political discourses in the nineteenth

interweaving of time and narrative – in the same vein as Bakhtin’s analysis of literary chronotopes – with Lefebvre’s ground-breaking scrutiny of the intricately Janus-faced nexus between space and time in *The Production of Space* (1991 [1974]): “Time is known and actualized in space, becoming a social reality by virtue of a spatial practice. Similarly, space is known in and through time. Unity in difference, the same in the other (and vice versa), are thus made concrete” (Lefebvre 1991: 218–219). In addition to this echo of Bakhtin’s deliberations, Lefebvre formulates the dialectics between the presence and the historicity of space in painstakingly accurate terms:

The historical and its consequences, the “diachronic”, the “etymology” of locations in the sense of what happened at a particular spot or place and thereby changed it – all of this becomes inscribed in space. The past leaves its traces; time has its own script. Yet this space is always, now and formerly, a *present* space, given as an immediate whole, complete with its associations and connections in their actuality. Thus production process and product present themselves as two inseparable aspects, not as two separable ideas. (Lefebvre 1991: 37)

The same dialectics (of simultaneous historicity and presence) holds true for movements across space over time, for each journey is prefigured and semanticized by previous trips along the same or similar routes and is, at the same time, present as current experience in the traveller’s mind. What is more, the current journey itself will contribute to the prefiguration and semanticization of future journeys (cf. Ette 2005: 11-12).⁸⁸ Therefore, while historically, movement – in the shape of exploratory, scientific, commercial or military voyages – has been one of the driving forces behind the development of modern-day “chronometrical time” (West-Pavlov 2013: 13) in the wake of European colonialist expansion (cf. *ibid.* 13-20), it has also served – and still does serve – as the principal connector between various different cultural temporalities all around the globe.

On a meta-level, Lefebvre argues, it is in fact precisely movement in space that enables us to overcome the imperceptibility of time: “Let everyone look at the space around them. What do they see? Do they see time? They live time, after all; they are in

century. In short, historicism is, among other things, a child of the global spatialization of European power in this era (cf. *ibid.*).

⁸⁸ Without referring to Ricoeur’s threefold mimesis (cf. Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52-87), Ette captures this interrelatedness of past, present and future movements with his concept of “vectorization” (Ette 2005: 11), which he defines as follows: “The *vectorization*, this storage of past (and even future) movement patterns, which appear and become *experienceable* in current movements again, reaches far beyond that which has been experienced on an individual level and that which can be experienced in the respective lifeworlds: vectorization also embraces the domain of collective history, the movement patterns of which it stores in the discontinuous, multiply refracted post-Euclidian vector field of future dynamics. Beneath the present movements, the past movements are rendered palpable and realized again: they are preserved as movements in the knowledge of literature – which is precisely what the concept of vectorization aims at” (Ette 2005: 11; italics in original; my translation).

time. Yet all anyone sees is movements” (Lefebvre 1991: 95). Following Lefebvre, I thus argue that time is rendered perceptible primarily through instances of human motion. In other words, only when it occurs in tandem with spatiality and agency in the phenomenon of movement (defined as a dislocation performed by an agent across space over time) does time begin to acquire meaning in everyday contexts. Consequently, equating time itself with movement proves to be too simplistic, for such a definition ignores the other two constitutive dimensions of motion: spatiality and agency. Rather than positing time solely as movement, it does make more sense to acknowledge the fundamental vectoriality of motion, that is, that any human movement arises from a specific combinatorial configuration of spatiality, agency and temporality. While it is true that the relative significance of each of these three factors hinges upon the individual configuration of the respective movement, this does not mean that the two other dimensions can be ignored completely just because they may not occupy centre-stage in a particular context.

This insight into the significance of movements for the perceptibility of time leads me to the second aspect of temporality that proves to be of particular relevance to my trialectics of motion: the individual traveller’s subjective experience of time during a journey. This subjective dimension of temporality interacts in complex and diverse ways with both “social time” (Middeke 2002a: 4) – that is, the ubiquitous, societally conventionalized regulation of time accomplished through its subdivision into intervals and the subsequent coordination of different simultaneous processes by means of the chronometer (cf. *ibid.*) – and the overall conditions prevalent in the specific historical context in which the traveller’s journey is embedded. Thus, it is justified to claim that the traveller’s subjective time-experience is shaped to a considerable extent by the specific cultural, social and historical contexts in which she moves, which, arguably, are marked by historicity themselves.⁸⁹ In Ursula Heise’s words, what must be taken into

⁸⁹ The relationship between the specific concept of history and notions of temporality in general is a difficult and complex one, not least because of their intricate mutual entanglement. While this study cannot provide a thorough analysis of this multi-layered interrelatedness, I at least want to hint at some of the central issues involved therein by quoting a pertinent passage from Heise’s monograph *Chronoschisms: Time, Narrative, and Postmodernism* (1997), in which she delineates “the relation between the concepts of ‘time’ and ‘history’, which are unquestionably entangled with each other, but not necessarily identical. Sociocultural changes in the management, representation and means of measuring time can be accompanied by transformations in the conceptualization of history; but such reconceptualizations need not be uniform or stable. Once we take this distinction into account, it becomes possible to describe changes in the culture of time as they have taken place over the last thirty or forty years, and to specify how they resemble or differ from those that occurred in the early twentieth century. These transformations can then be related to changes in historical thought or narrative reasoning, leaving open the possibility that such changes can also evolve to a certain extent independently, and that they can involve a range of different developments rather than a single one” (Heise 1997: 15).

due consideration is “[... t]he possibility that the human experience of time depends on cultural contexts that are themselves subject to change” (Heise 1997: 48). I therefore focus briefly on two paradigmatic examples of the complex entanglement of historical context and individual experience of temporality: colonial exploratory voyages as represented in the travelogue of the eighteenth century and postmodern air travel in our contemporary jet age.

Regarding the first example, the dialectical interplay between the geographically and historically context-bound nature of the traveller’s individual time-experience and the gradually emerging idiosyncraticity of the journey’s own temporality is described by Ette in his analysis of the temporal dimension of the colonial travelogue:

The *fourth dimension* of the travelogue, in the sense of Lévi-Strauss, is made by time. The traveller thereby moves in the time of his country of origin: We should not forget that only increasingly reliable clocks permitted the sailors of the 18th century an increasingly precise determination of length that is bound, in a truly material sense, to the time of departure from the country of origin’s longitude. Space and time are not only closely related to each other but also coupled to the time of one’s own space. The traveller, not only the one of the 18th century, takes his own time with him. On the other hand the traveller also moves within the journey’s own chronology which doubtlessly creates its own temporality. Moreover he also jumps during his time-travel back and forth between different cultural and historical times. (Ette 2003: 21-22)

All in all, I argue that the central thrust of Ette’s argument – the intermingling of various different temporalities during a journey – not only holds true for the historical genre of the travelogue, but can indeed be transferred to contemporary literary modes of writing like twenty-first-century Asian British novels, as the following example from Neel Mukherjee’s debut novel *A Life Apart* (2011 [2008]) shows.

The historical strand of this novel’s plot is set in early twentieth-century Calcutta, where Miss Gilby, the English protagonist, who travels to India where she is offered the post of a tutor to the wife of a Bengali *zamindar* (landholder and local ruler), becomes aware of how much her Western notion of temporality differs from that of her Indian contemporaries, which leads her to consider “this apparent lack of movement, of any forward motion altogether” to be “the very rhythm of the country” (Mukherjee 2011 [2008]: 88). This disputable observation is evidence that, despite her liberal-humanist ideals, Miss Gilby’s view of India is nevertheless strongly inflected by the imperialist mind-set of the early twentieth-century British Raj and, correspondingly, Western concepts of time as resource. This mind-set ascribes slowness and backwardness to the colonized peoples and belongs to the classical topoi of imperialist discourse, and it was utilized as one of the prime strategies to legitimize colonial rule. This highly

prejudiced view of the Indians as a collective entity leads Miss Gilby to the conclusion that “[t]ime means an altogether different thing to them” (Mukherjee 2011 [2008]: 88). Granted, with this allusion, she at least documents her awareness of time concepts other than the Western capitalist notion that ‘time is money’. Nonetheless, she proves unable to gauge Indian notions of temporality according to standards other than that posited by the European Enlightenment, which postulated its own rationalist, scientific and technological advancement as a universal measure of progress applicable to all humankind (cf. Frank 2006: 40-43; Fabian 2004: 349). Confronted with essentially different, incommensurable temporalities, she thus cannot help but stick stubbornly to this culture-specific idea of time as an arrow of historical progress. This typical constellation can be further elucidated by Bhabha’s concept of the “time-lag”, which, “despite the fact that it is a disruption of linear *time*” (Upstone 2009: 68), is characterized by Bhabha himself as “a *spatial movement* of cultural representation” (Bhabha 1992: 59; cf. also Upstone 2009: 68). With this definition, Bhabha emphasizes that a time-lag can be posited in relation to some definite stage of cultural development (e.g. Western modernity) only; therefore, it is always relative to the time concept predominant in the observing traveller’s particular cultural space of origin. It is this space-dependent relativity of any ascertainment of an alleged time-lag that comes to the fore in the narrative representation of Miss Gilby’s perception of Calcutta.

Regarding the second example, I briefly want to delineate the contemporary context in some of its decisive temporal features as a case in point that illustrates particularly well the dependence of individual human experience(s) of time while travelling on the respective historical context and its relevant characteristic features, such as the modes of travel available. In his path breaking study *Non-Places: An Introduction to Supermodernity* (2008 [1995]), Marc Augé posits “the acceleration of history” (Augé 2008 [1995]: 22) as one of the defining features of our contemporary age.⁹⁰ The principal consequence of this speeding up, he continues, is experienceable to everyone, inasmuch as “[w]e barely have time to reach maturity before our past has become history, before our individual histories belong to history writ large. [...] History is on our heels, following us like our shadows, like death” (Augé 2008 [1995]: 22).

⁹⁰ Interestingly, Augé conceives of the contemporary age as being marked by a number of “accelerated transformations” (Augé 2008 [1995]: 20), three of which he analyses in more detail: a profound change in our perception and utilization of time (cf. *ibid.* 20-25); the paradoxical correlation between what he calls “the excess of space” and “the shrinking of the planet” (*ibid.* 25; cf. *ibid.* 25-29); and the “comeback [of] the ego, the individual [...] in anthropological thought” (Augé 2008 [1995]: 29; cf. *ibid.* 29-33). It is intriguing to see the parallels between these “three figures of excess” that, according to Augé (cf. *ibid.* 33), define our contemporary age of “supermodernity” (Augé 2008 [1995]) and the three constitutive dimensions of my trialectics of motion – spatiality, agency and temporality, which could easily be correlated with Augé’s conceptualization of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Moreover, he contends, this acceleration of history directly correlates with the “multiplication” and resultant “overabundance of events” (Augé 2008 [1995]: 23) that is so characteristic of twenty-first-century global media society. Two factors are largely responsible for this unprecedented constellation: first, the “overabundant[ce] of information” (ibid.) available to virtually anyone in any place all around the globe via the Internet, television and mobile telecommunication devices, and, second, “the growing tangle of interdependences in what some already call the ‘world system’” (ibid.).

According to Augé, it is thus the peculiar interplay of the virtual elimination of spatial barriers to the transmission of information across the globe and the increasingly dense and varied networks interlocking the most heterogeneous and distant cultural spheres economically, socially and culturally – resulting from what is commonly subsumed under the buzzword ‘globalization’ – that account for the collective impression of a stretching of the present into both past and future (cf. Augé 2008 [1995]: 20-24).⁹¹ As a result, we are witnessing a “crisis of historicity” (Heise 1997: 12) in theories of postmodernism, which, in contrast to its equivalent in modernism, is not caused by a perceived “closure of the historical process in the conventional sense” (ibid.), but by a general “speed-up of temporal experience” (ibid.).

According to Harvey, this acceleration of human temporal experience is coupled with the perceived reduction or even elimination of spatial distance by means of state-of-the-art transportation and communication technologies in what he labels “time-space compression” (Harvey 1990 [1989]: vii; 265). This phenomenon, he argues, recurs periodically in different stages of the history of modern capitalism and produces – each time anew – a critical rupture in the cultural representation of time and space triggered by pervasive “processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves” (Harvey 1990: 240). The all-embracing impact of these transformative processes is documented by the fact that “[s]uch moments of representational rupture affect science, philosophy and the arts in everything from theories about the cosmos to map-making and literary or pictorial techniques” (Heise 1997: 21; cf. ibid.).

⁹¹ According to Augé, this extension of the present triggers a heightened avidity for meaning-making: “This need to give a meaning to the present, if not the past, is the price we pay for the overabundance of events corresponding to a situation we could call ‘supermodern’ to express its essential quality: excess. For each of us has – or thinks he has – the use of it, of this time overloaded with events that encumber the present along with the recent past. This can only [...] make us even more avid for meaning” (Augé 2008 [1995]: 24).

In the realm of human motion, there is no mode of travel in which time-space compression becomes more evident than modern air travel, for, compared to alternative vehicles like the train and the car, the airplane epitomizes a radical alteration in the subjective experience both of temporality and spatiality inasmuch as there is virtually no landscape to be looked at, nor is there an indication of the passing of time other than the inexorable abstraction of clock-time. As a consequence,

the experience of passenger flight is doubly disorienting: not only is the landscape more abstract than in other modes of travel, but the speed of movement, the fact of movement itself, cannot quite be felt. These effects create the strange sense in flight of being suspended, in a stillness outside quotidian time, which, combined with the view of the earth from above, encourages meditation, as if before an abstract painting. (MacArthur 2012: 269)

This feeling of suspension while in the air corresponds to a similar experience of being temporarily severed from everyday contexts while still on the ground, captured in Augé's concept of "non-places" (2008 [1995]), which he describes as follows:

[N]on-place[s], such as airports, highways or supermarkets] create the shared identity of passengers, customers or Sunday drivers. No doubt the relative anonymity that goes with this temporary identity can even be felt as a liberation, by people who, for a time, have only to keep in line, go where they are told, check their appearance. As soon as his passport or identity card has been checked, the passenger for the next flight, freed from the weight of his luggage and everyday responsibilities, rushes into the 'duty-free' space; not so much, perhaps, in order to buy at the best prices as to experience the reality of his momentary availability, his unchallengeable position as a passenger in the process of departing. (Augé 2008 [1995]: 81-82)

This now quasi-ubiquitous, but always temporary, experience of being suspended in a space of transit, a place between two highly heterogeneous cultural realities of quotidian life, correlates, in turn, with the absence of history in non-places: "There is no room there for history unless it has been transformed into an element of spectacle, usually in allusive texts" (Augé 2008 [1995]: 83). By contrast, "[w]hat reigns there is actuality, the urgency of the present moment" (ibid.). This overaccentuation of the present manifests itself in a reduction of non-places to their efficiency in terms of passenger turnover rates: "Since non-places are there to be passed through, they are measured in units of time. Itineraries do not work without timetables, lists of departure and arrival times in which a corner is always found for a mention of possible delays. They are lived through in the present" (Augé 2008 [1995]: 83-84).

All in all, contemporary air travel thus nicely exemplifies how the individual and collective experience of time-space compression – brought about by the all-encompassing dictate of efficiency so characteristic of postmodern global capitalism –

affects our perception of history to the extent that historical eras, events and personalities are in danger of losing all significance unless they lend themselves to spectacular re-enactments of the past for the pleasure of contemporary audiences. Therefore, modern air travel constitutes a case in point for the way in which effects of technological development – itself a truly historical process – produce a particular historical constellation – in this case, the contemporary age – which then conditions both our subjective experience of travelling in the present and our perception of and engagement with the historical past. On a meta-level, contemporary air travel hence epitomizes the dialectics of the historicity of the present and the presence of history in our subjective perception and experience of moving across space over time.

In addition, the speed of travel – as the concrete intersection of space and time in physical movement – constitutes one of the central determinants of the traveller's subjective experience of temporality during a journey, since it correlates directly with the perceived 'ease' of travelling and the concomitant experience of the spatial environment passing by. As experiential antipodes, one might be tempted to imagine the stark contrast between a wanderer in the mountains trudging along a narrow, stony and difficult path, who experiences time as passing slowly due to the physical hardship she is experiencing, and a passenger flying in a modern aircraft, whose experience of time is conditioned by the perceived total absence of friction characteristic of this mode of travel. Thus, while the physical definition of velocity as spatial distance divided by the time the moving body needs to cover it cannot convey a completely adequate picture of the human experience of travel, it nevertheless provides a basic starting point, inasmuch as it brings together two of the central dimensions of any travel experience – space and time – with the moving entity in a single formula. In order to obtain a more complete picture, it is, however, indispensable to integrate the resilient factor of friction (which appears only indirectly in the physical definition of velocity mentioned above) into the overall conceptualization, that is, to tie the human experience of temporality to the physical exertion involved in covering a given spatial distance (cf. Böhme 2005a: xv). With regard to walking, for instance, one can generally say that the more time a human agent needs in order to cover the distance involved, the higher the physical effort required and, thus, the slower the perceived passing of time. Accordingly, a tricky mountain path is likely to yield a discontinuous experience of temporality marked by the alternation of progression and pause, whereas contemporary air travel is prone to make the traveller believe in the common-sensical notion of time as a steady and continuous flow, or, in Harvey's words, in "time's ineluctable arrow of motion" (Harvey 1990 [1989]: 203).

Nevertheless, it would be erroneous to assume that the external circumstances of a journey as manifested, for instance, in the chronometrical regulation and coordination of an ever-increasing number of heterogeneous processes all around the globe that Middeke labels “social time” (Middeke 2002a: 4) are capable of determining the individual configuration of the traveller’s “subjective time” (ibid.) completely. According to Middeke (cf. 2002a: 4), it is thus indispensable to pose the question of how the latter’s individual rhythm relates to other dimensions of time and time-experience (such as, most prominently, social time), for “dream and fantasy worlds as well as imagination and the possibility of an inversion of times inherent in these phenomena are just as relevant in this context as the aspects of internal *durée* (Bergson) or the complex domains of involuntary, inadvertent remembrance and the phenomenological moment of recognition” (Middeke 2002a: 4; my translation). What is more, all these processual phenomena possess an irreducible dynamics of their own (cf. ibid.) that cannot be captured adequately by assuming a simple mimetic relationship between the external spatio-temporal conditions of a journey and the traveller’s internal experience of time, for the latter is mostly characterized by processes of remembrance and anticipation, i.e. jumps ahead or back in time, dwelling upon certain sensory impressions while immediately forgetting others (which may resurface with new intensity at a later stage, however), contemplation and oblivion, as well as an imaginative reconfiguration of the past marked by one’s present biographical situation or the act of building castles in the air inspired by momentous and awe-inspiring experiences during a journey through a fascinating foreign country.

In short, mind-time can never be reduced to clock-time; rather, one should arguably focus on their complex interactions (cf. Middeke 2002a: 3-4, 10) in the context of one’s enquiry into the temporal dimension of human motion. Having explored the third constitutive dimension of human motion – temporality – in its two most significant ramifications – historical context⁹² and subjective time-experience, I now briefly synthesize and exemplify the gist of my trialectics of motion in the following section.

⁹² As the category of social time (cf. Middeke 2002a: 3-4, 10) is always determined by the historical context in which individual human agents act, I have not treated it as a separate resource of temporality in this section.

2.4 Synthesizing the Trialectics of Motion

In this final section, I will intertwine a concluding synthesis of my trialectics of motion with a tentative application of this heuristic framework to a concrete literary example, the narrative enactment of protagonist Ormus Cama's airplane trip from Bombay to London in Salman Rushdie's *The Ground beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]).⁹³ This narratively enacted journey, I argue, can be examined productively by analysing its ontological vectoriality, that is, the combinatorial interplay of spatiality, human agency and temporality in its narrative configuration. In order to disentangle the complex multifactorial process generating this journey, I proceed in two steps. First, the contribution made by each of these three dimensions shall be explicated briefly; second, the crucial interactions between these three generative factors shall be examined through a consistent focus on the three dialectics that constitute the bedrock of my heuristic trialectics of motion: the spatiality-agency dialectic, the spatiality-temporality dialectic, and the agency-temporality dialectic.⁹⁴ Finally, the analogous interlocking of the processual product – motion – and each of its three formative dimensions shall be summed up alongside the transfer of Ricoeur's threefold mimesis to all aspects of my trialectics of motion.

Regarding the agentive dimension of Ormus Cama's flight from India to England, it is of vital importance that the protagonist – an aspiring young rock musician – migrates there out of free will. More precisely, he demonstrates his autonomous agency by accompanying his mother to England against her will (cf. *TGBHF* 201-202). The high degree of momentum resulting from this purely intrinsic motivation accounts for the protagonist's optimistic mood throughout the journey. With the benefit of hindsight, one can say that this optimism is more than justified, for performing this transcontinental migration enhances Ormus's individual agency in the long run, because it opens up the opportunity of musical self-actualization in the West. Endowed

⁹³ Abbreviated as *TGBHF* in the following text notes.

⁹⁴ Evidently, I am here proceeding in analogy with Soja's "trialectics of being" (1996: 71; cf. *ibid.* 70-73) again, because my three dialectics – spatiality-agency, spatiality-temporality and agency-temporality – represent a motion-oriented adaptation of the three dialectics that form the core of his ontological trialectic of human existence in this world: "Spatiality-Sociality, Spatiality-Historicity [and] Historicity-Sociality" (Soja 1996: 72). Whereas the argumentative thrust of Soja's trialectical model consists in an all-encompassing "ontological restructuring [grounded in] the presupposition that being-in-the-world [...] is existentially definable as being simultaneously historical, social, and spatial" (Soja 1996: 73), the purview of my trialectics of motion is much more modest in scope, as it merely aims to make one clearly defined segment of human existence – the practice of motion (and its narrative representation) – accessible to cultural analysis by scrutinizing the trialectical interplay of spatiality, human agency and temporality in the extratextual cultural and textual fictional configurations of this particular phenomenon.

with extraordinary musical talent and creativity, Ormus is bound to rise from an upper-middle-class playboy to international stardom. Accordingly, this trip constitutes the first step towards the realization of this steep upward social mobility and the resulting tremendous change in his spatial and sociocultural positionality. As the following quotation shows, Ormus's flight to England coincides with a profound transformation of his postmodern subjectivity and "identity configuration" (Welsch 2009: 9), in short, with an identity transformation (cf. Sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 of this dissertation):

One universe shrinks, another expands. Ormus Cama in the middle 1960s quits Bombay for England, restored to himself, feeling his true nature flowing back into his veins. As the plane lifts from his native soil, so his heart lifts also, *he sheds his old skin without a second thought*, crosses that frontier as if it didn't exist, like a shape-shifter, *like a snake*. (TGBHF 250; italics mine)

Triggered by the protagonist's act of migrating west, this metamorphosis of his individual subjectivity and identity configuration refutes Ingold's assertion that modern-day transport "leave[s the subject's] basic nature unaffected" (Ingold 2011b: 150). Instead, the narrative configuration of this airplane trip combines the protagonist's physical passivity with a high degree of mental activity. In concrete terms, Ormus bridges the tedium of non-friction typical of air travel with optimistic ruminations about his future, that is, by prospectively imagining the future course of his life after his current act of migration. This constellation points to the real-and-imagined nature of this (and any other) movement inasmuch as it interweaves 'real' (Ormus sitting on the airplane) and imagined elements (his optimistic speculations about his future) in the narrative enactment of this journey. In the same vein, the following quotation highlights the real-and-imagined character of this flight by joining information on the approximate route of the airplane to Ormus's highly imaginative semioticization of air resistance in the narrative enactment of his subjective experience of flying across continents:

This when they're flying over what's down there, the Bosphorus is it, or the Golden Horn, or are they the same place, Istanbul, Byzantium, whatever: drugged by flight, detached from the indifferent earth, he feels a certain resistance in the air. Something fighting back against the aircraft's forward movement. *As if there's a stretchy translucent membrane across the sky, an ectoplasmic barrier, a Wall*. And are there ghostly border guards armed with thunderbolts watching from high pillars of cloud, and might they open fire. But there's nothing for it now, this is the onliest high road into the West, so onward, drive those dogies onward. But it's so springy, this invisible restriction, it keeps pushing the airplane back, boeing!, boeing!, until at last the *Mayflower* breaks through, it's through! (TGBHF 253; italics mine)

In contrast to the common-sensical notion that the smoothness of air travel fuels the impression of frictionless motion, the metaphor of the translucent membrane (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 270-271) directs our attention to the fact that, from both a physical and a socio-political point of view, motion without friction is an illusion.

This membrane⁹⁵ functions as a complex metaphor inasmuch as it brings together the two tenors of concrete friction – the physical fact of air drag – and abstract friction – the sociocultural differences between India and England – in one joint vehicle taken from the source domain of biology. The latter functionalization of the invisible membrane – as a metaphor for the friction between heterogeneous cultures (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 270-271) – highlights the arbitrary and contingent constructivity of cultural demarcations like ‘East’ and ‘West’, thereby deconstructing their essentialist reification. At the same time, the thematization of frictionality through Ormus’s act of imagining a translucent membrane in the sky entwines the agentive and spatial dimensions of motion in one complex metaphor.

As for the spatial dimension, Ormus’s airplane trip fulfils one of the central functions of motion in narrative fiction – establishing topological and semiotic relationships between different chronotopes – by connecting two of the novel’s major settings – India and England in the 1960s. Therewith, it epitomizes the postmodern conceptualization of space as a relational configuration of places as well. As it is clear to the protagonist that, in the long run, England is merely a stepping-stone to the United States, he feels incited to compare these two Western countries with one another (and, implicitly, his country of origin, India, to the Western world as a whole) while performing the transcontinental migration from Bombay to London. Again, the real-and-imagined nature of this narrative enactment of motion resides in the fact that this cognitive co-presence of country of origin, temporary ‘stopover’ and final destination in Ormus’s mind is largely based on the protagonist’s speculations on what England and the US will be like: as he has not set foot on either English or American soil yet, his prospective semanticization of these two countries is grounded in nothing but fanciful imagination and the bits and pieces he has learned from their representation in the media.

At the same time, Ormus demonstrates his discursive agency through a postcolonial strategy of renaming spatial entities, for instance when he dubs the airplane “*Mayflower*” (TGBHF 250), calls the passengers “Pilgrim Children” (TGBHF 251) and suggests the toponym “Bombay Rock” (TGBHF 251) for their destination.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ The centrality of this metaphor for the meaning potential of the narrative enactment of Ormus’s transcontinental migration from India to England is corroborated by the fact that Chapter 9 of the novel is entitled “Membrane” (TGBHF 250).

⁹⁶ Cf. the following brief extracts, each of which is indicative of Ormus’s optimistic state of mind during the flight: “[... T]hese are the people who are going with me to the New World” (TGBHF 250; italics in original). “Welcome aboard the *Mayflower*, he greets them” (TGBHF 250; italics in original). “We are the Pilgrim Children, Ormus thinks. Where the first foot falls, let us call it Bombay Rock” (TGBHF 251).

Undertaken from the mobile vantage point of the airplane, this postcolonial act of remapping the cultural surface of the globe from his Indian point of view configures a process of fictional resemioticization that, in turn, amounts to Ormus Cama's strategic self-empowerment.

As far as the temporal dimension of motion is concerned, the availability of transcontinental air travel to the affluent upper class in the historical context within which he is acting – the 1960s – facilitates the protagonist's access to the Western world. Regarding the protagonist's subjective time-experience while on the plane, the way in which narrative discourse disrupts the chronological linearity of time by jumping back and forth between past, present and future is immediately striking. Here, the spatio-temporal alternation of narrative discourse between these three fundamental temporal levels is the rule, not the exception. Ormus's highly speculative *anticipatory* reflections on what his experience of America will be like, that is, his *prospective* semanticization of this cultural space based on the master narratives of American cultural imperialism, contribute to this effect in very much the same way as his chance acquaintance John Mullens Standish's *retrospective* account of his turbulent past.⁹⁷ As a result, the representation of the protagonist's experience of temporality during the flight is marked by a conspicuous ambivalence: while one might be tempted to associate the chronological notion of time as an arrow of inescapable forward motion (cf. Harvey 1990 [1989]: 203) unequivocally with Ormus's optimistic looking forward to life in his destination, this culturally constructed linearity is undermined by both his own joyful anticipation of life in the West and Standish's retrospective account of his eventful life story, which saw Ormus's future music producer rise from gay prostitute to American construction tycoon and British radio pirate (cf. *TGBHF* 258-270). Ormus's subjective time-experience while on the move does not follow any kind of one-dimensional linearity, but instead exhibits *prospective* speculations about his future as well as his immersion in the *retrospective* narrative of his future record-label boss's extraordinary life alongside the narration of the happenings during the flight itself. Remembrance of the past, present experience and anticipation of the future intermingle in order to deconstruct the essentialist reification of linear chronology as the one and only 'true' nature of temporality.

Having examined the three formative dimensions' individual contributions to elucidating the narrative enactment of motion in this particular example, I now focus on

⁹⁷ Cf. Sections 4.2.3 and 4.4.2 of this dissertation for a methodological enquiry into the role of Genette's pertinent narratological categories "analepsis versus prolepsis" (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 35-85) in the narrative enactment of human motion.

their reciprocal *interactions* by operationalizing them into three dialectics, each of which captures the dialectical interplay of two out of the three constitutive dimensions of human motion: the spatiality-agency dialectic, the spatiality-temporality dialectic and the agency-temporality dialectic.

Concerning the first of these dialectics, this study proceeded from the assumption that, on the one hand, the spatial environment human beings act in conditions their (individual or collective) agency significantly (space-to-subject relation), even if only as the prime source of physical friction. Accordingly, I have developed an experiential typology of frictionality that distinguishes, first of all, between external (read: physical) and internal (read: mental) types of friction. The former category can then be subdivided further by differentiating between natural and man-made types of external friction. The subcategory of man-made friction, finally, lends itself to further specification by distinguishing between concrete physical obstacles and more abstract legal, social, cultural or educational barriers to the ideal of freedom of movement. As we have seen in our primary-text example, the narrative enactment of motion is capable of merging these theoretically distinctive types of friction into one complex metaphor, such as the translucent membrane imagined by Ormus. In addition to the issue of frictionality, the distinction of push and pull factors draws attention to the way in which the overall living conditions a place (or cultural space) offers may promote or obstruct the agent's will to move there. At the same time, however, it is the purposeful cooperation of individual and collective human agency that is capable of transforming this spatial environment according to their preconceived architectural or logistic plans, sometimes even in revolutionary ways (subject-to-space relation), for instance by constructing a transcontinental railway line.

This dialectical interrelationship between spatiality and human agency is configured narratively in Ormus's migration from India to England. On the one hand, he can pursue his career as a rock musician only by migrating west. In his career plan, England merely serves as a stepping-stone to his final destination, the United States. His attraction to America results directly from its role as the quintessential hub of cultural activity in the second half of the twentieth century. As Ormus hopes to find an inspiring and lucrative cultural environment there, the centripetal force drawing him towards this spearhead of Western pop culture consists in a mixture of cultural and financial incentives. On the other hand, Ormus's idiosyncratic blending of Western and non-Western musical styles will have a tremendous impact on Western rock music. In a nutshell, migrating west expands Ormus's artistic agency as a future path breaking

rock musician (space-to-subject relation), whereupon he himself will transform the cultural landscape of Western rock music by virtue of his creative energy and musical inventiveness (subject-to-space relation). As the transformative effect of this migratory movement extends to both the migrant and the destination, it exemplifies the dialectical interplay of the spatial formation of movement and the movement-bound formation of space as well.

Regarding the spatiality-temporality dialectic, this study has postulated a motion-oriented dynamization of the classical model of this interrelationship – Bakhtin’s chronotope – by integrating the dimension of human agency. In order to render Bakhtin’s concept applicable to extratextual and textual configurations of human motion, this operation is indispensable because his conceptualization of the chronotope highlights the interdependent constitution of spatiality and temporality both in extratextual cultural experience and in literary texts (exemplified, for instance, by the historicity of space as distinct from the spatiality of history) without taking the essential dimension of human agency into due account. Our primary-text example testifies to the urgency of integrating this latter dimension into the picture precisely because it is Ormus’s self-determined decision to leave India for good that links this chronotope to England (and, eventually, the US) in the spatio-temporal configuration of this novel’s storyworld. Given the fact that it is the mobile protagonist Ormus’s act of transmigrating from India via the UK to the USA that brings together these disparate chronotopes, my reconceptualization of Bakhtin’s chronotopes as narratively enacted agentive space-time configurations is more than justified. In the light of the profoundly transformative effect this transmigration will have on both migrant and destination, the ontological vectoriality of this real-and-imagined movement moreover instantiates my contention that such vectorialities are capable of exerting a shaping influence on both the spatiality of history and the historicity of space. Accordingly, the following quotation highlights not only the interdependent constitution of spatiality and temporality in the narrative configuration of cultural spaces, but also the decisive part played by real-and-imagined movements in this process:

England may be my immediate destination but it is not my goal, Ormus’s clothes announce, old England cannot hold me, it may pretend to be swinging but I know it’s just plain hanged. Not funky but defunct. *History moves on*. Nowadays England is ersatz America, America’s delayed echo, America driving on the left. (*TGBHF* 251; italics mine)

As hinted at by the fundamental postulate of history’s spatio-temporal mobility, the phenomenon of human motion constitutes one central fulcrum of the dialectical interrelationship between the spatiality of history and the historicity of space precisely because the ontological vectorialities of such real-and-imagined movements account

for this chronotopic intertwining of spatiality and temporality both on the protagonist's individual micro-level and on the geopolitical macro-plane. The spatiality of history is alluded to here by the explicit reference to the extratextual cultural fact that, by the mid-1960s, the geopolitical and cultural centre of the world has moved from the UK to the US. In terms of directionality, the ontological vectoriality of Ormus's transmigration thus follows the trail of history. Conversely, the sarcastic characterization of England as "ersatz America" simultaneously points to the historicity of both cultural spaces. In the case of the United States, narrative discourse then underlines this insight by explicitly characterizing it as a nation of immigrants, replete with "histories, persecutions, massacres, piracies, slaveries" (*TGBHF* 252).

As far as the agency-temporality dialectic is concerned, this study rests upon the premise that, on the one hand, specific historical contexts can either diminish or enhance individual and collective agency, while, on the other, literally path breaking realizations of human agency are capable of changing the course of history. What is more, particular biographical or medical conditions (such as old age, mental diseases or disabilities) may affect the individual human being's experience of time considerably, for instance by slowing it down or speeding it up. Conversely, the pleasant (because stressless) experience of time during a recreational trip may reverberate upon a human being's individual agency by allowing her to recharge her batteries.

Returning to our literary example, it is evident that in the historical context within which he acts, Ormus can only expand his individual agency as an aspiring rock musician by migrating west. Hence, the geocultural (cf. S. Frank 2008: 252-253) distribution of centre and periphery in the mid-1960s shapes his career path decisively. At the same time, his volitional transcontinental migration is an intentionally *future-oriented* one, as he leaves India for England in order to build his career as a rock musician in the West. Regarding his individual time-experience while on the move, the following passage interweaves Ormus's reflections on the passing of time with his ongoing identity transformation. Significantly, it is the protagonist's subjective experience of this biographically momentous migration that triggers his self-reflective awareness of the transience of human existence:

He intuits that every bone in his body is being irradiated by something pouring through the sky-rip, a mutation is occurring at the level of the cell, of the gene, of the particle. The person who arrives won't be the one who left, or not quite. He has crossed a time zone, moved from the eternal past of early life into the constant now of adulthood, the tense of presence, which will become a different kind of preterite, the past of absence, when he dies. (*TGBHF* 253-254)

Having examined Ormus Cama's first transcontinental migration through the theoretical lens of my trialectics of motion, I feel obliged to draw attention to at least two major shortcomings of this heuristic model. First, it might generate the impression that the underlying thrust of my argument is to equate extratextual cultural reality and textual fictional enactment ontologically, because up to now, I have focused almost exclusively on the parallels between the ontological realms of actuality and fictionality in my attempt to come to terms with the phenomenon of human motion. In other words, what I have neglected so far is the narratological question of how narrative discourse incites the reader to imagine a character moving across (story) space over (story) time at all. This is why Chapter 4 elaborates a narratological semantics for the narrative enactment of human motion grounded in the heuristic analytical framework of my trialectics of motion. In order to underline the necessity of developing such a narratological vocabulary for motion, it is useful to remember one crucial aspect of the narrative representation of Ormus's journey that the trialectics of motion is definitely not capable of explaining with a satisfactory degree of terminological precision: the interlocking of his current trip (from Bombay to London) with the journey he intends to go on at some point in the future (from London to New York City) and, what is more, his prospective imaginary semanticization of (life in) this final destination. Here, the protagonist's intention, imagination and experience mingle with one another in the narratively enacted ontological vectoriality of his current airplane trip. More precisely, the vector currently being performed⁹⁸ – Ormus's flight from Bombay to London – alternates with the vector he intends to actualize in the future – the transcontinental migration from England to the United States – in the narrative enactment of the former airplane trip. Obviously, a highly differentiated, specifically *narratological* terminology is required to disentangle this peculiar intermingling of intended, imagined and experienced vectorialities.

Second, the trialectics of motion developed in this chapter still lacks a sociocultural contextualization of the literary practice of enacting human motion narratively with regard to the specific socio-historical context of contemporary Asian British novels. Therefore, the next chapter will sketch such a motion-oriented contextualization of the narrative enactment of transnational migratory movements between heterogeneous cultural spaces in these novels.

To sum up the gist of my argument in this chapter, I focus on the complex interactions between the product – motion – and its three individual factors of

⁹⁸ Interestingly, the present tense is consistently used in the representation of what is currently going on during Ormus's flight from India to England (cf. *TGBHF* 250-270).

production – spatiality, agency and temporality. In essence, I find a fundamental reciprocity as the underlying organizational principle of each of these three interrelationships. Most importantly, the intricate interplay of motion and each of its three constitutive dimensions proceeds in *analogy* with the functioning of the three dialectics explicated above. Consequently, the dialectical interrelationship between spatiality and human agency, for instance, mirrors the equally dialectical interplay between the spatial dimension and human motion (in its role as the product of the trialectical interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality). Accordingly, certain spatial conditions either facilitate or impede human motion (spatial constitution of movement), while cultural spaces are simultaneously produced, from an experiential point of view, by human movements across them (movement-bound formation of space). Regarding the dialectical interrelationship between agency and motion, it is evident that, on the one hand, the scope of agency available to an individual human being can either exert an enabling effect on his wish to travel or preclude this possibility categorically. On the other hand, performing a movement may enhance his personal agency (as in the case of Ormus Cama's migration west or, more generally, of an economic migrant who has successfully applied for a greencard in the US) or destroy it altogether (as in the case of prisoners' transports or the Middle Passage, notorious examples of forced movement). In terms of the nexus between temporality and motion, a similar dialectic applies, for historical contexts predetermine the (im)possibility of movement and its potential configurations, for example in terms of accessible routes and destinations. Conversely, literally path breaking movements are indeed capable of 'making' history, as with Columbus's first voyage to the Caribbean. In addition, an impressive journey may also affect the individual traveller's experience of (the passing of) time to a greater or lesser extent. In turn, certain mental dispositions (such as, for example, a propensity towards melancholy) do of course considerably predetermine the individual's subjective experience of temporality while being on the move. Due to the analogy between them, it is always important to keep in mind that the two theoretically separable subgroups of my trialectics of motion – the trialectical interplay among its three constitutive dimensions and the interactions between motion and each of these dimensions – do in practice overlap and interact with one another in multiple and diverse ways.

In addition, this theory chapter has shown how the scope of applicability of Ricoeur's threefold mimesis can be enhanced beyond the issue of temporality to the dimension of spatiality. Additionally, it has briefly mentioned the fact that, in principle, this model is applicable to human agency as well. What is more, I have transferred Ricoeur's model not only to these three dimensions taken separately, but also to their

combinatorial interplay in the emergence of human motion.⁹⁹ Accordingly, I have carried out an exemplary analytical intertwining of Ricoeur's threefold mimesis with my concept of ontological vectoriality. In essence, I have argued that the ontological vectorialities of various criss-crossing real-and-imagined movements are responsible for the dynamic nature of Bakhtinian chronotopes (and, by extension, for the dialectical interrelationship between spatiality and history) to the extent that characters' spatial movements in the storyworld and their mental mobility interact in such a way as to produce the agentive time-spaces within which they act. In short, these time-spaces emerge from the trialectical interplay of agency, spatiality and temporality in the phenomenon of real-and-imagined movements in the first place. By embedding an expanded version of the Bakhtinian chronotope labelled agentive space-time configuration in Ricoeur's processual model, my heuristic model further accounts for the fact that the mutual, tripartite interrelationship with extratextual cultural reality analysed so insightfully by Ricoeur pertains to the entire complex of agentive time-space that makes up the storyworld as relevant to narrative enactments of human motion.

All in all, I have elaborated a trialectical model that is capable of serving as a theoretical basis for my cultural narratology of *motion* because it takes into account the intricate and fundamental interrelatedness of space, time and agency in this complex phenomenon. It is the trialectical interplay of these three dimensions in the textual or extratextual configurations of individual movements that I have defined as ontological vectoriality. This chapter has thus shown that the processual emergence of human motion can be made accessible to analytic scrutiny by operationalizing it into the mutual interactions of spatiality, agency and temporality in a problem-oriented heuristic model called trialectics of motion. In order to avoid the impression of once-and-for-all closure, however, it is necessary to add a certain caveat here: I am aware of the fact that, according to Soja (cf. 1996: 70-82, particularly 82), categorical openness to revision, modification and amplification is a necessary precondition for any theoretical model to qualify as a trialectics. This is why I do not make any claim to exhaustiveness for my trialectics of motion, for there are of course further factors of central significance to the issue of human motion, such as contingency,¹⁰⁰ intercultural contact situations,

⁹⁹ More precisely, I have correlated Nünning's (cf. 2008a: 14) recognition that Ricoeur's threefold mimesis (cf. Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52-87) is applicable to the reciprocal interrelationship between the human experience of travelling and its narrative representation in the travelogue with my contention that textual and extratextual configurations of human motion can best be analysed by means of a consistent focus on the trialectical interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality in a trialectics of motion.

¹⁰⁰ One instance of contingency that justifies my transfer of Bakhtin's chronotope of the road to other modes of travel is the coincidental encounter between Ormus Cama and the British-

contact zones, third spaces and global ethnoscaples, as well as the specific social, cultural and historical context in which movements are embedded. Accordingly, the following chapter will deal with these contextual issues.

American radio pirate John Mullens Standish XII on the plane from Bombay to London in the mid-1960s, which derives its significance for the further course of the plot from the fact that it opens up future opportunities for Ormus's career as a rock musician (cf. *TGBHF* 258-270).

3 Towards a Motion-oriented Contextualization of Contemporary Asian British Novels

Subsequent to the elaboration of my trialectics of motion in Chapter 2, I will now contextualize this heuristic model in several interwoven respects: first, with regard to cross-cultural contact situations (Section 3.1); second, with regard to the historical and sociocultural context of contemporary Asian British fiction (Section 3.2); third, with respect to the implications and consequences of spatial movement (Section 3.3); and fourth, with regard to context-specific movement patterns and attendant storyworld topologies in contemporary Asian British novels (Section 3.4). Running through the entire chapter, two central questions are at stake here. First, to what extent can the heuristic model of my trialectics of motion be applied to pertinent issues related to, yet reaching beyond, human motion itself? And second, how can these interrelations be contextualized with examples stemming primarily from the Asian British context?

Accordingly, Section 3.1 will attempt to reconceptualize transculturalism and transculturality, respectively, through the lens of my trialectics of motion. In addition, further criteria for the precise specification of the frequently vague and fuzzy concept of transculturality shall be defined. Eventually, my reconceptualization of transculturality will be tentatively applied to a contemporary Asian British short story dealing with the fictional juxtaposition of its diverse facets. Section 3.2 will then provide a short introduction to the historical, social and cultural context in which contemporary Asian British novels are written. Building on my redefinition of transculturality, it shall moreover reflect upon the extent to which contemporary Asian British novels can be described as a transcultural mode of writing. The following section (3.3), which is concerned with the contextual implications and consequences of spatial movement, is divided into three parts. The first (3.3.1) provides both a general introduction to transnational migration as a principal type of spatial movement in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and a selective exemplification of the complex issues surrounding transnational migratory movements from the Asian British context. The second (3.3.2) will deal with pertinent processes of constructing, deconstructing and crossing borders, consistently highlighting their complex interdependence with issues of collective identity formation. And finally, the third part (3.3.3) will focus on spatializations of migrancy, that is, on context-specific cultural spaces emerging from (individual or collective) cross-border migratory movements, such as “contact zones” (Pratt 1992: 1), “third spaces” (Bhabha 1994b: 56) and “global ethnoscaapes” (Appadurai 1996: 33). To conclude my

motion-oriented contextualization of contemporary Asian British novels, I will analyse the interdependent emergence of context-specific, macro-structural migratory movement patterns and attendant cultural topologies in Section 3.4. Using Salman Rushdie's novel *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]) as a primary-text example, I furthermore intend to illustrate the central points made in Sections 3.3.3 and 3.4. In Section 3.5, the central recognitions and concepts developed throughout this contextualization chapter will be summarized briefly.

3.1 Reconceptualizing Transculturality via the Trialectics of Motion

In this section, I will focus on the intersection of human motion and pertinent conceptualizations of inter- and transcultural contact situations from contemporary cultural theory. Using the example of transculturality,¹⁰¹ I want to demonstrate the productivity of reconceptualizing such contact situations by focusing on a clearly defined concept of connectivity. Connectivity can be defined as the result of specific agentive space-time configurations. In short: connectivity is the product of the cross-cultural functioning of the trialectics of motion elaborated in Chapter 2. Connectivity is thus established as the least common denominator of different concepts from cultural theory describing cross-cultural contact situations, such as hybridity (cf. Bhabha 1994), transculturality (cf. Ortiz 2003 [1940]), transdifference (cf. Lösch 2005), syncretism (cf., for instance, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2007 [2000]: 210), creolization (cf. Brathwaite 1971; see also Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2007 [2000]: 51-52) and cosmopolitanism (cf., for example, Mignolo 2002). All these concepts, I argue, can be redefined as varying configurations and intensities of connectivity.

To begin with a brief evaluation of Sommer's conceptualization of transculturality (cf. Sommer 2001: 48-51), he does explicitly recognize the utopian potential that may be (but is not necessarily) inherent in transculturality. The prime problem with his conceptualization is that he elevates this *potential* property to the rank of the prime *constitutive* feature. Therewith, he restricts the applicability of this concept

¹⁰¹ For a detailed discussion of the differentiation between multiculturalism, interculturality and transculturality, cf. Sommer (2001: 20-56); see also Ette (2005: 20-21) and Ette (2012: 33-34).

to contexts marked by the presence of such a *utopian* streak (cf. Sommer 2001: 48).¹⁰² As a result, he ignores the potential presence of its *dystopian* counterpart in the extratextual cultural or textual fictional configuration of transcultural contexts. This is deplorable because it counteracts the very openness towards heterogeneous and frequently even contradictory configurations of cross-cultural contact situations that is one of the constitutive features of transculturalism in the first place (cf. Helff 2009: 79-82).

Thus taking up Helff's (cf. 2009: 80-82) critique of Sommer's (cf. 2001: 48-51) subordination of transculturality to the allegedly overarching paradigm of interculturality,¹⁰³ I corroborate Helff's hypothesis that "transculturality is a paradigm of its own" due to its foregrounding not only "a shift in the perspective and in the description of life, but also [...] a changed reality of life altogether" (Helff 2009: 81) marked, above all, by "increasingly connected lifeworlds" (ibid.) under the pervasive impact of contemporary globalization. More precisely, I will redefine transculturality by means of a set of clearly defined criteria, among which the concept of connectivity occupies a central position. At the heart of my argument is one central contention:

¹⁰² Sommer's conceptualization of transculturality reads as follows: "The paradigm of interculturality embraces transculturalism as a second central concept beside multiculturalism. To distinguish between the multicultural discourse of identity, as a reaction to demographic developments, and the concept of transculturalism, this study views transculturalism as an approach that ascribes a positive connotation to cultural hybridity, cosmopolitan globalisation and ethnic fragmentation while establishing them as counter models to exclusively national or ethnic identities. Therefore transcultural concepts are marked by a utopian moment: They develop optimistic counter approaches to the 'classic' models of multicultural assimilation and alteration to the extent of approaching visions of dissolution of fixed cultural identities. However, transculturality can neither be understood as an alternative to nor as a rivalling model of multiculturalism, but as its further development. Both discourses can be viewed as an intercultural continuum of the discursive evaluations and negotiations of ethnic variety and cultural hybridisation" (Sommer 2001: 48; translated by Helff 2009: 80).

¹⁰³ As the following quotation demonstrates, the main thrust of Helff's fundamental critique of Sommer's subordination of multiculturalism and transculturality to the superordinate umbrella term interculturality is directed at his exclusive identification of transculturality with the visionary realm of postmodern cultural utopianism: "Sommer's differentiation between interculturality, transculturality, and multiculturalism is problematic for several reasons. His model places transculturality next to multiculturalism in a conceptual space circumscribed by interculturality and differentiates between multiculturalism and transculturality mainly by aligning the latter with utopian ideas. This hypothesis thus characterizes the intercultural and the multicultural as referring to the social world, whereas the transcultural embraces utopian world scenarios. This, of course, is questionable, since there are many experiences relating to transculturality which cannot possibly be connected with a utopian realm. It is thus of considerable importance to read transculturality as a paradigm that is not solely informed by utopian moments but, rather, by strong ambivalences" (Helff 2009: 80-81). In contrast to Sommer, Helff thus advocates for a pronounced focus on the ambivalent "transnational oscillations" emerging "against the [cultural] background of modernity and increasingly connected lifeworlds" (Helff 2009: 81), concluding that "transculturality cannot be evaluated as a subcategory of interculturality, because it describes a different set of social preconditions related to the situation of modern globalized worlds. Hence, transculturality not only highlights a shift in the perspective and in the description of life, but also indicates a changed reality of life altogether" (Helff 2009: 81).

intercultural contact situations (and the concepts describing them) in general and the concept of transculturalism in particular can be analysed through the lens of the same three interacting parameters that are constitutive of human motion: spatiality, agency and temporality.¹⁰⁴ More specifically, one can justifiably claim that an extraordinarily high degree of connectivity itself – as the conceptual bedrock of transculturalism – comes into being as the result of a specific constellation of spatiality, agency and temporality only. A further central criterion for the intensity of connectivity is the presence (or absence) of the ability to translate cultural phenomena across national, ethnic, religious, ideological and other borders among the individual or collective agents involved. In the twenty-first century, it is most often migrants who are confronted with the intricate task of translating between their own cultural practices and those of the host country, hence the increasingly widespread notion of “migrants as ‘translators’” (title of a conference organized by Björn Siegel at the Institute for the History of the German Jews, Hamburg, in 2013).¹⁰⁵

In this context, however, the prime criterion for successful translation is not authenticity, equivalence or faithfulness to an ‘original’, but the capacity to find a ‘third idiom’ acceptable to both parties implicated in the translation process (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2012: 34). This emphasis on mutual acceptability brings the transcultural translation processes that are at stake here close to the Sojaian concept of “thirding-as-Othering” (Soja 1996: 60). While from a traditional point of view, one might be tempted to assume that geographical proximity constitutes a necessary condition for the emergence of transculturality, a closer look at the realities of contemporary globalization reveals that in the twenty-first century, this is no longer the case: granted, there are still instances in which this assumption holds true, but a peculiar characteristic of transculturality under conditions of contemporary globalization lies precisely in its capacity to emerge over vast, formerly virtually unbridgeable distances.

¹⁰⁴ The fundamental recognition that the emergence of transculturality is commonly accompanied by (extratextual cultural and textual fictional) configurations of human motion is ‘common sense’ among contemporary cultural theorists (cf. Ortiz 2003 [1940]: 97-103, who regards migration as one of the prerequisites of transculturation (cf. *ibid.*); cf. also Stein 2009: 260; Welsch 2009: 7; Ette 2005: 9-26; Ette 2012: 1-49 and Pratt 1992: 1-11. However, I am reframing this recognition according to the trialectics of motion developed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation here.

¹⁰⁵ The full title of this conference reads as follows: “Migrants as ‘Translators’: Mediating External Influences on Post World War II Western Europe, 1945-1973”, organized by Björn Siegel at the Institute for the History of the German Jews, Hamburg, from October 24-26, 2013. Cf. Conference Report available under http://www.ghi-dc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1312&Itemid=1140, last retrieved 24.06.2014. See also my discussion of the concept of the migrant-as-translator in Section 3.3.1 of this dissertation.

It is this unprecedented historical constellation that Arjun Appadurai describes with his concept of “global [...] ethnoscapas” (Appadurai 1996: 33; cf. *ibid.* 48-65).

Finally, the emergence of transculturality hinges upon the formation of transcultural third spaces, which can be identified by means of the following four criteria: first, they usually come into being as a result of transnational movements (most often migrations; cf. Helff 2009: 83); second, they are marked by a blending of at least two different cultural influences out of which a third, truly transcultural element arises (cf. Ortiz 2003 [1940]: 102-103); third, they enable migrants to redefine their individual identity (cf. Helff 2009: 83); and fourth, they entail a considerable expansion of migrants’ individual or collective economic, political and sociocultural freedom of action. With this reconceptualization, I deliberately ground my definition of transcultural third spaces in concrete socioeconomic realities instead of restricting it *a priori* to the realm of metaphoricity the way Bhabha (cf. 1994b: 37, 53-56) does.

When, for instance, Nalini, the Indian-born protagonist in Preethi Nair’s novel *One Hundred Shades of White* (2003), opens a pickle-producing business in London after quitting her job as a mere underling in a sewing factory, this crucial step enables her to redefine her individual identity as an independent, self-employed entrepreneur, and, what is more, it endows her with a degree of socioeconomic freedom of action she has never enjoyed before. Thus, while the first criterion for a transcultural third space is a neutral one (after all, transnational movements can come in various guises, ranging from destitute refugees’ desperate flight to cosmopolitan intellectuals’ global mobility), the third and fourth criteria clearly imply a utopian potential inasmuch as they signify the emergence of “transcultural identity configurations” (Welsch 2009: 9) and a considerable improvement in terms of personal socioeconomic independence, respectively. The pivotal criterion, however, is the second one, for it embodies the essence of transculturality: the creation of new cultural phenomena from the fusion of elements from at least two pre-existent source cultures (cf. Ortiz 2003 [1940]: 102-103). In the case of Nalini’s pickle-producing business, this innovative element is to be found in her creation of new composite spices through the idiosyncratic combination of Eastern and Western flavours: “In those bottles were a perfect combination of stable West and fiery East. It was an acceptance on my part, an assimilation of cultures, fused together with the coarse sweetness of cinnamon” (Nair 2003: 108).

By way of these specifications, I want to overcome the lack of precision¹⁰⁶ for which the concept of transculturality has frequently been criticized. Thus, I strive to enhance the practical utility of this concept beyond the realm of cultural theory by operationalizing it into clearly defined criteria, such as the emergence of transcultural third spaces and the (in)capacity to translate between (and within) cultures. By means of these criteria, transculturality becomes applicable to concrete primary-text analyses. Therefore, my definition of transculturality does not stop at the now common-place foregrounding of the internal differentiation of cultures and the network effects of intercultural contact situations (cf. Welsch 2000 [1999]: n. pag.), but turns the frequently fuzzy concept of transculturality itself into an analytical category.

On the whole, my reconceptualization of transculturality amounts to the conclusion that it encompasses a range of specific combinatorial configurations of spatiality, agency and temporality. Therefore, by positing a corollary spectrum of transculturality,¹⁰⁷ ranging from dystopian/subaltern transculturality to its utopian variants, I intend to tackle the reproach of elitism that has so often been voiced in relation to contemporary transculturalism.¹⁰⁸ The anti-utopian variant of transculturality as envisaged by Pratt (1992) and Ortiz (2003 [1940]) is marked by highly asymmetrical power constellations (involving socioeconomic inequality, coercion and subalternity) and economic exploitation, thus referring to dystopian historical and contemporary realities. By contrast, the utopian variant (cf., for example, Sommer 2001; Welsch 2009: 3-36) advocates the idealist vision of dissolution of all cultural, ethnic and other boundaries and power asymmetries. Following Helff (cf. 2009) and Ette (cf. 2005; 2012), I want to suggest a 'balanced' version of transculturality that focuses on the tension-filled and hence frictional interplay of these two poles instead of positing one or the other as the 'true' nature of transculturality. All in all, my conception of transculturalism is precisely not about lopsidedly celebrating the alleged dissolution of all boundaries, differences and disparities, but about grappling with the intertwined co-presence of its visionary utopian aspects and its frequently crudely dystopian historical and contemporary realities. In general, the dystopian variant of transculturality most often correlates with a rather low degree of individual agency, whereas utopian

¹⁰⁶ I am grateful to Leslie Adelson for drawing my attention to this major item of criticism raised in connection with the concept of transculturality.

¹⁰⁷ With this conceptualization of transculturality, I take into account the multifaceted character of different, highly heterogeneous extratextual cultural and textual fictional configurations of transculturality (cf. also Sommer's "intercultural continuum" [Sommer 2001: 48] in between multiculturalism and transculturalism [cf. Sommer 2001: 48]; for a critique of Sommer's conceptualization, see Helff 2009: 79-82).

¹⁰⁸ I am grateful to Claire Chambers for alerting me to the fact that transculturalism is often perceived as an elite phenomenon.

transculturality usually goes hand in hand with a relatively high degree of agency granted to the individuals concerned.

In the following, I will briefly examine the emergence of transculturality in Ishani Kar-Purkayastha's short story "The Sky Is Always Yours" (2011: 117-127) through the analytical matrix of my trialectics of motion. As with the example of Nalini's own little food company, my brief analysis of this short prose narrative is meant to demonstrate, among other things, that the emergence of micro-level transculturality frequently resonates with larger, macro-level transcultural issues, such as immigration policy, migrants' struggle for individual freedom and independence, the impact of globalization on our daily lifeworlds and global justice. As we shall see, this contemporary Asian British story enacts the interwoven co-presence of transculturality's utopian and dystopian facets by intertwining the life story of a mother who is about to be deported from Britain to India, because her residence permit expired years ago with her son Amal's story, who is coincidentally coming to Britain in order to take up his new position as a software engineer in London on the very same day. The fundamental tragedy of this mini-plot lies in the fact that, although Amal owes a great deal of his academic success (he is a top graduate) to his hard-working parents' financial support, his mother will not be able to reap what she has sown so self-sacrificingly, for she has officially been banned for life from Britain.

Thus, whereas his mother is deprived of her individual agency because of her failure to have her visa extended in time, Amal is generously endowed with a high degree of freedom of action on account of his first-class education and his bright career prospects. Thus, these two protagonists stand metonymically for the two extremes of transnational migration: destitute first-generation migrants forced to do badly paid factory work versus affluent, highly qualified second-generation migrants about to build a promising professional career for themselves in Britain. In terms of historical context, this intrafamilial constellation is indicative of the double ethical standards applied in contemporary Western immigration policy, which strives to attract highly educated professionals from emerging countries while at the same time trying to get rid of as many uneducated migrants as possible. Moreover, this policy is increasingly marked by an almost paranoid intensification of security concerns in the post-9/11 and post-7/7 era, which results in ever more sophisticated and pervasive efforts to contain illegal immigration. Consequently, the emergence of transcultural third spaces is rendered increasingly difficult under such restrictive circumstances.

In terms of spatiality, this story exhibits a parallelism of directionally inverse vectors inasmuch as the mother will travel from Britain to India along roughly the same route as her son has taken in the opposite direction. What emerges from such transnational (re)migrations is a pendular movement pattern that may be interpreted as one aspect of the formation of a transcultural topology in the British Asian context (cf. Section 3.4 of this dissertation). In addition, Amal's mother grapples with the depressing realization that she has never made a real claim to her place of residence throughout the 15 years she has been living in London. Her final attempts to appreciate its qualities and thereby resemanticize it for her own purposes, she regretfully admits, come too late, for it is only on the day of her deportation that she dares embark upon a sightseeing tour of the British capital. Her refusal to grant herself the wish to take a ride on the London Eye once in her life epitomizes her uncompromisingly self-sacrificing attitude towards life: she gave up pursuing her own wishes and desires in favour of building a better future for her children a long time ago. Even her sole attempt to contest the exclusiveness of British authority over London by equating the role of an unwelcome intruder ascribed to her as a migrant in Britain with the part the British colonizers played in Indian history sounds somehow timid: "I am the immigrant who is squatting uninvited in your country. And then I think, Is that not what you did? Were you not squatting in my country not so many years ago? We are not so different after all" (Kar-Purkayastha 2011: 120). Eventually, her belated and provisional assertion of her own right to live in the contested space 'London' ends up being crushed by the relentless and unforgiving bureaucratic procedures of the British immigration authorities. Unable to translate her justified concerns into the highly technical and abstract register of juridical bureaucracy, she loses her trial and is forced to return to India without any hope of ever being admitted to Britain again.

In the heart-rending final scene, it is the glass wall separating the incoming from the outgoing passengers at London Heathrow that functions as a powerful metaphor for the persistent inhumanity of the contemporary nation-state's gigantic bureaucratic machinery: although the mother gets a brief glimpse of her arriving son from the vantage point of the departure terminal and starts waving desperately, Amal fails to recognize her (cf. Kar-Purkayastha 2011: 124-127). It is the massive glass wall that prevents a happy family reunion, thus symbolizing – beyond the individual instance – the impermeable compartmentalization of migrants into desirable and undesirable ones.

All in all, the dystopian aspect of transculturality dominates this story for three reasons. First, Amal's mother fails to redefine her own identity by securing a better future for herself: she remains a poor and uneducated factory underling threatened by expulsion due to her status as an illegal migrant. Second, she is consequently also deprived of any chance to obtain a greater degree of freedom of action. Finally, this means that her dreams of a bright future in Britain together with her successful son are brutally shattered by the ruthless enforcement of British immigration laws. In the final analysis, her son's bright future as a highly paid software engineer in London therefore constitutes the only regard in which something like utopian transculturality emerges in this short story, inasmuch as Amal's future career symbolizes a productive fusion of Indian and British cultural elements. Thus, it is with regard to the protagonist's son that the allusion to the metaphorical nature of the sky as a symbol of freedom, optimism and the imaginative and boundless capacity of dreaming contained in the story's title is actualized. At the same time, however, this title – "The Sky Is Always Yours" (Kar-Purkayastha 2011) – does of course contain an ironic undertone, for it alludes not only to the individual's ability to make one's dreams come true but also to the highly sophisticated surveillance technologies deployed by national (and international) authorities all around the globe in order to compartmentalize and control airspace. To conclude, this short story by Asian British author Ishani Kar-Purkayastha (cf. 2011: 117-127) thus narratively enacts the complex intertwining of utopian and anti-utopian aspects of highly interconnected transcultural lifeworlds in our contemporary age of globalization on different textual levels. Moreover, it does so with reference to all three constitutive parameters of human motion and transculturality: spatiality, agency/identity and temporality/historicity.

In contrast, quite a few Asian British novels can be assigned to one of these poles of transculturality rather unequivocally: *A Life Apart* (Mukherjee 2011 [2008]; cf. Chapter 6 of this dissertation), for example, clearly enacts a dystopian vision of transculturality because the two Indian protagonists' sincere attempts to build a prosperous future in multicultural Britain and ensure the peaceful co-existence of Hindus and Muslims in early twentieth-century Bengal, respectively, are doomed to fail in this novel. Other examples of fictional enactments of the dystopian variant of transculturality include Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) and Hari Kunzru's *Transmission* (2005 [2004]). Tishani Doshi's *The Pleasure Seekers* (2010; cf. Chapter 7 of this dissertation), by contrast, unfolds a refreshingly optimistic vision of successful transculturality by narratively enacting a Welsh-Indian family story over three

generations. A similar scenario of optimistic transculturality is enacted narratively in Preethi Nair's *One Hundred Shades of White* (2003).

Having presented and exemplified my reconceptualization of transculturality, I will conclude by delimiting it from competing definitions of this central category and from selected other, adjacent concepts describing cross-cultural contact situations. In essence, my concept of transculturality revolves around the pivotal quality identified by Fernando Ortiz in his original definition of transculturation from 1940: the creation of innovative cultural phenomena from the fusion of cultural elements from (at least) two pre-existent source cultures (cf. Ortiz 2003 [1940]: 102-103). According to Ortiz, this complex process of cultural transfer consists of three stages:

I am of the opinion that the word *transculturation* better expresses the different phases of the process of transition from one culture to another because this does not consist merely in acquiring another culture, which is what the English word *acculturation* really implies, but the process also necessarily involves the loss or uprooting of a previous culture, which could be defined as a deculturation. In addition it carries the idea of the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena, which could be called neoculturation. In the end, as the school of Malinowski's followers maintains, the result of every union of cultures is similar to that of the reproductive process between individuals: the offspring always has something of both parents but is always different from each of them. (Ortiz 2003 [1940]: 102-103)

However, I have refined this classic definition by adding further criteria for the emergence of transculturality, such as the ability to translate cultural phenomena across cultural borders or the formation of transcultural third spaces. In contrast to Ette (2005), who posits "a constant leaping to and fro between different cultures [...] devoid of any stable and fixable relationship to an individual culture or cultural group" (Ette 2005: 20-21; my translation) as the sole criterion for the emergence of transculturality, I suggest a multifactorial definition that deliberately takes into account various aspects of this conceptual phenomenon under the conditions of contemporary globalization. In contrast to Lösch's concept of "transdifference" (2005), which denotes "situations in which the outdated difference constructions based on a binary logic of order [...] are suspended temporarily in their validity without being deconstructed definitively" (Lösch 2005: 23; my translation), my definition of transculturality does not concentrate solely on "the fleeting moment" marked by "a temporary destabilization" (Lösch 2005: 32; cf. *ibid.* 23-24, 32) of binary difference constructions, but zooms in on the potentially stable emergence of transcultural third spaces instead.

Moreover, by suggesting a specific definition of such transcultural third spaces that is explicitly grounded in concrete socioeconomic realities as one of the constitutive

features of my conceptualization of transculturality, I deliberately go beyond the extremely high degree of metaphoricity implied in Bhabha's interdependent definitions of hybridity and third space: whereas his characterization of "Third Space" as "the split-space of enunciation" that "open[s] the way to conceptualizing an *international* culture, based on [...] the inscription and articulation of culture's *hybridity*" (Bhabha 1994b: 56) remains stuck on the highly sophisticated level of poststructuralist cultural theory (cf. Bhabha 1994b: 37, 53-56), my definition of transcultural third spaces does make the necessary step of bridging the gap between the realm of cultural theory and the concrete quotidian realities of life faced by millions of migrants by making a substantial enhancement of their individual agency one essential criterion for the emergence of transcultural third spaces – be it in the shape of economic freedom of action or the (often concomitant) redefinition of their individual identity.

Following Lowenhaupt Tsing (cf. 2005: 6), I furthermore assert that friction is by no means an altogether negative phenomenon in cross-cultural contact situations resulting from transnational movements, because it may generate new transcultural modes of existence, production and consumption from the frequently tension-filled and conflict-ridden intercultural encounter responsible for the emergence of friction in the first place. The presence of friction, in turn, often necessitates processes of translational action. Finally, my definition of transculturality hence explicitly includes the issues of cultural translation and translatability in the overall picture. The specific concept of translation I am referring to here is characterized by two central insights. First, like space and motion, cultural translation is a relational and processual phenomenon (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2012: 38); that is, it always involves a plurality of stakeholders implicated in the concrete process of translating cultural items, entities and worldviews into other, frequently incommensurable cultural contexts, and, what is more, it always takes the shape of a negotiation process among these heterogeneous parties (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2012: 28). In a nutshell: cultural translation is a complicated process of "re-contextualization" and "re-articulation" (Hall 1996: 393) evolving in a fundamentally relational constellation of the highly heterogeneous stakeholders involved, be they national, ethnic, social or religious groups. As a consequence, there are no originals in cultural translation: each and every cultural phenomenon already constitutes a re-contextualized version of an earlier phenomenon adopted by the cultural entity in question from another cultural formation (cf. Hall 1996: 393 and Bachmann-Medick 2012: 38).

Second, like motion, cultural translation can be illuminated by focusing on the interactive constitution of three parameters: cultural translation is accomplished by individual or collective agents representative of the stakeholders concerned (agency), the negotiation processes it implies always take place somewhere (spatiality) and it is always necessitated by and carried out in a particular historical context (historicality/temporality; cf. Lutter 2014: 159). Therefore, the range of applicability of the trialectics of motion elaborated in Chapter 2 extends beyond the phenomenon of human motion itself to issues of cultural translation and the emergence of transculturality in cross-cultural contact situations. Subsequent to the explication of my reconceptualization of this central concept, I will now turn to a brief sociocultural contextualization of contemporary Asian British novels.

3.2 Contemporary Asian British Fiction: A Brief Sociocultural Contextualization

This section pursues a twofold objective. On the one hand, it provides a brief introduction to the social, cultural and historical context in which contemporary Asian British fiction is embedded; on the other, it examines in what regards this mode of writing can be described as a transcultural one.

As far as the first objective is concerned, I shall primarily focus on four interrelated contextual aspects of contemporary Asian British writing. Starting with some introductory remarks on the history of Asian British writing, I will subsequently justify my preference for the designation 'Asian British fiction' over its sequentially inverse competitor 'British Asian fiction'. Then the fundamental heterogeneity of the ever expanding number of contemporary authors subsumed under the homogenizing label 'Asian British/British Asian' shall be highlighted in conjunction with my plea for an inclusive interpretation of this term. Finally, I will conclude with some reflections on the dangerous pitfalls of equating the by now immensely popular label 'Asian British/British Asian' with a highly specific and thus inevitably narrow set of contentual items and formal strategies of representation.

Concerning the history of Asian British fiction, let me begin by stating an obvious but often overlooked fact: there was Asian British writing before the publication

of Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* in 1981, and there is an ever increasing number of younger Asian British authors who have emerged in the 1990s and 2000s (cf. Upstone 2010: 4 and Chaudhuri 2001a: xxiii). In the wake of several waves of mass migration from the former colonies to Britain from the early 1950s onwards, we are today confronted with a historically unique situation inasmuch as there is, for the first time, a substantial body of creative writing by British-born Asian authors that rightly demands recognition as a genre in its own right (cf. Upstone 2010: 1). As we shall see, the numerous novels and short stories written by this younger generation of Asian British authors are anything but epigonic in relation to Rushdie's oeuvre. As for the first point, Upstone points out that the history of fiction written by Asian authors born in Britain dates back to 1947, the year that Aubrey Menen published her debut novel (cf. Upstone 2010: 4). The history of Indian literature written in English in general does go back even further, to pioneering authors like Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao, who wrote their first literary works in English in the 1930s, and to Rabindranath Tagore, whose monumental oeuvre encompasses not only poems, songs, speeches, stories and novels in his mother tongue Bengali, but also texts originally written in English as well as translations of his own Bengali works into English (cf. Alam and Chakravarty 2011a: 1-33). Therefore, both Asian British fiction and Indian literature in English constitute rich and sprawling fields of literary creativity that can look back on "intertwined histories" (Said 1993: 1) teeming with formal and thematic variety. It is precisely for this reason that any reductionist attempt to constrict the immense diversity of these abundant fields of writing to Rushdie's oeuvre is doomed to failure despite the fact that it is this narrow-minded view that persists in the public consciousness of many a Western country.

In order to terminologically counter any such Western aspiration to retain a homogenizing and, above all, domineering grip on the genre I have selected as my primary text corpus, I am following Campbell-Hall (cf. 2007: 5) in using the designation "Asian British fiction" rather than "British Asian fiction" (ibid.), because the latter term is problematic due to its evident potential to evoke colonial connotations (cf., for instance, 'British India'). "Asian British fiction" (ibid.), in contrast, is not fraught with colonial baggage. As Campbell-Hall (cf. 2007: 5) points out, the term stresses the equal importance of both components – Asianness and Britishness – instead, thus being by far a "more empowering term than 'British Asian'" (Campbell-Hall 2007: 5). Accordingly, he interprets "Asian British" as "indicative of a very specific moment in literary history; one which fictionally represents Britishness and Asianness as beginning to blur into an altogether new identity" (Campbell-Hall 2007: 5). This fusion, then, is most likely to fulfil

the pivotal criterion for transculturality (and attendant identity configurations) established in Section 3.1 of my dissertation.

One problematic aspect that the label 'Asian British' shares with its counterpart 'British Asian', however, is the homogenizing effect it has on the highly diverse variety of authors it designates. Accordingly, it runs the risk of obscuring the very heterogeneity that is so characteristic of Asian British writers in terms of cultural, social and generational background. While first-generation Asian British authors typically put the experience of migration itself and their struggle for economic survival and societal recognition as an 'ethnic' minority in a white-majority country centre-stage, second-generation writers tend to make more encompassing claims in terms of an inclusive redefinition of traditional Britishness and, what is more, differ from their parents also in that their affective attachment is directed towards their birthplace, Britain, rather than the Indian subcontinent, which they may not even know from direct personal experience (cf. Upstone 2010: 5, 7). In addition to those South Asians who migrated to Britain in adulthood and their offspring, there are also those who were not born in Britain but were raised there. Among those who came to Britain as grown-ups, at least two subgroups can be distinguished: writers who stick to an expatriate stance and those who identify with their British-born colleagues. Further relevant criteria include nationality/ethnic origin (Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan and so on), religious affiliation (Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Sikh, to name but the most important ones) and social status (class affiliation as determined by the parents' social background, the author's own educational qualifications and so on). As can be seen from these brief remarks, fine-grained differentiations concerning individual ethnic, religious, social and biographical background are required in the analysis of the contextual dimensions of literary texts by Asian British authors (cf. Rushdie 1991a [1982]: 16–17; Chaudhuri 2001a: xxv and Upstone 2010: 4).

With this justified caveat in mind, I nevertheless want to argue in favour of an inclusive interpretation of the genre label 'Asian British fiction', because, given the primary focus of my dissertation – the narrative enactment of transnational migratory movements – it would be counterproductive to restrict my primary-text corpus *a priori* to British-born Asian authors. Instead, I intend to highlight precisely the myriad interconnections existing between literary works by British-born, British-raised and first-generation migrant authors of Asian origin. In principle, my inclusive conceptualization of the label 'Asian British fiction' in this study shall even include primary texts by writers who received their university education (completely or partly) in Britain but then

decided to go back to India and South Asian authors who write about themes related to the Asian British context without themselves qualifying as Asian British authors in the narrow biographical sense.¹⁰⁹ This way, I intend to capture the cross-cultural dynamics of South Asian writing in English as comprehensively as possible within the scope of this doctoral dissertation.

Before turning to the possibilities and limitations of conceptualizing contemporary Asian British fiction as a transcultural mode of writing, I intend to focus briefly on the “burden of representation” (Upstone 2010: 6; cf. *ibid.*) Asian British authors are commonly confronted with in regard to contentual and formal aspects of their writing, that is, “the pressure placed on ethnic authors not only to write about certain themes, but also to present them in a particular light” (Upstone 2010: 6). In her introduction to the 2011 short-story collection *Too Asian, Not Asian Enough*, the editor Kavita Bhanot (cf. 2011a: vii-xii) vividly describes the concrete shape this pressure usually takes in the case of Asian British writers:

We see the same few narratives again and again, stories about generational and cultural conflict which, greatly simplified, go something like this: born or brought up in Britain, we suffer at the hands of oppressive parents. These comical or villainous figures (usually both) continue to hold on to the culture and customs of the place they're from, a country that should be irrelevant to them since they live in England now. They hold us back from the pleasures and normality of western life: [...] they're overly religious; they make us study hard and push us into careers that we don't want to follow; they don't allow us to have relationships of our choice and want us to have arranged marriages. When we resist, they resort to emotional blackmail or physical force. (Bhanot 2011a: vii-viii)

Having grown tired of such stereotypical literary and media representations of themselves and their families, Bhanot goes on to point out, Asian British authors of the younger generation frequently prove to be particularly adept and versatile at resisting, countering and circumnavigating public and readerly expectations as to what they should write about and how they should represent it (cf. Bhanot 2011a: vii-xii). However, it is not only against monothematic readerly expectations that the younger generation of Asian British writers are more or less forced to position themselves in their creative endeavours, but also against the all-powerful, shining example of Rushdie's formally innovative, magical-realist strategies of representation, for the construction of the Indian English novel after Rushdie in the West has largely fallen prey to the fallacy of interpreting his idiosyncratic style as synonymous with a general orientation (cf. Chaudhuri 2001a: xxv).

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Murphy and Sim (2008a: 3) for an even more inclusive definition of British Asian fiction that integrates West and East Asian authors in addition to their South Asian colleagues.

Thus, celebrating the Indian novel – in the wake of Rushdie’s outstanding literary achievements – exclusively as exaggerated, fantastic, flamboyant, lush and non-linear is a homogenizing failure of recognizing the diversity and richness of Indian literatures in English and beyond (cf. Chaudhuri 2001a: xxv). In concrete terms, Chaudhuri further argues that claiming realism as an exclusive property of Western literature and relegating the fantastic to Indian literatures would definitely reiterate the old colonial prejudice according to which the Oriental exhibits a peculiar propensity towards irrationality, mysticism and spiritual ‘nonsense’, whereas in truth, realist strategies of representation are just as Indian as the fantastic is part of Western literature and culture (cf. Chaudhuri 2001a: xxx). In order to elude both the grip of Rushdie’s overwhelmingly successful and hence stifling example and the reiteration of colonialist prejudices, younger Asian British authors tend to ground their storyworlds more often in the frequently harsh realities of life in contemporary Britain (cf. Upstone 2010: 10) instead of focusing on “imaginary homelands” (Rushdie 1991a [1982]: 9-21) and postmodern playfulness regarding the deconstruction of fixed identities or linear conceptions of history. Whether this tendency may justifiably be interpreted as a general “return of realism” (Cuevas 2008: 191; cf. *ibid.* 191-217) in contemporary Asian British writing remains to be seen.

In addition to the inadequacy of stereotypical representations of Asian Britishness in the media, there is a further problematic tendency towards homogenization that does not do justice to the specific historical, social and cultural situatedness of contemporary Asian British writing: the frequently still unquestioned assumption that it can be subsumed under postcolonial frameworks originally developed for first-generation migrant literatures without refining those literary-theoretical models. Such undifferentiated theoretical transfers, however, are grist for the mill of those who reproach postcolonial theory for its lack of specificity anyway (cf. Upstone 2010: 8-9). As Upstone (cf. 2010: 7-9) explicates, the inadequacy of many postcolonial concepts to the specificities of contemporary Asian British fiction can be illustrated best with their most prominent example: Bhabha’s concept of hybridity (1994). The undifferentiated ascription of hybridity to British-born Asian subjects and their literary works poses severe conceptual problems because, for one thing, their feelings of alienation from white-majority Britain do not stem from “physical dislocation, but from the very lack of this alternative space of belonging because of an often-distanced relationship to an ancestral physical geography” (Upstone 2010: 7). While it is true that the younger generation of Asian Britons have to face up to the necessity of (re)negotiating their individual and collective identities marked by complex affiliations to

“both a distant ancestral homeland and a very present yet contested Britain” (Upstone 2010: 7), they nonetheless exhibit greater self-confidence than their parents in making their claim to integration in contemporary (re)definitions of Britishness.

Therefore, Upstone (cf. 2010: 7) concludes that Bhabha’s (cf. 2000: 139) narrowing down of options available to minorities to the occupation of spaces in between does not apply to British-born Asians as unequivocally as it did to first-generation migrants. The younger generation thus distinguishes itself from their parents by forcefully asserting their agency, a societal demand born out of “a more defiant British-born sensibility” (Upstone 2010: 7): in this context, “[n]egotiation of complex cultural positionings means a fusion of different influences celebrated as a powerful new identity, rather than as detrimental to a stable sense of self. Taken a step further, fusion itself becomes a defining identity, as both traditional Britishness and diasporic identities are rejected” (Upstone 2010: 7). It is precisely this moment of transculturation that constitutes the distinctive hallmark of the younger Asian Britons’ contemporary “identity configurations” (Welsch 2009: 9), which lay claim to being included in innovative redefinitions of Britishness and vigorously reject being relegated to the role of eternal outsiders.

Moreover, contrary to post-structuralist theories highlighting the fluidity and hybridity of any identity configuration, many second-generation Asian British authors subscribe to “more rooted and stable identities” (Upstone 2010: 9), thereby “reflect[ing] the recognition in postcolonial theory itself that terms like hybridity may become as exclusionary as the more ostensibly ‘stable’ identities they were identified as subverting” (Upstone 2010: 9). Hence, such postcolonial concepts must always be refined and, above all, complemented by “more culturally and geographically located social theory” (Upstone 2010: 9) if they are to become fruitful analytical categories for contemporary Asian British novels (cf. Upstone 2010: 7-10). With my definition of transcultural third spaces elaborated in Section 3.1, I intend to contribute to the spatial and sociocultural grounding of postcolonial concepts that is so vital for a substantial enhancement of their range of applicability to concrete literary texts and their referentiality to issues of decisive relevance beyond the realm of literary and cultural theory.

Regarding the second goal of this section, I will formulate several guiding hypotheses concerning the extent to which contemporary Asian British novels can be

conceived of as a transcultural mode of writing.¹¹⁰ Largely based on Helff's three general criteria for identifying a "transcultural novel" (Helff 2009: 83; cf. *ibid.*),¹¹¹ these hypotheses shall then be tested with regard to the three novels selected for an in-depth analysis in Chapters 5 to 7. Subsequently, their overall usefulness will be evaluated in Section 8.2.

To begin with, contemporary Asian British novels enact a wide range of transnational migratory movements – from illegal migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers to affluent, globally mobile tourists and cosmopolitan intellectuals – in highly diverse ways (cf. Helff 2009: 83). Most importantly, they do so without falling prey to the illusionary assumption that global mobility is available to everybody, nor do they engage in one-sided celebratory accounts of the positive consequences allegedly arising from the ubiquitous presence of transnational migration and mobility all around the globe. Instead, they grapple with the stark effects these phenomena are frequently accompanied by in terms of global injustice, economic inequalities and resultant power asymmetries (within and) across national, ethnic, social, cultural and religious borders. On the whole, one can thus justifiably claim that, as a result of their thematic and formal variety, contemporary Asian British novels deal with the causes, circumstances, effects and wider implications of transnational motion and mobility under the conditions of early twenty-first-century globalization in all their breadth and depth, thus retaining a decidedly global macro-perspective even when treating issues that are seemingly related to only a reductionist local micro-level. Therefore, I assert that, with regard to the narrative enactment of the complex phenomenon of human motion, contemporary Asian British novels do qualify as a transcultural mode of writing.

Second, these novels enact the renegotiation, (re)appropriation and resemanticization of contested spaces at the global, national, regional and local levels in myriad ways (cf. Helff 2009: 83). Here, the cityscape of present-day multicultural London frequently serves as an exemplary focus of attention in which globally relevant

¹¹⁰ For the criteria I used in selecting my primary text corpus; cf. Section 1.1 of this dissertation.

¹¹¹ In her article "Shifting Perspectives – The Transcultural Novel" (Helff 2009: 75-89), Sissy Helff formulates three central criteria for identifying a transcultural novel: "[...] first, [...] the narrator and/or the narrative challenge(s) the collective identity of a particular community; second, [...] experiences of border-crossing and transnational identities characterize the narrators' lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*); and third, [...] traditional notions of 'home' are disputed" (Helff 2009: 83). Helff demonstrates the usefulness of her definition of transcultural novels by analysing a Caribbean novel in English (cf. Helff 2009: 83-87). The four guiding hypotheses on possibilities of conceptualizing contemporary Asian British novels as a transcultural mode of writing formulated in the following represent a contextualized application and expansion of Helff's three general criteria for identifying transcultural novels to the specific field of contemporary Asian British novels.

macro-issues related to migration are negotiated at the local micro-level (cf. Hallet 2009: 102-107). From these renegotiation processes, transcultural third spaces may emerge either in the utopian variant or its dystopian counterpart, with the latter being marked by the denial of utopian potential to the (individual or collective) agents involved (cf. my definition of (utopian) transcultural third spaces in Section 3.1). In concrete terms, a dystopian transcultural third space constitutes a negation of the utopian potential associated with its optimistic counterpart in that it does not permit the migrants concerned to redefine their identity or to expand their individual freedom of action.

Third, contemporary Asian British novels call into question both essentialized monolithic national, cultural, ethnic and religious identities and their post-structuralist counterpart, i.e. perpetually fluid and “transitional identities” (Chattopadhyay and Shrivastava 2012: 113; cf. *ibid.* 113-125; Helff 2009: 83 and Upstone 2010: 7-9). Instead of unanimously subscribing to one or the other extreme, they open up a wide panorama of possible “identity configurations” (Welsch 2009: 9) ranging from down-to-earth thematizations of the allegedly basic human need to belong somewhere to the sophisticated post-structuralist deconstruction of such fixed identity configurations. Despite being culturally grounded in the specific sociohistorical context of contemporary Asian Britain, these novels deal with issues of high significance for all (Western and non-Western) societies undergoing profound transformations in the wake of global mass migration, such as migrants’ struggle for individual and collective agency, economic survival, equal rights, social acceptance and general recognition of their contribution to the host society’s economic prosperity.

Fourth, contemporary Asian British novels question the universality of Western modernity’s claim to being a role model for non-Western regions of the world by highlighting its intertwining with competing configurations of modernity to be found in formerly colonized societies, thus narratively enacting “entangled [...] modernities” (Randeria 2002; cf. *ibid.* 284-311, Welz 2009: 37-57 and West-Pavlov 2013: 158-174). In addition, they thematize the repercussions of Britain’s colonial legacy in the contemporary world without falling prey to the erroneous assumption that postcoloniality is a universal condition capable of explaining virtually everything. Instead, they focus on concrete issues faced by the Asian British population in their everyday lives, issues that are frequently correlated with, but nevertheless not identical to classical postcolonial concerns (cf. Upstone 2010: 7-9).

In conclusion, I thus want to point out that contemporary Asian British novels constitute a resourceful research field with regard to all three dimensions of the trialectics of motion developed in Chapter 2 and, by extension, transculturality. What is more, they (de)construct both the utopian and the dystopian facets of transculturation processes discursively, thus constantly giving voice to first- and second-generation migrants' heterogeneous viewpoints on matters of cross-cultural interweaving and its consequences. Thus, their suitability as a research object for my study extends to their intricate interweaving of the narrative enactment of transnational migratory movements and transculturation processes as well.

3.3 Third Spaces and Worlds in between: Implications and Consequences of Spatial Movement

Subsequent to the historical and sociocultural contextualization of contemporary Asian British novels, this section will be concerned with outlining major implications and consequences of spatial movement. To this end, I have singled out three distinct but interrelated aspects to be treated separately. While the first (3.3.1) involves transnational migration as one of the principal movement types in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the second (3.3.2) involves the implications and consequences of the interwoven processes of constructing, deconstructing and crossing borders and attendant notions of collective identities. The third aspect (3.3.3) involves the spatialized results of migratory border-crossings, thus highlighting the close interrelation between transnational migration and the attendant acts of transgressing borders and hybridizing seemingly monolithic identity constructions as well as the (often liminal) cultural spaces where these processes are typically acted out.

3.3.1 Migration as a Principal Type of Spatial Movement in the Twenty-first Century

In this section, I pursue two closely related goals. Acknowledging the central role played by transnational migratory movements in contemporary globalization processes, I intend to tentatively analyse the ubiquitous phenomenon of migration through the lens of my trialectics of motion. In addition, I shall interweave this general examination with concrete examples from the South Asian British context in order to corroborate my central hypothesis that transnational migration can be analysed productively by focusing on its spatial, temporal and agentive aspects and, above all, their complex interactions.

Undoubtedly, the general significance of transnational migration as a global issue has increased steadily throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, and it is expected to continue to do so unabatedly.¹¹² This overall development has led some scholars to postulate “[t]he Age of Migration” (eponymous title of a 2014 [1993] monograph by Castles, de Haas and Miller) in order to account for the unprecedented scale at which transnational migratory movements are nowadays altering the everyday lifeworlds both of migrants and non-migrants all around the globe. All in all, the phenomenon of transnational migration is both a major driving force and a result of globalization (cf. Chirico 2014: 24-25) because, on the one hand, mass migration propels the gradual disintegration of formerly rigid cultural boundaries, a development that is generally considered to be one of the hallmarks of globalization, and, on the other, the economic consequences of globalization (such as the destruction of people’s livelihood in agricultural societies due to multinational corporations’ practice of land-grabbing) literally force the people concerned to migrate elsewhere in the hope of finding better living conditions there. In this latter case, migration thus results from a case-specific combination of objective (economic constraints) and subjective

¹¹² Caused primarily by the civil war in Syria and the rise of the so-called Islamic State in Syria and Iraq, the current waves of refugees desperately trying to get to Europe testify to the ubiquity of forced mass migration in the early twenty-first century and therefore also to the political and ethical urgency of questions related to transnational migration. According to Solimano (2010: 4), “[i]nternational migration has increased substantially in the past four decades, particularly toward high-income countries, increasing threefold between 1965 and 2005 – the fastest growth period since the late 19th and early 20th centuries”. According to a recent press release on international migration published by the Population Division of the United Nations’ Department of Economic and Social Affairs on 11 September 2013, the number of people living abroad is higher than ever before: “In 2013, 232 million people, or 3.2 per cent of the world’s population, were international migrants, compared with 175 million in 2000 and 154 million in 1990”. Moreover, the largest diasporic group was formed by Asian expatriates, among whom international migrants from South Asia constituted the largest subgroup (cf. <http://esa.un.org/unmigration/wallchart2013.htm>, last retrieved 17.07.2014).

dimensions of globalization (individual desire to improve in terms of better socioeconomic living conditions and political liberties frequently spurred by media representations of a foreign country offering precisely these liberties; cf. Chirico 2014: 12-30). In other words, it is a specific constellation of push and pull factors that motivates migrants to leave their country of origin and embark upon a journey to an unknown but apparently promising destination. In the South Asian British context, for instance, the first wave of migration from India to the UK had its roots in the historical coincidence of the Partition of the subcontinent in 1947 (push factor) and the acute shortage of cheap labour plaguing the British national economy after the enormous human losses in the Second World War (pull factor; cf. Castles, de Haas and Miller 2014 [1993]: 28-31). Having lost their homes in the atrocities of the Partition, many South Asians were attracted to Britain by a liberal immigration policy and the hope for a better life, thus forming the first wave of migration from the subcontinent to the UK in the early 1950s (cf. Bald 1995: 71-72).

This example nicely shows how the three constituent dimensions of human motion interact in the emergence of migration: with the spatial dimension being marked by a profound and traumatizing disruption, the uprooting from one's traditional homestead, which was in turn caused by a momentous and, above all, atrocious historical event (the Partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan in 1947), quite a few South Asians asserted their agency by deciding to migrate to Britain, which attracted them with the promise of better living conditions, personal security from religious persecution and a considerably higher degree of political stability. As can be seen from this example, migration therefore epitomizes the role of agency as a mediator between the spatial and the temporal dimension of movement inasmuch as it is primarily the configuration of the former dimension that accounts for the decision to migrate and that predetermines the individual migrant's experience of space and time both during the journey itself and in the wake of their arrival in the host country.

One of the major factors upon which the scope of agency available to the individual migrant in the destination hinges is formed by the translational capabilities he has at his disposal. Accordingly, I take up the concept of the migrant as translator (cf. eponymous conference title, see Section 3.1 of this dissertation), which, I argue, can be reconceptualized by means of the trialectics of motion¹¹³ elaborated in Chapter 2 of

¹¹³ My combination of the migrant as translator with my trialectics of motion is backed up by the etymological correlation between 'migration' and 'translation' as well, for the Latin verbs *migrare* (to wander, to hike) and *transferre* (to bear or carry across; cf. also French *traduire*, derived

this dissertation as well, for, in addition to linguistic translation in the narrow sense, migrants are constantly confronted with the necessity to translate their concepts of space, time and agency cross-culturally into the language of the recipient culture or into an acceptable third idiom. In the following, I will thus corroborate this hypothesis by briefly exemplifying the relevance of each of these three constituents for the intercultural translation processes necessitated by migration.

With regard to agency, there are, for instance, cross-cultural differences regarding the scope and intensity of the impact that culture-specific identities regarding gender, social class, socioeconomic status and religion have on the individual's freedom of action. In the same vein, heterogeneous and often even incommensurable cultural notions of subjectivity, societal expectations and further motivational factors require careful, diligent and context-sensitive efforts at mutual translation. The difficulties, ruptures or even failures potentially involved in such an intercultural endeavour reveal themselves, for example, in different attitudes towards and evaluations of 'voluntary' and 'forced' migration. If, for instance, a marriage is arranged between a young Indian or Pakistani woman and an often considerably older man who is unknown to her and lives abroad, then consummating this arranged marriage will be her duty in the eyes of her family and compatriots, whereas many Westerners will consider this act an unjustified deprivation of her individual freedom of decision and action.

Concerning temporality, there are likewise several aspects that call for cross-cultural translation: first, culture-specific attitudes towards the passing and management of time (cf. Section 2.3 of this dissertation); second, cultural concepts of history and the historical dimension of the contemporary world; third, culturally and historically determined political, ideological and religious mindsets; and finally, culture-specific conceptualizations of and attitudes towards 'tradition' and 'modernity'. With regard to the latter issue, quite a few Westerners are still inclined towards an uncritical apotheosis of their version of modernity as the only 'true' path towards progress and prosperity, although in the study of culture, this myth has long ago been thoroughly deconstructed and, consequently, abandoned in favour of "multiple modernities" (Welz 2009: 37-57; cf. *ibid.*). With the concept of multiple or "alternative modernities" (Appadurai 1996: 49), scholars such as Arjun Appadurai stress both the plurality of Western and non-Western specimens of modernity arising out of a complex history of

from Latin *traducere*, meaning to lead across) both denote spatial movement (cf. Rushdie 1991a [1982]: 17).

colonialism and their mutual historical and present-day entanglements (cf. Appadurai 1996; particularly 49-50).

Deep ruptures that are likely to inhibit any sincere attempt at cross-cultural translation concern, above all, the culture-specific evaluations of the advent and triumph of phenomena like 'modernity' and 'globalization': while people in the West, who profited enormously from them in the colonial past and continue to do so in the globalized present, frequently still tend to welcome these all-encompassing developments or, at the very least, consider them inevitable, formerly colonized peoples take a very different stance on these phenomena, for their precarious situation in the present is the result of their military subjugation, economic exploitation and political oppression in the era of Western colonialism. The conflict between disparate evaluations of historical developments becomes equally evident in the recent rise of China (which is most often still classified as an emerging country) to global economic ascendancy: while from a Chinese point of view, this rise constitutes the merited return to the status quo ante Western imperialism, in the Western world it is mostly perceived as an enormous threat to its own political, economic and cultural hegemony.

In respect of space, it is accordingly the culture-specific distribution of ideas of centrality and peripherality that requires migrants to negotiate translationally between the competing claims to cultural centrality made by their country of origin and the country they have chosen to live in. This conflict arises most prominently in the context of Chinese migration to the US (and sometimes even vice versa), for the millennia-old assertion of global cultural superiority implied in the self-designation 'Middle Kingdom' is countered by the American claim to universal centrality dating from (at least) the second half of the twentieth century. In addition, heterogeneous cultural concepts of lived space(s) and incompatible cultural demarcations likewise call for translational efforts on the part of the migrant. Finally, the same holds true for Appadurai's "global ethnoscapes" (Appadurai 1996: 33; cf. *ibid.* 33-65), which have emerged from transnational migratory movements over the last decades. The latter example illustrates that the necessity to translate reaches beyond the realm heuristically captured by my trialectics of motion, for migrants do of course face the additional challenge of translating their cultural and religious customs, social conventions and political as well as ideological positions. Apart from the example of arranged marriages mentioned above, this necessity likewise pertains to incommensurable religious practices to be found in Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism in the Asian British context. All in all, migrants are thus constantly confronted with the frequently

difficult task of engaging in linguistic, cross-cultural, and other translation in their everyday life. To avoid the impression of one-sidedness, I conclude by pointing out that this preparedness and capability to translate cross-culturally is of course as necessary for the population of the recipient country as for their migrant contemporaries, for translation always works bidirectionally, leaving neither of the parties involved unchanged (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2012: 23-43, particularly 30).

In order to further corroborate my guiding hypothesis that the phenomenon of transnational migration can be grasped analytically by means of my trialectics of motion, I will focus on two salient aspects of the former – the complex issue of identity formation in migratory contexts and the history of transnational migration from South Asia to Britain – each of which pertains to (at least) one of the three constituent dimensions of human motion. Regarding identity formation, it is, first of all, indispensable to acknowledge the fundamental plurality of each and every individual's resources in this regard: in addition to cultural resources such as ethnic, religious and linguistic factors, socioeconomic parameters like profession, income and social status figure most prominently alongside gender and sexual determinants of an individual's personal identity (cf. White 1995: 2). The overall impact of migration as a biographical event manifests itself in a fundamental mobilization of these factors inasmuch as they are all subject to substantial reconfiguration, resulting in what White calls “[i]dentity shift[s]” (White 1995: 2; cf. *ibid.*).

It is these shifting or oscillating and hence mobile identity configurations that have attracted enormous attention in contemporary literary and cultural theory (cf. e.g. Bhabha 1994) because they are most often perceived as epitomes of the human condition under the pressures of contemporary globalization. Born out of a deep sense of alienation resulting from physical dislocation, these oscillating identity configurations are profoundly marked by ambivalence on multiple levels: a ubiquitous attitudinal feature of numerous migratory contexts, ambivalence does operate with regard to space, time, agency and so on (cf. White 1995: 3-4). This fundamental ambivalence towards the act of migration and its consequences is nicely reflected in the metaphors deployed to characterize it: ranging from death to rebirth¹¹⁴ (cf. White 1995: 6-7), the

¹¹⁴ Cf. also the following quotation by Rushdie: “The notion of migration as a form of rebirth is one whose truths many migrants will recognize. Instantly recognizable, too, and often very moving, is the sense of a writer feeling obliged to bring his new world into being by an act of pure will, the sense that if the world is not described into existence in the most minute detail, then it won't be there. The immigrant must invent the earth beneath his feet” (Rushdie 1991b [1987]: 149).

metaphorical spectrum of migrant experiences occupies the entire conceptual and imaginative space between these two poles.

The former extreme – migration as death – is most likely to trigger dreams of return, the realization of which, more often than not, turns out to be problematic, however. This is because the migrant yearning for a permanent return is inclined to imagine his home country as a stable, unchanging and continuous entity. Accordingly, he actually longs for return in a double sense: with regard to spatiality, the migrant dreams of going back to his country of origin, whereas in terms of temporality, he is craving for a return to the (no longer extant) past he left behind there (cf. White 1995: 14 and 2-14; see also Ette 2005: 12-13). These hopes, however, are bound to be thoroughly disappointed, for both the place and the historical context have undergone more or less substantial transformations in the meantime, all the more so if the actual migration took place decades ago (cf. White 1995: 1-19). What can be seen here is the complex interplay of the constituent dimensions of my trialectics of motion in the particular example of migration: the migrant intends to regain his original “identity configuration” (Welsch 2009: 9) and reassert his traditional scope of agency (that has often been denied to him by the authorities and the population of the recipient country) by returning to his home country; upon actualizing this dream, he is, however, forced to face the fact that, due to the historicity of space and the perpetual passing of time, both the cultural space itself and the historical circumstances under which his fellow countrymen live have changed.

Having explicated the general issue of identity reconfiguration in the wake of migration, I will now turn to the history of migration in the Asian British context in order to provide a basis for a more context-sensitive discussion of pertinent identity shifts. While it is important to stress that the history of migration from South Asia to Britain does not begin only after the Second World War, it is equally true that the sheer number of South Asian¹¹⁵ migrants arriving in the UK rose substantially from the early 1950s onwards, with the result that they soon made up 3.4 per cent of the total population.¹¹⁶ As indicated above, this first wave of mass migration has its roots primarily in two factors: the shortage of cheap labour in the UK after the large loss of life in the Second World War induced the British government to pass the Nationality Act

¹¹⁵ I am following the definition of South Asians proposed by Ranasinha (2012: 1), according to which the term refers to “peoples originating from the Indian subcontinent and Sri Lanka and their diasporas”.

¹¹⁶ According to a graphic representation of the results of the 2011 National Census published by the BBC on 11 December 2012, Asian Britons currently make up 7.5 percent of the total population in the United Kingdom (cf. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-20687168>, last retrieved 17.07.2014).

(1948), which granted rights of residence in the UK to citizens of former British colonies (cf. Ranasinha 2012: 20); and the deportations, refugee flows and atrocities committed in the wake of the Partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 uprooted millions of South Asians from their traditional homes. Attracted to Britain by the promise of a life in economic prosperity, political stability and personal security (above all from violent religious persecution), hundreds of thousands of Indians and Pakistanis made their way there, just as a considerably smaller number of South Asians from the Caribbean, mostly descendants of indentured labourers, did (cf. Bald 1995: 71-72). A second wave of South Asian migration to the UK followed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, this time primarily from East Africa, where the ruthless enforcement of ethnic cleansing under the ideology of Africanization drove most residents of South Asian descent out of countries like Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. In addition, more and more South Asians who had graduated from British universities or successfully completed their vocational training there made up their mind to stay. All in all, we are thus nowadays confronted with a situation in which approximately half of the British population of South Asian origin were born in the UK, most of whom have never been to their ancestors' home countries (cf. Bald 1995: 72).

This unprecedented situation resulted in substantial intergenerational differences among South Asian Britons: whereas the older generations opted primarily for reclusiveness or assimilation in their reaction to white racism, thus generally exhibiting a low degree of self-confidence, younger Asian Britons distinguish themselves by their self-assured assertiveness and resourcefulness in tackling this phenomenon. Unwilling to be relegated to the sphere of cultural liminality (cf. Wiest-Kellner 2008: 423-424; Bhabha 1994a: 2-7) forever, they are determined to struggle for the unconditional integration of their perspective into the amalgam of Britishness: "As 'Black' British¹¹⁷ they demand the right to their own place; they want to add their 'colour' to the Union Jack, and their story to the nation's his(story)" (Bald 1995: 84; cf. *ibid.* 83-84). As Bald so eloquently sums it up, "[u]nlike their parents, young male and female Black British are averse to either harmonizing their voices with those of the Anglos in a chorus written by the latter, or to playing only the music of the lands of their origin. Instead, they see themselves engaged in making a postmodern music of discordant notes and multilingual voices. From such music, we can expect a re-articulation and reconfiguration of the discourses of identity" (Bald 1995: 86). This is not to one-sidedly celebrate the utopian potential inherent in such discursive identity reconfigurations,

¹¹⁷ As Sommer points out, the label 'Black British' generally refers not only to Britons of African descent but functions as an umbrella term for the migrant populations originating from Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America (cf. Sommer 2001: 3, footnote 9).

however, for Asian British migrants and their descendants frequently still experience profound disillusionment with the recipient society when their hopes for a better life remain unfulfilled and the ensuing frustration causes them to feel disenchanting and discriminated against, to give up or even to turn aggressively against the white majority.

This latter fact ties in nicely with my comprehensive conceptualization of transculturality elaborated in Section 3.1 because the range of “transcultural identity configurations” (Welsch 2009: 9; cf. *ibid.* 8-9; see also Welsch 2000 [1999]: n. pag.) to be found in the Asian British context reflects the scope of the wide spectrum of transculturality suggested there. Accordingly, while there are promising success stories of Asian British fusion that can legitimately be considered representative of the utopian variant of transculturality, such as Asian British music, film and literature (cf. Bhanot 2011a: vii-xii), there are just as well many cases in which this transcultural fusion remains trapped in a vicious circle of poverty, lack of education, discrimination, institutionalized and everyday racism and resultant disillusionment and frustration (cf. Sardar 2008: 261-264 and 265-290).

In terms of my trialectics of motion, this sociohistorical constellation can be described as follows. In the wake of a particular historical process – the dissolution of the British Empire – several waves of mass migration from South Asia to Britain from the 1950s onwards have caused an unprecedented spatial constellation to emerge: for the first time in history, there exist vibrant and numerically substantial migrant communities on British soil, whose British-born descendants struggle for societal recognition of their specifically transcultural identity configurations – born out of a productive fusion of South Asian and British elements – both politically and in everyday life. Thus, it is, once again, the complex interplay of history, spatiality and agency (with identity as one of its main parameters) that accounts for the emergence of transculturality.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ As White points out, the formation of transcultural identity configurations within migrant communities is but one out of three options: “Other changes resulting from migration include attempts to re-create elements of former lives (possibly accentuating significant icons of that existence into quasi-talismans of high symbolic or ritual significance); attempts to integrate or assimilate completely (which may be blocked by a number of mechanisms within the ‘host’ society); or the creation of a new identity which is characterized by a feeling of independence from both the society of origin and the social structures of the destination. These changes in identity cannot be pinned down to a rigid linear continuum, for they represent the multiple and continually renegotiated outcomes of complex multifaceted phenomena operating both within individual biographies and for societies as a whole” (White 1995: 3). Cf. also Ette (2005: 12-13).

In contrast to Bhabha's post-structuralist vision of hybrid identities as being perpetually on the move (cf. Bhabha 1994c: 69-73), Welsch's concept of "transcultural identity configurations" (Welsch 2009: 9; cf. *ibid.* 8-9; see also Welsch 2000 [1999]: n. pag.) does not preclude the possibility that an individual will anchor herself in a particular place, for, particularly in contexts such as the contemporary British Asian one, the productive merging of South Asian and British influences goes hand in hand with the transcultural individual's desire to belong to Britain. Thus, this particular constellation does fulfil the pivotal criterion for the emergence of transculturality – the creation of an innovative fusion of cultural elements from (at least) two pre-existent source cultures (cf. Ortiz 2003 [1940]: 102-103, and Section 3.1 of this dissertation) – despite its deliberate grounding in the cultural space 'contemporary Britain'. Following Welsch (cf. Welsch 2009: 8-9; see also Welsch 2000 [1999]: n. pag.), I thus reject the idea that transculturalism – which, more often than not, emerges from transnational migratory movements – is synonymous with *perpetual* motion. In order to be able to describe the particular identity configurations Bhabha labels hybrid ones within the conceptual framework of my trialectics of motion, I suggest reconceptualizing them, following Lösch's (2005) concept of "transdifference", as *transdifferential* identity configurations, because this concept does stress the permanent mobility, fluidity and instability commonly associated with Bhabha's vision of identity as a free-floating signifier without, however, deconstructing or dissolving the difference between binarist constructions of identity and alterity in a metaphorical third space of hybridity: "The relationship between transdifference and difference is complementary, not substitutive" (Lösch 2005: 24; cf. Lösch 2005: 24, 32 and 34).¹¹⁹

As we shall see, however, this particular subset of transcultural identity configurations paradigmatically embodied in the postmodern global intellectual will play only a minor part in the primary text analyses to be conducted in Chapters 5 to 7 of this dissertation. Subsequent to this brief exposition of migration-related issues in the Asian British context, I will now turn to the complex problematic of drawing and deconstructing boundaries, which, because the formation of presumably stable identity configurations hinges upon the act of drawing clear-cut boundaries between self and other, correlates directly with the issue of identity formation.

¹¹⁹ As a complement to identity configurations, substantial identity *reconfigurations* are called 'identity transformations' in this dissertation. Compared with White's term "identity shifts" (White 1995: 2), this concept does foreground the *transformative* nature of such identity reconfigurations more pronouncedly.

3.3.2 Demarcations and Transgressions: Drawing and Deconstructing Boundaries

Subsequent to my analysis of migratory issues in the preceding section, this one will be concerned with the specific significance of setting up, deconstructing and crossing boundaries for the general thematic complex of human motion. While the interdependence of the construction of boundaries and collective identity formation (cf. Frank 2008a: 266-267) has been recognized ever since Foucault's programmatic preface to *Madness and Civilization* (1961) and Said's formulation of the concept of "imaginative geography" (2003 [1978]: 54) in his ground-breaking study *Orientalism* (1978), I intend to reframe this reciprocal dependence according to the trialectics of motion elaborated in Chapter 2 of this dissertation.¹²⁰ This does make sense because both borders and collective identities arise from context- and situation-specific and historically variable constellations of spatiality, agency and temporality. Before embarking upon this endeavour, however, I will briefly recapitulate selected pertinent approaches to the problematic of the construction of borders and evaluate both their merits and their shortcomings. The latter, I contend, frequently result from the problematic but widespread tendency to conflate different types of boundaries, such as political and semantic ones, without sufficiently attending to their specific – and sometimes incompatible – characteristics.

On the whole, this subchapter is predicated upon the premise that present-day globalization constitutes an unprecedented constellation of spatiality, agency and temporality that manifests itself in phenomena like "time-space compression" (Harvey 1990 [1989]: vii; 265) and the large-scale redistribution of degrees of agency, for instance in favour of multinational corporations and to the detriment of national labour forces. Moreover, contemporary globalization is essentially marked by a complex dialectic of "deterritorialization" versus "reterritorialization" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987 [1980]: 172), that is, by the contradictory but simultaneous processes testifying to the vanishing and the return of space both as a factor in everyday experience and as an analytical category. While the impression of a dissolution of space into a 'global village' is primarily due to the advent of 'placeless' and – at the same time – translocal telecommunications and information technologies epitomized by the Internet and the

¹²⁰ Section 2.2.2 (pp. 33-55) of my unpublished diploma thesis "Imaginative Geographien und die Inszenierung postkolonialer Räume in gegenwärtigen Fictions of Migration" (Matschi 2010) deals – among other things – with constructing and crossing boundaries as well; however, I am reframing my reflections on this issue according to my trialectics of motion (cf. Chapter 2 of this doctoral dissertation) here.

ubiquitous globalization of industry, trade and finance, the latter phenomenon becomes evident in the construction of new political borders and ethnic, religious and other boundaries, frequently undertaken for the purpose of reasserting precisely those traditional identities that are threatened most with erosion by contemporary globalization processes (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 286-291).

As Frank (cf. 2006: 36-37, 48)¹²¹ points out, a similar structural ambivalence holds true in the case of constructing borders, for this act produces a double-edged effect. On the one hand, it does divide space into two distinct territories and hence prevents movement from one to the other; but, on the other hand, it is precisely the act of establishing a clearly defined border that incites individuals to transgress this very borderline: psychologically speaking, prohibition provokes violation. In addition, the complexity of this situation is amplified even further by the seemingly paradoxical fact that the border and its transgression are definitionally dependent on one another, for a border that, in principle, cannot be crossed would not qualify as a border in the first place, while a transgression without a borderline to be stepped over would not count as a border crossing at all (cf. Frank 2006: 48).

Moreover, as Bhabha (cf. 1994d: 94-95) has amply demonstrated with regard to the stereotype in colonial contexts, discursive demarcations are fundamentally ambivalent in that they imply fixity and continuity without being able to live up to the expectation of stability nourished by such implications. As can be seen in this example, the post-structuralist deconstructions of the border propounded by Derrida (cf. 1999 [1972]) and Bhabha (cf. 1994) mainly focus on problematizing *semantic* boundaries in the signification process: contrary to de Saussure's (cf. 1960 [1915]: 65-78) postulate of the stable semantic border between two lexemes as a constitutive element of the signification process, both Derrida (cf. 1999 [1972]: 31-56) and Bhabha (cf. 1994, particularly 1994c: 85) claim that there are no 'stable' boundaries without violence; what is more, even in the case of violence being used, the border remains unstable, fluid and therefore in perpetual need of (re-)fixation (cf. Zapf 2008: 130-131 and Frank 2006: 31-39). Accordingly, in the case of the stereotype, the assertion of invariable

¹²¹ In his study *Kulturelle Einflussangst. Inszenierungen der Grenze in der Reiseliteratur des 19. Jahrhunderts* (2006), Frank provides a detailed theorization of the intertwined processes of the construction of cultural boundaries and collective identity formation in the context of European colonialism, with a particular focus on literary representations of transgressors of the "acculturation taboo" (Frank 2006: 82) and their cultural stigmatization in imperialist discourse. Despite the context-specificity of his literary examples, his general reflections on processes of spatio-temporal cultural demarcation and identity formation are of high relevance to any enquiry into these inevitably interwoven issues, all the more so in postcolonial contexts (cf. Frank 2006: 21-48).

fixity in both time and space must be reiterated over and over again precisely because it is impossible to prove the colonialist's denigrating ascription of negative character traits such as sexual licentiousness or insidious deceitfulness to non-European ethnicities discursively. Transferring this insight to the borders grounded in such stereotypical images of the Other, Frank (cf. 2006: 36-37) characterizes "boundary work" ("*Grenzarbeit*") as being marked by "discontinuity in continuity" (Frank 2006: 34), hence concluding that "boundary maintenance" (Barth 1969a: 17) is an interminable process (cf. Frank 2006: 37).

Building on Bhabha (cf. 1994), Frank (2006: 21-48) thus takes Said's influential analysis of the construction of borders in colonial contexts one decisive step further, for in *Orientalism* (1978), Said fails to recognize the dialectical interplay of continuity and discontinuity in colonial border-constructs. In addition, Said does not sufficiently take into account the reciprocity of constructing borders (cf. Barth 1969a: 9-38): while he successfully deconstructs any attempt to naturalize Western constructions of the Orient, he simultaneously falls prey to the same kind of essentialism in his description of Western rhetoric about the Orient he originally intended to criticize, i.e. the picture he draws of Western discourse on the Orient turns out to be as essentialist as the actual object of his critique. This is mainly due to his neglect of the other side of the coin, i.e. Eastern constructions of the West ("*Occidentalism*"; cf. Frank 2006: 33). By ascribing discursive agency only to the West, Said perpetuates the Orientalist stereotype of the passive Orient instead of deconstructing it. This major flaw in Said's approach can only be remedied by a pronounced focus on processes of border (de)construction on both sides of the posited dividing line (cf. Barth 1969a: 9-38).

As these examples demonstrate, extant constructivist and deconstructionist approaches to the problem of setting up boundaries concentrate almost exclusively on their discursive (de)construction in historical and contemporary contexts. Therefore, they suffer from insufficient acknowledgement of the *experiential* 'reality' of definite political borders for refugees and so-called illegal migrants who, in their desperate attempts to cross the territorial border of their destination, risk their lives in order to escape from economic hardship, civil war or political persecution (cf. Boehmer 2005: 242). Currently omnipresent in the media, the waves of refugees primarily from Syria and Iraq trying to get to Europe for precisely this reason testify to the ethical urgency of taking this experiential reality of extant political borders into account in the study of culture. In the postcolonial eyes of these forced migrants, the political borders of the recipient country are much more than just a mere discursive construct to be exposed in

its fluidity and instability: to them, these often heavily guarded borders constitute a 'real' threat, and trying to cross it is a potentially lethal endeavour. In addition to this neglect of the life-threatening character of such political borders, extant approaches to the border in the study of culture tend to conflate different types of boundaries by equating, for instance, political borders with cultural, linguistic or semantic boundaries, thus ignoring their specific structural characteristics in favour of a universalizing discursive model. In particular, post-structuralist deconstructions of the border à la Derrida (cf. 1999 [1972]) and Bhabha (cf. 1994) are predicated on the erroneous assumption that political borders obey the same laws as discursive boundaries in all possible respects and that, therefore, the demystification of the latter as fluid, culturally contingent and oscillating constructs can be uncritically applied one-to-one to the former as well.

Evidently, this is not the case. As even a cursory glance at border issues in contemporary world politics reveals, political borders cannot be done away with simply by deconstructing them analytically in the ivory tower of academia.¹²² Although they are to a large part subject to the same conditions of existence as cultural demarcations established and perpetuated discursively, political borders are in many cases still invested with a threatening 'real-life presence' that makes them stand out from the crowd of (material and immaterial) boundaries in other subject areas. This persistently maintained permanence of many a territorialized political entity's borders is one of the main reasons that I want to refine extant approaches to this issue in the study of culture in two steps: first, I will reframe the formation of borders through the lens of my trialectics of motion, and second, I will propose a number of tentative conceptual redefinitions concerning terms such as border, boundary and limit in order to avoid the terminological confusion originating in their synonymous usage.

Regarding the first step, I will reformulate Frank's (cf. 2006: 25-26) and Barth's (cf. 1969a: 10) insightful analyses of the border-identity nexus (cf. Frank 2008a: 266-267) by arguing that the interdependent processes of collective identity formation and demarcation result from situation-specific, mutable and partly contingent configurations of my trialectics of motion; that is, borders and collective identities emerge from context-dependent constellations of the complex interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality.

¹²² For different postcolonial views on border issues in conjunction with questions of the material conditions of transnational migration, the nation-state, national, cultural, ethnic and religious spaces, identities and affective belonging in various historical and contemporary (geo)political contexts, cf. Young (2003: 59-68), and Nayar (2010: 141-162, 163-190 and 191-211).

To begin with, it is important to emphasize that, even if the political construction of borders frequently follows natural spatial conditions such as rivers, lakes, seas or mountain ranges, the border itself is never natural, for it always involves the wilful act of demarcation on the part of collective human agents (cf. Frank 2008a: 266-267). As well, these agents' motives for establishing this particular border are always historically conditioned; that is, the specific historical context provides the answer to the question of why they deemed it necessary to do so. Potential reasons for the perceived necessity to set up a political border include fear of invasion (such as in the historical examples of the Great Wall of China and the Roman Hadrian's Wall in Britain, which were erected to prevent 'Barbarian' tribes from invading the 'civilized' territory of the Celestial Empire and the ancient *Imperium Romanum*, respectively); inner stabilization; and, in the Modern Age, the institutionalization of a modern bureaucratic state based on the principle of neat territorialization (cf. Frank 2008a: 266-267). In addition, the temporal dimension acquires additional significance from the fact that the passing of time requires the state to constantly repeat its efforts at boundary maintenance. The agentic dimension, finally, relates to questions such as 'Who defines the border?' and 'Who is included or excluded by it?' Here, it must be noted that processes of inclusion/exclusion are synonymous with granting or refusing specific types of agency, for instance, the right to enter or leave the territory of the nation-state in question.

Accordingly, the setting up of political-administrative borders gives agency to some people (border police, customs officers, those entitled to cross it), while denying it to others (those prevented from crossing it, such as illegal migrants, refugees). In the eyes of the latter group, the (simultaneously postmodern and postcolonial) constructivist analysis of the interminable process of establishing and maintaining borders is bound to acquire a cynical undertone because it falls short of recognizing the concrete physical frictionality of the political borders of nation-states and supranational political bodies like the European Union: the experiential quality of illegal migrants' hazardous and desperate attempts to get across the border to the 'promised land' is something that no highly-privileged, globally mobile Western intellectual is capable of grasping affectively. Apart from the large-scale efforts on the part of the EU to prevent African refugees from entering its territory via the Mediterranean Sea, further examples of the strict enforcement of rigid borderlines include the US-Mexican border and the former intra-German border between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany.

Beyond that, the history of colonialism abounds in particularly horrifying instances of the brutal consequences brought about by political demarcations enforced regardless of pre-existent ethnic, religious and other cultural boundaries, whether in the context of the 'scramble for Africa' or of the atrocious mutual massacres of Hindu and Muslim refugees in the wake of the Partition of the Indian subcontinent. Moreover, in colonial contexts, the act of redrawing official borders frequently served the purpose of enforcing a divide-and-rule policy, as with the partition of Bengal in 1905, which had been devised by Viceroy Lord Curzon in order to break the resistance to British rule over India orchestrated from this stronghold of Indian nationalism by dividing it territorially into a Muslim-majority and a Hindu-majority part. In this latter instance, however, the colonial government's attempt to weaken anti-colonial resistance by antagonizing communal religious identities largely failed, so that this redrawing of administrative borders within British India was eventually reversed (cf. Kulke and Rothermund 2010 [1986]: 214-216).

As Foucault (cf. 1969 [1961]: 9-10),¹²³ Barth (cf. 1969a: 15-16) and Said (cf. 2003 [1978]: 54) have recognized, the act of drawing and perpetuating cultural boundaries constitutes a prerequisite for collective identity formation (cf. Frank 2008a: 266-267), because any human collectivity defines itself by delineating its own space both conceptually and territorially, that is, by ascribing certain positively connoted features to the members of its own community and linking these character traits to the territory they inhabit (cf. Said 2003 [1978]: 54). In this context, the crucial point made by both Said and Foucault is that such a conceptual-territorial definition of what is one's own can operate only under the condition that an Other is identified, excluded from the community 'we' are part of (because he happens to live beyond the bounds of 'our' territory) and hence wholeheartedly rejected by 'us' (cf. Foucault 1969 [1961]: 9-10; Said 2003 [1978]: 54; Barth 1969a: 15-16, and Frank 2006: 31-39). Consequently, the second aspect of the border-identity nexus – collective identity formation – lends itself to a reframing according to the categories of my trialectics of motion as well, for it is through the spatial act of drawing boundaries and the temporal accomplishment of constructing a common history that collective human agents such as ethnicities, nations and religions form their own identities. In the case of nation-states, this additionally involves the formation of collective organizational and administrative bodies like national parliaments, bureaucratically hierarchized state authorities and

¹²³ As the crucial passage I am referring to here has unfortunately been eliminated from the English translation (entitled *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* [1965]) of Michel Foucault's ground-breaking dissertation *Folie et déraison: Une histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (1961), the text notes here refer to the German translation (entitled *Wahnsinn und Gesellschaft: Eine Geschichte des Wahns im Zeitalter der Vernunft* [1969]).

professional armies. All in all, it is thus the multi-layered and intricate interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality that accounts for how borders and identities are constructed and perpetuated on the territorial ground and in people's minds.

In order to henceforth avoid the terminological confusion arising from both the quasi-synonymous usage of different terms referring to demarcations (such as border, boundary, frontier and limit) and the amalgamation of heterogeneous meanings under the umbrella term 'identity', I will now move to the second step announced above – my attempt to disentangle this web of interrelated semantic contents by means of a set of stipulative definitions. With regard to the complex lexical amalgam of 'identity', this endeavour has already been undertaken successfully by Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 1-47), which is why I will briefly recapitulate their alternative suggestions for the term 'identity' before proposing a number of tentative redefinitions regarding the concept of borders.

In their attempt to overcome the amalgam of different meanings commonly associated with the term 'identity', Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 1-47) suggest disentangling this intransparent web of interrelated but frequently conflictual semantic contents by substituting an alternative term for each of the potential meanings of 'identity'. First, identity can designate the act of identifying oneself with something, be it a group, a conceptual label or an extensive social collectivity, such as a nation, an ethnicity, a religion or a subculture. Conversely, it can likewise refer to the passive process of being identified with any such entity by others. Accordingly, Brubaker and Cooper recommend the term "identification" (2000: 14) for this first meaning of identity, subdividing it into "self-identification" and "other-identification" (ibid.) according to the respective agent that performs the act of identifying. With this substitution, they take account of Bhabha's recognition that "identity is never an a priori, nor a finished product" (Bhabha 1994c: 73). Moreover, they stress the fundamental situation- and context-dependence of both of these subtypes. In addition, they distinguish between "*relational* and *categorical* modes of identification" (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 15; cf. ibid.; italics in original): while the former mode relies on the individual subject's relational situatedness in a web of kinship, friendship, legal or professional relations, the latter defines the subject according to its exhibiting certain characteristic features, such as race, ethnicity, religion and nationality (cf. Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 14-17).

Second, 'identity' can refer to "'situated subjectivity': one's sense of who one is, of one's social location, and of how (given the first two) one is prepared to act"

(Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 17). In this dispositional sense, Brubaker and Cooper replace 'identity' with "self-understanding and social location" (2000: 17). It is important to note that their use of the term "self-understanding" is not meant to imply a specifically modern-day Western concept of the human self as "a homogeneous, bounded, unitary entity" (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 17).¹²⁴ In addition, they highlight both the context-dependence and the intrinsic interrelatedness of their conceptual pair "self-understanding and social location" by pointing out that

In some settings, people may understand and experience themselves in terms of a grid of intersecting categories; in others, in terms of a web of connections of differential proximity and intensity. Hence the importance of seeing self-understanding and social locatedness in relation to each other, and of emphasizing that both the bounded self and the bounded group are culturally specific rather than universal forms. (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 17-18)

It is this joint emphasis on the crucial significance of the contextual setting and on the interdependence of the individual's self-understanding and their social positionality – which is always also defined via one's *spatial* situatedness – that renders Brubaker and Cooper's suggestion (cf. 2000: 17-19) compatible with the overall thrust of my trialectics of motion, for the latter likewise highlights the contextual (that is, social *and* spatial) determination of a human being's individual subjectivity and agency (cf. Section 2.2 of this dissertation).

The recognition of the significance of social entities, that is, human collectivities of whatever sort, provides a neat transition to the third meaning of 'identity' analysed by Brubaker and Cooper: that of "[...] *collective* identities [...] that is,] the emotionally laden sense of belonging to a distinctive, bounded group, involving both a felt solidarity or oneness with fellow group members and a felt difference from or even antipathy to specified outsiders" (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 19; italics in original). They disentangle this particular semantic content into the terminological triad of

¹²⁴ Despite their endorsement of "self-understanding", Brubaker and Cooper (cf. 2000: 18-19) do not fail to acknowledge three major limitations of this term: "'Self-understanding' cannot, of course, do all the work done by 'identity'. We note here three limitations of the term. First, it is a subjective, auto-referential term. As such, it designates one's own understanding of who one is. It cannot capture others' understandings, even though external categorizations, identifications, and representations may be decisive in determining how one is regarded and treated by others, indeed in shaping one's own understanding of oneself. At the limit, self-understandings may be overridden by overwhelmingly coercive external categorizations. Second, 'self-understanding' would seem to privilege cognitive awareness. As a result, it would seem not to capture – or at least not to highlight – the affective or cathectic processes suggested by some uses of 'identity'" (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 18). "Finally, a term that emphasizes situated subjectivity, 'self-understanding' does not capture the objectivity claimed by strong understandings of identity. Strong, objectivist conceptions of identity permit one to distinguish 'true' identity (characterized as deep, abiding, and objective) from 'mere' self-understanding (superficial, fluctuating, and subjective)" (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 19).

“commonality, connectedness, [and] groupness” (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 19): “‘Commonality’ denotes the sharing of some common attribute, ‘connectedness’ the relational ties that link people. Neither commonality nor connectedness alone engenders ‘groupness’ – the sense of belonging to a distinctive, bounded, solidary group. But commonality and connectedness together may indeed do so” (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 20). In addition to “categorical commonality and relational connectedness” (ibid.), however, they contend that groupness also hinges upon a “feeling of belonging together”, which “may indeed depend in part on the degrees and forms of commonality and connectedness, but [which] will also depend on other factors such as particular events, their encoding in compelling public narratives, prevailing discursive frames, and so on” (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 20). In the case of large-scale “imagined communities” (Anderson 1991 [1983]) such as nations, the feature of relational connectedness may even be of merely minor import, because here, “a diffuse self-understanding as a member of a particular nation crystallizes into a strongly bounded sense of groupness, [which] is likely to depend not on relational connectedness, but rather on a powerfully imagined and strongly felt commonality” (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 20; cf. ibid. 19-21). To sum it up, Brubaker and Cooper propose three groups of alternatives to ‘identity’: “identification” for the act of identifying or being identified with a group or a category; “self-understanding and social location” for one’s (spatially and socially) situated subjectivity and corollary degree of agency, and the triad of “categorical commonality”, “relational connectedness” and “groupness” to account for the complex processes involved in the formation of so-called ‘collective’ identities (cf. Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 1-47).

In order to account for the particularly high degree of conceptual intertwining of the first two alternatives suggested by Brubaker and Cooper – identification and self-understanding coupled with social location – I take up Welsch’s (2009: 9) term “identity configuration”: building on the insight that identification and self-understanding constitute complementary concepts, I suggest using “identity configuration” as an integrative term that is meant to highlight the mutual entanglement of these two concepts without ignoring their significant conceptual differences. I opt for Welsch’s compound “identity configuration” (Welsch 2009: 9) here because the concept of configuration always implies an active process that is not only narrative and temporal (cf. Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 64-70), but also spatial and subjective (cf. Beck 2014: 35; see also Section 2.2 of this dissertation).

In a similar vein as Brubaker and Cooper's suggestions for replacing 'identity' with these alternative terms, I want to propose some tentative conceptual redefinitions concerning the concept of boundaries in order to avoid the terminological confusion frequently arising from the synonymous usage of terms such as 'border', 'boundary', 'frontier' and 'limit'. To illustrate what I am getting at, I will briefly juxtapose some of the pertinent meanings of these nouns as defined by the online version of the *Oxford English Dictionary*.¹²⁵ Among the potential meanings of "border", it lists both "[t]he district lying around the edge of a country or territory" (2.a.) and "[t]he boundary line which separates one country from another" (2.b.). In addition, it can also refer to "the line or frontier between the occupied and unoccupied parts of the country, the frontier of civilization" in the US American context.¹²⁶ Hence, there is at least a partial semantic overlap with the lexeme "frontier", which generally denotes "[t]he part of a country which fronts or faces another country" (4.a.) and, in the particular context of American history, likewise refers to "[t]hat part of a country which forms the border of its settled or inhabited regions" (4.b.).¹²⁷

On a more all-embracing scale, the noun "boundary" designates "[t]hat which serves to indicate the bounds or limits of anything whether material or immaterial; also the limit itself" (1.).¹²⁸ Similarly, the term "limit" refers to "[a]ny of the fixed points between which the possible or permitted extent, amount, duration, range of action, or variation of anything is confined; a bound which may not be passed, or beyond which something ceases to be possible or allowable" (1.a.).¹²⁹ Thus, in contrast to "border" and "frontier", the lexemes "boundary" and "limit" are less concerned with political demarcation than with the general issue of drawing dividing lines between contrasting but adjacent concrete or abstract entities (boundary) and with ethical issues of permission and prohibition (limit). Building on these general definitional clarifications, I will now suggest some tentative terminological demarcations in order to counter the widespread tendency of using these four lexemes more or less interchangeably.

¹²⁵ All definitions quoted in the following are taken from the online version of the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*. Number-letter combinations (for instance, 1.a.) indicate the position of the specific definition quoted within the overall structure of the respective entry.

¹²⁶ See entry on "border" in the online version of the *OED*, accessed under <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/21617?result=1&rskey=o6Yaly&> (last retrieved 06.08.2014).

¹²⁷ See entry on "frontier" in the online version of the *OED*, accessed under <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/74931?result=1&rskey=10FqT9&> (last retrieved 06.08.2014).

¹²⁸ See entry on "boundary" in the online version of the *OED*, accessed under <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/22048?redirectedFrom=boundary&> (last retrieved 06.08.2014).

¹²⁹ See entry on "limit" in the online version of the *OED*, accessed under <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/108477?result=1&rskey=ZubXol&> (last retrieved 06.08.2014).

To begin with, the term ‘border’ shall be reserved for the territorial boundaries of nation-states and any smaller or larger political entities, such as federal states in the US, ‘Bundesländer’ in Germany or supranational political federations like the European Union. The term ‘boundary’, by contrast, shall designate any type of bounds or limits other than political ones, such as natural, linguistic, religious, gender, ethnic or any further type of cultural dividing lines. Thus, it also includes, for instance, the semantic boundaries between different lexemes posited by de Saussure and deconstructed by post-structuralism. The term ‘frontier’, which has most typically been used in the US American context with reference to the alleged border between ‘civilization’ and ‘nature/savagery’ – that is, between the land colonized by Europeans and that inhabited by Native Americans – will be avoided precisely due to this colonialist baggage. Finally, the term ‘limit’ shall be used exclusively in its ethical meaning as a moral boundary line that must not be crossed, for otherwise, the transgressor will be punished with social exclusion by the community that set up this ethical bound in the first place. In contrast to ‘boundary’, which may refer to natural bounds, the term ‘limit’ is hence supposed to emphasize the man-made nature of the respective *ethical* dividing line.

In the following, I want to tentatively illustrate the usefulness of these terminological clarifications concerning the intrinsically intertwined concepts of ‘border’ and ‘identity’ in their application to the conceptual and political differentiation between exiles, expatriates, immigrants, tourists and nomads in “postmodern discourses of displacement” (Kaplan 1996). In contrast to exiles, whose spatial ties to their home country have been severed by state force, the concept of “expatriation” implies “the *voluntary* displacement undertaken for any number of reasons without entailing legal or state-sponsored banishment” (Kaplan 1996: 106; italics in original). Accordingly, their disparate degrees of individual agency hinge upon the (im)permeability of the political border between home and host country; it is the possibility of return that distinguishes the expatriate from the exile. Both the exile¹³⁰ and the expatriate have traditionally been conceived of as being more aloof and reserved, and therefore less willing to integrate into the host society than the immigrant, to whom a fundamental preparedness for assimilation has commonly been ascribed:

¹³⁰ Cf. also Braidotti (1994a: 1-39), who warns of the ethnocentrism implied by “the lofty metaphor of planetary exile” (Braidotti 1994a: 21) and, pointing to the urgency of coming to terms with the forced mass migration of refugees from their war-torn home countries to Europe and North America, concludes that “issues such as exile and the right to belong, the right to enter, the right to asylum, are too serious merely to be metaphorized into a new ideal” (Braidotti 1994a: 21). Although written more than 20 years ago, this observation has lost nothing of its political and ethical urgency – as the current waves of refugees primarily from Syria and Iraq to Europe demonstrate.

They leave their homes without reluctance and they face a new situation with an eagerness to become as much a part of the nation or community as possible. In addition to this rather simplistic notion of intention to assimilate, I would argue that immigrants are associated with financial or material gain rather than aesthetic gain; in moving to improve their material circumstances, immigrants do not offer a romantic alternative to the exile, who may be seen to be displaced for spiritual, political, or aesthetic survival alone. (Kaplan 1996: 110)

Thus, while the exile has traditionally been romantically stylized as a lonesome and isolated, but materially highly privileged, individual yearning for the past in his beloved home country (which, more often than not, has undergone dramatic changes in the meantime due to political revolution, civil war or totalitarian dictatorship), which he was forced to leave, the immigrant, by contrast, has gone abroad voluntarily and for more profane reasons, mostly to improve her socioeconomic positionality in the recipient country. Whereas the exile has consequently been deprived of his individual agency by being forced into banishment, the immigrant has asserted her personal agency by trying her luck in another, usually more prosperous country. Again, for the exile the political border to the home country remains impermeable; the immigrant, though, can in principle entertain the possibility of return.

Nevertheless, exiles, expatriates and immigrants do face complex issues of personal identification and self-understanding originating in their diasporic in-between positionality, which results in their situation-specific “contrapuntal double vision” (Said 2001 [1984]: 189 and Bhabha 1994e: 126): due to their having left behind their country of origin, they always compare everything they are confronted with in the recipient country to the overall situation in their home country (double vision); in so doing, they provide a counterpoint to the majoritarian ‘native’ population’s perspective on their homeland in the recipient country (contrapuntal double vision). As well, the use of politically and ethically charged designations like ‘exile’, ‘refugee’, ‘expatriate’ or ‘émigré’ for particular persons or groups is by no means a unidirectional process, but involves a dialectical interplay of self- and other-identification, i.e. of self-ascription and external ascription by others.

Compared to the exile, the expatriate and the immigrant, the figure of the nomad constitutes a radicalization of these concepts inasmuch as it “represents a subject position that offers an idealized model of movement based on perpetual displacement” (Kaplan 1996: 66). In the idealized figure of the postmodern, globally mobile intellectual, this intellectual and geographical nomadism correlates with complex transdifferential identifications marked by constantly being on the move between and across (real-world and imagined) state, national, ethnic, cultural, religious and other

borders without any clearly discernible affiliation to any of the imagined communities behind these demarcations (cf. Lössch 2005: 22-45).¹³¹ Wolfgang Welsch (1996) calls their movements, which characteristically imply multiple successive acts of border-crossing, “transversal” (ibid.).

In contrast to the exile, expatriate, immigrant and nomad, the tourist travels for mere pleasure and is therefore frequently constructed as the exile’s dichotomous counterpart in postmodern theorizations of displacement:

The commonsense definitions of exile and tourism suggest that they occupy opposite poles in the modern experience of displacement: Exile implies coercion; tourism celebrates choice. Exile connotes the estrangement of an individual from an original community; tourism claims community on a global scale. Exile plays a role in Western culture’s narratives of political formation and cultural identity stretching back to the Hellenic era. Tourism heralds postmodernism; it is a product of the rise of consumer culture, leisure, and technological innovation. Culturally, exile is implicated in modernist high art formations while tourism signifies the very obverse position as the mark of everything commercial and superficial. (Kaplan 1996: 27)

Interestingly enough, the commonplace notion of the tourist as the paradigmatically postmodern subject position has retained its culturally dominant influence in the West in spite of vigorous postcolonial critiques of this uncritical and one-sided idealization: “This tourist travels, crosses boundaries, is freely mobile, consumes commodities, produces economies, and is, in turn, commodified to a lesser or greater extent”, Kaplan (1996: 62) writes, adding that “[t]he tourist, in this formulation, straddles eras, modes of production, and systems of thought – this tourist has a passport, but what that passport signifies may have changed as we move from national to transnational eras” (Kaplan 1996: 62).

Since all of these conceptual figures – exile, expatriate, immigrant, nomad and tourist – are implicated in singular or multiple acts of border crossing, I now turn to this latter problematic. As we have seen above, the concepts of border and border crossing/transgression are mutually interdependent. In order to specify different types of border crossing and the attendant figure of the go-between, it is first necessary to take a closer look at the pertinent topological configurations of the border (cf. Frank 2008a: 266-267). This is why in the following I will delineate three such configurational

¹³¹ For a decidedly feminist conceptualization of postmodern nomadism, cf. Braidotti (1994a: 1-39, particularly 21-39).

possibilities: the border as dividing line, as “contact zone” (Pratt 1992: 4, 6 and 7) and as threshold (cf. Fludernik 1999b: 99-108, particularly 100 and 103).¹³²

In the first case, the border is conceptualized as a neat and allegedly unambiguous dividing line between two spatial entities, paradigmatically epitomized by the geographical, political and administrative border between two adjacent nation-states. However, even a cursory glance at the actual configuration of political borders reveals that they are hardly ever the one-dimensional lines suggested by their cartographic representation on maps. Rather, they are in most cases configured as a border *area*, be it in the shape of a man-made institution like checkpoints or natural spatial conditions like a lake, a mountain range or a river. Accordingly, a go-between can be “both someone who *crosses* such a border and someone who moves on the *borderline* or in the *borderland*” (Fludernik 1999b: 99; my translation; cf. *ibid.*). Nevertheless, the border as neat dividing line remains a powerful discursive construct frequently exploited for ideological purposes: construed as the topological embodiment of a clear-cut either/or opposition, this type of border implies an unequivocal ontological separation of what is to be found on either side of the borderline: A is not only spatially separated, but also qualitatively different from B. It is this essentialization of ontological difference that proves to be constitutive of the border as dividing line (cf. Fludernik 1999b: 99). Simultaneously, this goes hand in hand with the discursive construction of ‘identity versus alterity’: in the case of nations, for instance, nation A constructs its auto-image by ascribing positively connoted features to itself – always necessarily in diametrical opposition to the negative characteristics out of which it shapes its hetero-image of nation B. Since nation B follows the same procedure, however, this process is always a reciprocal one (cf. Fludernik 1999b: 99-108; Gehrke 1999: 15-24 and Said 2003 [1978]: 54).

In contrast to this first conceptualization, the construction of the border as contact zone *sensu* Pratt (1992) grants this space in between an ontological reality of its own: it is not merely an “ideal line” but a “topological quantity in its own right, endowed with a certain extension” (Fludernik 1999b: 99; my translation; cf. *ibid.*). While such a zone might theoretically be conceived of as a neutral space, in concrete historical and contemporary contexts, this is virtually never the case. As Pratt (1992) has shown with regard to European colonial expansion, the historical configuration of

¹³² In her article “Grenze und Grenzgänger: Topologische Etuden” (1999b: 99-108), Monika Fludernik distinguishes between seven different topological configurations of the border, out of which I have selected the three configurations that are most relevant to my research interest. In the following, I will briefly summarize their principal differential characteristics as elaborated by Fludernik, albeit in a slightly simplified form.

such contact zones has always been marked by radical political, socioeconomic, military and technological power asymmetries (cf. *ibid.* 4, 6-7).

Third, the border can also be constructed as a threshold beyond which a new cultural sphere, social milieu or stage of life begins. Here, the function of the borderline reaches beyond that of mere separation into the realm of metaphorical meanings: to name but one example, the initially neutral act of spatial border crossing may be resemanticized as a transgression, that is, a violation of one or several moral norms and cultural taboos. Such a transgressive act then typically provokes a punitive reaction from the cultural community concerned, such as social exclusion and stigmatization. The transgressor turns into an outcast because his 'misdeed' has endangered the pillars upon which the community's self-definition rests. In colonial contexts, the miscegenation taboo epitomizes this social psychological mechanism: for fear of allegedly harmful 'racial contamination', hybrids were constructed as a major threat to the 'purity' of the colonizers' blood in deeply racist imperialist discourse (cf. Fludernik 1999b: 101-102). In addition, the concept of the border as threshold likewise pertains to transitional stages in an individual's biography as epitomized by initiation rites signalling, for instance, an adolescent's entry to adulthood. In this latter case, the threshold turns into a liminal area where the individual human being's metamorphosis, i.e. his transformation from one subject position into another, becomes possible (cf. Fludernik 1999b: 101-102). All in all, the threshold thus not only "institutes a border area between inclusion and exclusion" (Fludernik 1999b: 102; my translation), but frequently also indicates a "qualitative transformation" (*ibid.*). From these three basic topological configurations of the border, one can thus derive an equal number of attendant types of go-betweens: the crosser of a simple demarcation-line, the go-between in the contact zone, and the transgressor or liminal subject.

In the final section of this chapter, I shall focus on the specific figure of the postcolonial go-between, who distinguishes herself, among other things, by combining characteristic features of these three subtypes. By definition, the singular or multiple act of crossing extant political borders as well as ethnic, religious, linguistic or other cultural boundaries is constitutive of the postcolonial go-between as instantiated by contemporary postcolonial celebrity scholars and authors like Homi K. Bhabha and Salman Rushdie, who deliberately turn their "interposition[ality]" (Bhabha 1994c: 90) – that is, their straddling and floating between two or more cultures, societies and religions – into a defining feature of their outstanding role as perpetual cultural translators and mediators. Dwelling in – material and immaterial – spaces in between,

they interpret their condition of quasi-diasporic displacement not as a deplorable but inevitable predicament, but rather as a unique opportunity to explore the workings of culture from the vantage point of the migrant's interpositionality with its attendant contrapuntal double vision: simultaneously insider and outsider, member of a marginalized ethnic minority and of the highly privileged intellectual elite (in Western academia or literary stardom, respectively), their perspective is marked by a particular sensitivity to the hybrid, liminal third space of "the 'inter' – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation [...]" which, according to Bhabha (1994b: 56), "carries the burden of the meaning of culture" (cf. *ibid.*). It is this special sensitivity to issues of intercultural contact situations, hybridity, fusion and transculturation born out of concrete biographical experience that makes these intellectual postcolonial go-betweens stand out in comparison to their Western counterparts (cf. Byrne 2009: 18-48, particularly 30-37). In short, they are border-crossers, contact zones and third-space phenomena as well as liminal subjects and transgressors of cultural boundaries all in one, who dedicate themselves to the project of reevaluating the transcultural go-between positively as an exemplary incarnation of our contemporary postcolonial, postmodern and globalized age.

As I intend to show in the following section, however, it is not only to such prominent celebrity intellectuals that the defining features of the postcolonial go-between can legitimately be ascribed, because, being the interpositional "marks of a shifting boundary that alienates the frontiers of the modern nation" (Bhabha 1994f: 236), 'ordinary' migrants are likewise confronted with daily issues of cultural translation, multiple and potentially conflicting identifications as well as hybrid fusion of cultural elements. As well, they, too, inhabit different configurations of contact zones and third spaces, such as the "global ethnoscapae" Appadurai (1996: 33-65) describes, which occupy a liminal "interposition" (Bhabha 1994c: 90) in relation to both the culture of the host country and that of their country of origin inasmuch as they are spatially embedded in Western metropolises as epitomized by the 'postcolonial' London, but at the same time retain strong cultural ties to both their home country and other diasporic communities all around the globe by sticking to powerful identificatory signifiers of their culture of origin, such as food, dress and religious festivals (cf. Appadurai 1996: 33-65 and Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 297).

3.3.3 Contact Zones, Third Spaces and Global Ethnoscapes: Spatializations of Migrancy¹³³

Having examined the closely intertwined issues of constructing, deconstructing and crossing borders and boundaries in the previous section, I will now turn to three selected configurations of hybrid spaces in between, that is, to spatializations of migrancy that distinguish themselves by heterogeneous processes of intercultural contact, cultural translation and transculturation, which may even exhibit potential for political change. Such spatial configurations are the result of multiple border crossings on the part of migrants who thereby contribute substantially to the fundamental project of resemanticizing their own role of postcolonial go-betweens: no longer regarded as dubious transgressors of allegedly 'natural' cultural boundaries and political borders, they are nowadays increasingly equated with the positively connoted role of cultural intermediaries and translators whose very interpositionality endows them with a unique perspective on both their culture of origin and that of the recipient country. As we shall see, it is this *thirdspatial* (cf. Soja 1996) vantage point that renders their point of view so invaluable to contemporary negotiations of cultural difference, cultural translation and hybridization or transculturation under the conditions of twenty-first-century globalization.

Since contemporary conceptualizations of such spaces of cultural translation in cultural theory are primarily grounded in the historical experience of colonialism and its aftermath, I will begin my exploration of these spatial configurations with brief introductory remarks on Said's seminal concept of "imaginative geography" (2003 [1978]: 54) before moving on to "contact zones" (Pratt 1992: 1), "third spaces" (Bhabha 1994b: 56), "Thirdspace" (Soja 1996) and "global ethnoscapes" (Appadurai 1996: 33). Subsequent to the critical discussion of these spatial concepts, I will elaborate on my concept of transcultural third spaces (already briefly delineated in Section 3.1 of this dissertation), demarcate it from the above-mentioned concepts by highlighting both differences and commonalities and, finally, exemplify it with a paradigmatic instance from Salman Rushdie's novel *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]).

¹³³ Section 2.2.2 (pp. 33-55) of my unpublished diploma thesis "Imaginative Geographien und die Inszenierung postkolonialer Räume in gegenwärtigen Fictions of Migration" (Matschi 2010) deals – among other things – with spatial results of transnational movements, such as "contact zones" (Pratt 1992) and "third spaces" (Bhabha 1994) as well; however, I am reframing my reflections on these issues according to my trialectics of motion (cf. Chapter 2 of this doctoral dissertation) and my concept of transcultural third spaces (cf. Section 3.1) here.

Edward Said's path breaking concept of "imaginative geography" (2003 [1978]: 54) is important to any inquiry into interpositional spaces of cultural translation because it constitutes the originary reference point in contradistinction to which subsequent conceptualizations of such spaces in between have been developed in contemporary cultural theory. With this concept, Said posits that any cultural group defines its own identity spatially, that is, by drawing a boundary line between the territory it claims as its own and the 'barbarian' land that lies beyond. This boundary is then semanticized as the dividing line between dichotomous realms, such as culture/civilization versus nature/savagery, and attendant cultural attributes like rational versus irrational, moral versus immoral or hard working versus lazy (cf. Said 2003 [1978]: 54). "To a certain extent," Said concludes, "modern and primitive societies seem thus to derive a sense of their identities negatively" (Said 2003 [1978]: 54). Accordingly, culture-specific notions of identity and alterity are constructed and perpetuated discursively via this "spatialized conception of difference" (Frank 2006: 39) that helps an "imagined community" (Anderson 1991 [1983]) stabilize its self-understanding "by dramatizing the distance and difference between what is close to it and what is far away" (Said 2003 [1978]: 55). Developed in *Orientalism* (2003 [1978]), Said's ground-breaking study of Western discourse about the Orient, the concept of imaginative¹³⁴ geography pertains primarily to colonial contexts without, however, taking due account of the hybridized spaces between heterogeneous cultural spheres that the historical phenomenon of European colonialist expansion engendered all around the globe. It is this major shortcoming that Pratt addresses with her concept of "contact zones", first formulated in her 1992 study *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*.

Initially defined by Pratt as "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination – like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today" (Pratt 1992: 4), the contact zone constitutes "an attempt to invoke the spatial and temporal copresence of subjects previously separated by

¹³⁴ Throughout his definition of imaginative geography, Said stresses the fictional and one-sided character of this universal human practice of demarcation: "It is perfectly possible to argue that some distinctive objects are made by the mind, and that these objects, while appearing to exist objectively, have only a fictional reality. A group of people living on a few acres of land will set up boundaries between their land and its immediate surroundings and the territory beyond, which they call 'the land of the barbarians'. In other words, this universal practice of designating in one's mind a familiar space which is 'ours' and an unfamiliar space beyond 'ours' which is 'theirs' is a way of making geographical distinctions that *can be* entirely arbitrary. I use the word 'arbitrary' here because imaginative geography of the 'our land – barbarian land' variety does not require that the barbarians acknowledge the distinction. It is enough for 'us' to set up these boundaries in our own minds; 'they' become 'they' accordingly, and both their territory and their mentality are designated as different from 'ours'" (Said 2003 [1978]: 54).

geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect” (Pratt 1992: 7). Her prime objective in employing a “‘contact’ perspective” is “to foreground the interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by diffusionist accounts of conquest and domination” (Pratt 1992: 7). In deliberate contrast to this lop-sidedness, Pratt’s contact perspective “treats the relations among colonizers and colonized [...] not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power” (Pratt 1992: 7).

In contrast to Said, who restricts his analysis of the spatial aspect of collective identity formation to the clear-cut opposition of identity and alterity implied by his definition of imaginative geography, Pratt does move the spaces of intercultural negotiation and translation centre-stage, focussing, above all, on processes of transculturation in the context of European colonialist expansion to the so-called ‘New World’. In contrast to Bhabha’s concept of “third space” (1994) and Soja’s epistemological reconceptualization of it as “Thirdspace” (1996), Pratt’s contact zone does not entail any kind of utopian potential, but instead focuses exclusively on the radical power asymmetries and resultant socioeconomic inequalities between European colonizers and non-European colonized ethnicities in colonial encounters, mainly in the American context (cf. Pratt 1992: 1-11).

Accordingly, it is only with Bhabha’s (cf. 1994b) eponymous innovative concept that “third space[s]” come into view as perpetually shifting constellations of agency, space and time, i.e. as transdifferential spaces and attendant subject positionings, which, typically corresponding to fluid identity configurations, open the arena for utopian visions of political progress grounded in the creative act of imagining possibilities other than those trapped in the rigid binarism of the either/-or divide:

The language of critique is effective not because it keeps forever separate the terms of the master and the slave, the mercantilist and the Marxist, but to the extent to which it overcomes the given grounds of opposition and opens up a space of translation, a place of hybridity [that is, Third Space], figuratively speaking, where the construction of a political object that is new, *neither the one nor the other*, properly alienates our political expectations, and changes, as it must, the very forms of our recognition of the moment of politics. The challenge lies in conceiving of the time of political action and understanding as opening up a space that can accept and regulate the differential structure of the moment of intervention without rushing to produce a unity of the social antagonism or contradiction. (Bhabha 1994b: 37; italics in original)

The high degree of metaphoricity implicit in this first approximation to third space Bhabha undertakes in his seminal essay “The Commitment to Theory” (Bhabha

1994b: 28-56) is corroborated by the first *explicit* characterization of third space, which focuses mainly on its function as an interstitial space mediating between the two poles implicated in the communicative process of interpretation:

The pact of interpretation is never simply an act of communication between the I and the You designated in the statement. The production of meaning requires that these two places be mobilized in the passage through a Third Space, which represents both the general conditions of language and the specific implication of the utterance in a performative and institutional strategy of which it cannot 'in itself' be conscious. (Bhabha 1994b: 53)

The status of this "Third Space" as a fluid, mutable and unstable metaphorical space in between (the I and the You, colonizer and colonized, capitalism and Marxism and so on) turns it into an epitome of transdifferential interpositionality, for "each position is always a process of translation and transference of meaning" (Bhabha 1994b: 39; cf. *ibid.*); that is, any genuinely new political, ideological, epistemological or other position is obliged to define its own positionality by demarcating its 'territory' in the conceptual space shaped by extant approaches to a given issue. That said, it is, however, necessary to remember that, in Bhabha's eyes, the concept of "Third Space" nevertheless emerges from a concrete historical context, as the following quotation demonstrates:

It is significant that the productive capacities of this Third Space have a colonial or postcolonial provenance. For a willingness to descend into that alien territory [...] may reveal that the theoretical recognition of the split-space of enunciation may open the way to conceptualizing an *intemational* culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's *hybridity*. To that end we should remember that it is the 'inter' – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the *inbetween* space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture. It makes it possible to begin envisaging national, anti-nationalist histories of the 'people'. And by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves. (Bhabha 1994b: 56; italics in original)

By locating the potential for innovative agency in terms of rewriting colonial history from the perspective of the colonized in the interstitial space of cultural translation, Bhabha takes account of the fact that all three dimensions of human motion I have outlined in Chapter 2 do play a significant part in this process. Consequently, I reformulate Bhabha's conceptualization of third space in the terminology of my trialectics of motion in the following. This is justified because third spaces emerge as the result of the case-specific combinatorial interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality. The aspect of spatiality comes in due to the fact that third spaces are liminal spaces in between other, dichotomized spaces. These spaces are marked by a heightened degree of individual or collective agency inasmuch as they enable the articulation of alternative viewpoints frequently situated between two allegedly

irreconcilable dichotomous political, ideological or epistemological positions. And finally, the relevance of the temporal component derives from Bhabha's explicit assertion of the crucial significance of third spaces being rooted in the particular historical context of colonialism and postcolonialism.

While it does draw our attention to the intellectually productive capacities of the third space it posits (inasmuch as it eschews the polarity of clear-cut either/or divisions and encourages us to think beyond this binarist logic), this undisputable merit simultaneously also constitutes the basis of its most significant shortcoming: due to its exclusive emphasis on issues of the semantics of culture and the intellectual crossing of the artificial divide between cultural theory and political practice, Bhabha's conceptualization of third space remains largely trapped in the realm of poststructuralist metaphoricity because it fails to adequately take into account pertinent 'real-life circumstances', that is, frequently highly precarious socioeconomic living conditions the transformation of which is at least as relevant to political change as the post-structuralist deconstruction of the rigid semantic boundaries implied by any lexicological either/or distinction. All in all, Bhabha's third space of hybridity thus remains a highly metaphorical construct with little connection to the lived realities of disenfranchised subaltern groups in so-called 'Third World' countries.

In contrast to Bhabha's third space, which functions merely as a metaphor for cultural hybridity, Soja's innovative conceptualization of "Thirdspace" (1996) is grounded in postmodern spatial theory. More precisely, it is embedded in an epistemological "trialectics of spatiality" (Soja 1996: 74) based on Lefebvre's conceptual triad¹³⁵ of "spatial practice" (which corresponds to "perceived space" [*espace perçue*]), "representations of space" (which correspond to "conceived space" [*espace conçue*]) and "spaces of representation" (which correspond to "lived space" [*espace vécue*]), the components of which Soja renames "Firstspace", "Secondspace" and "Thirdspace", respectively (Soja 1996: 70-82; cf. Lefebvre 1991 [1974]: 33-46 and

¹³⁵ Soja labels Lefebvre's innovative epistemological strategy "Thirling-as-Othering" (Soja 1996: 60; cf. *ibid.* 60-70), which he delineates as follows: "For Lefebvre, reductionism in all its forms [...] begins with the lure of binarism, the compacting of meaning into a closed either/or opposition between two terms, concepts, or elements. Whenever faced with such binarized categories (subject – object, mental – material, natural – social, bourgeoisie – proletariat, local – global, center – periphery, agency – structure), Lefebvre persistently sought to crack them open by introducing an-Other term, a third possibility or 'moment' that partakes of the original pairing but is not just a simple combination or an 'in between' position along some all-inclusive continuum. This critical thirling-as-Othering is the first and most important step in transforming the categorical and closed logic of either/or to the dialectically open logic of both/and also..." (Soja 1996: 60; cf. *ibid.* 60-61).

Döring 2010: 90-93). Elaborating in detail on the attendant First-, Second- and Thirdspace epistemologies (cf. Soja 1996: 74-82), Soja defines the latter category as “both a space that is distinguishable from other spaces (physical and mental, or First and Second) and a transcending composite of all spaces (Thirdspace as Aleph)” (Soja 1996: 62).¹³⁶ According to Soja (1996: 62), Thirdspace can thus denote both the third alternative to First- and Secondspace in the corresponding conceptual triad and an all-embracing mode of spatiality transcending this trialectical subdivision. Soja’s Thirdspace hence clearly entails pronounced utopian potential in that it constitutes the spatial vantage point from which resistance to political oppression, economic exploitation and social discrimination can be creatively imagined and organized by marginalized groups (cf. Soja 1996: 68):

It is political choice, the impetus of an explicit political project, that gives special attention and particular contemporary relevance to the spaces of representation, to *lived space as a strategic location* from which to encompass, understand, and potentially transform all spaces simultaneously. Lived social space, more than any other, is Lefebvre’s limitless Aleph, the space of all inclusive simultaneities, perils as well as possibilities: the space of radical openness, the space of social struggle. (Soja 1996: 68; italics in original)

However, it is necessary to draw attention to the fact that, while Soja’s first definition of Thirdspace is in accordance with Lefebvre’s original conceptualization of “lived space”, the latter definition remains a curiously mysterious construct of Soja’s, which makes the reader wonder why he establishes the tripartite differentiation between First-, Second- and Thirdspace in the first place, only to eventually leverage it with the second item of his twofold (re-)definition of Thirdspace as an all-encompassing space under which all other modes of spatiality can be subsumed (cf. Döring 2010: 92-93).¹³⁷ Thus, in comparison to Bhabha, Soja does shift the epistemological focus of the

¹³⁶ As further constitutive features of Thirdspace, Soja enumerates the following: “[It is] a knowable and unknowable, real and imagined lifeworld of experiences, emotions, events, and political choices that is existentially shaped by the generative and problematic interplay between centers and peripheries, the abstract and concrete, the impassioned spaces of the conceptual and the lived, marked out materially and metaphorically in *spatial praxis*, the transformation of (spatial) knowledge into (spatial) action in a field of unevenly developed (spatial) power” (Soja 1996: 31; italics in original).

¹³⁷ As Döring (cf. 2010: 92-93) rightly points out, Soja can be accused of two crucial misunderstandings of Lefebvre’s *La Production de l’Espace* (1974): “For one thing, he [Soja; AM] regards Lefebvre’s lived space (*espace vécu*) as a dialectical suspension of the contrast between physical-material and conceived mental space in some sort of synthesis, which, according to Soja, is capable of designating the entirety of socially produced space. [...] At the same time, however, the main thrust of Lefebvre’s tripartite construction of space resides precisely in the coequality of its components and the simultaneity of their efficacy. Accordingly, Soja’s own tripartite model (cf. 1996: 68) [...], which is modelled on Lefebvre’s, ends up not being compatible with the concept of space propagated in *La Production de l’Espace* because it intentionally grants a privileged status to ‘Thirdspace’ (cf. Schmid 2005: 308 ff.). For another thing, Soja takes recourse in a [...] somewhat constricted apprehension of perceived space

concept of “third space” by defining it as a transcendent, “real-and-imagined” (Soja 1996) mode of spatiality – as programmatically indicated in his spelling of “Thirdspace” (1996) as one word – while at the same time retaining its utopian potential as a strategic vantage point for revolutionary political action. What Soja does not do, however, is specify concrete criteria that social, historical and spatial examples of such Thirdspaces would have to meet in order to have a realistic chance of effecting the far-reaching socio-political transformations (against the powerful bloc of hegemonic stakeholders) he envisages. This is why his conceptualization, despite laying a more pronounced focus on revolutionary political action on the part of hitherto marginalized sociocultural groups, remains almost as vague and detached from the ‘lived realities’ of the countless members of such disenfranchised groups all around the globe as Bhabha’s original formulation of “third space” as a metaphorical space of hybridity. One such criterion (and probably one of the most important), I argue, consists in reaching a certain degree of economic independence, for otherwise one always remains trapped in a vicious circle of poverty, illiteracy and subaltern disenfranchisement.

In contrast to both Bhabha’s concept of third space and Soja’s fundamental epistemological reconceptualization of it as Thirdspace, Appadurai’s concept of “global ethnoscapescapes” (Appadurai 1996: 33 and 48) lays particular emphasis on the transnational cultural connections with the home country and among each other to be found in diasporic communities all around the globe as expressed in their adherence to common religious festivals, culinary specialties and further identificatory cultural signifiers (cf. Appadurai 1996: 33-43 and 48-65). Whereas both Bhabha and Soja focus on the utopian potential for political change, Appadurai concentrates primarily on the identificatory ties holding together diasporic communities across all geographical borders and boundaries; one of his main points is that today, spatial proximity is no longer the crucial precondition for upholding strong cultural bonds. Instead, this function is now fulfilled by adherence to such culture-specific practices. Regardless of where you live, you can thus express your cultural affiliations by complying with these behavioural patterns: the precise location of your residence is irrelevant; what counts is your relational connectedness to your culture of origin as manifested in your practice of definite cultural rituals involving religion, nutrition, clothing and so on (cf. Appadurai 1996: 33-43 and 48-65; Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 297).

(*espace perçu*) in Lefebvre’s work. Conceived in analogy with Lefebvre’s *espace perçu*, Soja’s concept of ‘Firstspace’ refers much more to physical material space [...]” (Döring 2010: 92; my translation) than does Lefebvre’s original conceptualization, which highlights, above all, the role of space as the product of a social construction process (cf. Döring 2010: 92-93).

The transnationally dispersed cultural communities thus emerging are labelled “global ethnoscaples” by Appadurai (1996: 33 and 48): “By *ethnoscape*, I mean the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers, and other moving groups and individuals constitute an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of (and between) nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree” (Appadurai 1996: 33). This pronounced emphasis on such transnationally intertwined, perpetually moving spatial entities, Appadurai adds, is by no means tantamount to an outright denial of the existence of their conceptual counterpart, i.e. comparatively stable and fixed spatial configurations:

This is not to say that there are no relatively stable communities and networks of kinship, friendship, work, and leisure, as well as of birth, residence, and other filial forms. But it is to say that the warp of these stabilities is everywhere shot through with the woof of *human motion*, as more persons and groups deal with *the realities of having to move or the fantasies of wanting to move*. (Appadurai 1996: 33-34; italics mine)

As a result of this historically unprecedented constellation in which issues of human motion occupy a pivotal position, Appadurai argues that “the changing social, territorial, and cultural reproduction of group identity” (1996: 48) is one of the undeniable facts of the contemporary age of globalization:

As groups migrate, regroup in new locations, reconstruct their histories, and reconfigure their ethnic projects, the *ethno* in ethnography takes on a slippery, nonlocalized quality, to which the descriptive practices of ethnography will have to respond. The landscapes of group identity – the ethnoscaples – around the world are no longer familiar anthropological objects, insofar as groups are no longer tightly territorialized, spatially bounded, historically unselfconscious or culturally homogeneous. (Appadurai 1996: 48)

Nowadays, this unprecedented degree of spatial deterritorialization and cultural hybridization is complemented, according to Appadurai (cf. 1996: 48), by a highly complex web of transnational and transcultural interactions between the countless global ethnoscaples scattered all around the globe: “[T]he ethnoscaples of today’s world are profoundly interactive” (Appadurai 1996: 48).

Since Appadurai himself conceives of global ethnoscaples as a result of human motion, I deem it justified to briefly reformulate his concept in the terminology of the trialectics of motion developed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation: global ethnoscaples emerge from a historically unprecedented configuration of spatiality marked, above all, by strong tendencies of deterritorialization and the possibility to uphold cultural ties across vast geographical distances by means of state-of-the-art transportation, information and communication technologies. Furthermore, this fact also reverberates

on the dimension of agency, and it does so either positively, i.e. by enabling individual and collective agents to preserve their cultural connections – symbolized by a pronounced adherence to common identificatory signifiers – regardless of where they live, or negatively, such as in the case of refugees and illegal migrants, whose mobility, more often than not, is restricted to refugee and asylum-seeker camps by the recipient country after their arrival there. Accordingly, the idealized vision of free global mobility being available to everybody must seem like a cynical joke to these disenfranchised population groups. Finally, the temporal dimension comes in as the increasing prevalence of all these aforementioned phenomena results from an epoch-specific historical context, viz. that of contemporary globalization, which exhibits a multitude of conflicting (and frequently even contradictory) features, such as the simultaneity of deterritorialization and reterritorialization, an unprecedented degree of time-space compression, global migratory flows and, consequently, an increasingly complex web of transnational cultural affiliations based on what Appadurai calls the “globalization of ethnicity as a political force” (1996: 41).

Having reframed both Bhabha’s concept of “third space” (1994) and Appadurai’s concept of “global ethnoscapas” (1996) according to my heuristic model of the trialectics of motion, I will proceed by further concretizing the characteristics of my concept of transcultural third spaces through a comparative juxtaposition with each of the spatial concepts analysed so far. Accordingly, selected central commonalities and differences of my conceptualization of transcultural third spaces and Pratt’s “contact zone” (1992), Bhabha’s “third space” (1994) and Soja’s fundamental epistemological reconceptualization of it as “Thirdspace” (1996), as well as Appadurai’s “global ethnoscapas” (1996), shall be delineated in the following.

In Section 3.1 of this dissertation, I defined transcultural third spaces via the following four constitutive criteria: they emerge from transnational (usually migratory) movements (cf. Helff 2009: 83); they exhibit processes of transculturation *sensu* Ortiz (2003 [1940]); they allow for a significant redefinition of migrants’ (individual or collective) self-understanding (cf. Helff 2009: 83); and they enable the individual or collective agents involved to reach a certain degree of economic, political and sociocultural freedom of action in daily life. Taking up Ortiz’s (cf. 2003 [1940]: 102-103) concept of transculturation as a tripartite process involving the loss of elements of one’s own culture of origin (“deculturation”) while acquiring elements from the recipient country’s culture (“acculturation”), which results in the merging of items from these two source cultures into hitherto inexistent cultural practices, rituals or other signifiers

("neoculturation"), my concept is grounded in an acknowledgement of the often stark socioeconomic inequalities and resultant political power asymmetries similar to that proposed by Ortiz (2003 [1940]) and Pratt (1992: 4-7). In contrast to Pratt's concept of the contact zone, however, my concept of transcultural third spaces does not focus exclusively on such radical power asymmetries as manifest in intercultural contact situations like colonialism, slavery and indentured labour. Instead, I additionally recognize that the political emancipation of formerly exploited individuals and population groups is possible under the conditions of contemporary globalization, provided that their struggle for at least a modest degree of economic independence is successful.

With Bhabha's concept of third space and Soja's fundamental epistemological reconceptualization of it as Thirdspace, my concept shares the pronounced emphasis on the need to think – in the spirit of Soja's critical strategy of "thirthing-as-Othering" (Soja 1996: 60; cf. *ibid.* 60-62) – beyond dichotomized binarisms of the traditional either/-or variant: just like Bhabha and Soja, I conceive of (transcultural) third spaces as innovative interstitial spatial configurations deliberately situated between pre-existent, traditionally dichotomized notions of homeland and diaspora, one's own and foreign cultures, religions and lifestyles and so on. Moreover, I likewise regard (transcultural) third spaces as particularly suitable vantage points for initiating social movements that aim at progressive political change in favour of previously marginalized and oppressed sociocultural groups. In contrast to both Bhabha and Soja, however, I do consider the accomplishment of a sufficient degree of economic freedom of action on the part of hitherto exploited groups a vital criterion for the success of such movements, for I hold that falling prey to the illusion that the transformation of socio-political structures can be achieved solely by a post-structuralist deconstruction of the binarist logic of imperialist discourses (cf. Bhabha 1994) or by the imaginative creation of Thirdspace as an epistemological alternative to the pitfalls of such dichotomization (cf. Soja 1996) merely plays into the hands of the hegemonic social groups and their persistently enforced power structures. Granted, the imaginative conception of alternative third spaces constitutes one precondition for social change, but it is by no means the only, or the most important, one: without translating their innovative ideas into concrete socioeconomic action, peripheralized social groups simply cannot expect to effect any change for the better. This is why I aim to shift the focus of the analysis of third spaces from the linguistic-discursive realm to concrete socioeconomic configurations in extratextual cultural reality.

In the same vein as Appadurai's global ethnoscapas, my concept of transcultural third spaces is meant to draw attention to the existence of globally dispersed but culturally connected diasporic communities all around the globe. In contrast to Appadurai, who highlights, above all, the recognizable cultural signifiers among the diaspora and the homeland that nourish the preservation of a common ground for identification with one's culture of origin, my concept lays more emphasis on the transcultural generation of innovative cultural signifiers than on the pre-existent, transnational identificatory ties between the globally scattered diasporas and their original homeland. Moreover, unlike Appadurai's concept of global ethnoscapas, which merely aims to describe the extant social realities of tourists, migrants, refugees and other population groups on the move, my concept of transcultural third spaces entails a reasonable degree of utopian potential, because it foregrounds the possibility of social change, which, however, ultimately becomes attainable only through the prior achievement of a sufficiently consolidated degree of economic self-empowerment on the part of previously disenfranchised collectives or individuals.

Subsequent to this clarification of what I mean by transcultural third spaces, I now want to exemplify this central concept with a pertinent instance from Salman Rushdie's novel *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]), abbreviated as *TGBHF* in the following text notes. In it, Rushdie narratively enacts the glittering world of rock music as a transcultural third space for two of his protagonists, Vina Apsara and Ormus Cama, who rise from insignificance to the status of internationally acclaimed celebrities in their role as protagonists of a fictitious rock band, VTO. Represented throughout the novel as positively semanticized, fictitious incarnations of postcolonial *and* postmodern go-betweens, that is, as wanderers between different sociocultural, aesthetic and mental worlds, Vina – the singer – and Ormus – the ingenious songwriter – migrate from India to the US via Britain in order to make their dream of becoming rock stars come true (cf. *TGBHF* 172, 250-270, 330-332 and 346-354). In addition to these transnational movements, their musical career qualifies as a transcultural third space because their personal style of music is the result of an idiosyncratic blending of Indian and Western (and other) musical styles (cf., for instance, *TGBHF* 367, 378-379). Transforming the corpus of Western rock music by integrating instruments and performers from highly heterogeneous cultural backgrounds, Ormus performs the triad of deculturation, acculturation and, most importantly, neoculturation in his musical compositions and arrangements. Coupled with Vina's unmistakable voice and overwhelming stage-presence, their joint performances are narratively enacted as offering something genuinely new to their spoilt American audience:

And that America which by losing certitude has newly opened itself to the external world responds to the un-American sounds Ormus adds to his tracks: the sexiness of the Cuban horns, the mind-bending patterns of the Brazilian drums, the Chilean woodwinds moaning like the winds of oppression, the African male voice choruses like trees swaying in freedom's breeze, the grand old ladies of Algerian music with their yearning squawks and ululations, the holy passion of the Pakistani *qawwals*. (TGBHF 379)

Beside this pivotal aspect of transculturation, their rock music enables them to redefine their individual self-understanding as they succeed in ascending the stairway from unknown musicians to the protagonists of a global rock phenomenon. In particular, it is Vina who persistently rejoices in performing her transdifferential, perpetually mobile and shape-shifting individual identity configuration as an omnipresent public chameleon (cf., for example, TGBHF 339) until her untimely death in a horrid earthquake in Mexico. Finally, their success as rock musicians endows Vina and Ormus with a degree of individual economic, artistic and political freedom of action they have never enjoyed before. As a result of its meeting all four criteria stated above, Rushdie's narrative enactment of their personal part in the glamorous, slippery, excessive, continually oscillating and shallow world of contemporary rock music constitutes a telling example of the discursive construction of transcultural third spaces in contemporary Asian British novels. After this exemplification of my analytical foray into selected spatializations of migrancy, the next section will take a closer look at exemplary movement patterns and resultant topologies in contemporary Asian British novels.

3.4 Migration, Movement Patterns and Topologies in Contemporary Asian British Novels

While the preceding section focused on a selection of spatial results of migrancy, this one will deal with migratory movement patterns and the cultural topographies and topologies they help engender. Accordingly, this section is predicated on Ette's (cf. Ette 2005: 23; Ette 2012: 29; see also Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 20-24) central hypothesis that definite movement patterns play a decisive role in the production of corresponding cultural topologies that can then be described as Bakhtinian chronotopes. Consequently, section 3.4 serves a twofold purpose. First, it is concerned with the general phenomenon of transmigration as well as a specific exemplification of

an attendant movement pattern. Second, it additionally focuses on the resultant configurations of cultural topologies as chronotopes. Throughout this section, Salman Rushdie's novel *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]) shall serve as a primary text example of the central points I intend to make in my argumentation.

To begin with, the concept of transmigration (cf. the title of Brooks and Simpson's (2013) monograph *Emotions in Transmigration: Transformation, Movement and Identity*) can be defined as migration from a country of origin via at least one transit country to a destination country (for instance, from India via Britain to the USA, as in the primary text example I will use; cf. Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 270-271). As many migrants perform such a movement without ever returning to their country of origin on a permanent basis, I call the resulting movement pattern an incomplete triangle. In contrast to 'simple' migration, the phenomenon of *transmigration* complicates the cultural issues relating to migration even further. Hence, a heightened degree of complexity applies to transmigratory configurations of agency, space and time. Before delving into the concrete characteristics of this specific transmigratory movement pattern of the incomplete triangle, however, I intend to delineate the backdrop against which my concept shall be delimited in two steps. Initially, some introductory remarks on the general characteristics of cultural topographies and topologies will clarify what exactly I refer to by these two closely related concepts. In a second step, I will then briefly outline the contours of other – colonial and postcolonial – movement patterns in relation to which the concept of the incomplete triangle shall be delineated.

As for cultural topography¹³⁸ and topology, it is, first and foremost, indispensable to recognize that they constitute complementary, not mutually exclusive, perspectives on the spatiality of cultural phenomena. In the following, I accordingly want to outline fundamental characteristics of these perspectives and the cultural products they describe – cultural topographies and topologies, respectively. In his introduction to the collected volume *Topographien der Literatur: Deutsche Literatur im transnationalen Kontext* (2005), the editor Hartmut Böhme specifies eleven constitutive features of cultural topographies (cf. Böhme 2005a: xix-xx), of which I have selected

¹³⁸ See also Sigrid Weigel's article "Zum ‚topographical turn‘: Kartographie, Topographie und Raumkonzepte in den Kulturwissenschaften." (Weigel 2002: 151-165). In contrast to the spatial turn, which focuses primarily on the analysis of the sociocultural "production of space" (Lefebvre 1991 [1974]), Weigel's concept of a topographical turn is more concerned with cultural techniques of representing spatial configurations (cf. Weigel 2002: 151-165; see also Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 300-303).

five items that distinguish themselves by their particular relevance to issues of human motion.

First, Böhme defines cultural topographies as “procedures of spatial ordering by means of which spaces are marked in terms of their relevance for action – via [...] boundary markers, routes, inscriptions, pictograms and so on” (Böhme 2005a: xix; my translation). Thus “always designat[ing] a *semiotically organized space* that is supposed to enable oriented movement” (Böhme 2005a: xix; italics in original; my translation), cultural topographies are essentially “prefigurations of actions” inasmuch as “[t]hey perform an *action space*” (Böhme 2005a: xix; italics in original; my translation).

Second, cultural topographies can be classified as “*representations*, in the double sense of ‘representing’. They are representations of something that exists and that is produced as such in the act of representing only. This is the double-edged dimension of all topographies, for it is both *representing* and *performative*” (Böhme 2005a: xix; italics in original; my translation). Third, Böhme defines cultural topographies as “always consist[ing] of *locations* and *paths/routes* [Bahnungen] that encode directions, orient possible movements, prefigure routes, designate possible destinations and positions” (Böhme 2005a: xix; italics in original; my translation). In addition, they “may [...], in older forms (mappae mundi, early maps of America) in particular, contain narratives about dangers, encounters, events and so on” (Böhme 2005a: xix; my translation).

Fourth, for the purpose of oriented movement in the space culturally structured by such topographies, the individual subject must dispose of what Böhme calls “[d]irectional spatiality [*Richtungsräumlichkeit*]”, that is, “the capability of translating transsubjective topographies into concrete, corporeal movements in space” (Böhme 2005a: xix; italics in original; my translation).¹³⁹ More precisely, this complex translation process involves three successive steps on the part of the subject that is about to move, the first two of which “require a double *reading ability*” (Böhme 2005a: xix; italics in original; my translation). Initially, the subject intent on moving must have the ability “to read ‘maps’ (of all kinds)”, by which Böhme means that “one must be capable of

¹³⁹ In this context, Hallet considers literature, film and cartography in general, and the contemporary novels he describes as “fictions of space” (Hallet 2009: 107; cf. *ibid.* 107-109) in particular, as a cultural necessity inasmuch as they offer the reader orientational spatiality exemplarily, that is, by means of concrete modelling of continents, landscapes, cities and so on (cf. Hallet 2009: 83, and *ibid.* 83-93, 108; see also Dünne’s monograph *Die kartographische Imagination: Erinnern, Erzählen und Fingieren in der Frühen Neuzeit* [2011]).

producing in one's mind a spatial image of the two-dimensional graphic or linguistic topography" (Böhme 2005a: xix; my translation). In a second step, the individual subject must additionally be capable of "'re-cogniz[ing]' the locations and paths marked on the map in the real space (of a landscape or city)" (ibid.). In a third step, it is required of the subject that it is able to "translate the cartographic information into bodily directional spatiality in order to carry out the target-aimed movement in practice" (Böhme 2005a: xix; my translation). Fifth, Böhme highlights both the simultaneous co-existence of multiple cultural topographies on various levels of geographical, geopolitical and other analysis and their fundamentally ambivalent ontological status:

There is always a multitude of interwoven, coupled and nested topographies that are nonetheless disjunct. Topographies do have a peculiar objectivity that emerges from their intermediate position between corporeal and real space. We believe that we are within them as if they really existed in the world – all the same, they are cultural constructs, no matter whether they function in terms of salvation history, geography, epistemology, the military, economy, politics and society, technology and media or biography. (Böhme 2005a: xx; my translation)

To sum it up, Böhme thus conceives of cultural topographies as "spatial techniques by means of which cultures embody, delimit and stabilize themselves, and through which they organize their material metabolism and their symbolic exchange" (Böhme 2005a: xxi; my translation). In conclusion, he highlights the essentially *chronotopic* nature of cultural topographies by drawing attention to the mutual dependence of spatiality and temporality within (and beyond) them: "The elementary nature of spatial and temporal orders brings about their interpenetration: temporal orders cannot do without spatializations, while spatial orders are always historical and temporalizing as well" (Böhme 2005a: xxi; my translation).

Having presented a seminal definition of cultural topographies in some detail, I will now turn to the complementary perspective of cultural topology. What, among other things, these two approaches to the cultural ordering of spatiality have in common is their pronounced emphasis on the dialectical interrelatedness of cultural topographies and topologies and the (im)possibility of movement within such structures, be it on a micro- or a macro-structural plane (cf. Böhme 2005a: xix-xxii and Günzel 2007a: 23-24). As well, these two approaches share the feature of diachronic dynamicity; that is, each of them acknowledges that cultural topographies and topologies can and do change over time, frequently due to cataclysmic events in extratextual cultural reality or the textual fictional universe of a narrative text (cf. Böhme 2005a: xxi-xxii and Günzel 2007a: 25-26). As Günzel (cf. 2007a: 25-26) convincingly argues, the historicity of cultural topographies and topologies is brought about by cracks, fissures or ruptures in the respective spatial configuration; here, it is the topological analysis of (spatial)

structures in particular that highlights “the difference between heterogeneous topologies or, rather, *how a ‘fissure’ can destroy the topological structure and thereby transform it*” (Günzel 2007a: 26; italics mine; my translation).

However, there are also crucial differences between the *topographical* and the *topological* approaches to the processual ordering of cultural spatiality. As the following quotation demonstrates, the topological approach to cultural spatiality is less interested in questions of representational surface configurations or, more precisely, the ontological and epistemological transformations of the represented object concealed by the map as the finished product of cartographic representation, and is instead more geared towards the identification of deep-structural constants among different topographical surface configurations:

In short, topology is about *describing homologies in heterogeneous phenomena* or about identifying similar structures. While critical topography would be interested in the spatial changes that take place when a map pretends that it ‘merely represents’, topology, by contrast, pursues the question of *what remains constant when a beholder thinks that something has changed*. (Günzel 2007a: 21; italics in original; my translation)

Accordingly, topology – originally a sub-discipline of mathematics – does not probe into minute details of the case-specific surface configurations of cultural topographies; instead, it attempts to (re)construct their overall deep-structure from this source material by identifying commonalities and differences with other cultural topographies that exist simultaneously with, prior to or subsequent to the topography in question. Based on such a comprehensive, synchronic and diachronic comparison of concrete cultural topographies, I argue, it becomes possible to outline, on a more abstract level, different deep-structural types of cultural topologies that, in their basic configurations, can then legitimately be assigned to different historical (and contemporary) epochs. Moreover, I assert that there is an intrinsic, reciprocal correlation between such epoch-specific cultural topologies and equally age-specific dominant movement patterns inasmuch as the latter contribute substantially to the formation of the former, while in turn, cultural topologies are capable of enabling movement or, conversely, restricting the range of possible routes and destinations available to the subject intent on moving. Accordingly, I want to outline three prototypical types of such cultural topologies – colonial, postcolonial and transcultural – and highlight their fundamental interdependence with attendant movement patterns in the following.¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰ See also Jameson’s Marxist cognitive mapping of the three major stages and attendant spaces in the historical development of capitalism (cf. Jameson 1988: 348-353).

Among the variety of colonial movement patterns, Ette (cf. 2003: 39-47) singles out two particularly conspicuous ones: the circle and the star. While the former is defined by Ette as “the basic figure of a circular travel movement in which the traveller returns to the place of departure” (Ette 2003: 39) and identified as the predominant movement pattern “in journeys overseas of the 18th and 19th century in European as well as in non-European travellers” (ibid.), the latter is conceptualized as “a movement in space [that] starts from a definite centre, which serves as a starting point for more or less circular journeys and leads to a stellate expansion of the travelled and registered space [, with] the dialectic of area and centre proceed[ing] analogously to certain centralized political structures” (Ette 2003: 45-46). Accordingly, Ette associates the circle primarily with exploration (and conquest) voyages of the colonial era, whereas the star applies, first and foremost, to the stellate expansion of knowledge and political control from a pre-established centre, such as the European nation-states engaged in expansionist colonial policies.

Both of these movement patterns do tend to promote the emergence and perpetuation of a colonial topology marked, above all, by the dichotomization and hierarchization of heterogeneous cultural spaces into metropolitan centre and marginalized periphery prevalent in politics, the economy and culture. They are also characterized by the attendant semanticization of the centre as all-important, omnipotent, civilized, rational, progressive, modern and hence universally superior, and of the periphery as dependent, powerless, uncivilized, irrational, conservative, backwards and therefore universally inferior. This dichotomized semanticization of centre and periphery is discursively constructed, disseminated and ‘perpetuated’ by imperialist discourse via the remediation of the ever-same stereotypical catalogue of allegedly characteristic features across the whole range of media available in the historical era of European colonialism including newspapers, political pamphlets, (pseudo-)scientific academic treatises and literature, and later also photography and the radio (cf. Neumann 2009: 125-128; Gymnich 1996: 149-166; Upstone 2009: 1-24; Hallet 2009: 102-107).

Postcolonial topologies differ from their colonial predecessors in that the former colonies have now achieved political independence after long and difficult struggles for freedom from colonial domination, frequently involving heavy losses and bloodshed. At the same time, however, postcolonial topologies are also marked by a continuation of (neo)colonial structures of domination and exploitation in the global economy; the tripartite global topology of the Cold War era – that is, the self-righteous subdivision of

the globe into the First, Second and Third World from a Western point of view – is indicative of this persistence of (neo-)colonial structures in the postcolonial age, because it highlights the allegedly stark contrast between the highly developed, efficient, capitalist and democratic Western nations of former colonizers and the underdeveloped, inefficient Third World countries that, having emerged from formerly colonized territories, are more often than not ruled by a brutal dictator and a corrupt *comprador* class complicit with the Western neo-imperialist hegemony (cf. Thieme 2003: 259). Whereas the political *topography* thus seems to have been transformed on the surface with the transition from directly dependent colonies to formally independent postcolonial states, a closer look at the underlying *geotopolological* power structures reveals that little to nothing has happened in terms of actual socioeconomic change for the better from the point of view of the formerly colonized ethnicities, for they still serve primarily as a convenient source of cheap natural resources and labour and as potential sales markets for Western multinational corporations (cf. Upstone 2009: 1-24). Accordingly, migration from an ex-colony to the former imperial centre constitutes the most prominent example of a postcolonial movement pattern (cf. Neumann 2009: 128; Hallet 2009: 102-107).

In contrast to both colonial and postcolonial topologies, *transcultural* topologies emerge as a consequence of highly complex and mutually intertwined networks of Ette's pendular movement pattern (cf. Ette 2003: 43), defined as "the commuting between two or several locations" (ibid.). In addition, they are marked by the increasing relevance of transmigration, by multipolarity and by a concomitant partly rhizomatic topological structure that is engendered precisely by the very networks of pendular movements among the various hubs I mentioned. There is one respect, however, in which transcultural topologies do differ significantly from what Deleuze and Guattari (1977 [1976]; see also Frank 2008b: 626-627) conceptualize as a rhizome: in contrast to the latter, transcultural topologies frequently exhibit conspicuous and persistent political, economic, military and cultural power asymmetries among these hubs as manifest, for instance, in the cynical and hypocritical ambivalence of Western industrial nations towards 'illegal' migrants from so-called 'Third World countries': despite the fact that they are indispensable as a source of cheap labour for their national economies, such migrants are nonetheless persecuted and deported ruthlessly by state authorities in case of detection. Finally, I argue that the emergence of transcultural topologies hinges upon the presence of potentially utopian transcultural third spaces (cf. Neumann 2009: 129-135) and of transcultural or transdifferential identity configurations, such as

in the case of Vina Apsara, the rock-singer protagonist of Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]).

Unable to identify with the place she currently finds herself in, Vina keeps moving on to other places, only to realize that they are just as bad as the one she has just left behind. In other words, her chronic inability and categorical refusal to take *root* in one particular spot are the prime motivators for her pursuit of ever more *routes* all across the globe, none of which gives her the satisfaction she is constantly looking for (cf. Clifford 1997: 251).¹⁴¹ It is this paradoxical condition that turns her into an epitome of a *transdifferential* identification process: being in one place, she always feels the tantalizing lure of another. Bound to be thoroughly disappointed by this other place as well, she becomes the incarnation of a restless seeker (spiritual and otherwise) who cannot help but keep shifting between various places and positionalities. It is this narratively enacted dedication to perpetual motion that turns her identification and self-understanding into transdifferential performances (cf. *TGBHF* 163). As the following comment by the homodiegetic narrator Rai (alias Umeed Merchant) underlines, such transdifferential performances are narratively resemanticized by Rushdie as a powerful, positively connoted counterpoint to the traditional *topos* of the allegedly universal human need for belonging somewhere:

For a long while I have believed [...] that in every generation there are a few souls, call them lucky or cursed, who are simply *born not belonging*, who come into the world semi-detached, if you like, without strong affiliation to family or location or nation or race; that there may even be millions, billions of such souls, as many non-belongers as belongers, perhaps; that, in sum, the phenomenon may be as "natural" a manifestation of human nature as its opposite, but one that has been mostly frustrated, throughout human history, by lack of opportunity. And not only by that: for those who value stability, who fear transience, uncertainty, change, have erected a powerful system of stigmas and taboos against rootlessness, that disruptive, anti-social force, so that we mostly conform, we pretend to be motivated by loyalties and solidarities we do not really feel, we hide our secret identities beneath the false skins of those identities which bear the belongers' seal of approval. (*TGBHF* 72-73; italics in original)

The rootless, unbelonging individuals evoked by Rushdie in this passage, which I interpret as referring as much to his three protagonists – Vina Apsara, Ormus Cama and Umeed Merchant, alias Rai – as to the author himself, nicely conform to my conceptualization of transdifferential identification, for they perform their personal identity configuration not via the act of identifying unambiguously and intransigently with an essentialized, unchanging and stable entity commonly referred to as home(stead), family, location or nation, but instead ground their self-understanding in

¹⁴¹ For the (now well-worn) conceptual opposition between *roots* and *routes* as well as their manifold interactions, cf. Clifford (1997). See also Ette (2012: 37) and Antz (2014).

being restlessly on the move both intellectually and physically. In this passage and in his literary oeuvre as a whole, Rushdie thus vigorously calls into question the allegedly 'natural' need of human beings to belong somewhere by arguing that it has been enforced discursively by those who fear transience, instability and fluidity in order to preserve their peculiar illusion of human rootedness and, concomitantly, to nourish the sense of stability without which they could not survive. For this reason, Rushdie argues, those who do not feel rooted in their place of origin have always been deliberately marginalized by their anxious and narrow-minded contemporaries desperately clinging to traditional notions of home.

All in all, the narratively constituted storyworld topology in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* hence does converge with what I define as a transcultural topology in several regards. First, it comes into being as a result of transmigratory movements, which, second, enable two of the protagonists to construct their own transcultural third space in the glamorous world of international rock music (cf. Section 3.3.3 of this dissertation); and third, the personal identity configurations performed by all three protagonists distinguish themselves by their fluid, unstable, essentially mobile transdifferential character.

As I intend to argue in the following, it is – among other factors – by performing the movement pattern of the incomplete triangle that two of Rushdie's protagonists – Vina and Ormus – succeed in eluding the grip of the identificatory networks tying individuals to their family, home and culture of origin. This liberating effect of their transmigration from India via Britain to the USA, which, on the geographical map, roughly corresponds to the geometric figure of an incomplete triangle (incomplete because the third side, the return vector from the U.S. to India, is conspicuous by its absence), is captured by Rushdie in the 'etymological metaphor' of disorientation:

Disorientation is loss of the East. Ask any navigator: the east is what you sail by. Lose the east and you lose your bearings, your certainties, your knowledge of what is and what may be, perhaps even your life. Where was that star you followed to that manger? That's right. The east orients. That's the official version. The language says so and you should never argue with the language.

But let's just suppose. What if the whole deal – orientation, knowing where you are, and so on – what if it's all a scam? What if all of it – home, kinship, the whole enchilada – is just the biggest, most truly global, and centuries-oldest piece of brainwashing? [...] But just imagine you did it. You stepped off the edge of the earth, or through the fatal waterfall, and there it was: the magic valley at the end of the universe, the blessed kingdom of the air. Great music everywhere. You breathe the music, in and out, it's your element now. It feels better than "belonging" in your lungs.

Vina was the first one of us to do it. Ormus jumped second, and I, as usual, brought up the rear. And we can argue all night about why, did we jump or were we pushed, but you can't deny we all did it. We three kings of Disorient were. (*TGBHF* 176-177)

As this passage vividly illustrates, disorientation – as movement away from, or loss of the East – is imagined by Rushdie as the decisive leap into freedom from the discursive power of rootedness, from the pressure to root oneself in one's place of origin. Accordingly, this quotation exemplifies, once again, the essentially postmodernist thrust of Rushdie's narratively wrapped argument against the naturalization of the 'need' to belong somewhere (cf. *TGBHF* 72-73): Vina and Ormus free themselves from their place of origin by performing the simultaneously postcolonial, postmodern and transcultural movement pattern of the incomplete triangle, viz. they *transmigrate* from India via Britain to the USA in the 1960s (cf. *TGBHF* 172, 202-203, 250-270, 330-332, 346-354).

Why do I claim that this narratively performed incomplete triangle can legitimately be labelled postcolonial, postmodern and transcultural at the same time? A straightforward answer to this central question can be given by highlighting the peculiarly hybrid nature of this movement pattern: Vina and Ormus's transmigration is both postcolonial and postmodern because it combines a postcolonial migration from the margins of (post)colonial topology (India) to the imperial centre (Britain and, above all, the US) undertaken in the quintessentially postmodern vehicle – the passenger aircraft – with a successful leap to the heights of postmodern stardom with its attendant celebrity cult in the realm of Western rock music. Due to their idiosyncratic merging of British and American rock music with their Indian musical heritage, their personal artistic genius and musical influences from other cultures (cf. *TGBHF* 378-379), they succeed in creating a uniquely transcultural sound mix that proves to be hugely successful throughout the world. As it was their performance of the incomplete triangle that enabled this musical transculturation process to emerge in the first place, I deem it justified to attach the label transcultural to this transmigration itself as well. As we shall see, the same triad – postcolonial, postmodern and transcultural – can likewise be applied to the characterization of the narratively constituted storyworld topology of this novel.

Coming back to the predominant movement pattern(s) in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (Rushdie 2000 [1999]), I want to take a closer look at Vina Apsara's trajectories, for she proves to be the most fruitful object of analysis in this respect: First of all, unlike Ormus and Rai, Vina was not born in India, but in the U.S. (albeit to Indian

parents), where she spent a horrible early childhood being moved to and fro between her divorced parents and other relatives, none of whom was able to give her the care and attention she needed. As soon as her stubbornly rebellious nature has exhausted the pedagogical abilities of her American relatives, Vina is sent to India, where a highly successful but morally dubious uncle has consented to bringing her up in his household (cf. *TGBHF* 102-113). Born an expatriate or, in official terminology, a non-resident Indian (NRI), Vina's 'return' to her parents' ancestral homeland thus constitutes the first side of a triangular journey that will eventually lead her from India back to the United States via a stopover in Britain (cf. *TGBHF* 172). As a consequence, she is the only protagonist to perform both several complete triangles (USA → India → Britain → USA) and, finally, an incomplete one inasmuch as, having established herself as a rock singer in America, she never returns to India to settle there permanently.

Granted, after a terrible earthquake there, she returns to India for one night in order to look for her beloved Ormus (cf. *TGBHF* 224-228) and, several years later, she comes back to Britain in order to awake Ormus from his coma (caused by a nearly lethal car accident some two years earlier). However, in the latter case she does so only to urge him to leave Britain and follow her to the hub of contemporary rock music: the United States of America in general and New York City in particular (cf. *TGBHF* 330-332). There, they succeed in launching a phenomenal joint career, which enables them to do numerous concert tours all around the globe in the following years. Ironically, however, they end up being denied access to their ancestral homeland India on the grounds that they have betrayed their cultural origins and have become complicit with Western cultural imperialism. It is thus tangible external friction motivated by accusations fuelled by intangible cultural sensitivities that eventually prevents these global rock icons from returning triumphantly to their country of origin. In other words, the postcolonial belongers, i.e. those who have remained in India throughout their lifetime, take revenge upon the Westernized postmodern non-belongers by refusing to grant them access to their country of origin: disorientation comes at a price in Rushdie's fictional universe. It is, however, a price that both of his protagonists are willing to pay, since they value their artistic freedom more than anything else. Of course, this typical Rushdiean constellation of priorities may legitimately be accused of postmodernist elitism, since, having risen from a modest middle-class existence to the glittering world of global stardom, both Vina and Ormus represent unique and inimitable career paths for the huge majority of 'ordinary migrants'.

Returning to the question of macro-structural movement patterns, I accordingly assert that, on the whole, it is by performing, among further movements, both complete triangles (USA – India – Britain – USA) and an incomplete one (India – Britain – USA) that Vina turns into the novel's epitome of postmodern global mobility. Having said that, it is necessary to add some qualifying clarifications concerning the ontological status of the rather abstract movement pattern of the incomplete triangle vis-à-vis the concrete routes the two protagonists travel on in the fictional storyworld of this novel.

While a thorough *topographical* reconstruction of the precise routes they have travelled throughout their turbulent lives would thus demonstrate that both Vina and Ormus have undertaken many more journeys than those major, transmigratory ones captured by the movement pattern of the incomplete triangle, the latter nevertheless does have its justification on the *topological* level because their intertwined biographies do revolve around the three hubs India, the United Kingdom and the USA on this latter plane. Since after their rise to the Hall of Fame of rock stars in the West, they never return to India on a permanent basis, it is moreover justified to highlight this triangle's fundamental incompleteness.

Although the precise reason for this incompleteness of their triangular movement pattern naturally remains open to debate, I hold that it is probably grounded in Rushdie's celebration of postmodern rootlessness, for, by denying his protagonists the eventual return to their country of origin and, what is more, by showing that this situation by no means constitutes a failure or a deficiency on their part, he does make a powerful narrative statement in favour of fluidity, unbelonging and rootlessness, while at the same time vigorously calling into question the traditional *topos* of the allegedly 'natural' human need for rootedness, stability and belonging. All in all, he thus deconstructs the commonplace naturalization of this *topos* – among other narrative and rhetorical strategies – by making it irrelevant to his protagonists in the storyworld.

Having analysed the macro-structural movement pattern of the incomplete triangle, I now come to the topological configuration(s) of the storyworld in this novel. On the whole, I argue, the narratively constituted storyworld topology in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (Rushdie 2000 [1999]) is marked by its peculiar interpositionality between a postcolonial, a postmodern and a transcultural configuration. It can be classified as postcolonial because it exhibits a strong power asymmetry between the centre of rock music (USA) and its peripheries (India, for instance) and, what is more, because having only an Indian passport is narratively represented as being a cause of

friction in the 1960s (cf. *TGBHF* 178-179). Initially, it is thus (at least according to Ormus's version of the story) the restriction of Indians' mobility to unattractive destinations (which stands in stark contrast to the global mobility available to affluent Western citizens) that prevents him from looking for Vina in the West.

At the same time, the narratively enacted topology does show transcultural elements inasmuch as in the fictional universe of the text, rock music is turned into Vina and Ormus's transcultural third space (cf. Section 3.3.3 of this dissertation): with transculturation being one of the distinctive markers of their music and stage performances, they succeed in ascending to the status of rock legends. Finally, the global mobility available to the protagonists as a consequence of their phenomenal success additionally endows the narratively configured topology of the novel's storyworld with a distinctly postmodern touch. All in all, the narrative configuration of this novel's storyworld topology thus epitomizes the coupling, interweaving and nesting of cultural topographies and topologies that Böhme (cf. 2005a: xx) considers to be so characteristic of these cultural constructions.

To conclude my motion-oriented analysis of *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, I want to focus on one aspect of particular relevance to a structural analysis of both extratextual cultural and fictional textual topologies: the relationship between the global and the local planes. Evidently, the movement of people, goods, images and information functions as one of the prime connectors between the global and the local in extratextual cultural contexts. Analogously, global issues manifest themselves on the local plane in contemporary Asian British novels like *A Life Apart* (Mukherjee 2011 [2008]), *The Pleasure Seekers* (Doshi 2010), *The Impressionist* (Kunzru 2002) and *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*. In the latter novel, this intricate global-local nexus is symbolized in the "metaphor of the earthquake" (Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 271), which, running through the entire text as a leitmotif, brings together these two disparate but interlinked levels. Just like the earthquake – as a local phenomenon – results from conflictual tectonic constellations on the supra-local level and, in turn, produces global reactions (usually in the form of global aid campaigns, support in rescue operations and charity appeals), global political imbalances, economic inequalities and resultant power asymmetries manifest themselves locally, frequently provoking local reactions that, in turn, have global repercussions. Throughout this novel, it is often earthquakes or other disastrous events that trigger new stages in the plot and, concomitantly, cracks, ruptures or fissures in the storyworld's topological configuration. Accordingly, it is, for instance, a devastating earthquake in Bombay that causes Vina to come back in

order to look for her lover, Ormus; it is only after she has been informed of Ormus's nearly lethal accident and his subsequent coma that Vina rushes back to Britain in order to literally awaken her beloved future husband from the (almost) dead, and, finally, Vina herself is killed in an earthquake in Mexico, which substantially contributes to spelling doom for her excessively eccentric, drug-addicted ex-husband Ormus.

Finally, I want to conclude my analysis of the exemplary movement pattern of the incomplete triangle and the attendant storyworld topologies it helps to engender by drawing attention to the fact that, beyond Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, it can be found in other Asian British and Asian American literary texts, such as the short story "The Third and Final Continent" (1999a) by Asian American author Jhumpa Lahiri, Hari Kunzru's debut novel *The Impressionist* (2002; cf. Chapter 5 of this dissertation) and V.S. Naipaul's novel *Half a Life* (2001). While it is unfortunately not possible to conduct a thorough comparative analysis of the narrative enactment of the incomplete triangle in these four literary texts within the scope of this section, I at least want to briefly point out selected crucial commonalities and differences among them: in both *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* and "The Third and Final Continent", the movement pattern of the incomplete triangle revolves around the three hubs India, Britain and the USA, whereas in *The Impressionist* and *Half a Life*, this movement pattern is structured around the triad India, Britain and Africa. In addition, the former two texts are both temporally situated in a period roughly stretching from the early postcolonial era to the present, while the latter two are either set exclusively in the late colonial era (*The Impressionist*) or span the transitional period between this era and the early days of decolonization (*Half a Life*).

In accordance with the partly overlapping but essentially heterogeneous historical contexts in which the storyworlds of these works are situated, they are also marked by topologies that, despite selective points of contact in some respects, exhibit fundamental differences in others. Accordingly, I argue, the movement pattern of the incomplete triangle does fulfil different primary functions in these literary texts. Whereas, for instance, in Rushdie's novel it is essentially about the *postmodernist* endeavour of disentangling the protagonists from their country and culture of origin, the incomplete triangle in *The Impressionist* is more about the *postcolonialist* deconstruction of imperialist movement patterns (cf. Section 5.3 of this dissertation).

Regardless of its individual semanticization and functionalization in each of these literary texts, the recurrence of the incomplete triangle as a major migratory

movement pattern in several works by Asian British and Asian American authors of different generations and cultural backgrounds testifies to its relevance for my research endeavour of developing a narratology of motion attuned to the specific historical, social and, above all, *cultural* context of the narrative enactment of transnational, primarily migratory movements in contemporary Asian British novels. Having concluded my historical, social and cultural contextualization of this genre with these final remarks of my section on (trans)migration, the exemplary movement pattern of the incomplete triangle and attendant extratextual cultural and textual fictional topologies, I will sum up my motion-oriented contextualization of contemporary Asian British novels before moving on to the methodological core of my dissertation – the cultural narratology of motion – in the following chapter.

3.5 Summary

This chapter has pursued a double objective: first, to fathom the possibilities of applying the heuristic model developed in Chapter 2 – the trialectics of motion – beyond the issue of human motion itself; and second, to contextualize this theoretical model with regard to contemporary Asian British novels.

Regarding the first goal, I have shown that the range of applicability of my trialectical model does indeed reach beyond human motion *per se*: the intricate and context-specific interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality can, in principle, be called on as a heuristic explanatory model for the emergence of cross-cultural contact situations and the concepts from cultural theory describing them, such as hybridity, syncretism, multiculturalism, interculturality and, above all, transculturalism/transculturality (Section 3.1), for the emergence of large-scale migratory movements (Section 3.3.1), for the processes of setting up borders and boundaries and attendant collective identity formation (Section 3.3.2) and, finally, for the coming into being of spatial results of migration, such as third spaces and global ethnoscapas (Section 3.3.3). In addition, I have outlined my concept of transcultural third spaces via four interrelated constitutive features: they emerge from transnational (usually migratory) movements; they exhibit processes of transculturation *sensu* Ortiz (2003 [1940]); they allow for a significant redefinition of the migrants' (individual or collective) self-understanding; and they enable the individual or collective agents concerned to reach a

certain degree of economic, political and sociocultural freedom of action in daily life (cf. Sections 3.1 and 3.3.3). With the fourth criterion in particular, I deliberately ground the utopian potential inherent in this concept in concrete socioeconomic realities, for the achievement of at least a modest degree of economic self-reliance, independence and resultant freedom of action constitutes one of the most important preconditions for realizing significant improvements in the daily lifeworlds of marginalized and disenfranchised population groups. Accordingly, this pronounced emphasis on the socioeconomic aspect of creating transcultural third spaces represents the decisive move in my attempt to make up for the post-structuralist overemphasis on metaphoricity prevalent in Bhabha's original conceptualization of third space.

Concerning the second goal, I supplied a brief account of the historical and sociocultural context in which contemporary Asian British fiction is rooted, viz. the large-scale presence of British-born, British-raised and first-generation migrant authors of South Asian origin in the contemporary British literary scene, which constitutes one of the major consequences of several waves of mass migration from the Indian subcontinent to the United Kingdom from the 1950s onwards (cf. Sections 3.2 and 3.3.1). Moreover, my contention that large-scale migration does have its roots in a particular, context-specific constellation of spatiality, agency and temporality has been exemplified by applying it to the specific instance of the first wave of South Asian migration to Britain in the 1950s.

In addition, I have combined my general reflections on transculturality with the specific example of the (South) Asian British context by reflecting upon the question of the regards in which contemporary Asian British novels can be conceived of as a transcultural mode of writing, essentially highlighting four such respects: they enact a wide range of transnational migratory movements engendering diverse transculturation processes; they thematize the renegotiation, (re)appropriation and resemanticization of contested spaces at the global, national, regional and local level in myriad ways; they deliberately call into question both essentialized monolithic national, cultural, ethnic and religious identities and their post-structuralist counterpart, i.e. perpetually fluid and transitional identities; and finally, they undermine Western modernity's claim to being a role model for non-Western regions of the world by highlighting the ways in which Western modernity is intertwined with competing configurations of modernity in formerly colonized societies (cf. Section 3.2). In conclusion, I have pointed out that contemporary Asian British novels thus do qualify as a transcultural mode of writing

with regard to all three constitutive dimensions of my trialectics of motion – spatiality, agency/identity and temporality/historicity.

Finally, I have concluded my motion-oriented contextualization of contemporary Asian British fiction by focusing on selected migratory movement patterns and resultant cultural topologies – notably colonial, postcolonial and transcultural topologies – in Section 3.4. Using the macro-structural migratory movement pattern of the incomplete triangle in particular, I have shown that it can not only be correlated with different prototypical narrative configurations of fictional storyworld topologies (such as, most prominently, postcolonial, postmodern and transcultural topologies), but can additionally be deployed to various ontological and epistemological ends, such as celebrating postmodernist rootlessness and unbelonging or deconstructing the circularity of colonial movement patterns from a postcolonial point of view. Due to its recurrence in several literary texts by contemporary Asian British and Asian American authors, the incomplete triangle thus constitutes a prime example of a macro-structural movement pattern that reflects the major concerns with which these authors grapple, such as the peculiar and contradictory co-presence of neo-colonial, postcolonial, postmodern and transcultural elements in contemporary configurations of extratextual cultural and textual fictional topologies. To the extent that the latter do not simply represent the former mimetically on a one-to-one basis, it is, however, indispensable to consider the additional aspect of the specifically *narrative enactment* of such topological configurations before embarking upon the exemplary primary text analyses. This is what – among other things – the following chapter will do. Based on the contextualized trialectics of motion outlined so far, Chapter 4 will elaborate a cultural narratology of motion, that is, a narratological semantics for the narrative enactment of motion in fiction. Designed to combine a general systematic perspective on human motion with more culturally contextualized aspects, this systematic narratological model constitutes the methodological core of my doctoral dissertation.

4 Cultural Narratology of Motion – A Narratological Semantics for the Narrative Enactment of Motion in Fiction

4.1 Approaching Motion from a Narratological Perspective

Subsequent to the theoretical exploration of the multidimensionality of human motion (cf. Chapter 2 of this dissertation) and the motion-oriented contextualization of contemporary Asian British novels in Chapter 3, I now turn to the methodological elaboration of my cultural narratology of motion proper. Accordingly, this chapter will be concerned with the development of a context-oriented narratological semantics for the narrative enactment of motion in contemporary Asian British novels, which will then serve as the analytical toolbox for the practical examination of the narrative enactment of motion in three selected Asian British novels. Building on the text-context nexus implied in Ricoeur's threefold mimesis (cf. Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52-87; see also Chapter 2 of this dissertation), this chapter will transfer my heuristic theoretical model of movement practice labelled trialectics of motion to the methodological realm of narrative representations of movement.¹⁴² To put it in Ricoeur's terminology (cf. Ricoeur 1984: 52-87), the present chapter reflects upon the modifications, amplifications and innovations necessary to make this trialectics of motion – which, as a heuristic model of movement practice in extratextual cultural reality corresponds to *prefiguration* (cf. Ricoeur 1984: 54-64) – applicable to the narrative *configuration* (cf. *ibid.* 64-70) of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels.¹⁴³

Accordingly, Section 4.2 will sketch prolegomena for a cultural narratology of motion by scrutinizing the three constitutive dimensions of the trialectics of motion – agency (Section 4.2.1), spatiality (Section 4.2.2) and temporality (Section 4.2.3) from a specifically narratological perspective. Section 4.3 will then explicate further complementary perspectives on the narrative enactment of human motion, notably the

¹⁴² Cf. my introductory conceptualization of the interrelationship between the trialectics of motion and the cultural narratology of motion in analogy with Lefebvre's "trialectics of spatiality" (Soja 1996: 74; cf. Lefebvre 1991 [1974]: 33-46) in Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

¹⁴³ As we shall see in Section 4.4 of this dissertation, this transfer requires the complementation of my concept of ontological vectoriality (defined in Chapter 2 as the combinatorial interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality in extratextual cultural and textual fictional configurations of individual movements) with a specifically narratological concept of vectoriality that takes into account the representational dimensions of the narrative enactment of human motion.

experiential aspect of characters' affective semanticization(s) of their movements across the storyworld (Section 4.3.1) and the cognitive aspect of how readers are incited to develop the idea of a character moving across space over time at all (Section 4.3.2).¹⁴⁴ Section 4.4 will then integrate these reflections into a context-oriented narratological semantics for the narrative enactment of motion in three steps. First, Section 4.4.1 will explicate the implications of transferring the mathematical concept of the vector to narratology as a conceptual metaphor for human motion. Second, Section 4.4.2 will develop an innovative narratological vocabulary for the narrative enactment of real-and-imagined movements in contemporary fiction. Finally, Section 4.4.3 will examine the emergence of macro-structural topologies from the narrative enactment of characters' various movements across the storyworld in contemporary Asian British novels.

To begin with, however, I will reflect upon the elusive nature of motion as a textual phenomenon: why is it actually so difficult to capture the narrative enactment of motion in texts by means of precise analytical categories? Is it perhaps because motion is like a butterfly that escapes from the grip of your hands the very moment you think you have caught it? From the perspective of cognitive narratology, a less poetical answer could be given: motion is such an elusive textual phenomenon simply because – like all other storyworld phenomena – it is virtually inexistent on the material level, for, after all, a literary text consists of nothing more than a sequence of words on a certain number of pages (cf. Grabes 1978: 405-413). As David Herman points out (cf. 2002: 263-264), the imaginative illusion of a character moving across a fictional storyworld comes into being in the reader's consciousness only as a result of the complex interplay of textual cues and inference processes. Although there is thus only one kind of physically measurable motion, namely the reader's ocular movement as he peruses the novel line by line and page by page, a literary text is capable of motivating the reader to imagine movements on different communicative planes, most importantly on the level of narrative mediation in contradistinction to that of the storyworld by providing (at least a minimum of) pertinent textual cues (cf. Ette 2003: 33-34).

¹⁴⁴ In my unpublished article "The Representation of Motion as a Narratological Problem: Cognitive, Contextualist and Historical Perspectives" (Matschi unpublished article), I provide an introductory overview of these three *extant* approaches to the narrative representation of motion. By contrast, the present chapter of my doctoral dissertation *elaborates an innovative* cultural narratology of motion, that is, a context-oriented methodological framework designed to elucidate the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels from various different yet complementary methodological perspectives. This innovative narratological vocabulary is grounded in the trialectics of motion developed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, which, in turn, revolves around my concept of ontological vectoriality (cf. Chapter 2 of this dissertation).

Additionally drawing on what Emmott (cf. 1997: 121-122) labels “contextual frames” (Emmott 1997: 121), that is, “knowledge representations that store specific configurations of characters located at specific space-time coordinates in the storyworld” (Herman 2002: 270), the reader thus (re-)constructs mental models of the spatio-temporal configuration of the storyworld. Evidently, just like in real life, the cognitive (re-)construction of storyworlds evoked by narrative texts requires a constant process of updating these mental models in the reader’s consciousness along the lines of the new relevant information contained in the text as the reader progresses through the novel. Consequently, in addition to the physical movement of her eyes, the reader is on the move in an imaginative sense on different levels: first, the “deictic shift” (Zubin and Hewitt 1995: 131; cf. Herman 2002: 270-274), i.e. the mental transgression of the threshold between reality and fiction the reader performs by opening the novel and immersing herself in its fictional “textual universe” (Ryan 1991: vii) in which, second, the action on the story level unfolds in a linear movement before her mental eye (cf. Ette 2003: 33-34); third, the individual plane of the characters’ moving about within the storyworld, or, more precisely, the “textual actual world” (Ryan 1991: vii) of this novel; and fourth, the movements an individual character merely imagines herself undertaking (for instance in a dream or in her memories), which form part of the various “textual possible worlds” (Ryan 1991: vii; cf. Herman 2002: 263-299).

In particular, the latter ontological distinction – between spatial and mental mobility – deserves special attention in the context of my research interest, because each of them is capable of triggering the other. Due to this fundamental reciprocity, the dynamic interplay between transnational movements actually taking place on the story level and imaginary journeys undertaken in the protagonist’s consciousness will have to be examined in sufficient detail in the subsequent primary text analyses (Chapters 5-7), because it is likely to yield valuable insights into the experiential dimension of motion and mobility on different geographical and ontological levels in contemporary Asian British novels.

4.2 Prolegomena for a Cultural Narratology of Motion

This section will delineate methodological prolegomena for a cultural narratology of motion by scrutinizing the constitution of agency, spatiality and temporality through narrative discourse from a decidedly narratological perspective. The separate exploration of the role(s) played by these three formative dimensions of human motion in the narrative enactment of this phenomenon constitutes a necessary preliminary step for my overall endeavour of developing narratological categories for their combinatorial interplay in the narrative enactment of motion. Since, in my view, agency functions as the connective pivot between space and time in the narrative enactment of the experience of human motion, this category shall be treated first here.

4.2.1 Agency in the Narrative Enactment of Motion

In the overall context of my methodological enquiry into the narrative enactment of human motion, this section is concerned with the central question of how agency emerges in narrative texts. Building on the theoretical insight into the multi-layered distribution of agency on different structural planes of narrative texts, it differentiates the category of agency according to the structural levels of narrative transmission and story (cf. Bal 2009 [1985]: 12).¹⁴⁵ As the distribution of agency is regulated primarily via the variable allocation of the two central textual functions – narration and focalization – to these planes, it is vital to recognize their fundamental interdependence, that is, to take account of “[t]he fact that ‘narration’ tends to imply focalization” (Bal 2009: 18) and vice versa (cf. *ibid.*). Generally speaking, one thus cannot occur without the other, for the act of narrating a story requires adopting a certain perceptual point of view on the events narrated, while at the same time, it is impossible to communicate such a point of view without the presence of a narrating subject, however faint its textual traces may be.

¹⁴⁵ I am grateful to Prof. Ottmar Ette and the participants in his “Romanistisches Forschungskolloquium – Forum für neue Forschungen” at the University of Potsdam on 22 April 2014, where we discussed my dissertation project, for alerting me to the necessity of differentiating between these two structural levels of narrative texts in the methodological examination of the emergence of agency in the narrative enactment of human motion.

According to Bal (cf. 2009: 42), there are three concrete textual forms of narrative agency: “speaking, looking, or acting” (Bal 2009: 42). Generally, narrators’ and characters’ agency can manifest itself in these three activities: making verbal or written utterances (represented narratively by direct or indirect speech, or the insertion of letters, diary entries, e-mails and blogs), sensory perception (realized narratively via internal or external focalization) and the performance of concrete actions on the respective textual level (actualized narratively through the focalized representation of actions). In addition to these three forms, there is, in my view, a fourth narrative manifestation of agency that Bal does not mention: the activity of reflection, which is actualized on the textual surface level by means of the representation of the narrator’s or a character’s consciousness.

Regarding the emergence of agency on the level of narrative transmission, it is indispensable to conceive of the narrator as an acting persona, no matter how far into the textual background it may recede: “To talk about narrators [...] is to impute agency to a subject of narration [...]” (Bal 2009: 12). Accordingly, the central question is: who represents whom? The precise answer to this question depends on the various gradations of the distribution of agency among narrator and characters as regulated via different types of narration (homodiegetic versus heterodiegetic¹⁴⁶), focalization (notably internal versus external) and the selection and configuration of perspectives actualized in the narrative text (cf., for instance, the difference between monoperspectival and multiperspectival narration). In homodiegetic narration, for instance, the identity of narrator and focalizer endows the narrator with an extremely high degree of agency because the two crucial functions in a narrative text are performed by one and the same textual persona.¹⁴⁷ In heterodiegetic narration, by contrast, there is a more or less clear division of labour between narrator and internal focalizer. In addition, the degree of agency ascribed to the narrator by the reader hinges upon their textual concretization, overtness and overall discernibility, hence Bal’s binary distinction between “perceptible” and “non-perceptible” narrators (Bal 2009: 26; cf. *ibid.* 18-29, and Chatman’s differentiation of “overt” and “covert” narrators [1978: 196; cf. *ibid.* 196-262]). In the context of their textual presence, narrators can also demonstrate their agency by integrating mere intertextual references, by rewriting entire classics of colonial literature from their postcolonial point of view, or by inserting

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Genette (1980 [1972]: 243-252).

¹⁴⁷ According to Bal’s model (cf. 2009: 152, 145-165), a homodiegetic narrator is always identical with an external focalizer. The narratological controversy surrounding the question of whether a homodiegetic narrator coincides with internal or external focalization can be resolved by referring to the seminal distinction between “narrating I” and “experiencing I” (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 252).

counterfactual metalepses (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 234-237) into the overall structure of the respective novel.

With regard to perspectivization, Bamberg argues that, from a typological point of view, “[l]anguages offer different lexical and grammatical choices for character and event construction, and by making such choices speakers signal different perspectives (and position selves and others) in terms of more versus less agency, dynamism and affectedness” (Bamberg 2008 [2005]: 10). Consequently, these linguistic choices exert a direct influence on perspectivization, i.e. on the way the narratorial speaker represents individual characters as regards their involvement in certain actions and his moral evaluation of the acts in question. This way, a narrator is, for instance, able to understate or exaggerate his own or a character’s degree of involvement and to praise or condemn the agent concerned, depending on whether he regards this act as morally impeccable or as purely evil (cf. Bamberg 2008 [2005]: 9-10).

Concerning the emergence of agency on the story level, the central question to be answered in the context of the narrative enactment of human motion is whether the respective character moves out of ‘free’ will or is forced to move by other characters or by the external circumstances of his current situation in the storyworld. In order to grasp this difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, in Section 2.2 of this dissertation I suggested conceptualizing agency in extratextual cultural reality as a continuum stretching between the poles of total passiveness and total activeness. The transfer of this basic model of agency to the realm of narrative texts requires us to recognize that the generation of agency on the story level is indissolubly bound up with the cognitive process of character formation in the reader’s mind. This is why I will begin my discussion of agency in the storyworld with some brief remarks on the dynamic and multifactorial, cognitive and affective process of character reception.

Despite the theoretical insight that literary characters are textual constructions, readers intuitively tend to conceive of them as human beings (cf. Schneider 2001: 607; Schneider 2013: 130).¹⁴⁸ It is between these two conceptual poles that the spectrum of character reception oscillates. This is why Schneider (cf. 2001: 607-640) integrates them into his attempt to formulate a “cognitive theory of literary character” (Schneider 2001: 607). On the one hand, he conceptualizes literary characters primarily as “mental

¹⁴⁸ For cognitive enquiries into the complex issue of character reception, cf. Grabes (1978: 405-428), Schneider (2001: 607-640), and Schneider (2013: 117-134). See also my motion-oriented recapitulation of Grabes (cf. 1978: 405-428) in my unpublished article “The Representation of Motion as a Narratological Problem: Cognitive, Contextualist and Historical Perspectives” (Matschi unpublished article).

models" (Schneider 2001: 609) based on two different types of information processing. The "mental model" (Schneider 2013: 121) formed in the reader's mind of characters and the journeys they perform hinges upon the interaction of textual information (bottom-up) and his extratextual cultural real-world knowledge (top-down), both of which feed into the inferences he makes concerning the characters' act of moving across "story space" (Chatman 1978: 96; cf. *ibid.* 96-107) over story time. This mental model of such a movement thus constitutes the result of the complex interplay of textual cues, the reader's contextual world knowledge and his capacity for "inferencing" (Schneider 2013: 121), that is, to draw on the latter to complement informational lacunae left by the former (cf. Schneider 2013: 120-121). On the other hand, Schneider deploys the term "empathy" to designate the reader's affective response to the situation a character finds herself in at a specific point in time and space during the unfolding of the narrative plot (cf. Schneider 2001: 613). Accordingly, a likable character going on a pleasurable leisure trip is most likely to evoke a joyful affective response on the part of the reader, whereas the subjection of the same character to a dreadful experience of forced migration (caused by civil war or political persecution) will incite the reader to feel pity and fear for her (cf. *ibid.*).

In order to come to terms with the multi-faceted phenomenon of agency on the story level, I contend that it is necessary to distinguish between a character's mental agency in contradistinction to her physical agency, because this differentiation enables us to analyse both narrative configurations of agency in which these two elements converge (such as in the example of the leisure trip, where the character's spatial *and* mental mobility can typically be gauged as high) and situations in which these constituents of story-level agency are at odds with one another (such as states of confinement, in which the character's spatial mobility is zero, whereas her mental mobility may nevertheless be high). As can be seen from these examples, the degree of mental agency ascribed to a character hinges upon the extent to which the reader is granted access to the textual "possible world" (Ryan 1985: 719) of her "fictional mind" (Palmer 2004) via internal focalization. The degree of a character's physical agency, by contrast, depends on the scope of her freedom of action in the textual "actual world" (Ryan 1985: 720) as manifest, for instance, in the reach of her self-determined spatial mobility. In the following, I will thus shed light on the two major types of focalization in their interrelationship with the four principal resources of human agency in the context of motion from a narratological perspective.

All in all, I assert that the degree of agency ascribed to a character depends on the extent to which she is set off from the setting and from other, minor characters in terms of subjectivity, intentionality, motivationality, actionality, corporeality, and experientiality (cf. Chatman's [1978: 267] diagram of narrative structure and his narratological distinction of "figure" versus "ground" [Chatman 1978: 138-145]). With this contention, I deliberately take account of the interdependence of a character's agency and the historical, cultural and spatial setting within which she acts.¹⁴⁹ In terms of motion, the degree to which narrative discourse foregrounds a character's individual mobility as figure from the background of the novel's chronotopic storyworld narratopology (cf. Section 4.4.3 for a definition of narratopology) thus constitutes one crucial indicator of her overall agency. While actionality and corporeality can be actualized narratively without direct access to the respective character's "fictional mind" (Palmer 2004), the narrative configuration of all the other constituents of human agency (subjectivity, intentionality, motivationality and experientiality) depends on the focalized representation of consciousness to a greater or lesser degree. Thus, narratively enacted real-and-imagined movements become perceptible as such to the reader only on the condition that he is granted access to the moving character's consciousness, experientiality and mental mobility by means of internal focalization (cf. Hallet 2009: 87-89). Accordingly, it does make a significant difference whether the narrator sums up the character's experience of a journey from his superior vantage point in a rather distanced fashion or whether the illusion of direct access to the individual character's cognitive-affective experience of this trip is created. Generally speaking, the issue of focalization¹⁵⁰ directly reverberates on the perceived experiential immediacy of such an account: if internal focalization is deployed, that is, if the subject of focalization is situated on the story level, this experiential immediacy is much higher than in external focalization, that is, in cases where the focalizer is to be found on the level of narrative transmission (cf. Bal 2009: 152, 145-165).¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ Cf. my reconceptualization of Bakhtin's chronotopes (cf. Bakhtin 1981a [1973]: 84–258) as agentive space-time configurations in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. See also Lotman's definition of a character's agency via her ability to cross the boundary between two different semantic fields within their spatial environment (cf. Lotman 1977 [1971]: 229-230, 233, 236-240, and Section 4.2.2 of this dissertation).

¹⁵⁰ Bal defines focalization as "the relations between the elements presented and the vision through which they are presented" (Bal 2009: 145).

¹⁵¹ I am using Bal's model of focalization instead of Genette's (cf. 1980 [1972]: 189-211) because it assigns the role of focalizer to either the narrator or a character unambiguously. However, I do employ it in tandem with Genette's subdivision of internal focalization into fixed, variable and multiple types (cf. *ibid.* 189-190) in order to capture the differences between monoperspectival and multiperspectival narration. In addition, Bal's model of focalization is combined with Genette's distinction between homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narration (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 243-252) here. For the differentiation of heterogeneous levels of narrative transmission, notably extradiegetic and intra- and metadiegetic levels, cf. Genette (1980 [1972]: 227-234).

Building on Bal's differentiation of focalizers as "the subjects of perception and interpretation" (Bal 2009: 12) and actors¹⁵² as "the subjects of action" (ibid.), I introduce the concept of traveller-focalizer for the coincidence of the textual functions of moving agent and internal focalizer in one and the same textual persona. In *The Pleasure Seekers* (Doshi 2010), for example, this functional merging applies to all three protagonists – Babo, Siân and Bean – because their respective transnational migrations are presented through the lens of their own subjective point of view. This point of view is of course marked by the characters' individual historical, spatial and sociocultural positionality in its interdependence with their individual perspective, that is, their "subjective worldview" (Surkamp 2008 [2005]: 424) as determined by their "knowledge and abilities, psychological disposition, system of norms and values, belief sets, attitudes, motivations, needs and intentions as well as [their] sex, gender, sexuality, ethnic identity, and the general economic, political, social, and cultural conditions under which [they] live" (ibid.).¹⁵³ While in general, all of these factors reverberate directly upon an individual character's agency, the factors relating to her motivationality (knowledge, abilities, psychological disposition and so on) and to her grounding in the storyworld's spatio-temporal structures (general socioeconomic and historical conditions of living, ethnic identity and so on) are particularly relevant in the context of the narrative enactment of human motion.

To complete my motion-oriented survey of the narratological category of focalization, I would like to point out that, in addition to the subjects of focalization,¹⁵⁴ the objects perceived by them likewise merit attention. In the context of the difference between characters' spatial and mental mobility, Bal's distinction between a perceptible and an imperceptible focalized object is particularly relevant, because it allows us to differentiate between objects of focalization that are perceptible by everyone in the textual actual world (such as obstacles on a travelling character's route) and those that merely pop up in the textual possible world of an individual character's mind, for example in the course of dreams (cf. Bal 2009: 156, 153-160).

In order to concretize the foregrounding of protagonists in terms of agency, I will now focus on the question of how the narrative representation of its four principal

¹⁵² I use the concepts of 'actor' and 'agent' more or less synonymously throughout this dissertation.

¹⁵³ For a detailed, jointly narratological and context-oriented investigation into the possibilities of combining the perspectives endorsed by characters and narrators in different types of perspective structures, cf. Surkamp (2003).

¹⁵⁴ According to Bal, the subjects of focalization can be subdivided into "perceptible" and "non-perceptible" (Bal 2009: 26) focalizers in analogy with the subjects of narration (cf. Bal 2009: 26; cf. ibid. 18-29).

resources in the context of human motion – subjectivity, motivationality, corporeality, and experientiality – contributes to a protagonist's standing out from the crowd of minor characters and from the spatio-temporal setting. Regarding the first of these resources, Beck provides an exhaustive discussion of different strategies of enacting human subjectivity in its interdependence with spatiality: first, via the selection of characters and spaces; second, via characters' movements within certain spaces and across the boundaries between them; third, via narrative transmission and focalization and, finally, via the narrative representation of consciousness (cf. Beck 2014: 62-104). This is why I will concentrate primarily on the other three resources of agency in the following. Suffice it to say here that in principle, all of these narrative strategies can be brought to bear on the narrative enactment of agency in the overall context of human motion as well. In particular, the reach of characters' spatial mobility, that is, the physical movements and attendant border crossings they are able to perform on their own, constitutes a decisive indicator of their individual agency (cf. Lotman 1977 [1971]: 229-230, 233, 236-240; see also Section 4.2.2 of this dissertation).

At the same time, characters' spatial and sociocultural positionality within the storyworld is likewise indicative of their overall agency (cf., for instance, the stark contrast between a globally mobile member of the international academic or business elite and a hapless destitute refugee). This positionality results from the interplay of their "self-positioning" (Döring 2002: 1) and the way they are positioned by other characters. The degree to which these two positionings either diverge or converge permits us to make inferences concerning the reliability of the different agents and their perspectives (cf. Bamberg 2008 [2005]: 9-10). What is more, the realization of upward or downward social mobility (cf. Urry 2007: 8) on the part of a character in the course of the story is tantamount to highly significant changes in her individual agency within the sociocultural configuration of the storyworld. Finally, the degree to which a transcultural character is represented as devoting herself to mobility reverberates not only on her individual agency but also on her "identity configuration" (Welsch 2009: 9): if an analysis of the representation of her consciousness yields the result that she expresses a desire for stable grounding in a place called 'home' (despite her awareness of its nature as a discursive construction), then her identity configuration is a transcultural one (cf. Welsch 2009: 8-9). If, by contrast, she chooses to celebrate postmodern rootlessness and unbelonging, her identity configuration qualifies as transdifferential (cf. Sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 of this dissertation).

This category of momentum, that is, the degree of *intrinsic commitment* an individual agent exhibits vis-à-vis the performance of a particular movement, directly correlates with the second resource of agency to be considered here: human motivationality. Conceiving of human motion as an action, I want to highlight the implications of this conceptualization here. According to Ricoeur (cf. 1984 [1983]: 54-55), any human action requires the presence of the following elements. First, an agent who carries out the action in question and can therefore be held responsible for it by the narrator and his fellow characters. Second, this agent is endowed with motives, i.e. personal reasons for which he has chosen to act in this particular way, and goals, that is, desired outcomes of this action. As Ricoeur rightly points out, there is an intrinsic correlation between the agent and his motives: “To identify an agent and to recognize this agent’s motives are complementary operations” (Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 55). In addition to these individual factors, Ricoeur also stresses the interpersonal nature of human action, for “to act is always to act ‘with’ others. Interaction can take the form of cooperation or competition or struggle” (Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 55). Finally, he draws attention to the spatial, historical and sociocultural embeddedness of human agents in structures, circumstances and situations that are not of their own making but that nonetheless constitute practical constraints on their individual freedom of action (or enabling opportunities for it) (cf. Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 54-55).

In terms of the narrative enactment of human motion, this means that the concrete configuration of the Bakhtinian chronotopes (cf. Bakhtin 1981a [1973]: 84–258) within which they act directly impinges upon agents’ mobility or immobility in the storyworld. While Ricoeur mentions all factors circumscribing the conceptual field of human agency, he does not specify the correlation between different types of motivation, the character’s agency and her individual experientiality of the movement in question: intrinsic motivation (which is synonymous with a high degree of momentum; cf. Section 2.2 of this dissertation) is commonly interpreted as a clue to an agent’s high degree of activeness, whereas extrinsic motivation may indicate a specific agent’s passiveness. This essential difference between ‘moving’ and ‘being moved’ can have far-reaching implications for parameters like the individual character’s self-perception and the character constellation of a particular novel.

Regarding human experientiality, it is indispensable to recognize two things. First, the individual character’s jointly cognitive and affective experience of the journey in question is indissolubly tied to her fundamental corporeality, i.e. her bodily embeddedness in the spatio-temporal configuration of the storyworld:

Embodiedness evokes all the parameters of a real-life schema of existence which always has to be situated in a specific time and space frame, and the motivational and experiential aspects of human actionality likewise relate to the knowledge of one's physical presence in the world. Embodiment and existence in human terms are indeed the same thing [...]. (Fludernik 1996: 30; cf. *ibid.*)¹⁵⁵

Second, this cognitive-affective and physical experience of a journey on the part of an individual character constitutes the only point of access to spatiality and temporality in the narrative enactment of motion. As we have seen in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, this experiential dimension of travelling correlates with different modes of travel in various ways. This is particularly true of the affective side of the experience of human motion. Due to its much higher degree of tellability, a thrilling adventure trip across the Brazilian jungle is more likely to be narratively enacted in scrupulous and graphic detail than a boring, because standardized and monotonous, airplane trip. From the point of view of context-oriented narratology, these experiential differences among modes of travel do reverberate upon narrative representation inasmuch as different narrative strategies tend to be deployed for the enactment of heterogeneous travel experiences (cf. Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation).

In addition to external friction (cf. Sections 2.1 and 4.2.2 of this dissertation), the degree of agency granted to a character can also be restricted by internal friction, that is, by an individual's psychic inhibitions, physical or mental disabilities, mental disorders or simply a lack of sense of orientation or any other skill required to plan and carry out a journey (cf. Section 2.2). Naturally, such internal constraints directly impinge upon the individual character's experientiality of movement, or his inability to move. Due to its mental nature, internal friction is represented narratively by means of different techniques of representing consciousness, such as "psycho-narration" (cf. Cohn 1978: 21-57), free indirect discourse (cf. Fludernik 1993: 72-359) or interior monologue. As an immediate result of internal friction, the psychoanalytical phenomenon of belatedness (cf. Kirchhoff 2009: 141-232) constitutes a particularly pertinent example of the repercussions of internal friction on experientiality: when, for instance, Ritwik, the protagonist of *A Life Apart* (Mukherjee 2011 [2008]) wets his trousers because he is unable to go to the bathroom of his student dormitory due to his haunting memories of being maltreated by his mother as a child, this experience instantiates the psychoanalytical concept of belatedness insofar as Ritwik's bodily functions continue operating, but his mind proves to be temporarily unable to resolve to

¹⁵⁵ See also my motion-oriented recapitulation of Fludernik (cf. 1996: 12-52) in "The Representation of Motion as a Narratological Problem: Cognitive, Contextualist and Historical Perspectives" (Matschi unpublished article).

act as is expected of him (cf. Kirchhoff 2009: 141-232; Laplanche and Pontalis 1972 [1967]: 313-317; see also West-Pavlov 2013: 116-119).

Subsequent to this overview of the significance of its four principal resources for the emergence of human agency in narrative texts, I will conclude this section by briefly reflecting upon the various different roles that characters can perform in the context of the narrative enactment of human motion. With his “Semantic Continuum of Thematic Roles” (Herman 2002: 157-163, particularly Figure 6 on p. 158), which is an adapted version of van Valin’s model (1993a), Herman provides a fine-grained differentiation of actors in terms of the nature and degree of their involvement in the action currently narrated. The poles of this continuum are constituted by agents on the left end and patients on the right. In between, Herman positions the following items (from left to right): effectors, that is, storyworld participants “that can cause things to happen, without instigating or controlling what happens in the manner of agents” (Herman 2002: 158); experiencers, i.e. participants who are “the locus of an internal event, but [in a way that is] not wilful, volitional and instigating” (van Valin 1993a: 42); locatives, which he subdivides into “source[s], path[s], goal[s] and recipient[s]” (Herman 2002: 158); and themes, i.e. entities that “get moved around, even if they do not get kicked or diced or raked, like patients” (ibid. 157). As Herman’s specifications show, Bremond’s classical structuralist dichotomy of “agent versus patient” (cf. Bremond 1973) merits close attention and simultaneously requires more fine-grained distinctions along the continuum stretching between these two poles, notably in regard to complex narratological issues such as, for example, the question of the individual motivation for performing a certain movement on the part of a character on the story level and her experientiality of this journey.

Accordingly, agent and effector, on the one hand, and patient and experiencer, on the other, are the concepts to be retained in the application of Herman’s semantic model to the narrative enactment of human motion. Regarding the category “experiencer”, it has to be noted, however, that in this context, the role of experiencer may refer to both external events – i.e. spatial movements and their refraction through the lens of the internal focalizer’s consciousness – and purely internal events – i.e. to all instances of mental mobility. As Herman’s model does not take into account the impact of the historical, spatial and sociocultural context in which individual characters act upon the relative distribution of agency among them, the following two sections will deal with the spatial and temporal aspects of this context of the narrative enactment of human motion. Due to its central role as the crucial bottleneck enabling and restricting

the reader's access to the spatial and temporal dimensions of the storyworld, the individual characters' cognitive-affective experientiality of moving across the storyworld shall receive particular attention in the following.

4.2.2 Spatiality in the Narrative Enactment of Motion

This section deals with the role that spatiality plays in the narrative enactment of human motion.¹⁵⁶ Taking up the central hypothesis that space and motion are co-constitutive of one another (cf. Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 20-21; Beck 2014: 26-61, and Section 2.1 of this dissertation), it will shed light on the implications that the double-edged role of the spatial dimension of storyworlds engenders for my methodological investigation into the narrative enactment of human motion. This is why this section consists of two parts. The first is concerned with the spatial formation of movement – the impact of the narrative representation of space on the (im)possibility of characters' agentic movement(s) across the storyworld. The second, by contrast, treats of the reverse direction of influence, that is, the consequences of the narrative enactment of such movements for the narrative configuration of the storyworld's spatial dimension. With this latter perspective, I explicitly integrate the fundamental insight that characters' movements constitute the prime explanatory factor accounting for the relationality of a novel's storyworld into the overall picture of my methodological framework (cf. Herman 2002: 263-285; Beck 2014: 62-66, 81-91; Dünne 2015: 49). Given my primary research interest – the theoretical, contextual and methodological elucidation of narrative enactments of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels – it is evident that this second perspective, which views storyworlds as mental models of relational, spatio-temporally evolving configurations of places connected by

¹⁵⁶ In Section 2.2.2 (pp. 33-55) of my unpublished diploma thesis "Imaginative Geographien und die Inszenierung postkolonialer Räume in gegenwärtigen Fictions of Migration" (Matschi 2010), I am concerned – among other things – with the narrative representation of space as well, but from a different perspective, namely that of options available for narratively enacting Said's concept of "imaginative geography" (Said 2003 [1978]: 54) and other spatial concepts from postcolonial theory. Here, by contrast, I am approaching the narrative representation of space from the vantage point of my prime research interest in this doctoral dissertation, that is, the analytical elucidation of the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels by means of a cultural narratology of motion. See also my introductory article "Representing Space in Literature: Narratological Categories and Practical Analyses" (Matschi 2014), which aims to provide undergraduate students with a basic toolkit for the examination of this aspect of literary texts.

characters' movements (cf. Herman 2002: 263-285; Herman 2008 [2005]: 569-570), is the more significant one.

How does the narrative representation of space open up, restrict or prevent opportunities for characters' agentive movements across the storyworld? In order to find one's bearings in this complex question, it is necessary to first take a closer look at the textual process of representing space narratively. In his structuralist approach to this problem, Nünning (cf. 2009: 33-52) differentiates between three dimensions of the narrative representation of space: "the paradigmatic axis of selection, the syntagmatic axis of combination or configuration of narrated spaces and the discursive axis of perspectivization" (Nünning 2009: 39; my translation). In any narratological analysis of the spatiality of fictional storyworlds, the following questions thus need to be answered. Which settings, objects and situations are selected for narrative representation from the vast reservoir of extratextual historical and contemporary cultural material (paradigmatic axis)? How are these elements of extratextual cultural reality represented narratively; that is, "which literary techniques of representation contribute to the intratextual relationing and narrative configuration of spaces and objects in a novel on the syntagmatic axis of combination and the discursive axis of perspectivization" (Nünning 2009: 39; my translation; cf. *ibid.* 39-44)?

Regarding the first step, Nünning (cf. 2009: 40) identifies two principal resources for the narrative representation of space: the context of extratextual (historical or contemporary) cultural reality on the one hand, and intertextual references to previous literary texts on the other. According to Nünning, "the analysis of extratextual references is important [because it] yields insight into a novel's referentiality to cultural reality [and] into the relationship between narrated spaces, real spaces and cultural models of space" (Nünning 2009: 40; my translation). One pertinent example of this intricate interrelationship is that between extratextual cultural and textual fictional topologies, which shall be analysed in Section 4.4.3 of this dissertation.

Regarding the second step, Nünning provides a comprehensive list of narratological categories that can be utilized for an analysis of the formal aspect of the narrative representation of space. Beyond the narrative technique of description, which has traditionally been associated with representing space, he enumerates the following categories: representation of consciousness, narrative situation and focalization, imagery and tropes, monoperspectival versus different techniques of multiperspectival

narration, and unreliable narration (cf. Nünning 2009: 45-46). With postcolonial novels in particular, the structuration of story space is frequently accomplished by way of multiperspectival narration. The polyphonic constitution of “story space” (Chatman 1978: 96; cf. *ibid.* 96-107) arising from this co-presence of multiple narratorial voices problematizes any pretence of monolithic access to narrative configurations of ‘reality’ (cf. Nünning 2009: 45-46; Hallet 2009: 102-107). In particular, the question of which type of focalization is applied does harbour important consequences for the reader’s perception of the fictional spaces represented narratively. Accordingly, Nünning (cf. 2009: 45) distinguishes “authorial-narrated” (*ibid.*) or externally focalized spaces, which are described primarily by a heterodiegetic narrator, from “figural-focalized” (*ibid.*) or internally focalized spaces, that is, spaces that are perceived from the subjective point of view of a character in the storyworld (cf. Nünning 2009: 45). As a third option, Nünning points to the possibility of thematizing and evoking space in character dialogue (cf. *ibid.*). Obviously, each of these representational techniques conveys a different impression of “story space” (Chatman 1978: 96; cf. *ibid.* 96-107) to the reader. Whereas a heterodiegetic narrator describes space from a superordinate and static but spatio-temporally unspecific vantage point, the evocation of story space through the eyes of an internal focalizer moving about within the storyworld typically dynamizes the narrative representation of space (cf. Nünning 2009: 45).

Evidently, the second option is the most important one in the context of my research interest, for the individual traveller-focalizer’s subjective, jointly cognitive and affective experientiality of her spatial surroundings while on the move generally constitutes the prime point of access to the storyworld’s spatial dimension in contemporary Asian British novels. Consequently, the central question is: how does this individual internal focalizer experience the places and cultural spaces she travels across on the way from her point of departure to her destination? Which places are represented as desirable destinations, and which should better be avoided due to infernal living conditions, political chaos or a repressive regime? Thus, the way in which particular places are semanticized by the internal focalizer (and the narrator) directly reverberates upon the probability with which they may be chosen as final destination of this protagonist’s migration. In other words, the atmosphere these places are endowed with by means of the various narrative techniques available directly impacts upon their overall attractiveness or repulsiveness in the eyes of the respective internal focalizer (cf. Sections 2.2 and 3.3.1 of this dissertation).

Regarding the issue of the narrative techniques available for the narrative representation of space, Nünning's distinction between externally and internally focalized spaces lends itself to a productive correlation with the binary differentiation explicated in the following quotation by Ryan (cf. 2014 [2012]: n. pag.):

On the macro-level, spatial information can be organized according to two basic strategies: the map and the tour (Linde & Labov 1975), also known as the survey and the route. In the map strategy, space is represented panoramically from a perspective ranging from the disembodied god's eye point of view of pure vertical projection to the panoramic view of an observer situated on an elevated point. In this mode of presentation, space is divided into segments and the text covers them in systematic fashion, e.g. left to right, north to south, front to back. The tour strategy, by contrast, represents space dynamically from a mobile point of view. Thus an apartment will for instance be described room by room, following the itinerary of somebody who is showing the apartment. In contrast to the pure vision of the map view, the tour simulates the embodied experience of a traveler. (Ryan 2014 [2012]: n. pag.)

While the map strategy will typically be associated with narratorial descriptions of story space from a superordinate vantage point, the tour strategy renders the qualities of story space from the point of view of a character's individual, spatio-temporally concretized cognitive-affective experientiality of a movement across it (cf. Nünning 2009: 39-46). Hence, the latter strategy is evidently the more intriguing one from the point of view of my research interest, the development of a cultural narratology of motion.

Based on a precise identification of the narrative techniques deployed for the evocation of space in a novel, Nünning (cf. 2009: 45-46) contends, it becomes possible to set up hypotheses concerning the fictional semanticization and functionalization of space in this particular text. In this process, "the syntagmatic relations among the spatial elements of this novel" (Nünning 2009: 46; my translation) are of particular relevance, because, from a jointly semantic and contextualist point of view, "the language of spatial relations [...] prove[s] to be the material for constructing cultural models with completely non-spatial content" (Lotman 1977 [1971]: 218). As topological connectors between these different spatial elements of a novel's storyworld, characters' acts of border-crossing finally acquire special significance in this analytical context as well (cf. Nünning 2009: 45-46; Lotman 1977 [1971]: 229-241).

In order to provide a precise description of their syntagmatic relations, it is indispensable to categorize the spatial elements of a novel's storyworld first. This problem can be tackled from two different angles: whereas Ette's differentiation of scales of movement (translocal, transregional, transnational and so on; cf. Ette 2005:

23) resorts to extratextual *geographical* entities in order to complete this task, Ryan's (cf. 2014 [2012]: n. pag.) distinction of five different layers of narrative space is primarily ontological in nature.

Building on Buchholz and Jahn's definition of "narrative space" as "the environment in which story-internal characters move about and live" (Buchholz and Jahn 2008 [2005]: 552), Ryan differentiates the micro-level entity of "[s]patial frames" – defined as "the immediate surroundings of actual events, the various locations shown by the narrative discourse" (Ryan 2014 [2012]: n. pag.) – from its macro-level counterpart, the "[s]etting", conceptualized as "the general socio-historico-geographical environment in which the action takes place" (Ryan 2014 [2012]: n. pag.): "[i]n contrast to spatial frames, this is a relatively stable category which embraces the entire text" (Ryan 2014 [2012]: n. pag.). With her characterization of the latter as consisting of a social, a historical and a geographical dimension, Ryan takes into account all three formative dimensions of human motion: agency (as determined by the social context in which the individual acts), temporality/history and space/geography. This is why her conceptualization of setting proves to be compatible with my reconceptualization of Bakhtinian chronotopes as agentive space-time configurations (see also Mahler 1999a: 11-36, particularly 28-32).

In addition, Ryan further distinguishes "[s]tory space" – that is, "the space relevant to the plot, as mapped by the actions and thoughts of the characters" (Ryan 2014 [2012]: n. pag.), which "consists of all the spatial frames plus all the locations mentioned by the text that are not the scene of actually occurring events" (Ryan 2014 [2012]: n. pag.) – from the "[n]arrative (or story) world", defined as "the story space completed by the reader's imagination on the basis of cultural knowledge and real world experience [...]" (Ryan 2014 [2012]: n. pag.). "While story space consists of selected places separated by voids, the narrative world is conceived by the imagination as a coherent, unified, ontologically full and materially existing geographical entity, even when it is a fictional world that possesses none of these properties" (Ryan 2014 [2012]: n. pag.). The fifth and final ontological lamination in Ryan's model of narrative space is called "[n]arrative universe", conceptualized as "the world (in the spatio-temporal sense of the term) presented as actual by the text, plus all the counterfactual worlds constructed by characters as beliefs, wishes, fears, speculations, hypothetical thinking, dreams, and fantasies" (Ryan 2014 [2012]: n. pag.). Her category of narrative universe thus refers to a novel's textual actual world (cf. Ryan 1985: 720) in tandem with the textual possible worlds (cf. Ryan 1985: 719) of its characters' mental mobility.

However, Ryan makes clear that “[f]or a possible world to be part of the metaphorical concept of narrative universe, it must be textually activated [...]” (Ryan 2014 [2012]: n. pag.).

In the context of my cultural narratology of motion, Ryan’s distinction of five different laminations of *narrative* space represents an appropriate complement to Ette’s differentiation of five geographical scales of *real-world* movement. In particular, her concept of the storyworld is of outstanding relevance to my research interest because it brings together the textual entity of story space with the reader’s contextual world knowledge and real-life experience. This is why it deserves further concretization: Herman (2008 [2005]: 570) defines “[s]toryworlds [as] mental models of who did what to and with whom, when, where, why, and in what fashion in the world to which interpreters relocate (Ryan 1991) as they work to comprehend a narrative” (ibid.).

By and large, I will primarily use Herman’s concept of the storyworld whenever I am dealing with the imaginatively reconstructed spatio-temporal and social environment in which characters act, because, unlike one-sided terms such as “story space” (Chatman 1978: 96) or “narrative space” (Buchholz and Jahn 2008 [2005]: 552), this concept expresses the chronotopic inseparability of the spatial and temporal dimensions of such an environment in a single compound. As it additionally takes into consideration the dimension of characters’ individual agency, it is the most appropriate terminological equivalent to my reconceptualization of Bakhtinian chronotopes as agentive space-time configurations. This is all the more true as Herman’s usage of the term “world” in tandem with “story” is meant to highlight that readers and “[i]nterpreters do not merely reconstruct a [temporal] sequence of events and a [spatial] set of existents, but imaginatively (emotionally, viscerally) inhabit a world in which things matter, agitate, exalt, repulse, provide grounds for laughter and grief, and so on – both for narrative participants [i.e. characters] and for interpreters of the story” (Herman 2008 [2005]: 570; cf. ibid. 569-570). In its attempt to explain the immersiveness of stories, the concept of the storyworld thus brings together the three constitutive dimensions of human motion in their cognitive and affective as well as textual and contextual manifestations.

Having elaborated on the narrative representation of space as one shaping factor of characters’ movement across a novel’s fictional storyworld (spatial formation of movement), I will now approach the other side of the coin, that is, the movement-bound formation of space. As they integrate these two aspects in one coherent

narratological model, Lotman's reflections on the border and its crossing constitute a suitable interface between the spatial formation of movement and the movement-bound formation of space in the novel. To begin with, Lotman considers "the *boundary* [...] the most important topological feature of space" (Lotman 1977 [1971]: 229; italics in original):

The boundary divides the entire space of the text into two mutually non-intersecting subspaces. Its basic property is impenetrability. The way in which the boundary divides the text is one of its essential characteristics. This division can be between insiders and outsiders, between the living and the dead, between rich and poor. What is more important is that the boundary which divides space into two parts must be impenetrable, and the internal structure of each of the subspaces must be different. (Lotman 1977 [1971]: 229-230)

According to Lotman's structuralist model (cf. 1977 [1971]: 217-231),

[this] division of the storyworld into opposite subspaces unfolds on three levels: *topologically*, story space is structured through oppositions such as 'high versus low', 'left versus right' or 'inside versus outside'. In literary texts, these topological distinctions are associated with *semantic* oppositions like 'good versus evil', 'familiar versus unfamiliar', 'natural versus artificial'. Finally, this semantically charged topological order is concretized by means of *topographical* contrasts such as 'mountain versus valley', 'town versus forest', or 'heaven versus hell'. (Martinez 2011a: 6-7; italics in original; my translation)

Thus, "the spatial order of the world in these texts becomes an organizing element around which its non-spatial features are also constructed" (Lotman 1977 [1971]: 220; cf. Martinez 2011a: 7). This insight into the modelling role of textually evoked space for the structuration of aspatial semantic content does harbour important consequences reaching far beyond the merely fictional realm to include the text-context nexus inasmuch as this central role of spatiality pertains to the construction of extratextual cultural and ethical models of the world as well (cf. Lotman 1977 [1971]: 217-218).¹⁵⁷

In terms of narratology, Lotman's ground-breaking stroke of genius lies in his definition of a narrative event via the protagonist's act of disrupting the topological order of story space by crossing the otherwise insurmountable border between its two subspaces: "What then is an event as a unit of plot construction? *An event in a text is the shifting of a persona across the borders of a semantic field*" (Lotman 1977 [1971]: 233; italics in original). With this definition, Lotman grasps the correlation between space and motion as well as between the latter and narrativity by defining the protagonist's act of border-crossing as the central fulcrum around which the emergence of a narrative plot revolves (cf. Frank 2009: 67). This performative act of spatial border-

¹⁵⁷ For a brief but insightful analysis of the "constitutive function [of literary spaces] for the emergence of spatiality itself" (Dünne 2015: 45), cf. Dünne (2015: 45-46).

crossing on the part of the protagonist always coincides with a moral transgression: “Thus an event always involves the violation of some prohibition [...]” (Lotman 1977 [1971]: 236).¹⁵⁸ In addition, Lotman’s model also proves to be compatible with my trialectics of motion and the cultural narratology of motion built upon it because Lotman conceives of the border as a barrier that is insurmountable for everyone except the protagonist on one single occasion (cf. Lotman 1977 [1971]: 240-241), therewith taking into consideration the restrictive role played by external friction in the shaping of characters’ movement across the storyworld. Both natural and man-made types of external friction are representable by means of different combinations of narrative techniques, such as naming of the concrete obstacles in tandem with summary or scenic presentation of their consequences for the characters’ mobility. Essentially, the narrative configuration of the spatial dimension of a novel’s storyworld thus always produces repercussions on the characters’ freedom of movement, either by inviting them to move about freely, or by restricting or even preventing movement through its presence as external friction.

Having briefly presented the benefits of Lotman’s original spatial narratology (cf. Frank 2009: 65-68; see also Mahler 1999a: 35), I will now turn to the drawbacks of its overly simplifying structuralist orientation.¹⁵⁹ In order to render his original model applicable to the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels, five central modifications are necessary. Instead of Lotman’s binary structuration of the presence of external friction (absolute for all minor characters and inexistent for the protagonist in one specific situation), it seems, first of all, more reasonable to assume a continuum of different gradations of external friction stretching between these two poles (cf. Frank 2009: 69). For a globally mobile business executive or postmodern intellectual, external friction is virtually zero, whereas for so-called illegal migrants, the threatening real-life presence of borders makes them appear as almost insurmountable barriers (cf. Section 3.3.2 of this dissertation), that is, external friction is (almost) total. Generally speaking, the higher the degree of external friction a character has to face, the lower is her individual agency in terms of freedom of movement.

¹⁵⁸ According to Lotman’s theory, acts of border-crossing qualify as ethical transgressions and, hence, as events only if two conditions are fulfilled. First, the borders concerned must be semanticized culturally. Second, the act of crossing them must possess a particular relevance for the unfolding of the novel’s plot, i.e. a high degree of narrative saliency (cf. Lotman 1977 [1971]: 229-241; Frank 2009: 67).

¹⁵⁹ As Frank (cf. 2009: 68-71) shows, Lotman himself revised his own basic structuralist model in his later writings (cf., for example, Lotman 2010 [2000]: 161-290). In the following, I am thus drawing on Frank’s summary of these modifications (cf. 2009: 68-71) and contextualizing them tentatively where necessary.

Second, the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels is marked by a multiplication of cultural (sub)spaces, the borders between them and border-crossings on the five geographical levels distinguished by Ette (cf. 2005: 23, and Frank 2009: 69). Third, this heightened degree of complexity of the storyworld's topological structuration frequently goes hand in hand with a positive resemanticization of the protagonists' multiple acts of (transnational) border-crossing: no longer semanticized as transgressions of culturally dominant ethical taboos, they are increasingly viewed as mutually beneficial acts of intercultural translation and mediation on the part of postcolonial go-betweens (cf. Frank 2009: 69-70; see also Section 4.4.3 of this dissertation). Fourth, the border itself has been transformed in this process from a mere dividing line into a contact zone *sensu* Pratt (1992), that is, a hybrid space of intercultural exchange in which post-colonial border-crossers function as cultural intermediaries and translators, or, in short, as transcultural go-betweens (cf. Frank 2009: 68-71; see also Section 3.3.2 of this dissertation). In the context of my research interest, it is vital to note that the latter three phenomena described here contribute substantially to the emergence of transculturality in contemporary Asian British novels. Fifth, it is indispensable to recognize that the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels must be contextualized historically (cf. Frank 2009: 71), for example in terms of the modes of travel available and the cultural attitudes towards motion and mobility prevalent in the historical or contemporary era in which the respective novel's action is set. This final point is of particular significance, for without a sufficiently precise characterization of this historical context, Lotman's original model of spatial narratology is simply incapable of reflecting the complexity of my trialectics of motion and the cultural narratology of motion resting upon its pillars, which consist precisely of the three constitutive dimensions of human motion and their manifold interactions.

With Lotman's postulate concerning the double significance of the protagonist's act of border-crossing (both in its function as trigger of a novel's plot and in its disruptive effect on the storyworld's topological structure), we have reached the other side of the coin, that is, the movement-bound formation of space, which tackles the issue of how characters' movements across the storyworld contribute to the production and concretization of story space (cf. Dünne 2015: 49). With the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels, it can generally be said that the individual traveller-focalizer's immediate experiential perspective on the event of transnational migration and the cultural spaces involved matters a lot more than any kind of distanced narratorial comment on or description of this biographically

momentous occurrence. As well, different movement practices and modes of travel generate different experientialities for the individual traveller.

This commonsensical recognition is reflected in the narrative techniques deployed for their enactment: whereas Ingold's movement practice of wayfaring (cf. Ingold 2011b: 149) is most likely represented by means of an alternation of summary and scene, that is, in a narrative mode allowing for variations in detail and scope of presentation, the diametrically opposite movement practice of transport lends itself to particularly concise modes of representation such as, most prominently, the Genettean "ellipsis" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 106; cf. *ibid.*: 106-109, and Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation). Accordingly, the deterritorialization and defrictionalization of space through air travel finds its literary equivalent in elliptical modes of enacting such trips and, concomitantly, the direct juxtaposition of heterogeneous cultural spaces in contemporary Asian British novels (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107; see also Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation). Naturally, these different narrative techniques permit disparate degrees of concretization of the character's spatial environment while on the move. Irrespective of this degree of textual activation, the character's experience of space while on the move is always multisensory, i.e. it involves the complex interplay of all five human senses as well as his corporeality, cognition and affective disposition (cf. Hallet 2009: 90-93; Beck 2014: 98-102, and Würzbach 2006: 191-204; see also Section 4.3.1 of this dissertation).

In terms of intratextual functionalization, the narrative enactment of human motion generally serves as the prime means of sequencing and relating different settings (cf. Hallet 2009: 102-107), of triggering the co-presence of these settings in the reader's mind (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107), and of resemanticizing individual settings and the entire spatio-temporal and topological structure of the storyworld (cf. Neumann 2009: 128-135; see also Section 4.4.3 of this dissertation). This is why in the following, I will elaborate on each of these aspects briefly. Regarding the first aspect, it is vital to realize that characters' movements across the storyworld play a crucial part in the temporal sequencing and spatial relating of the various cultural spaces that, taken together, form the novel's story space. As the reader is most often acquainted with these different but always chronotopic cultural settings through the eyes of a traveller-focalizer moving from one place to another, these movements constitute the connecting tissue that establishes relations of contrast and correspondence between these heterogeneous chronotopic settings by highlighting their differences and disparities, or similarities and commonalities. This is where the second aspect comes

in, for the spatio-temporal sequencing and relationing of different cultural spaces through characters' movements always triggers their cognitive co-presence in the reader's imagination (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107). The decisive part played by characters' movements in this process justifies my reconceptualization of Bakhtinian chronotopes as agentive space-time configurations (see also Mahler 1999a: 11-36, particularly 28-32).

As narratively represented spaces are always charged with cultural semanticizations (and therefore can never be neutral), the protagonist's act of crossing the borders between them inevitably engenders salient consequences (be it by triggering the central conflict of the novel's plot or by supplying any other kind of plot-relevant element; cf. Lotman 1977 [1971]: 233-241). The individual semanticization of these different cultural spaces and the protagonist's performative act of border-crossing hinges upon the interplay of the novel's narrative configuration of space and the reader's extratextual cultural world knowledge. What is more, the co-presence of heterogeneous cultural spheres in the reader's mind – which results from their successive unfolding in the course of the novel – always turns out to be transcultural inasmuch as, for instance, the simple mentioning of 'India' in addition to the current setting 'Britain' suffices to evoke their cognitive co-presence in the reader's mental topology of the novel's storyworld (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107). Consequently, literary texts and their fictional spaces “establish semiotic [and cognitive] connections between objects [and cultural spaces] that are not necessarily physically adjacent” (Dünne 2015: 48; my translation; cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107).

In this context, the spatio-temporal nature of this interplay of narrative configuration and readerly world knowledge is worth emphasizing. It is temporal because, as the reader progresses through the narrative, his mental topology of the storyworld is subject to constant updating through the continual comparison of textual information with his knowledge of extratextual cultural topologies. At the same time, it is also spatial because the other place is always present mentally in the reader's storyworld topology. Drawing on Foucault's concept of heterotopia (cf. Foucault 2006 [1967/1984]: 317-329), Hallet (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107) describes this constellation as the perception of one place through comparison with another place. The emerging pendular cognitive movement – metaphorically speaking, the reader jumps between these different narratively represented cultural spaces, always keeping the one narrative discourse is currently not focusing upon in the back of her mind as a foil – leads to a cognitive short-circuiting of these settings in the reader's mind (cf. Hallet

2009: 89, 102-107). In a sense, this cognitive co-presence of country of origin and recipient country is at the heart of migrants' "double perspective" (Rushdie 1991a [1982]: 19). Accordingly, migrations can be differentiated according to the number of geographical places involved. Whereas the route of 'simple' migrations leads from country of origin to destination in one go, transmigrations involve, in addition to country of origin and destination, a more or less long stay in a transit country. Thus, the larger the number of cultural spaces that are implicated in the migration, the more complex the cognitive co-presence of various places (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107) and the emerging storyworld topology in the reader's mind becomes.

As most contemporary Asian British novels are set in cultural spaces that exist in extratextual geographical reality as well, the question of how to conceptualize the relationship between these extratextual cultural spaces and their textual configurations inevitably arises. In order to avoid the fallacy of assuming too simplistic an analogy between the *narrative* representation of such cultural spaces and the spatial phenomena they contain in literary texts, on the one hand, and *actual* spatial entities in extratextual cultural reality – such as highly semanticized famous places, buildings, bridges, cathedrals or other landmarks – on the other, I take up David Herman's concept of "contextual anchoring" (2002: 331; cf. *ibid.* 331-371), which he delineates as follows:

Just as narratives cue interpreters to build temporal and spatial relationships between items and events in the storyworld, and just as they constrain readers, viewers, and listeners to take up perspectives on the items and events at issue, stories trigger recipients to establish a more or less direct or oblique relationship between the stories they are interpreting and the contexts in which they are interpreting them. (Herman 2002: 331)

He then goes on to elaborate further on the two sides of the coin of a contextualized understanding of narratively enacted storyworlds:

On the one hand, interpreters build models as part of the process of representing the space-time profile, participant roles, and overall configuration of storyworlds. On the other hand, interpreters rely on analogous, model-based representations of the world(s) in which they are trying to make sense of a given narrative. Contextual anchoring is my name for the process whereby a narrative, in a more or less explicit and reflexive way, asks its interpreters to search for analogies between the representations contained within these two classes of mental models. There can be many or few representations involved, and the projection relations that the text cues readers to build between them can be more or less dense or multiplex. (Herman 2002: 331)

This process of contextual anchoring is central to the reader's understanding of the third aspect of the significance of characters' narratively enacted movements across the storyworld for the narrative representation of (story) space, for, without

searching for semantic analogies between textual fictional and extratextual cultural topologies, the reader will not be able to comprehend processes of resemanticization such as the postcolonial strategy of remapping imperial topologies of the globe (cf. Neumann 2009: 129-135; see also my investigation into the generation of narratively enacted topologies in Section 4.4.3 of this dissertation).

Targeted at a comprehensive renegotiation of the binary spatial structures typical of colonial literature and colonialism in general, the narrative representation of space in postcolonial literatures in English promotes an innovative understanding of space that focuses on the dissolution of clear-cut 'us versus them' oppositions accomplished through such processes of remapping imperial topology and the narrative creation of third spaces marked by transcultural processes of displacement and translation. By replacing the colonialist dichotomization of space with innovative ternary spatial models that allow for the emergence of such interstitial spaces, these postcolonial literatures enact "the simultaneity of disparate spaces" (Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 295), thereby "undermining the rigid demarcations between imperial centre and the peripheries, between one's own and foreign spaces" (Neumann 2009: 129; cf. *ibid.*).

In essence, it is through the narrative enactment of postcolonial protagonists' migratory movements between the former imperial centre and the peripheries that postcolonial literatures in English – such as contemporary Asian British novels – effect such postcolonial remappings and the emergence of hybrid third spaces such as, for instance, the conceptualization of transcultural third spaces I have defined in Sections 3.1 and 3.3.3 of this dissertation. Among other things, the degree to which such transcultural third spaces emerge as figures against the backdrop of the topological ground of a novel's setting (cf. Chatman 1978: 138-145) depends on the scope and depth of their textual concretization. To conclude, the third function of the narrative enactment of motion – as the prime means of triggering processes of postcolonial remapping and the potential emergence of third spaces (cf. Neumann 2009: 128-135) – instantiates its interstitial situatedness at the interface of context-oriented and cognitive narratology.

4.2.3 Temporality in the Narrative Enactment of Motion

The final section of my prolegomena for a cultural narratology of motion is concerned with the issue of temporality in the context of the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels. As I argued in Section 2.3 of this dissertation, there are two aspects of temporality that acquire particular relevance in connection with human motion: the historical context in which a specific movement is performed, on the one hand, and the individual traveller's subjective time-experience while on the move, on the other. While the historical context obviously co-determines the traveller's agency and time-experience, there are of course further factors influencing the latter as well, such as the traveller's personal physical constitution, mental disposition and other micro-level determinants of his mind-time (cf. Section 2.3 of this dissertation).

As the question of the historical contextualization of literary texts has already been dealt with briefly in my discussion of Ricoeur's (cf. 1984 [1983]: 52-87) conceptualization of the text-context interrelationship in Section 2.3 of this dissertation, I will concentrate on the latter aspect of temporality in the narrative enactment of human motion – the traveller-focalizer's subjective time-experience – in the following. Suffice it to say here that, as active forces in the shaping of historical and contemporary cultural realities (cf. Nünning 2006: 169), literary texts are capable of reconfiguring historical contexts in the medium of fiction, for instance by rewriting important historical events from a postcolonial perspective (cf., for instance, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2009 [1989]) or by remapping imperialist topology (cf. Neumann 2009: 129; see also Section 4.2.2 of this dissertation).

As we have seen in Section 4.2.2, one of the prime means of remapping this topology from the margins is through the narrative enactment of motion. In addition, it is necessary to at least mention the fact that these textual fictional reconfigurations of extratextual historical or contemporary cultural contexts are subject to the same three dimensions of literary representation – selection, combination/configuration and perspectivization – as the narrative representation of space (cf. Nünning 2009: 39-44), because a precise analytical description of these reconfigurations requires answering the interrelated questions of which contexts are chosen, how they are reconfigured and from whose perspective this reconfiguration is presented (cf. Nünning 1995: 153-205).

In terms of the historical contextualization of the narrative enactment of human motion, one crucial parameter is the issue of which modes of travel are available to the

character intent on moving from A to B in the specific historical or contemporary sociocultural context within which she acts. In realist novels, the case-specific answer to this question depends primarily on two aspects: the *technological* availability of different means of getting ahead, such as horses, stagecoaches, ships, trains, cars or airplanes, in the given context, and the *socioeconomic accessibility* of these modes of travel for the character in question. Additionally, one further aspect of interest to a context-oriented examination of the narrative enactment of motion is the degree to which one specific mode of travel is perceived as embodying the standard type of mobility in a given context by the characters in the respective novel's storyworld and, ultimately, its readers. To give one example, air travel is considered the standard type of global mobility in our contemporary context by affluent Westerners and the privileged upper classes of emerging countries. As this example illustrates, the degree of standardization of the procedures pertaining to a particular mode of travel constitutes one of the major criteria for determining the extent to which it is experienced as the standard mobility of a given era (or, conversely, as a non-standard type of mobility) by both characters and readers.

With this, we are already in the midst of the issue of the traveller-focalizer's time-experience and its narrative representation. Building on Ricoeur's seminal recognition that narrative texts in general and the novel in particular "configure and refigure the human experience of time and constitute themselves one of its modes" (Middeke 2002a: 5; cf. *ibid.* and Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 1-30, 52-87), I will focus on the particularities of the narrative configuration of this experience in the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels and the narrative strategies of representation deployed.

In the context of the narrative enactment of motion (and beyond), the narrative representation of temporality in contemporary Asian British novels frequently tends to foreground the frictional discontinuity, that is, the disruption of straightforward chronological linearity, in the traveller-focalizer's subjective time-experience while on the move. This is why the Genettean category of "order" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 33; cf. *ibid.*: 33-85) deserves particular attention here, for the prime narrative strategy of representing this frictional discontinuity consists in interspersing narrative discourse with Genettean "anachronies" (*ibid.*: 35), that is, "prolepses" and "analepses" (*ibid.*: 40; cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 35-85) dealing with anticipations and expectations or memories of past journeys (or other events) in the internal focalizer's mind. In addition, deviations from "chronometrical time" (West-Pavlov 2013: 13) in the internal focalizer's

subjective experience of temporality are occasionally enacted narratively by foregrounding the phenomenon of belatedness in the representation of their consciousness. Put simply, belatedness is defined in psychoanalytical theory as an involuntarily postponed reaction on the part of the focalizer's mind to past experiences, external sensory stimuli registered by the body or the latter's physiological needs (cf. Kirchhoff 2009: 141-232; Laplanche and Pontalis 1972 [1967]: 313-317; see also West-Pavlov 2013: 116-119).¹⁶⁰ In fact, belatedness can thus be interpreted as an outcome of internal friction typically caused by traumatic experiences in the past, and therefore constitutes a particularly apt candidate for the narrative enactment of frictional discontinuities in the individual internal focalizer's time-experience. In short, the narrative representation of this experience in contemporary Asian British novels is thus marked by a prevalence of individual mind-time over objectively measurable clock-time, that is, the ubiquitous, societally conventionalized regulation of time accomplished through its subdivision into intervals and the subsequent coordination of different simultaneous processes by means of the chronometer that Middeke labels "social time" (Middeke 2002a: 4; cf. *ibid.*).

All in all, it is thus legitimate to argue that the narrative representation of the internal focalizer's experience of temporality in contemporary Asian British novels frequently modifies one of the pertinent patterns characteristic of the colonial travelogue, viz. "walk a crooked path, tell a straight story" (Fabian 2004: 350; cf. *ibid.* 350-352), inasmuch as it tends to foreground the pertinent discontinuities (such as belatedness) caused, for instance, by internal or external friction. Whereas one major narrative strategy of representing the experience of temporality deployed in the colonial travelogue consisted in smoothing these frictional discontinuities into a linear narrative, contemporary Asian British novels resort to a different representational strategy by foregrounding these discontinuities in the internal focalizer's experience of temporality while on the move (and beyond). This latter narrative strategy of foregrounding such frictional discontinuities is most often realized by a pronounced focus on mental mobility in its most general sense, that is, on the repercussions they engender in the focalizer's mind as enacted narratively through different techniques of representing his consciousness (cf. Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation for a more detailed examination of mental mobility).

¹⁶⁰ I am aware of the fact that this hands-on definition of belatedness does not do justice the complexity of this phenomenon as elaborated in psychoanalytical theory (cf. Kirchhoff 2009: 141-232). As we shall see in the primary text analyses, it does, however, reflect the narrative enactment and functionalization of belatedness in *The Impressionist* (Kunzru 2002) and *A Life Apart* (Mukherjee 2011 [2008]). For an in-depth examination of the history of this psychoanalytical concept, cf. Kirchhoff (2009: 141-232).

As for the narrative techniques deployable for the representation of the traveller-focalizer's time-experience in particular and temporality in general, I will resort to Genette's seminal narratological framework for the analytical elucidation of temporality in the novel. As we shall see in Section 4.4.2 in particular, all of Genette's temporal categories – "order" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 33), "duration" (ibid.: 86) and "frequency" (ibid.: 113; cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 33-160) – can be brought to bear on the narrative enactment of motion, because the individual sequentialization of different journeys and the various stages of any given single trip, the scope of textual space devoted to a particular journey, and the number of times it is thematized by narrative discourse reveal significant insights into the individual traveller-focalizer's cognitive-affective experientiality of this journey in regards to both temporality and spatiality. Starting with the category of order¹⁶¹ (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 33-85), I therefore combine a necessarily highly selective presentation of Genette's framework for the analysis of temporality in the novel with a brief assessment of its usefulness for coming to grips with the narrative enactment of motion in contemporary Asian British novels in the following.

As I argued above, the widespread tendency to focus on the frictional discontinuities in the internal focalizer's experience of time in these novels makes Genette's umbrella term of "narrative anachronies" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 35; cf. ibid. 35-85) a particularly insightful analytical category for the examination of this aspect. However, as we shall see in a minute, its application to spatial and mental mobility in the storyworld necessitates certain modifications. In order to illustrate this necessity, let me quote Genette's definitions of the two types of narrative anachronies first:

[... T]o avoid the psychological connotations of such terms as 'anticipation' or 'retrospection,' which automatically evoke subjective phenomena, we will eliminate these terms most of the time in favour of two others that are more neutral, designating as *prolepsis* any narrative maneuver that consists of narrating or evoking in advance an event that will take place later, designating as *analepsis* any evocation after the fact of an event that took place earlier than the point in the story where we are at any given moment, and reserving the general term *anachrony* to designate all forms of

¹⁶¹ It is important not to confound this category – which, according to Genette (cf. 1980 [1972]: 35), refers to the sequencing of events in narrative discourse as opposed to the story and can, in principle, either follow chronological linearity or combine it with "narrative anachronies" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 35; cf. ibid. 35-85) – with Genette's category "time of the narrating" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 215), which designates the narrator's temporal position vis-à-vis the narrative he recounts and can therefore be narratively configured as "subsequent narrating" (in the past tense), "prior narrating" (in the future tense), "simultaneous narrating" (in the present tense), or "interpolated narrating" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 217; cf. ibid. 215-227). The latter subcategory refers to narrative texts in which the act of narrating is situated "between the moments of the action" (ibid. 217), such as in epistolary novels (cf. ibid.). As primarily realist literary texts, contemporary Asian British novels typically use the standard type (cf. ibid.) of subsequent narrating.

discordance between the two temporal orders of story and narrative [discourse ...]. (Genette 1980 [1972]: 39-40; italics in original)

From a motion-oriented perspective, there are two major problems with these complementary definitions. First, they disregard the fact that most often, analepses and prolepses involve not only a temporal break in chronological continuity, but also a spatial relocation to a different setting. Accordingly, the narrative configuration of these anachronies require the reader to perform a cognitive *movement* to a frequently very different spatio-temporal setting – either forward (prolepsis) or backward (analepsis) in time *and* space. Hence, both analepses and prolepses establish semiotic, cognitive and affective relationships between different, narratively enacted agentive space-time configurations in the reader’s mind. Second, Genette’s categorical exclusion of subjective – that is, mental – phenomena is problematic in the context of the narrative enactment of human motion because it proves to be unable to account for the internal focalizer’s planning process of journeys to be conducted in the future, which evidently takes place in her “fictional mind” (Palmer 2004) only.

With my reconceptualization of prolepses and analepses as *mental* movements forward or backward in time and space performed by the internal focalizer and, ultimately, the reader, I intend to integrate the realm of possible worlds extant in a focalizer’s imagination only in the overall definitional scope of narrative anachronies. This way, it becomes possible to analyse the complex interplay of characters’ spatial and mental mobility by means of (an adapted version of) Genette’s structuralist narratological toolkit.¹⁶² As we shall see in Section 4.4.2, this reconceptualization of anachronies is of special relevance in the case of prolepses, for, in the narrative enactment of human motion, they are frequently configured as purely mental anticipations of future journeys.

In his further specifications of analepses and prolepses, Genette distinguishes between their “reach”, that is, their “temporal distance [from] the moment in the story when the narrative was interrupted to make room for the anachrony” (Genette 1980 [1972]: 48), and their “extent”, defined as “the duration of story cover[ed by] the anachrony itself” (ibid.). Obviously, the individual narrative configuration of these parameters can likewise harbour salient insights into the experiential significance of, say, past movements for the internal focalizer’s present state of mind and/or

¹⁶² Cf. Bal’s distinction between “subjective and objective anachronies” (Bal 2009 [1985]: 85; cf. ibid. 85-88), which solves the same problematic deficiency of Genette’s conceptualization (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 39-40), that is, its inability to account for anachronies occurring merely in a focalizer’s mind, by means of different terminology.

sociocultural positionality, or, conversely, of his current situation for his preparedness to perform a transnational migration in the future. Of Genette's various subcategories of analepses and prolepses (e.g. external versus internal or mixed analepses, depending on their reach; cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 47-85), the distinction between completing and repeating analepses is the most relevant one in the context of the narratological examination of the narrative enactment of human motion: according to Genette (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 51-54), the subcategory of "*completing* analepses, or 'returns', comprises the retrospective sections that fill in, after the event, an earlier gap in the narrative" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 51; italics in original), whereas with "*repeating* analepses, or 'recalls', we no longer escape redundancy, for in these the narrative openly, sometimes explicitly, retraces its own path" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 54; italics in original). Due to its evident combinability with the Genettean ellipsis (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 51; for the pertinent definition of ellipsis, see *ibid.* 93-95, 106-109), the completing analepsis acquires special significance in the narrative enactment of contemporary air travel, which, as we shall see in Section 4.4.2, is very often represented by precisely this tandem.

This leads us to Genette's second category for the analysis of temporality in narrative texts, duration, or, more precisely, narrative "speed" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 87; cf. *ibid.*: 86-112). Here, Genette distinguishes between "four [...] canonical forms of novel *tempo*" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 94; italics in original), ranging from "the infinite speed of ellipsis, where a non-existent section of narrative [discourse] corresponds to some duration of story" (*ibid.* 93) to "the absolute slowness of descriptive pause, where some section of narrative discourse corresponds to a non-existent diegetic duration" (*ibid.* 93-94). Between these two extremes, Genette locates two further narrative tempos, viz. scene, which, usually consisting of dialogue, "realizes conventionally the equality of time between narrative [discourse] and story" (*ibid.* 94), and summary, that is, "the narration in a few paragraphs or a few pages of several days, months, or years of existence, without details of action or speech" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 95-96). In contrast to ellipsis, pause and scene, whose tempo is more or less fixed, summary constitutes "a form with variable tempo [...], which with great flexibility of pace covers the entire range included between scene and ellipsis" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 94; cf. *ibid.* 93-99). While all of these narrative tempos are employed by narrative discourse in the narrative enactment of characters' agentive movements across the storyworld over a certain period of story time at some point or another, the category of ellipsis is of special interest because it is deployed particularly frequently for narrative

representations of air travel in contemporary Asian British novels. This is why it shall be treated here first.

Regarding the narrative tempo of ellipsis¹⁶³ in this context, the most important distinction introduced by Genette (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 106-109) is that between “explicit” (ibid.: 106) and “implicit” (ibid.: 108) ellipses. The first of these two subcategories

arise[s] either from an indication (definite or not) of the lapse of time they elide, which assimilates them to very quick summaries of the ‘some years passed’ type (in this case the indication *constitutes* the ellipsis as textual section, which is then not totally equal to zero); or else from elision pure and simple (zero degree of the elliptical text) plus, when the narrative starts up again, an indication of the time elapsed, like [...] ‘two years later’ [...]. (Genette 1980 [1972]: 106; italics in original)

The second subcategory, by contrast, refers to “those [ellipses] whose very presence is not announced in the text and which the reader can infer only from some chronological lacuna or gap in narrative continuity” (Genette 1980 [1972]: 108). Whether a narrator opts for explicit or implicit ellipses in the narrative enactment of characters’ biographically momentous movements can harbour crucial implications for the textual fictional semanticization of the narrative enactment of motion in a given novel in general. When, for instance, the protagonist Ritwik Ghosh’s transnational migration from India to England is not even mentioned (let alone narrated in some detail) in Neel Mukherjee’s debut novel *A Life Apart* (Mukherjee 2011 [2008]) but can only be inferred by the reader from a change in his spatial deixis (Oxford instead of Calcutta), this clearly qualifies as an implicit ellipsis, which acquires central saliency for the meaning potential of the text-specific narrative enactment of motion and, ultimately, of the novel as a whole.

As for the category of pause, it commonly fulfils one of its traditional functions inasmuch as it is mostly deployed for the narrative representation of space through description (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 99-106) in contemporary Asian British novels. However, it must be noted that descriptions of characters’ spatial surroundings while on the move usually serve a narrative purpose (cf. Mosher’s [1991: 426-427; see also Ronen 1997: 274-286] concept of “narrativized description”) in these novels, such as, for instance, evoking a particular atmosphere in the reader’s mind. Concerning the tandem of summary and scene, Genette argues that “summary remained, up to the

¹⁶³ As Genette points out, he is focusing solely on temporal ellipses here: “Obviously, we are dealing here only with ellipses as such, or *temporal* ellipsis, leaving aside those lateral omissions for which we have reserved the name *paralipsis*” (Genette 1980 [1972]: 106; italics in original).

end of the nineteenth century, the most usual transition between two scenes, the 'background' against which scenes stand out, and thus the connective tissue par excellence of novelistic narrative, whose fundamental rhythm is defined by the alternation of summary and scene" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 97). Thus conceiving of the relationship between summary and scene as one of 'figure (scene) versus ground (summary)' (cf. Chatman 1978: 138-145), Genette further elaborates on their complementarity in his explication of scenes:

In [traditional] novelistic narrative [...], the contrast of tempo between detailed scene and summary almost always reflected a contrast of content between dramatic and nondramatic, the strong periods of the action coinciding with the most intense moments of the narrative while the weak periods were summed up with large strokes and as if from a great distance [...]. The real rhythm of the novelistic canon [...] is thus the alternation of nondramatic summaries, functioning as waiting room and liaison, with dramatic scenes whose role in the action is decisive. (Genette 1980 [1972]: 109-110)

In the context of the narrative enactment of transnational migrations in contemporary Asian British novels, events worthy of scenic presentation include, first of all, departure and arrival scenes and, occasionally, unexpected occurrences during the migration itself. Generally, it is thus legitimate to contend that, while the fundamental principle recognized by Genette is still operative in these novels, the prime focus of attention has often shifted from the course of the journey itself to other issues, such as the long-term consequences of a transnational migration for the individual migrant. This shift is particularly evident if the migration is performed by airplane, for this mode of travel lends itself especially well to narrative representation by means of an ellipsis (cf. Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation).

Genette's third and final category for the examination of temporality in narrative texts, frequency (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 113-160), likewise acquires central significance because the text- and movement-specific answer to the question of how often a specific migration takes place in the storyworld in relation to the frequency with which it is represented by narrative discourse can yield important insights into the traveller-focalizer's individual experientiality of this migration, its affective significance for her, and its overall narrative saliency (see also Section 4.3.1 of this dissertation). Regarding frequency, "Genette distinguishes between three modes: 'singulative' (telling once what happened once), 'repetitive' (telling many times what happened once), and 'iterative' (telling once what happened several times; cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 114-116)" (Scheffel 2014 [2013]: n. pag.).

Consequently, it is the individual narrative configuration of these three modes in the narrative enactment of different transnational migrations that allows readerly inferences concerning the relative significance of these migrations both from the traveller-focalizer's individual experiential point of view and from the perspective of their overall narrative saliency for the unfolding of the novel's plot. When, for instance, each of the transnational migrations performed by the three protagonists in the course of Tishani Doshi's debut novel *The Pleasure Seekers* (Doshi 2010) receives the prerogative of singulative narration, this constitutes a strong indicator of their crucial significance from both of these perspectives. In contrast to these biographically momentous migrations, the protagonists' periodically recurring holiday trips from India to their relatives in Wales are rendered in iterative narration, which points to their lesser relevance both from the characters jointly cognitive and affective experiential perspective and from the point of view of the novel's plot structure (cf. Section 7.2 of this dissertation). All in all, this section has thus explored the role that the temporal dimension plays for the narrative enactment of motion in contemporary Asian British novels by explicating the productivity of the Genettean structuralist narratological framework for the analysis of this particular aspect of narrative representations of movement.

Taken as a whole, Section 4.2 has sketched prolegomena for a cultural narratology of motion by examining the multi-faceted contributions that a narratological analysis of the narrative representation of the three pillars of the trialectics of motion elaborated in Chapter 2 of this dissertation – agency, spatiality, and temporality – can make to the context-oriented narratological elucidation of the narrative enactment of human motion. Subsequent to this survey, the following section will focus on the part that affect and cognition play in this overall endeavour.

4.3 Embodiment as Connector between Affect and Cognition in the Narrative Enactment of Motion

After this highly selective investigation into some of the central issues pertinent to the narratological analysis of the three constitutive dimensions of human motion in the overall context of my cultural narratology of motion for contemporary Asian British novels, I now turn to the equally relevant category of characters' embodiment and its

reciprocal relationship with the storyworld the characters of a given novel populate. This section proceeds from the fundamental assumption that the category of embodiment, or bodily embeddedness,¹⁶⁴ constitutes the ideal connector between the moving character's affective semanticization and cognitive processing of the journey enacted, because, ultimately, the human or anthropomorphic character's body is the irreducible vantage point that significantly predetermines her perception of her spatial environment as well as all related cognitive and affective processes going on in her mind (cf. Fludernik 1996: 30; Stockwell 2002: 27). In order to capture the dynamics of the complex interactions between the human body, cognition and affect methodologically, I am relying on the central role of bodily embeddedness in Fludernik's narratological concept of experientiality (cf. Fludernik 1996: 12-13, 30). Moreover, my conceptualization of embodiment as the connector between cognition and affect in the narrative enactment of human motion hinges upon recent findings in the cognitive sciences, where Margaret Wilson and Lawrence Barsalou, among others, advocate the concepts of "embodied cognition" (Wilson 2002: 625) or "grounded cognition" (Barsalou 2008: 619), respectively, in order to stress the fundamental significance of the human body and further contextual factors for the functioning of human cognition (cf. Wilson 2002: 625-636; Barsalou 2008: 617-645 and Stockwell 2002: 27; see also Section 2.2 of this dissertation).

To this end, it is first necessary to briefly specify the two closely interrelated concepts from the cognitive sciences I intend to adopt. While Wilson sums up her concept of embodied cognition as "the idea that the mind must be understood in the context of its relationship to a physical body that interacts with the world" (Wilson 2002: 625), Barsalou criticizes this simplistic conceptualization because it "produces the mistaken assumption that all researchers in this community believe that bodily states are necessary for cognition and that these researchers focus exclusively on bodily states in their investigations" (Barsalou 2008: 619). By contrast, his concept of grounded cognition "reflects the assumption that cognition is typically grounded in multiple ways, including simulations, situated action, and, on occasion, bodily states" (Barsalou 2008: 619).

As the character's human or anthropomorphic body plays a crucial role both in his affective experience of space and in his – as well as the reader's – cognitive strategies of making sense of it, I adopt Wilson's concept in principle, merely changing it slightly to 'bodily embeddedness in space' in order to foreground the reciprocity of the

¹⁶⁴ In this study, I use 'embodiment' and 'bodily embeddedness' synonymously.

complex relationship between the human body and its spatial environment. Barsalou's recognition of the multiple ways in which human cognition is grounded plays a role in regard to characters' mental mobility only (cf. also Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation), because mental mobility can arguably be conceived of as cognitive-affective simulations of 'real-world' actions in the respective character's mind. For the time being, suffice it to say that the human body is one of the central reference points on which human cognition relies in its attempts to make sense of the world.

4.3.1 Affective Semanticization and Narrative Saliency of Movement

Having given an introductory survey of the fundamental significance of bodily embeddedness for coming to terms with the narrative representation of human motion, I now turn to the issue of narrative saliency, i.e. the central question of what (degree of) specific relevance to the development of the novel's plot individual movements of characters in the storyworld are endowed with by narrative discourse. In this context, it is first indispensable to acknowledge the fundamental significance that the affective semanticization of a particular journey from the point of view of the respective internal focalizer can acquire for this journey's overall narrative saliency in terms of the entire novel's plot structure, because the issue of narrative saliency can be negotiated not only via the narrative representation of temporality – or, in precise Genettean terms – via order, duration and frequency (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 33-160), but also via the parameter of the affective significance this journey is semanticized with in the representation of the focalizer's consciousness. It is also crucial to keep in mind the insight into the reciprocity of motion (on the spatial plane of the textual actual world) and emotion (on the affective plane of the individual focal character's mind, which constitutes one of the textual possible worlds; cf. Ryan 1991: vii; Ryan 1985: 719-720), because, after all, movements and mobility contribute decisively to the formation and transformation of the individual character's feelings and emotions; conversely, the latter reverberate on an individual's mobility and her (actualized or merely imagined) movements (cf. Ette 2012: 31-32). Accordingly, the myriad journeys undertaken by a quintessential globetrotter contribute to her emotional state marked, notably, by the feeling of limitless freedom; conversely, a certain emotional condition, such as severe depression, hampers the concerned person's mobility.

As we have seen in Section 2.2 of this dissertation, Lehnert (cf. 2011a: 18) contends that the same inextricable interrelatedness applies to space and emotion as well, for certain spaces (e.g. cemeteries, memorials, monuments) are capable of triggering specific emotions (sadness, mourning, painful awareness of the finitude of one's own life, solemn commemoration of important historical events), just as an individual's or collective's prevalent emotion(s) can turn a specific space into what Hoffmann (1978: 55-79) calls a "mood-invested space".¹⁶⁵ Consequently, Lehnert (cf. 2011a: 18) concludes, it becomes evident that human beings make sense of the world in spatial terms and that "feelings are 'embodied', which always also constitutes a spatialization" (ibid.; my translation). Thus, she argues along the same lines as Lotman (cf. 1977 [1971]: 217-231), who likewise posits that spatial categories represent one of the primary means used by human beings in order to structure not only the material world around them, but also, for example, the religious universe as described in Christian cosmology.

In addition to these general considerations on the relationship between space, motion and emotion, it is of course indispensable to reflect upon the central question of how they can be brought to bear on the narrative representation of motion in contemporary Asian British novels. To this end, it is first necessary to consider the related question of the concrete shapes that emotions can take in narrative texts. To what extent can they be represented at all, and in what guises may they appear in literary texts?

In order to find one's bearings in this complex issue, it is useful to take up the sophisticated distinction between emotions and feelings proposed by Lehnert (2011a: 18; my translation): "Emotions are thus that which manifests directly and instinctively in body language, facial expressions and so on (and which, consequently, can be examined in the study of culture), whereas one can learn to hide one's feelings". However, I augment Lehnert's argumentation by emphasizing that, in literary texts, it is definitely possible for the narrator to articulate a focal character's feelings (notably via

¹⁶⁵ In his seminal study *Raum, Situation, erzählte Wirklichkeit – Poetologische und historische Studien zum englischen und amerikanischen Roman* (1978), Gerhard Hoffmann differentiates the narrative space evoked by a novel, which he calls "lived space" ("*gelebter Raum*", Hoffmann 1978: 47-48) into three subcategories: "mood-invested space" ("*gestimmter Raum*", ibid.; translation Neumann and Nünning 2008: 62), which serves the purpose of conveying the predominant atmosphere reigning over the respective setting according to the subjective viewpoint of the character-focalizer; "space of action" ("*Aktionsraum*", ibid.; translation Neumann and Nünning 2008: 62), which functions as backdrop against which the narrated action unfolds, and "observed space" ("*Anschaunungsraum*", ibid.; translation Neumann and Nünning 2008: 62), which provides a panoramic overview of narrative space (cf. Hoffmann 1978: 47-48 and 55-108; Neumann and Nünning 2008: 62).

the representation of consciousness; cf. Cohn 1978), while at the same time hiding them from other characters present in the respective scene (cf. Cohn 1978: 3-20). This then constitutes an example of dramatic irony, a technique that, if applied consistently throughout the literary text, may acquire crucial significance in terms of narrative saliency on condition that this discrepancy of information between the reader and one or more textual actors is responsible, for instance, for the tragic concatenation of events in the novel's plot (cf. Korthals Altes 2008 [2005]: 261-263).

While being well aware of the fact that it is ultimately the reader who is motivated to 'feel' certain emotions triggered by specific textual cues, I nevertheless want to take a slightly different perspective on motion and emotion here by focusing not so much on the cognitive narratological question of how emotions are elicited in the reader, but on the issue of the individual focal character's affective experience of moving across different cultural spaces in the course of the novel's plot (cf. Gumbrecht 2011: 7-34). To this end, I adopt a further central insight proposed by Lehnert (2011a: 19; my translation): "Evidently, emotions are transported via the convincing enactment of – real or fake – emotions, be it in lived reality, in texts, in images or in film." Thus, the "narrativization" (Fludernik 1996: 31; cf. *ibid.*: 31-35) of cultural spaces results, above all, from the narrative enactment of characters' cognitive and affective experientiality and the attendant charging of these spaces with their moods and emotions (cf. Neumann 2015: 98-100, 102).

According to Lehnert's argumentation, this is precisely the reason that certain spaces are capable of triggering specific emotions (and vice versa) by way of the mood(s) they embody in the eyes of sensitive human beings (cf. Lehnert 2011a: 19). Moreover, she contends, it is the intensity of certain emotions experienced in conjunction with specific spaces that makes those spaces memorable in the first place (cf. Lehnert 2011a: 16-17). The same, I argue, holds true for both real and narratively enacted movements: the more incisive and momentous a definite journey is (think, for instance, of a child migrating with his parents to a foreign country), the more significance will be attributed to this experience in the individual's recollection. With Lehnert (cf. 2011a: 16-17), one can thus legitimately argue that the emotional intensity of experiences is the prime factor responsible for their affective significance in the mind of the internal focalizer. The degree of this significance can be inferred from subsequent processes of memorization and retrospective semanticization. Therefore, the frequency and duration with which a certain experience is thematized in the narrative representation of the respective focalizer's recollection constitutes one joint

indicator of its degree of affective semanticization, which, in turn, is one crucial parameter for determining its narrative saliency. As a corollary, one can hence infer a significant correlation between the emotional intensity of an experience and the degree of its foregrounding by narrative discourse: the more the experience of a certain journey is foregrounded both quantitatively and qualitatively, the more likely it is to possess a high degree of intensity in terms of affective semanticization from the individual character's perspective.

By way of illustration, one can compare this emotional intensity to the notion of impression, which, in its literal Latin sense, refers to the imprint a solid object leaves on the surface of another object or animate being (cf. Ahmed 2004: 6). The metaphor of "impression" for emotional intensity – as suggested by Ahmed (2004: 6) – distinguishes itself by clarity and pictorial vividness, while at the same time, it does not necessitate "making analytical distinctions between bodily sensation, emotion and thought" [...] (Ahmed 2004: 6). Ahmed explains: "*We need to remember the 'press' in impression.* It allows us to associate the experience of having an emotion with the very affect of one surface upon another, an affect that leaves its mark or trace" (Ahmed 2004: 6; italics in original). In the same vein, it is arguably justified to state that major biographical events, such as a transnational migration, do likewise leave their marks upon the human beings or fictional characters concerned. However, this influence is reciprocal, for, just as migrating to an essentially different cultural space alters the individual character, the presence of migrant characters does also have repercussions on the cultural space in question.

Regarding the phenomenon of transnational migration, it is furthermore indispensable to recognize that there is a spectrum of different contextual, cognitive-affective configurations ranging from the masses of so-called 'illegal' migrants risking their lives each and every day in their desperate attempts to reach their promised destinations (mostly Europe and the United States) via 'ordinary' migrants entering another country legally in order to work there to globally mobile pseudo-nomadic elite intellectuals and executives who can afford to fly first-class all around the globe (cf. Braidotti 1994a: 21-28). In the context of the cultural narratology of motion aspired to, the crucial point here is that the stark contrasts among these groups in terms of their choice of modes of travel and their equally disparate affective semanticizations of transnational migration often translate into different narrative modes of enacting their migratory movements. Whereas the experience of a perilous flight from a war-torn country is likely to be represented by narrative discourse in at least some detail, an

effortless first-class airplane trip can just as well be omitted completely (cf. Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation).

In order to come to terms with characters' affective semanticization of motion, it is moreover important to acknowledge, with Würzbach (cf. 2006: 5, 193), Hallet (cf. 2009: 90-93) and Beck (cf. 2014: 98-102), that the human experience of space and one's movement across it is always marked by multisensory perception, that is, it involves all five sensory faculties human beings are equipped with. On the concrete content level, the precise experiential nature of the myriad sensory impressions perceived with the organs corresponding to each of these faculties triggers individual associations, memories and expectations, which, in turn, evoke certain affective responses on the part of the character concerned. Mainly accessible via the narrative representation of the character's consciousness, these affective responses triggered by different sensory impressions may contribute to a more or less harmonious overall picture of this internal focalizer's experience of a specific cultural space she travels through on the way to her destination; however, they may just as well be at odds with one another in the sense that the sensory impressions perceived by means of the different organs produce conflicting affective responses and therefore a highly ambivalent subjective semanticization of the cultural space in question (cf. Würzbach 2006: 191-204; Hallet 2009: 90-93; Beck 2014: 98-102).

As Hallet (cf. 2009: 91-92) reminds us, it is indispensable to take account of the extremely high degree of selectivity pertaining to literary representations of characters' multisensory, jointly cognitive and affective experience of cultural spaces here, for the sheer number and variety of sensory impressions pouring in upon the respective character in a given situation renders an all-embracing representation impossible. Hence, the question of which sensory impressions are foregrounded by a given literary text in the narrative representation of particular "experiential spaces" (Lehnert 2011a: 12) deserves special attention, for it promises to yield insight into the narrative saliency of definite human senses in the context of the narrative enactment of certain types of human motion, such as, for instance, the eminent significance of visual perception for the traveller-focalizer's experiential perspective on his spatial environment in the colonial travelogue (cf. Hallet 2009: 90-93).

From the vantage point of narrative saliency, one should additionally remember that acts of spatial boundary-crossing are capable of functioning not only as the initial trigger of the plot as a whole but also as transitions from one stage of the plot to the

next (cf. Lotman 1977 [1971]: 233, 231-241; see also Section 4.2.2 of this dissertation). Thus, just as a migration from India to the UK can kick off the entire plot of an Asian British novel, a (temporary or permanent) return to India may, for instance, cause the protagonist to redefine her individual identity and “self-positioning” (Döring 2002: 1). Also, the fact that journeys other than major transnational ones can also be accorded a high degree of narrative saliency has to be taken into due consideration, for, just as a trip across half the globe might be attributed a relatively low degree of relevance to plot development if mentioned only in passing, a single step across a threshold may acquire a comparatively high degree of narrative saliency if it constitutes, for example, a moral transgression according to the ethical system governing the storyworld (cf. Würzbach 2006: 15-21, 35).

In conclusion, I would thus like to stress the fact that there is not necessarily a direct correlation between the spatial reach and temporal extent of a single movement and the narrative saliency it acquires in the context of the respective novel’s overall plot. Rather, it is more reasonable to assume that the narrative saliency of individual movements depends on (at least) two factors that may co-operate or be at variance with one another: their significance to the traveller-focalizer in terms of their individual affective semanticization of experiencing this movement, and the particular significance of this movement for the overall development of the novel’s plot. In other words, the degree of affective semanticization of a journey on the part of the focal character can be low; at the same time, however, this journey can nevertheless exert a pervasive effect on the further plot development and hence acquire a high degree of narrative saliency in the context of the novel as a whole even so. To put it in a nutshell, affect and effect attributed to a journey can be proportional, but they may just as well diverge from one another.

4.3.2 Cognitive Processing and Narrative Techniques of Representing Motion

In contrast with the preceding one, this section is concerned with the cognitive processes at work in the readers’ generation of mental models of characters’ movements across the storyworld. These mental models are formed on the basis of the textual cues provided by narrative discourse (cf. Herman 2002: 263-264) and are thus

directly related to the narrative strategies or techniques deployed within this domain. Therefore, the cognitive narratological question of how the reader is cued to imagine a character moving across the storyworld and the issue of the representational techniques deployed to evoke this illusion constitute two sides of the same coin. Thus, searching for plausible answers to the important question of which narrative techniques are actually deployed to evoke the illusion of a character moving across the storyworld in the reader's mind in contemporary Asian British novels constitutes no less than one of the pivots of my entire endeavour, for, without accounting for the actual representational dimension, my model would remain trapped in an abstract theoretical vacuum devoid of any connection to the concrete literary practice of enacting motion in contemporary Asian British novels. This is why the cognitive and representational aspects of the narrative enactment of (space and) motion shall be treated jointly in this section (cf. also Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation).

Among the four different cognitive levels on which movement occurs in narrative texts that I differentiated in Section 4.1, the third one, i.e. that of characters' actual movement in the storyworld, is what interests me most, because it is the very communicative plane that my cultural narratology of motion shall focus on primarily: Proceeding from this clearly defined research interest, I argue that the characters' movements across story space constitute a crucial factor in the generation of mental maps of fictional storyworlds in the reader's mind in two ways: first, the narrative representation of actual movements across the storyworld performed by characters is one of the prime strategies of acquainting the reader with the spatio-temporal setting of the events narrated, and second, characters' act of moving across the storyworld is one of the main forces propelling the plot forward (cf. Zoran 1984: 314; Herman 2002: 266, 297-298).

Therefore, I will explore the contributions cognitive narratology can make to the development of a cultural narratology of motion here. These contributions are of prime significance to my methodological goal because research in the field of cognitive narratology attempts to answer the central question of how narrative texts actually cue readers to imagine characters existing and moving about in fictional storyworlds (cf. Herman 2002: 263-299). In addition, recent research in cognitive narratology corroborates the hypothesis that, in most cases, narration and description are interlocked in passages from narrative texts to the extent that the rigorous, classical structuralist dichotomy between 'narration' and 'description' has to be replaced by a

considerably more differentiated typology of narrative techniques of representation of events and existents in the storyworld (cf. Herman 2002: 297-298).

In order to delineate the contours of my drawing from this subdiscipline of narratology more precisely, I will proceed in two steps. First, I will briefly explicate the closely related concepts of cognitive frames and scripts (cf. Jahn 1997: 441-468; Herman 2002: 85-113), with a clear focus on their applicability for my cultural narratology of motion. To the same end, I will then recapitulate Herman's discussion of four *spatial* concepts from cognitive narratology in a second step, viz. the notion of deictic shift; the distinction between figure and ground; the differentiation of regions, landmarks and paths; and the word class of motion verbs (cf. Herman 2002: 269-284).

In their endeavour to make sense of the narrative enactment of motion in contemporary Asian British novels, readers rely on pertinent cognitive frames (cf. Jahn 1997: 441-468; Herman 2002: 85-113) and scripts (cf. Herman 2002: 85-113; Neumann and Nünning 2008: 157). Jahn defines frames as "cognitive model[s] that [are] selected and used (and sometimes discarded) in the process of reading a narrative text" (Jahn 1997: 442; cf. *ibid.* 441-442). However, this general conceptualization can be specified further by differentiating between cognitive frames in contradistinction to cognitive scripts. In cognitive narratology, the former concept denotes "conventionalized and culturally standardized sets of information" (Neumann and Nünning 2008: 157) stored in the reader's mind that help her to make sense of the narrative enactment of, say, a flight in a modern aircraft or a pleasure trip in a historic steam train by imagining it as corresponding to analogous experiences in the real world (cf. Neumann and Nünning 2008: 157; Margolin 1986: 209; Fludernik 1996: 12; Ryan 1991: 51). The latter concept, by contrast, designates "culture-specific knowledge about [the] standardized *action sequences*" (Neumann and Nünning 2008: 157; italics mine; cf. *ibid.*) typically related to these activities, such as buying a ticket or going through the security procedures at the airport. As Herman (cf. 2002: 89) points out, frames thus constitute *static* mental models representing a specific point in time, whereas scripts are the former's *dynamic* counterpart in that they "help readers to know how events typically *unfold* during common occasions" (Herman 2002: 89; italics mine) over a certain period of time (cf. *ibid.*). The activation of cognitive frames and scripts hinges upon the complex interplay of the bottom-up textual data given and the reader's top-down extratextual cultural world knowledge concerning the question of which frames and scripts are to be activated in what situational context (cf. Jahn 1997: 441, 448-450).

Regarding the narrative enactment of human motion, these cognitive frames and scripts vary, for example, according to the mode of travel used by the characters in question.¹⁶⁶ As the narrative enactment of motion is necessarily highly selective – that is, it can never treat all aspects of, say, a transnational migration – the reader is called upon to fill the resultant gaps by making inferences based on such jointly cognitive and contextual frames and scripts (cf. Hallet 2009: 91-92; Schneider 2013: 120-121; Ryan 1991: 53; Neumann and Nünning 2008: 157). Here, Ryan’s “principle of minimal departure” (1991: 51) comes into play, which, put simply, stipulates that readers rely as far as possible on their extratextual cultural knowledge about the real world in their attempts to reconstruct a novel’s storyworld in their mind, deviating from it only if the text requires this by supplying information that is definitely incompatible with readerly real-world knowledge (cf. Ryan 1991: 51).

As a corollary, this also implies that readers stick to the cognitive frame activated initially as long as possible, that is, until the text releases information that necessitates the substitution of a different frame for the initial one (cf. Jahn 1997: 457; Ryan 1991: 51). In addition to jointly cognitive and contextual frames, Ryan’s ontological distinction between the “textual actual world” (Ryan 1991: vii) and various “textual alternative possible worlds” (Ryan 1991: vii)¹⁶⁷ plays a crucial part in the reader’s constant process of cognitively mapping the novel’s storyworld (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 300-303; Jameson 1988: 347-360; Herman 2002: 263-299).¹⁶⁸ In

¹⁶⁶ Cf. also the section on cognitive approaches to the narrative enactment of motion in my unpublished article “The Representation of Motion as a Narratological Problem: Cognitive, Contextualist and Historical Perspectives” (Matschi unpublished article), which provides an introductory overview of the applicability of cognitive narratology to the narrative enactment of human motion.

¹⁶⁷ In the glossary of her monograph *Possible Worlds, Artificial Intelligence, and Narrative Theory* (1991), Marie-Laure Ryan distinguishes between the “textual reference world (TRW)”, the “textual actual world (TAW)”, and “textual alternative possible world[s] (TAPW)” (Ryan 1991: vii). She defines the textual reference world as “the world for which the text claims facts; the world in which the propositions asserted by the text are to be valued” (Ryan 1991: vii), adding that it “is the center of a system of reality comprising APWs [alternative possible worlds]” (ibid.). The textual actual world, then, is the “image of TRW [textual reference world] proposed by the text” (Ryan 1991: vii), with “the actual sender (author)” being “the authority that determines the facts of TAW [textual actual world]” (Ryan 1991: vii). Finally, Ryan conceptualizes textual alternative possible worlds as “alternative possible world[s] in a textual universe structured as a modal system” (Ryan 1991: vii), which “are textually presented as mental constructs formed by the inhabitants of TAW [textual actual world]” (ibid.). For reasons of problem-oriented simplification, I merely adopt Ryan’s distinction between the textual actual world and textual possible worlds, with the former referring to the characters’ actual spatio-temporal environment in the storyworld, and the latter designating the various different possible worlds of their mental mobility (cf. Ryan 1991: vii; Ryan 1985: 719-720).

¹⁶⁸ See also the very brief section on cognitive mapping in Section 2.2.2 of my unpublished diploma thesis “Imaginative Geographies und die Inszenierung postkolonialer Räume in gegenwärtigen Fictions of Migration” (cf. Matschi 2010: 45-46), which explicates the significance of this jointly mental and cultural technique for the construction of spatial models, such as imaginative geographies (cf. Said 2003 [1978]: 54).

particular, the intricate interrelationship between the textual possible world of characters' mental mobility and their spatial environment in the textual actual world is of special significance for coming to terms with the narrative enactment of real-and-imagined movements (cf. Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation).

To come to the second step, the concept of "deictic shift" was developed by Zubin and Hewitt (1995: 131; cf. *ibid.*) in order to describe the mental leap every reader performs when engaging with a narrative text, i.e., the spatio-temporal relocation from the here and now of the present reading situation to the alternative space-time configuration of the storyworld evoked by this literary text (cf. Zubin and Hewitt 1995: 130-133; Herman 2002: 270-274). Accordingly, the reader's immersion in the storyworld necessarily involves a semi-conscious act of leaving the current communication situation behind and embarking upon an imaginary journey to the India of the British Raj or pre-Columbian America, for example. The principal benefit of the notion of deictic shift lies in the particular attention it draws to the inevitability of this mental operation on the part of the reader, which is triggered automatically whenever we open a novel. In other words, this concept sensitizes us to the cognitive dimension of immersing oneself in a fictional storyworld, while at the same time it is an elegant shorthand term for the essential but barely noticed bridging of the ontological gap between extratextual cultural reality and the intratextual fictional storyworld that takes place in the reader's mind. In the context of contemporary Asian British novels, which abound in reality references, it is of particular relevance to stress the point that no fictional storyworld, however close a resemblance to actuality it may exhibit, can ever be equated ontologically with extratextual cultural reality (cf. Mahler 1999a: 12).

In addition, the recognition that any verbal description of an arbitrarily chosen object can acquire meaning only by setting it off against a discernibly different background has to be acknowledged in its particular relevance for the cognitive aspect of the narrative representation of space (cf. Chatman 1978: 138-145). This general constellation is captured adequately by the epistemological distinction between the object to be localized in a given context, which is labelled the "figure" (Landau and Jackendoff 1993: 223), and the object in reference to which the figure is localized, i.e. the "ground" (Landau and Jackendoff 1993: 223; cf. *ibid.* 217-229, and Herman 2002: 274-277). As the localization of the figure (or located object) and the ground (or reference object) is based solely on their mutual spatial relationship (cf. Herman 2002: 274), this fundamental differentiation is in complete accordance with the conceptualization of space propagated by Lefebvre (1991 [1974]) and Soja (1996),

because both in these postmodern theories of space and in cognitive narratology, the central characteristic property of space is relationality (cf. Beck 2014: 29; Herman 2002: 274). With regard to the development of a cultural narratology of motion, the binary distinction between figure and ground is helpful because it permits a clear separation of the element that is currently foregrounded, i.e. the respective movement in question, from all other elements, which, at least for the moment, serve as mere background to this action. In the field of narratology in general, the figure versus ground dichotomy can likewise be applied to the multifarious ways in which the protagonist is commonly set off from minor characters and the antagonist by virtue of a more or less extensive description of his extraordinary qualities which, of course, appear as shining as they do only in contradistinction to the minor characters' dull normality and the antagonist's evil (cf. Chatman 1978: 138-145, particularly 138-139).

Third, the binary distinction between figure and ground can be refined further by adopting the tripartite structuration of the story space into "regions" (Landau and Jackendoff 1993: 223), i.e. locations defined by "landmarks" (ibid.), a term synonymous with reference objects, and connected via "paths" (ibid.), which are the spatial trajectories taken by characters as they move across the storyworld (cf. Landau and Jackendoff 1993: 223-232; Herman 2002: 277-280). As Herman points out, "the notion of paths is an especially important one in narrative domains, since paths imply motion from one place to another and thus dynamic or emergent spatial properties of the sort characteristic of narratives" (Herman 2002: 278).

Fourth, together with linguistic realizations of projective locations¹⁶⁹ (for example, by means of prepositional phrases or locative adverbs), the word class of 'motion verbs', which express concrete directions of movement and are located, in English, on a continuum stretching between the poles 'come' and 'go' (cf. Brown 1995: 108-124, 188-191), forms a joint narrative technique that is of utmost importance for a precise analytical description of the narrative representation of motion, because in tandem, they encode the fundamental vectoriality of any movement in narrative space (cf. Herman 2002: 282-284). More precisely, narrative texts "rel[y] on the deictic functions of motion verbs [, because their] distribution in narrative discourse helps [the reader] map out the positions of storyworld entities as they move or are moved along

¹⁶⁹ Herman distinguishes between topological and projective locations. Whereas the inside of a cube, for instance, is a topological location because it does not change with the perceiver's angle of vision, the prepositional phrase 'in front of a tree' denotes a projective location, for whether something is perceived as being situated in front of or behind a tree clearly depends on the viewer's position and the resulting angle of vision (cf. Frawley 1992: 254, 262 and Herman 2002: 280).

more or less narratively salient paths” (Herman 2005: 129). Thus, “[b]y encoding the directionality of movement, motion verbs express viewer-relative locations of entities being perceived by narrators, as well as paths taken by entities as they transition from place to place” (Herman 2005: 129).¹⁷⁰ All in all, these four cognitive-narratological concepts thus distinguish themselves by their particular productivity for coming to grips with the dynamically interrelated narrative enactment of space and characters’ movement across it from a reader-oriented point of view.

In order to demonstrate the analytical benefits of combining cognitive narratology and research on narrative techniques of representation, they shall be exemplified with the following primary text extract from Hari Kunzru’s debut novel *The Impressionist* (2002; abbreviated to *TI* in the following text notes), which introduces the reader to the main setting of its first part, the Indian city of Agra:

If, like the flying ace Indra Lal Roy, you could break free of gravity and view the world from up above, you would see Agra as a dense, whirling movement of earth, a vortex of mud bricks and sandstone. To the south this tumble of mazy streets slams into the military grid of the British Cantonment. The cantonment (gruffly contracted to Cantt. in all official correspondence) is made up of geometric elements like a child’s wooden blocks; rational avenues and parade grounds, barracks for the soldiers who enforce the law of His Britannic Majesty George. To the north this military space has a mirror in the Civil Lines, rows of whitewashed bungalows inhabited by administrators and their wives. The hardness of this second grid has faded and softened with time, past planning wilting gently in the Indian heat. (*TI* 17)

While at first glance, this passage seems to be merely a pretty straightforward introductory description of the novel’s setting, a closer analysis reveals that its ‘true’ nature is more complex than that. First, it exhibits what Herman terms “hypothetical focalization” (Herman 2002: 310; cf. *ibid.* 309-330, particularly 309-311), because the observation of the city is attributed to an observer, who, although he exists on the extradiegetic level of narrative transmission as the narratee, is in effect inexistent on the story level and therefore incapable of actually making the observations attributed to him. As the narratee, he is nevertheless directly addressed by the narrator by means of the personal pronoun ‘you’ (cf. *ibid.*). Second, via this “direct hypothetical focalization”¹⁷¹ (Herman 2002: 311; cf. *ibid.* 311-318), the “contextual frame” (Emmott

¹⁷⁰ Herman’s contribution to the collected volume *Narratology beyond Literary Criticism: Mediality, Disciplinarity* (2005, edited by Meister), which is entitled “Quantitative Methods in Narratology: A Corpus-Based Study of Motion Events in Stories” (Herman 2005: 125-149), provides an innovative approach to the representation of motion in narrative texts by bringing together corpus linguistics and cognitive narratology (cf. *ibid.*).

¹⁷¹ Herman defines his concept of hypothetical focalization as “a mode of focalization” contained in “narratives whose interpretation provokes, in a more or less direct or explicit way, speculation about some non-existent focalizer” as well as in “narratives that prompt speculation about

1997: 121)¹⁷² of a ‘sightseeing flight over a city’ is activated in the reader’s mind. Third, the emerging mental model of Agra is updated constantly in the course of the imaginary flight. Thus, the precise nature of this description of Agra’s spatial structure is shaped by its configuration as a dynamic map¹⁷³ (cf. de Certeau 1984 [1980]: 119) presented from a bird’s eye perspective, and the active movement involved therein is what essentially problematizes the unambiguous classification of this paragraph as pure description.

The imaginary, hypothetically focalized sightseeing flight high above the city exhibits a narrative element inasmuch as it describes not only a state (‘Agra in 1918’), but also embeds this delineation into the narration of an activity (flying over the city). Accordingly, it uses not only predicates of state, which indicate zero movement, but also several predicates of action. Moreover, the task of describing Agra from above is assigned to an active agent, i.e. the resultant characterization of its spatial structure is given from the perspective of an observer flying over the city. Again, this problematizes the neat categorization of this passage according to the purist dichotomy of ‘description’ and ‘narration’. To conclude, it can thus be argued that, while the function of this extract as a whole clearly consists in providing the reader with an overview of the setting of the first part of the novel, it nonetheless contains traces of narration as well because the dynamic map is rendered through a character’s moving eyes (cf. Ronen 1997: 276-277, 278-279). The atmosphere conveyed by this passage is predominantly marked by the distanced aloofness of both narrator and hypothetical focalizer vis-à-vis the spatio-temporal setting presented (‘Agra in 1918’). This atmosphere, which correlates directly with the absence of emotional identification with this setting and its inhabitants on the part of these two textual entities, constitutes the result of the *spatial* distance between hypothetical focalizer and the objects he perceives while flying high above the city in conjunction with the narrator’s *rhetorical*

focalizing activity that someone who actually exists in the storyworld may or may not have performed” (Herman 2002: 309). He then subdivides this concept further into “direct [and] indirect hypothetical focalization” (ibid. 311 and 318, respectively), depending on whether the respective narrative “explicitly appeal[s] to a hypothetical witness, a counterfactual focalizer, in setting out the elements of the story” (ibid. 311) or not (cf. ibid. 311-318 and 318-323, respectively).

¹⁷² Emmott defines “contextual frame[s]” as “mental store[s] of information about the current context, built up from the text itself and from inferences made from the text” (Emmott 1997: 121).

¹⁷³ Although this description is of de Certeau’s map type on the surface, the introduction of a certain degree of dynamism via the moving hypothetical focalizer problematizes this unequivocal classification. That is why I chose to label this type of description a ‘dynamic map’, which, according to de Certeau, would constitute an oxymoron because he qualifies maps as static, in contradistinction to dynamic tours (cf. de Certeau 1984 [1980]: 118-122).

distance from them arising, in turn, from the ironical undertone clearly perceptible in his narrative representation of this cultural space.

Therefore, this paragraph from *The Impressionist* nicely illustrates the difficulties that frequently arise from the attempt to categorize primary text passages as either pure description or pure narration. Hence, even if abandoning this binary distinction altogether may not be the solution, the necessity of refining this dichotomy by introducing intermediate categories becomes evident. Attempts at such a refinement have been made by Mosher (cf. 1991: 425-445), Ronen (cf. 1997: 274-286) and Nünning (cf. 2007: 91-128). In the following, the usefulness of two of these post-classical approaches to the narratological distinction between narration and description shall be explored tentatively by gauging their applicability to the selected example.

In his article "Toward a Poetics of 'Descriptized' Narration", Harold Mosher Jr. (1991: 425-445) proposes two intermediate categories on the continuum between the poles narration and description: "descriptized narration", which he defines as "a passage whose formal qualities are or seem to be predominantly narrative, but whose ultimate function reveals itself to be descriptive" (Mosher 1991: 427), and "narratized description", defined as the diametrical opposite, i.e. a passage that, according to purely formal characteristics, must be classified as description, whereas its function ultimately proves to be narrative (cf. Mosher 1991: 426-427). Mosher elaborates on this finely grained differentiation by adding that "[o]ften the difference between the two may be conceived of as a situation in which the more important function remains in the background, concealed by the predominance of the other function or its form" (Mosher 1991: 427). When trying to apply this differentiation to the above-quoted example, however, one immediately runs into severe difficulties, for the traces of narrativity it contains are so subtle that classifying it as narratized description would constitute a gross exaggeration. This is where Ruth Ronen's (cf. 1997: 274-286) redefinition of Mosher's differentiation can be brought in usefully because she underpins it with concrete examples from the start: "When action is qualified as slow, for instance, descriptive notions enter narration and when a view is given through the *moving eyes* of a character, narrative elements enter description" (Ronen 1997: 278-279; italics mine). The latter example she gives captures precisely what is going on in the passage from *The Impressionist*, albeit with the qualification that the character from whose perspective the bird's eye view of Agra is provided is a purely hypothetical focalizer. Hence, in Ronen's terms (1997: 278-279; cf. *ibid.*: 274-286), the selected extract instantiates "narratized description".

In a seminal article from 2007, Ansgar Nünning provides an even more sophisticated analytical framework for the differentiated examination of the chameleon-like character of 'description' in fiction (cf. Nünning 2007: 91-128). The central underlying thesis of his structuralist approach to this textual phenomenon is that, despite the alleged self-explanatory and ornamental character of descriptions, it is possible to devise a differentiated framework on the basis of definitional criteria relating to five different levels of a narrative text: the communicative plane, the stylistic level, the structural or syntagmatic plane, the thematic and paradigmatic level, and the reception-oriented and functional level (cf. Nünning 2007: 92-93, 102, 114-116).

With regard to the communicative plane, the central criterion concerns the level of the communication model for narrative texts (cf. Neumann and Nünning 2008: 27) on which the descriptor is located as well as the mode of narrative mediation employed in the descriptive passage. Accordingly, Nünning differentiates, for example, between diegetic and extradiegetic or externally and internally focalized descriptions (cf. Nünning 2007: 102-104, 114). Regarding the linguistic and stylistic form of a descriptive passage, Nünning distinguishes between explicit and implicit as well as between metaphoric and non-metaphoric descriptions (cf. Nünning 2007: 104-105, 115). Concerning the structural plane of a narrative text, there are – according to Nünning (cf. 2007: 105-109, 115) – two main criteria: first, the quantitative ratio of descriptive to non-descriptive passages and their qualitative weighting, and second, the degree of syntagmatic integration of descriptive passages in the overall course of the narrated story. Here, Nünning distinguishes between marginal and central descriptions, block and distributed descriptions and integrated and isolated descriptions (cf. Nünning 2007: 105-109, 115).

The thematic or content-oriented analysis of descriptions, which takes a closer look at the actual 'object' described in a certain passage (cf. Nünning 2007: 109-112, 115), is one area of particular interest here, because what I am scrutinizing is the narrative enactment of spatial movement in contemporary British Asian novels; hence, my selection of primary texts is de facto based on a content-related criterion. In regard to content, Nünning states that "descriptions tend to focus on concrete, static, and spatial phenomena, e.g. places, characters, physiognomies and objects, rather than on abstract notions, feelings, or bodily sensations, though the latter cannot be excluded from the possible objects of description" (Nünning 2007: 109). The fact that he explicitly acknowledges the possibility of thematizing phenomena of mental mobility, such as memories, ideas, thoughts, projects and imaginary journeys via description here is of

prime relevance to my overall research interest, because one recurrent focus in the context-oriented narratological analyses to be conducted in Chapters 5 to 7 will be the dynamic interplay between movements actually taking place on the story level and imaginary journeys undertaken in the respective protagonist's consciousness. As we shall see, this aspect can yield valuable insights on the experiential dimension of the narrative enactment of (transnational) motion and mobility in the selected primary texts (cf. Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation).

To return to Nünning's criteria for the content-oriented differentiation of descriptions, he distinguishes, for instance, between selective and comprehensive descriptions, story-oriented and discourse-oriented descriptions and affirmative and undermining descriptions (cf. Nünning 2007: 109-112, 115). On the functional and reception-oriented level, the prime criterion relates to the potential functions the respective descriptive passage fulfils in the context of the entire narrative and the effects it may have on the reader (cf. Nünning 2007: 113-114, 116). Accordingly, Nünning differentiates between transparent and opaque descriptions, as well as between merely ornamental descriptive passages and descriptions that serve a particular function, for example the explanation of an important detail (cf. Nünning 2007: 91-128, especially 101-116 and 114-116). In the same vein as Mosher (cf. 1991: 425-445) and Ronen (cf. 1997: 274-286), Nünning (cf. 2007: 91-128) thus takes important steps towards a deconstruction of the classical structuralist dichotomy between 'narration and description' by means of his sophisticated typology of descriptions. The endeavour of these scholars testifies to the necessity of bringing together central insights from cognitive narratology on the one hand and narratological investigations into specific representational forms on the other.

To conclude, I have shown in Sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 that affective and cognitive approaches to narratology do offer crucial insights regarding the character's subjective experience of the storyworld he moves about in and the mental formation process of narrative space and movement across it in the reader's mind. From the cultural and narratological reflections on motion explicated so far, the following three sections (4.4.1 – 4.4.3) will develop an innovative narratological semantics for the narrative representation of spatial (and mental) movement in contemporary Asian British novels.

4.4 Integrating the Preceding Reflections into a Narratological Semantics for Motion

The main part of my methodology chapter shall be concerned with the crucial question of how to integrate the preceding considerations into a context-oriented narratological toolbox for the analysis of the narrative enactment of motion.¹⁷⁴ In my theory chapter, I explicated Ette's conceptual metaphor of the vector (cf. Ette 2003: 113; 2004: 227, 250, 251; 2005: 11; 2012: 29) by reformulating it as 'motion is vectoriality',¹⁷⁵ that is, by defining human motion as the product of the combinatorial interplay of three constitutive dimensions – spatiality, agency and temporality. Establishing this link between the outcome and its 'factors of production' enables me to not only analyse individual micro-level configurations of human motion, but also focus on the macro-level contextual plane of extratextual cultural or textual fictional conditions that promote, hinder or prevent movement in the first place. In order to capture the intricate dynamics of the narrative enactment of human motion, this ontological conceptualization of vectoriality must be complemented by a specifically narratological one. In analogy with the structuralist insight into the three-dimensional representation of space (cf. Nünning 2009: 39-44), the narrative enactment of human motion emerges – according to Nünning (cf. 2008a: 19-26, particularly 21) – from the combinatorial interplay of the paradigmatic axis of selection, the syntagmatic axis of combination and the discursive axis of perspectivization (cf. Nünning 2008a: 19-26, particularly 21; see also Nünning 2009: 39-44). Therefore, it is legitimate to argue that narratological vectoriality consists precisely in the conjuncture of these three representational dimensions in the narrative configuration of individual movements. Thus, three central questions arise. What contentual affinities justify the conceptual transfer of the mathematical concept of the vector to the realm of narratology? How can my double definition of vectoriality be applied meaningfully to the narrative representation of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels? And finally, how does this narrative enactment of motion contribute to the emergence of different storyworld topologies in the reader's mind? Each of the three following sections (4.4.1 - 4.4.3) shall be devoted to one of these crucial issues.

¹⁷⁴ As should be clear by now, I use the concepts 'representation' and 'enactment' mostly in an almost synonymous, largely interchangeable sense. Nevertheless, 'representation' traditionally presupposes a static, one-to-one mimetic relationship between the two entities concerned, whereas 'enactment' highlights the dynamic, interdependent nature of the constitution process of human motion in real life and in narrative fiction.

¹⁷⁵ See Stockwell (2002: 110) for a list of everyday conceptual metaphors, such as 'life is a journey' (ibid.).

4.4.1 The Vector as a Conceptual Metaphor for Motion in Narratology

This section will reflect upon the suitability of the mathematical concept of the vector for the central role of a pivotal conceptual metaphor for human motion in context-oriented narratology. To this end, I will proceed in three steps: I will first offer a brief examination of the premises and implications of subjecting the vector to such a conceptual transfer; I will then develop a heuristic functional typology of narrative vectors as a basis for the application of this concept to the narrative enactment of human motion in Section 4.4.2; and I will finally juxtapose the vector with the concept of the path in order to highlight their complementary usefulness for grasping the phenomenon of human motion in narrative texts terminologically.

To begin with, my argumentation is based on the heuristic premise that the intrinsic multidimensionality of the vector qualifies it as a conceptual metaphor for capturing the complex phenomenon of human motion both in extratextual cultural contexts and in textual fictional enactment. More precisely, it constitutes a useful concept for grasping the intricate complexity of human motion and its narrative enactment precisely because it is a topological construct by means of which both the three ontological *and* the three narratological dimensions of motion can be represented as coinciding in the shaping of a concrete movement (cf. my definitions of ontological and narratological vectoriality above). As we shall see, there are a number of further features of mathematical vectors that lend themselves to meaningful application to the narratological description of the narrative representation of motion. This is why I am now turning to the concrete conceptual process of transferring the vector from mathematics to literary and cultural studies.

Because Ette deploys his conceptual metaphor¹⁷⁶ of the vector (cf. Ette 2003: 113; 2004: 227, 250, 251; 2005: 11; 2012: 29) in multiple ways for the analytical description of literary representations of motion (thereby turning it into a “travelling concept” *sensu* Bal [2002])¹⁷⁷ without defining the concept of the vector explicitly, let

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Stockwell (2002: 105-119) for a discussion of conceptual metaphors from the perspective of cognitive poetics. Among other things, Stockwell distinguishes “expressive and explanatory metaphors. Expressive (often poetic) metaphors tend to have low clarity but a high degree of richness, whereas explanatory (often scientific) metaphors tend not to be very rich but are very clear” (Stockwell 2002: 108). Contrary to Stockwell, I argue that the conceptual metaphor of the vector distinguishes itself by a high degree of richness *despite* its scientific provenance and its explanatory character.

¹⁷⁷ See Baumbach, Michaelis and Nünning (2012a: 1-21) for a critical examination of the metaphor of travelling in the context of Bal’s notion of “travelling concepts” (2002).

alone explicating the implications of transferring it from mathematics to the realm of literary and cultural studies, I will provide such a definition and elaborate on potential commonalities between mathematical and literary vectors; that is, I intend to show which properties of the former actually constitute viable links for this conceptual transfer.¹⁷⁸ More precisely, this conceptual transfer shall be examined as a metaphorical process, which always involves the projection of certain salient features of a vehicle – the vector – from a source domain (the subdiscipline of mathematics called analytical geometry) to a tenor – human motion and its literary representation – in a target domain (context-oriented narratology, a subdiscipline of literary and cultural studies). In addition, the restriction of the metaphorical process to a select number of semantic features that are of relevance in the given context triggers the question of what conceptual gains, losses and modifications it entails (cf. Berning, Nünning and Schwanecke 2014a: 4; Stockwell 2002: 106-108; Nünning and Nünning 2004: 68-72).

For the purpose of elucidating the analytical potential inherent in this metaphorically structured conceptual transfer, it is first necessary to identify the concrete mathematical properties of this concept in its source domain: according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a vector is defined in mathematics as “[a] quantity having direction as well as magnitude, denoted by a line drawn from its original to its final position” (online version of the *OED*, last retrieved 01.06.2015).¹⁷⁹ Any introductory mathematics textbook will give the same definition of vectors as quantities endowed with both direction and size, which are applied for the representation of physical categories such as force, displacement or momentum, in contradistinction to scalar quantities, which have size but not direction (cf., for instance, Hummel 1965: 14-15; Kemnitz 2009: 290; Buchanan et al. 2012: 406-407; Großmann 2012: 33-41). In modern technology, a vector denotes, for instance, the course taken by an aircraft. Most importantly, a vector is always multidimensional; in Euclidean space, for instance, it is determined by the three dimensions length, height and width (usually represented by the x, y and z axes in a Cartesian coordinate system; cf. Großmann 2012: 37). Furthermore, the particular subset of Euclidean vectors can be added to one another in countless combinations, the analysis of which is the subject of vector algebra. In

¹⁷⁸ Berning, Nünning and Schwanecke (2014a) define “the general phenomenon of conceptual transfers [as] the dynamic and complex process of transferring concepts from one context to another and the theoretically as well as methodologically transformative work entailed in this process” (2014a: 9). In accordance with this definition, I will reflect upon the case-specific implications of transferring the concept of the vector from mathematics to literary and cultural studies in the following. See Hallet (2012: 389-409) for a specifically cognitive approach to the notion of conceptual transfer.

¹⁷⁹ Available online at <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/221825?result=1&rskey=wgkimu&> (last retrieved 01.06.2015).

addition, vectors can indicate both an entity's position in a coordinate system and its displacement across this frame of reference (cf. Hummel 1965: 14-18).

In my conceptual transfer of the vector to literary and cultural studies, I take up, first and foremost, the intrinsically topological feature of directionality, whereas the second defining feature, size, shall play a secondary role, because it is merely an optional feature in certain extreme cases of human motion, such as perpetual nomadism (cf. Ette 2003: 47-48). In addition, I utilize its intrinsic multidimensionality in order to capture the complexity of the target domain, i.e. the context-oriented narratological examination of the narrative representation of human motion. Finally, the free combinability of Euclidean vectors lends itself to narratological application as well as their ability to encode both static positionality and dynamic movement. The *tertium comparationis* – or, in cognitive-narratological terminology, the common ground (cf. Stockwell 2002: 106-108; Nünning and Nünning 2004: 68-72) – of source and target domains thus lies in these five defining characteristics: directionality, quantifiability, multidimensionality, combinability and double referentiality (to either immobility or mobility).

Transferring these five salient features of the mathematical concept of the vector to the description of the narrative representation of human motion in literary texts, I define a narrative vector as a cognitive construct representing the multidimensionally configured¹⁸⁰ directionality of an agent's movement across the storyworld, or, to put it in simpler terms, a mental model of the respective agent's route that is formed in the reader's mind on the basis of relevant information extracted from the literary text. Assigning the dominant position within this conglomerate of features defining a narrative vector to directionality does not mean depreciating the part played by other characteristics; rather, it is tantamount to acknowledging the high degree of semanticization that this particular property is endowed with in many an Asian British novel (cf., for instance, *The Impressionist* [Kunzru 2002] and *A Life Apart* [Mukherjee 2011]). Having provided a basic definition of narrative vectors, I will now take a closer look at the conceptual modifications necessitated by this conceptual transfer as well as the gains and losses engendered in this metaphorical process.

¹⁸⁰ With this characterization of narrative vectors as marked by multidimensionally configured directionality, I intend to draw attention to the fact that the direction in which a focalizer moves always constitutes the result of the combinatorial interplay of the agentive, spatial and temporal dimensions of human motion as mediated by the complex interplay of the three dimensions of narrative representation.

What modifications are necessary to make the concept of the vector applicable to human motion and its narrative enactment? While the basic feature of three-dimensionality that distinguishes vectors in Euclidean space can be retained in principle, the *content* of these dimensions must inevitably be changed from length, width and height (cf. Großmann 2012: 37) to spatiality, agency and temporality for individual configurations of human motion in general (ontological vectoriality). This combinatorial configuration of spatiality, agency and temporality is always movement-specific inasmuch as no single movement is identical with any other, even if conducted along the very same route. In the case of their narrative enactment, the scope of the picture must be widened to integrate narratological vectoriality, i.e. the combinatorial interplay of the three dimensions of narrative representation – selection, combination/configuration and perspectivization (cf. Nünning 2008a: 19-26, particularly 21; see also Nünning 2009: 39-44). In narrative texts, these three narratological dimensions take precedence over the ontological dimensions of human motion inasmuch as the former produce the illusion of the latter in the reader's mind by means of narrative techniques of representation.

Despite the exchange of dimensions on the content level, however, the fundamentally *conjunctural* nature of vectoriality is retained in the conceptual transfer of the vector from mathematics to the study of literature and culture, because, just like length, width and height coincide in the shaping of a Euclidean vector, individual configurations of human motion arising from the combinatorial interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality take the shape of a conjuncture, that is, their complex interactions are blocked from direct view by their apparent coincidence in the movement they configure. The same holds true for the three narratological dimensions of representing motion. All in all, the literary representation of human motion in narrative fiction thus emerges from ontological vectoriality as generated by narratological vectoriality.

What is gained in this process of conceptual transfer (cf. Berning, Nünning and Schwanecke 2014a: 4)? In terms of vectoriality, the surplus value of the narratological examination of the narrative enactment of motion in comparison with mathematical analysis is to be found in its clear focus on the subjective experiential dimension of the individual traveller and the cultural contextualization of human motion it provides, thereby forming a deliberate contrast to the decontextualized abstraction of

mathematical and scientific examinations of motion.¹⁸¹ In order to complete the picture, it is finally necessary to mention potential losses implied by the conceptual transfer of the vector from mathematics and science to the study of literature and culture. To exemplify this transformative aspect, the feature of quantifiability is a particularly apt candidate, for, in the process of “reframing” (Berning, Nünning and Schwanecke 2014a: 1) vectoriality for literary and cultural studies, this feature loses much of its central significance. Whereas in mathematics, magnitude constitutes one of the two indispensable properties of a vector, there are certain cases in which narrative vectors can do without any kind of quantifiability, for example perpetual nomadism. In addition, literary enactments of human motion also deprive quantification of its crucial importance because the cultural differences between country of origin and destination are of much greater relevance to the protagonist’s subjective experience of their transnational migration than the mere measuring of the distance travelled in miles or kilometres.

To put the same point in Peirce’s semiotic terminology (cf. Hauthal 2008: 316-317; Horlacher 2008: 561-562), the *indexical* quality of the arrow (as the conventionalized representation of a vector) is depreciated in significance in favour of its *symbolic* quality inasmuch as in literary representations of human motion, what counts is not the one-to-one quantitative correspondence between the length of the arrow and the precise distance covered by the vector (as in mathematics), but the cultural differences between point of departure and destination as experienced by the travelling focalizer. In terms of narrative saliency, the process of individual experiential resemanticization of both places takes precedence over the exact quantification of the distance between them. Nevertheless, the route or spatial trajectory the traveller-focalizer takes in order to get from her individual point of departure to her destination can be quantified either explicitly – that is, by mentioning the exact distance between A and B in miles, kilometres or any other measure of length – or implicitly – for instance by naming the time-span required to overcome this distance and the mode of travel used, pieces of information from which the approximate distance can then be roughly inferred.

In addition to the above-mentioned semantic commonalities, the mathematical distinction between free and bound vectors can be deployed with regard to human motion in a meaningful way as well. Whereas in the case of free vectors, only the

¹⁸¹ The etymology of the term ‘vector’ – Latin for ‘carrier’ – can be brought to bear on its conceptual transfer to literary studies inasmuch as a narrative vector carries with it both the agent’s subjective experience of her journey and the contextual dimensions of this movement.

magnitude and direction of the vector matters, bound vectors are additionally characterized by a fixed initial and terminal point (cf. Hummel 1965: 17-18). In terms of motion, this means that the movement encoded by the respective vector does possess a definite point of departure as well as a definite destination. In order to capture these two positions in space terminologically, it is thus expedient to speak of the initial positionality of a character, i.e. his location in space before a definite movement, in contradistinction to his terminal positionality after completion of the movement in question. Provided that the movement is not carried out in one row, there may be a varying number of intermediate positionalities in between. The accurate determination of such specific positionalities is of course possible only in relation to the underlying spatial frame of reference, be it the abstract space of a mathematical coordinate system or the mental model of the storyworld evoked by textual cues in a novel.

As the movement expressed by the vector can be in various stages of realization, i.e., one can roughly distinguish between the intention, planning, implementation, completion and retrospection phases, it is furthermore possible to devise a typology of narrative vectors based on this subdivision of the travelling process. Theoretically, a one-to-one correspondence of configurational stage and narrative vector is entirely feasible. Accordingly, I speak of an intended vector if merely the intention to travel is present in the traveller-focalizer's consciousness; a designed vector implies that concrete plans have been made but the movement has not been carried out yet; an implementation vector describes an on-going journey; and, finally, a completed vector entails that the journey has been finished. With regard to mental mobility, the complementary concept will be called an imagined vector, which designates the 'route(s)' of memories, dreams, thoughts and other sorts of purely imaginary journeys. As we shall see in the three exemplary primary text analyses to be conducted in Chapters 5 to 7, such an overly fine-grained functional typology of narrative vectors does not reflect the actual practice of the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels adequately. This is why I will simplify it by merging the descriptive functions of several types in the resultant triad of intended, experienced and imagined vectors.

Grounded in the central agentive feature of (ideally) volitional human intentionality, the concept of the *intended* vector accordingly covers the essentially anticipatory process of deciding upon, planning and preparing a journey, thereby merging its own intrinsic conceptual reach with that of the designed vector (according to the more fine-grained typology delineated above). By contrast, the concept of the

experienced vector refers to the retrospective account of a journey the traveller has already completed, thus combining semantic elements of the implementation and completed vectors. Finally, the *imagined* vector is either future-oriented or geared towards the past inasmuch as this concept comprises nocturnal or daydreaming about a future journey in advance or about a past journey after the fact. Most importantly, the imagined vector can also refer to journeys that are *purely* imaginary in the sense that they are disconnected from any possibility or intention to put them into practice in the “textual actual world” (Ryan 1991: vii; cf. *ibid.* and Ryan 1985: 720).

While arguably, one could object that all narrative vectors are imagined inasmuch as they emerge as cognitive constructs in the reader’s mind, the point of this typology lies in its capacity to describe various configurational stages in the realization of a journey enacted narratively. In the same vein, it is possible to object that there is a subtle degree of conceptual overlap between the intended vector and the imagined vector because, after all, both of them refer exclusively to mental phenomena situated in various different “textual possible worlds” (Ryan 1991: vii; cf. *ibid.* and Ryan 1985: 720). Here, the critical differentiator lies in the question of whether the focalizer shows any indication of the intention to put the idea of going on a journey into practice. Naturally, this means that an imagined vector can turn into an intended one, for a dream about travelling to India can of course trigger the intention to actually visit it. Conversely, after the completion of a journey, the focalizer is able to re-experience this trip in his imagination, for instance, semi-consciously in a nocturnal dream or consciously in a rational evaluation of the new insights he has gained in its course.

Subsequent to the elucidation of the conceptual transfer of the vector from mathematics to literary and cultural studies as well as the delineation of a triadic functional typology of narrative vectors, the third step consists in enhancing the profile of this concept by juxtaposing it with a contiguous concept for the analytical description of the directionality inherent in the narrative representation of human motion. In addition to the above-mentioned salient features, there is a further aspect of vectors that deserves particular attention: their contentual affinity to the concept of the path from cognitive narratology (cf. Herman 2002: 277-280). Due to its pre-eminent usefulness for the precise description of the spatial trajectories that, by virtue of their being travelled upon by characters on the story level, acquire central significance in any attempt to analyse the configurations of the storyworld, the concept of the path constitutes a viable starting point for the mental reconstruction of the ‘road network’ that links the individual settings together, thus producing what Kurt Lewin (1934: 249-

299) has aptly labelled a “hodological space” (‘hodos’ is the ancient Greek term for ‘way’ or ‘path’; cf. Günzel 2007a: 24 and Herman 2002: 277-280). The case-specific suitability of these two concepts (vector and path) hinges, among other factors, on the mode of travel used by the moving agent in the novel’s storyworld. Accordingly, the high degree of abstraction from concrete, literally down-to-earth spatio-temporal contexts prevalent in the experience of contemporary air travel turns the vector into a particularly suitable metaphor for this mode of travel, whereas the agent’s subjective experience of hiking is better represented by more ‘contextualized’ metaphors such as path and route (cf. Clifford 1997 for the latter).

In the following, I want to briefly sketch the productivity of combining vectors and paths in the narratological description of motion. As pointed out above, any scholarly investigation into the narrative enactment of travelling may focus on various aspects of a journey’s narrative representation. Among them, two aspects deserve particular attention: the cognitive and the experiential perspectives. Depending on the angle from which the narrative representation of travelling is scrutinized, its analysis can focus on either the question of the cognitive processes at work in the evocation of a movement headed in a particular direction or the way the agent’s experience of overcoming the distance between A and B is semanticized. To some extent, these aspects can be conceived of as two sides of the same coin, for all travel-related activities – going on a journey, representing this journey narratively and processing this narrative enactment cognitively – necessarily entail both of these domains. Thus, it is justified to argue that there is at least a partial overlap between vector and path, which argument I want to make productive for the narratological description of the narrative representation of human motion in the following.

On the one hand, these two concepts overlap in that both of them describe the spatial trajectories human agents travel on (whether in extratextual cultural reality or in a fictional textual storyworld); on the other hand, however, there is a subtle difference in the particular configuration of such a route implied by the term ‘vector’ as distinct from ‘path’: According to the basic mathematical conceptualization (cf. Hummel 1965: 14-18), a vector does imply a straight line, i.e. the shortest possible connection from point A to point B, whereas a path (as the term used in everyday language) may naturally include meandering trajectories, digressions, impasses, detours and shortcuts; in short, it encompasses any kind of deviation from the ideal route (as represented by the vector) necessitated by real-world circumstances. Capturing such meandering routes by means of a vector-based representation inevitably requires

subdividing them into straight-line sections that can justifiably be conceived of as single vectors. Taken together, these vectors then constitute the respective journey's complete trajectory.

On the whole, it is thus justified to conclude that the ambivalent relationship between the concepts of 'vector' and 'path' does indeed lend itself to narratological purposes insofar as the former concept proves to be fruitful for the reader's cognitive retracing of a narratively enacted journey, while the latter tends to be more useful for grasping the concrete experiential realization of a character's journey across the storyworld. Consequently, the two concepts capture the same phenomenon, but from different perspectives and varying distances: the vector allows, for example, for zooming in on one particular part of a journey, whereas the path tends to lay more emphasis on a holistic, bird's eye view. By virtue of this complementary combination of vector and path, it thus becomes possible to analyse both the experiential and the cognitive aspects of the narrative representation of motion in literary texts by means of an integrative theoretico-methodological model. In the following section, I will provide an exemplary exposition of what such a model can look like.

4.4.2 The Narrative Enactment of Real-and-Imagined Movements

This subchapter will focus on the methodological core of the cultural narratology of motion aspired to by delineating a context-oriented narratological toolbox for the analytical description of narrative enactments of physical human motion. As coming to terms with this phenomenon additionally requires taking the related issue of mental mobility into due account, its narrative representation shall be integrated into this narratological semantics. With regard to the narrative enactment of such real-and-imagined movements, I will proceed in five steps. First, selected introductory reflections on the relationship between ontological and narratological vectoriality will set the stage for the following exposition of my narratological toolbox. Second, the triadic functional typology of narrative vectors developed in Section 4.4.1 will be correlated with analytical categories from classical structuralist narratology. Third, the minimalistic mode of representing journeys narratively will be examined as a particularly pertinent example of the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels. Fourth, the functions performed by mental mobility in the context of the

narrative enactment of real-and-imagined movements shall be analysed in conjunction with the narrative techniques deployed for the representation of such mental movements. Fifth, I will briefly focus on ‘movements of representation’, that is, diachronic changes in the preferences for certain narrative techniques of representing real-and-imagined movements and the phenomenon of intertextuality.

Regarding the first step, cognitive narratology provides us with the recognition that in narrative texts, it is the combinatorial interplay of the three dimensions of narrative representation in what I call narratological vectoriality that *creates the illusion* of ontological vectoriality, that is, of a character moving across space over time, in the first place. From a jointly cognitive and structuralist point of view, the *narrative enactment* of a particular movement thus becomes describable as the product of the interplay of the selection structure, the narrative configuration and the narrative mediation as well as perspectivization of this movement (cf. Nünning 2008a: 19-26, particularly 21; Nünning 2009: 39-44; see also Ricoeur 1984: 56-70 and Nünning 1995: 173-200). In the transfer of his own model of the narratological dimensions of narrative representation from historical novels to travelogues (cf. Nünning 2008a: 19-26), Nünning explicates the three axes involved in this process:

[... first,] the paradigmatic axis of the selection of the elements described and reported; second, the syntagmatic axis of the combination and relationing of the selected elements, that is, the narrative configuration and other macro-structural types of linking the represented elements in travel literature; and third, the discursive axis of the communication of the narrated content by means of definite techniques of narrative mediation and perspectivization [...]. (Nünning 2008a: 21; my translation)

According to Nünning (cf. 2008a: 23), the constitution of textual meaning through different strategies of “emplotment” (White 1973: 7) in the travelogue extends to all three dimensions of narrative representation. First, the paradigmatic axis is involved inasmuch as the combined acts of selecting, weighting and thus hierarchizing settings, events, and people encountered while on the move suggest to the reader that certain interpretations and ideologically coloured opinions thereof might be more plausible than others. Second, narrative meaning is shaped decisively by strategies of plot configuration on the syntagmatic axis, that is, by “the arrangement, combination and causal-logical (or other types of) linking elements of the action” (Nünning 2008a: 23; my translation). The crucial significance of narrative configuration and attendant structuration lies in the process of establishing relations between the elements selected and in the transformation of an infinite succession of incidents into the structured and meaningful sequence of events that constitutes a plot (cf. Nünning 2008a: 22 and Ricoeur 1984: 67). Third, the discursive axis comes into play, “for, in both a novel and a

travelogue, the explicit and implicit constitution of meaning hinges upon the issue of narrative mediation and perspectivization” (Nünning 2008a: 23; my translation; cf. *ibid.* 21-23).

Building on Nünning’s model, I have defined narratological vectoriality as the conjuncture, i.e. the combinatorial interplay, of the paradigmatic axis of selection, the syntagmatic axis of combination/narrative configuration and the discursive axis of narrative mediation and perspectivization in the narrative enactment of one specific movement (cf. introductory paragraph of Section 4.4; see also Section 4.4.1 of this dissertation). As the textually represented directionality of an agent’s movement, the concept of the narrative vector constitutes a movement-specific configuration of these three dimensions. Consequently, three questions need to be answered with regard to the movement in question. Which stages of this movement are selected for representation (cf. Ette’s [2012: 216, 240, 268] concept of “vectoricity”)? Which narrative techniques of representation are deployed for the narrative enactment of this movement on the syntagmatic and discursive axes? From whose perspective is this movement represented (cf. Nünning 2008a: 19-26; Nünning 2009: 39-44)?

In terms of the selection structure, contemporary Asian British novels frequently opt to privilege departure and arrival scenes, anticipatory expectations and retrospective evaluations of the consequences of biographically momentous trips – such as, most importantly, transnational migrations – over detailed renderings of the precise course of such a journey. As for narrative configuration, this specific selection structure correlates with the narrative practice of conjoining two (or more) geographically distant and culturally heterogeneous settings to one another more or less directly, that is, without inserting lengthy accounts of the experiential event of the transnational migration itself. In terms of the narrative strategies of representation deployed, establishing such (more or less) direct links between country of origin and destination necessitates the frequent use of Genettean ellipses for the spatio-temporal transit of the migratory movement concerned. Accordingly, the comprehensive narrative enactment of the journey itself via the alternation of summary and scene, which occupied the bulk of the text in many traditional travel narratives such as, most importantly, the colonial travelogue, is often supplanted by radically minimalistic modes of narrative representation. Regarding the discursive aspect of narrative mediation and perspectivization, the prevalence of internal focalization in the narrative enactment of motion in contemporary Asian British novels suggests that the traveller-focalizer’s subjective perspective on the journey he performs is more important than any kind of

structurally superordinate narratorial perspective because, in contrast to the latter, the former is capable of granting the reader insight into the travelling character's subjective experientiality of his journey. By foregrounding the *individual* experience of travelling (even if only from the retrospective vantage point of its major long-term consequences), the arrogant claim to general validity traditionally implied in rendering events from an overarching narratorial perspective is fundamentally called into question (cf. Nünning 2009: 45-46). Simultaneously, this foregrounding of the subjective individuality of the traveller-focalizer's experience of transnational migration and its consequences highlights the subjectivity and context-dependence of any semanticization of human motion and the different cultural settings it inevitably brings together in the focalizer's mind (cf. Beck 2014: 119-120 and Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107).

Subsequent to this tentative application of Nünning's model to the narrative enactment of motion in contemporary Asian British novels, I will correlate my triadic functional typology of narrative vectors with analytical categories from classical structuralist narratology in the following. This combination shall then serve as one central module in my attempt to come to grips with the minimalistic mode of representing motion prevalent in contemporary Asian British novels. Within Genette's seminal framework for the narratological analysis of the narrative representation of time (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 33-160), the category of order¹⁸² (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 33-85) distinguishes itself by its special pertinence to this mode of representational minimalism because the question of where, i.e. at what point, the narrative is interrupted in order to make way for a Genettean ellipsis (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 106-109) is of particularly high cultural significance in the context of the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels. As we shall see, it is the cognitive analogies between intended, experienced and imagined vectors on the one hand and Genettean anachronies (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 35-85) on the other that justify this act of linking my triad of narrative vectors with these established narratological categories.

¹⁸² For the following exposition of the heuristic correlation of my functional triad of narrative vectors with Genettean anachronies (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 33-85), it is essential to keep in mind the difference between the time of the narrating, i.e. the narrator's overall temporal position vis-à-vis the narrative she recounts (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 215-227), on the one hand, and the order in which she narrates the events that make up the narrative's plot, that is, the case-specific sequentialization of these events in narrative discourse (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 33-85), on the other. With regard to the former issue, contemporary Asian British novels generally subscribe to the traditional mode of subsequent narrating. By contrast, they employ the entire range of narrative configurations of order, including, apart from simple chronological narration, not only analepses and prolepses but also nested combinations of these anachronies, i.e. analepsis-in-prolepsis or, conversely, prolepsis-in-analepsis (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 33-85).

To begin with, the *intended* vector is part of the textual *possible* world of the mind of the individual character-focalizer intent on performing a specific movement across the storyworld over a certain period of story time. More precisely, it merges intentional and imagined components inasmuch as its *anticipatory* character always involves deliberate and purpose-oriented thinking ahead of its current spatio-temporal location on the part of the character-focalizer. According to the heuristic framework of my trialectics of motion, the intended vector thus foregrounds the *agentive* dimension in that it necessarily entails complex processes of human decision-making and rational planning of the movement to be carried out, which, in turn, are marked by the agent's intentionality, motivationality and (ideally) volitionality. In other words, the *cognitive prefiguration* of the journey the traveller-focalizer intends to perform is indispensable because planning a journey necessarily entails thinking ahead of time (and space) about the route to be taken, the mode of travel to be used, the types of friction to be expected and so on (cf. Ingold 2011b: 152). Due to its nature as a mental movement *forward* in time and space,¹⁸³ one might intuitively be tempted to associate the *intended* vector with the narrative device of a Genettean *prolepsis*. From the perspective of cognitive narratology, it does, in fact, always contain a certain *proleptic* element inasmuch as the future-oriented character of planning a journey requires the agent to perform it in advance mentally. However, Genette's conceptualization of prolepsis refers exclusively to the anticipation of events that will definitely take place in the textual *actual* world of a novel, never to the merely *virtual* realm of the textual *possible* world of a character's mind (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 35-85). Regarding the planning stage of a journey, it is evident that the textual actualization of a character's intention to embark upon it can never be guaranteed due to the potential presence of internal and/or external friction. Moreover, its actual course is likely to differ significantly from the respective character's anticipatory expectations. This is why I would like to expand the scope of applicability of prolepses to include the cognitive prefiguration of a journey in a *character's* mind by introducing the subtype of *mental* prolepsis.

Accordingly, the anticipatory nature of the intended vector must not be confounded with the narrative strategy deployed to enact it. While, at first glance, the mental prolepsis arguably seems to be the most typical narrative strategy of enacting intended vectors, there are (at least) two further options available: chronological narration and (mental) "prolepsis-in-analepsis" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 79-83). The former strategy is at work whenever the preparations for a trip are recounted in their

¹⁸³ With my characterization of intended vectors as mental movements forward in time and space, in addition to Genette (cf. 1980 [1972]: 35-85), I am drawing on Bal's reflections on direction in connection with anachronies (cf. Bal 2009 [1985]: 83-85).

'proper' place, that is, before the journey itself but subsequent to any preceding event. The latter, much more complex strategy applies whenever the anticipatory planning of a trip is embedded in a retrospective account of this very same journey. Both the simple prolepsis and the prolepsis-in-analepsis require the reader to perform intricate *spatio-temporal* deictic shifts (cf. Herman 2002: 270-274) that defy schematically chronological linearity. Since Genette focuses solely on the *temporal* aspect of prolepses, the *spatial* aspect deserves particular attention in the context of the narrative enactment of human motion, for, evidently, characters' movements across the storyworld do by definition imply a change of spatial location. As pointed out above, the process of planning such a movement accordingly necessitates performing it in the domain of mental mobility prior to its actualization in the storyworld. In the case of transnational migration, the character's *prospective*, culturally conditioned individual semanticization of his destination tends to be particularly insightful for a context-oriented narratological enquiry into the narrative representation of human motion, because the way he perceives this cultural space prior to the migratory movement frequently differs significantly from his perceptual perspective after his arrival. Accordingly, *prospective* semanticizations of the destination commonly reveal much more about cultural stereotypes about this 'promised land' prevalent in the migrant's country of origin than about the reality of everyday life there.

The *experienced* vector, by contrast, belongs to the textual *actual* world, because it refers to a movement that has already taken place in the respective novel's storyworld. Having been carried out and experienced by an internal focalizer, it thus combines performative and experiential components that tie it to the 'actual' spatio-temporal configuration of this storyworld. In contrast to intended vectors, experienced vectors thus tend to foreground the individual traveller-focalizer's subjective experience of their spatio-temporal surroundings, thereby privileging their *experiential* perspective on space and time over the decision-making process that caused this movement to happen in the first place. In short, these two types of narrative vectors usually highlight different components of agency: intended vectors put the aspect of intentionality centre-stage, whereas experienced vectors foreground the aspect of the traveller-focalizer's bodily and mental, jointly cognitive and affective experientiality of their spatio-temporal environment while on the move. Thereby, the latter type brings in the other two dimensions of my trialectics of motion through the lens of the traveller-focalizer's subjective perspective.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁴ As a conceptual correlative to mental prolepses, mental analepses can of course occur in narrative texts as well (cf. Bal 2009 [1985]: 85-88). As they pertain primarily to the realm of

With the notable exception of simultaneous narrating (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 217), *experienced* vectors do generally qualify as *retrospective* inasmuch as, from a cognitive point of view, some kind of mental (re)configuration of the journey experienced is indispensable for narrating it. As mental movements *backward* in time and space, experienced vectors in contemporary Asian British novels are typically enacted narratively by means of a Genettean completing analepsis preceded by an ellipsis.¹⁸⁵ Evidently, the use of an analepsis always requires the reader to perform a spatio-temporal deictic shift backwards, that is, to the precise point in time and space from which the traveller departed. In the simplest case, the analepsis then narrates the journey itself chronologically up to the point at which the story has been interrupted to make way for the analeptic account of this trip. Of course, narrative discourse is free to heighten the complexity of narrative enactment further by incorporating additional anachronies into this account, each of which then necessitates one further spatio-temporal deictic shift.

The retrospective nature of the experienced vector as a cognitive movement backward in time and space performed by the reader must not be confounded with the agentive spatio-temporal directionality of the character's movement across the storyworld represented by this vector, which is, at least in realist novels, always headed in a forward direction. On the level of the storyworld, this agentive spatio-temporal directionality is always subject to the cultural semanticization of the movement encoded by the experienced vector. Regarding the cultural contextualization of the narratively enacted movement in question, it does, for instance, make a significant difference whether the character is travelling from the former imperial centre Britain to an ex-colony (such as India) or in the opposite direction. Additionally, the purpose of his trip is of crucial relevance here, for a postcolonial migrant trying to escape harsh living conditions in India will semanticize his transnational migration to Britain affectively in a way totally different from that of a Western tourist coming to India for mere sightseeing or spiritual enlightenment. As well, the issue of frequency likewise acquires central importance in its conjunction with directionality because the outward vector of an initial transnational migration is usually semanticized differently than the return vector of an eventual remigration. In the context of my cultural narratology of motion, the analysis of experienced vectors must therefore go beyond the identification of the narrative

mental mobility, they can legitimately be said to correspond to imagined vectors (See also the sections on the imagined vector and mental mobility below.).

¹⁸⁵ Due to their combination with a preceding ellipsis, these analepses are always of the completing type, because, in contrast to repeating analepses, their function consists in filling in a lacuna that has been left by narrative discourse at some earlier point of the narrative (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 51-54).

strategies deployed for the enactment of transnational migrations (and other types of motion) to include salient aspects of the historical, sociocultural, economic and literary contexts in which this specific movement is embedded (cf. Section 4.4.3 of this dissertation).

To return to my correlation of my functional triad of narrative vectors with Genettean anachronies, the recurrent pattern of 'ellipsis plus analepsis' is by no means the only possible narrative strategy for enacting the experience of past journeys narratively. Rather, experienced vectors can likewise be rendered in simple chronological narration. In this case, the sequentialization of events in narrative discourse follows the seemingly natural order of chronological linearity by narrating the intended vector before the experienced vector. Finally, the most complex strategy of enacting experienced vectors narratively consists in embedding an analepsis in a prolepsis – yielding "analepsis-in-prolepsis" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 79-83). This nested constellation obtains whenever narrative discourse gives a retrospective account of a completed journey in the context of a proleptic thematization of what will happen in the future course of the story. Such intricately nested narrative configurations severely disrupt the conventionalized, common-sensical notion of the temporal evolution of the action in the storyworld as a one-dimensional linear flow from beginning via middle to end, thereby highlighting the similarly discontinuous nature of human motion as well. Consequently, the myth of movement as uninterrupted linear progression from point of departure to destination is debunked by a deliberate narrative strategy of foregrounding anticipation and retrospection as well as (potentially) frictional factors from the vantage point of the traveller-focalizer's individual experiential perspective on the movement he is performing. As a result, the notion of movement as smooth transit from point A to point B is revealed as an ideologically motivated, idealized construct propagated, for instance, by uncritical proponents of utopian transculturalism.

The *imagined* vector, finally, is once again part of the textual *possible* world of the internal focalizer's imagination. From a cognitive perspective, it can be classified as anticipatory, retrospective or *purely* imaginary, since it involves a mental movement backward or forward in time and space on the part of the internal focalizer who re-experiences a past journey, anticipates a future one or embarks upon an exclusively imaginative equivalent in his individual mind. In short, my concept of imagined vectors is meant to capture the whole range of mental mobility, be it as the mental prefiguration of a future journey, the mental reconfiguration of a past journey or a solely imaginary dream journey or fantasy trip. Each of these subtypes usually implies the necessity to

perform at least one spatio-temporal deictic shift on the part of the reader. While narrative discourse typically enacts the first two subtypes of imagined vectors via mental prolepsis or analepsis, respectively, there are alternative strategies of representation for these two subtypes. Most importantly, they can be constituted via chronological narration or, in considerably more complex fashion, by embedding a prolepsis in an analepsis (prolepsis-in-analepsis) in the case of the first subtype (imaginative anticipation of a future journey), or by deploying the reverse procedure of embedding, i.e. analepsis-in-prolepsis (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 79-83 for the complex embedding of different anachronies in one another) in the case of the second subtype (the mental act of re-experiencing a past journey imaginatively). In conclusion, it is thus justified to argue that, although analepsis and (mental) prolepsis are among the most frequent means deployed for the narrative enactment of intended, experienced and imagined vectors, there is nonetheless no cogent one-to-one form-to-function correlation between the cognitive metaphors of intended, experienced and imagined vectors on the one hand and Genette's pertinent narratological categories on the other.

What is more, the terminological delimitation of these different types of narrative vectors according to the representational function they fulfil should not be interpreted as a mutually exclusive categorization. Due to the inescapably hybrid nature of real-and-imagined movements, my narratological endeavour is more about assessing which of these three functions – intentionality, experientiality and imagination – is dominant in any particular narrative enactment of human motion than about drawing rigid either/-or dividing lines between them. Consequently, my differentiation of intended, experienced and imagined vectors is supposed to serve as a merely heuristic analytical toolbox designed to shed light on both the different configurational stages of a narratively enacted journey and the primary function fulfilled by individual vectors in this specific context.

Subsequent to this heuristic combination of my functional triad of narrative vectors with Genettean anachronies, I will now examine the minimalistic mode of representing human motion narratively in more detail. The attribute 'minimalistic' refers to the Genettean category of duration (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 86-112) here, for the characteristic quality of this mode is its extreme reduction of the length of text devoted to characters' individual movements across the storyworld. As this representational mode distinguishes itself by both its particular frequency and its potential for cultural and literary-historical contextualization with regard to the narrative enactment of motion in contemporary Asian British novels, it constitutes a particularly apt choice for closer

inspection in the framework of my cultural narratology of motion. In the case of experienced vectors, one of the most frequent means of narrative enactment consists in Genettean ellipsis in tandem with analepsis. Accordingly, narrative discourse first omits the course of the journey in question, only to return to it at a later point in the narrative in order to fill in the gap, either by providing a brief account of it belatedly or by semanticizing it retrospectively from the privileged vantage point of its long-term consequences for the individual traveller-focalizer. From the point of view of historical and sociocultural contextualization, it is highly significant that the narrative techniques deployed tend to vary according to the mode of travel used. Accordingly, Asian British novels employ the pattern 'ellipsis plus analepsis' particularly frequently in the narrative enactment of contemporary air travel. In fact, this representational pattern itself constitutes one narrative strategy of foregrounding the frictional discontinuity of the traveller-focalizer's time-experience in connection with human motion, such as, most prominently, transnational migrations conducted by airplane (cf. Section 4.2.3 of this dissertation).

Due to the resultant outstanding relevance of the category 'ellipsis', I will provide a heuristic, problem-oriented adaptation of the classical Genettean framework to the specific case of the narrative representation of individual movements in the following. More precisely, I will simplify his highly sophisticated typology by merely distinguishing between two prototypical subtypes of Genettean ellipsis:¹⁸⁶ the *elusive* and the *ellipsoidal* mode of representing journeys narratively. Drawing – like Genette¹⁸⁷ – on the linguistic concept of elision, I conceptualize the *elusive* mode of narrative representation as a complete omission of the course of the journey itself *without* anticipatory hints or a retrospective account of the journey. When, for instance, the protagonist Ritwik's transnational migration from India to England can be inferred by the reader from the fact that he is in Calcutta in one chapter and in Oxford in the next, this clearly qualifies as an *elusive* representation of the migration in question (cf. my examination of *A Life Apart* in Chapter 6 of this dissertation).

Taking my cue from the three-dimensional geometrical figure of an ellipsoid (which, compared to a rectangular column, leaves out certain parts of the original

¹⁸⁶ In his highly differentiated typology of temporal ellipses, Genette distinguishes, among other things, between explicit and implicit as well as definite and indefinite ellipses (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 106-109). See Section 4.2.3 of this dissertation for a more detailed account of Genette's sophisticated conceptualization of ellipses.

¹⁸⁷ Genette repeatedly refers to ellipsis as "the elision of a diachronic section" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 51) of the story by narrative discourse. In his explication of the subtype "explicit ellipsis", he defines "elision pure and simple" as the "zero degree of the elliptical text" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 106).

shape while retaining others), I define the *ellipsoidal* mode of narrative representation as encompassing the entire range from the mere mention of a verb of departing, travelling or arriving to a brief summary of the journey. With the latter mode, anticipatory hints and brief retrospective accounts of the trip are possible. Whereas the first mode thus elides its experiential dimension so thoroughly that its existence can be inferred by the reader from changes in a character's spatial deixis only, the second mode allows for a wide scope of flexibility in its concrete narrative evocation. Within its purview, the combination Genettean ellipsis plus completing analepsis constitutes one of the most frequent patterns of narrative enactment deployed for experienced vectors in contemporary Asian British novels. In this specific context, the *extent* of the analepsis is the prime criterion for classifying the narrative enactment of a particular journey as belonging to this minimalistic mode of narrative representation, for what counts here primarily is the length of text devoted to the respective analeptic account, not its reach, i.e. the temporal distance of the analepsis from the present point at which narrative discourse interrupts chronological linearity in order to insert this anachrony (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 48). The longer the analeptic summary of the journey, the less likely its overall narrative representation is to qualify as minimalistic.

Because the conspicuous prevalence of minimalistic modes of representing journeys narratively in this transcultural mode of writing¹⁸⁸ calls for culturally contextualized explanation, I will present three hypotheses on the cultural semanticization of these narrative techniques (cf. Nünning 2008c: 652-653, and Neumann 2009: 116 for the general significance of the semanticization of literary techniques of representation), which shall then be tested in the in-depth analyses of the narrative enactment of motion in the three selected Asian British novels (cf. Chapters 5 to 7 of this dissertation). First and foremost, the predominance of representational minimalism can justifiably be interpreted as a postcolonial strategy of silencing precisely that which used to be foregrounded in colonial travelogues, i.e. the course of the journey itself, hence constituting a clear break with the representational conventions of the traditional travelogue, such as its “predominantly linear-chronological narrative structure” (Nünning 2008a: 22; my translation).¹⁸⁹ By often

¹⁸⁸ In addition to the three novels selected for detailed examination – *The Impressionist* (Kunzru 2002), *A Life Apart* (Mukherjee 2011 [2008]), and *The Pleasure Seekers* (Doshi 2010), elliptical modes of enacting human motion narratively can be found, for instance, in *One Hundred Shades of White* (Nair 2003), *Transmission* (Kunzru 2005 [2004]), *The Inheritance of Loss* (Desai 2006), *Salt and Saffron* (Shamsie 2000), *The God of Small Things* (Roy 2009 [1997]) and *Maps for Lost Lovers* (Aslam 2004).

¹⁸⁹ According to Nünning (cf. 2008a: 22), this high degree of conventionalization of most traditional travelogues has only been challenged “by pronouncedly self-reflective travel fictions

treating the phenomenon of travelling itself elliptically, contemporary Asian British authors deliberately establish a narrative counter-discourse to the extremely detailed accounts of exploratory, adventure, missionary, commercial, military and other voyages that were typical of the era of European colonialism. In the process, they also deconstruct the underlying, ideologically motivated and lopsided celebration of the male imperial explorer that used to dominate the classical colonial travelogue in its double role as adventurer and hero (cf. Thompson 2011: 15, 28; see also Griem 2003: 160-163). Second, the traditional conventionalization of travelling and the travelogue (cf. Nünning 2008a: 22) has contributed substantially to the contentual depreciation of the performative act of travelling itself. Due to this significant decrease in the tellability of travelling, it is justified to argue that nowadays, the *consequences* of, say, a transnational migration frequently matter much more in terms of the individual migrant's subjective experientiality than the precise course of the migratory movement in and of itself. Third, the extremely high degree of standardization characteristic of state-of-the-art contemporary modes of travel frequently tends to reduce their tellability to zero. From the ethnocentric perspective of affluent Westerners, contemporary air travel functions as the paradigmatic example of this tendency, not least because it embodies not only the resultant monotony of travelling but also Harvey's condition of postmodern "time-space compression" (Harvey 1990 [1989]: vii; 265). This reduction of geographical and temporal distance between locations scattered all around the globe, I argue, finds its literary equivalent in elliptical modes of narrative representation as deployed, for instance, with regard to the myriad airplane trips performed by the protagonists of Tishani Doshi's *The Pleasure Seekers* (2010; cf. Section 7.2 of this dissertation).

From a jointly political and ethical perspective, it is, however, necessary to integrate the other side of the coin into the overall picture of contemporary global mobility, viz. the currently omnipresent destiny of refugees and so-called illegal migrants, whose forced transnational mass migrations from war-torn countries to Europe form a stark experiential counterpoint to the highly standardized and effortless prerogative of flying all around the globe as experienced by Western tourists and the privileged middle and upper classes of emerging countries like China and India: Forced to fight for their survival while breaking a dangerous and stony path across hostile environments abounding in natural and man-made obstacles, these refugees' experience of transnational migration has nothing to do with postmodern time-space compression and the routinization of state-of-the-art modes of travel. Consequently,

such as those of Bruce Chatwin, V. S. Naipaul and W. G. Sebald in the past decades" (Nünning 2008a: 22; my translation).

their dystopian experience of forced transnational migration abounds in tellability precisely because of its perilous, horrid and precarious nature. In stark contrast to the postmodern vision of smooth worldwide mobility for everyone, these dystopian configurations of transnational migration represent the marginalized Other of transcultural utopianism. It is between these two poles that an entire spectrum of different experiential configurations of transnational migration unfolds (cf. Braidotti 1994a: 21-28).

The reduction in tellability of contemporary air travel can be reformulated more accurately through recourse to cognitive narratology (cf. Section 4.3.2 of this dissertation) in tandem with cultural contextualization (cf. Chapter 3): in the age of contemporary globalization, the cognitive frame of 'passenger aircraft' and the attendant script of travelling in one have reached such an extraordinary degree of ubiquity and stereotypical triviality that their tellability has vanished almost entirely. Accordingly, the individual traveller's role in the cognitive script of 'contemporary air travel' consists in nothing more than being a passive, obedient (and therefore partly objectified) passenger moved around by global mobility systems. In order to get from A to B, the passenger merely has to perform the stereotypical, highly standardized tasks of booking a ticket, going through the security and customs procedures and board the flying vessel.

Under present-day technological and cultural circumstances, the act of flying in a passenger aircraft itself is therefore turned from a kernel into a mere satellite (cf. Chatman 1978: 53-56), losing its tellability, experiential intensity and narrative saliency in the process.¹⁹⁰ In his novel *Se una notte d'inverno un viaggiatore* (1983 [1979]), the Italian author Italo Calvino accordingly posits flying as the experiential antipode of travelling (cf. Ette 2003: 27-28): "Flying is the opposite of travelling. You cross a jump in the space continuum, a kind of hole in space, you disappear in emptiness, you are a while, which is also a kind of hole in time, in no place, nowhere [...]" (Calvino 1983: 253). With transnational migration in particular, these central narratological qualities are transferred from the performative act of travelling itself to the initial expectations cherished before departure and the long-term biographical consequences this

¹⁹⁰ According to Chatman's plot theory, narrative events can be hierarchized according to their indispensability for the logic of a novel's plot: "Kernels are narrative moments that give rise to cruxes in the direction taken by events. They are nodes or hinges in the structure, branching points which force a movement into one of two (or more) possible paths" (Chatman 1978: 53). Hence, while "[k]ernels cannot be deleted without destroying the narrative logic" (ibid.), "minor plot event[s] – *satellite[s]* – [...] can be deleted without disturbing the logic of the plot, though [their] omission will, of course, impoverish the narrative aesthetically" (Chatman 1978: 54).

migration actually engenders for the individual traveller-focalizer. In narrative discourse, the comparative juxtaposition of the traveller-focalizer's jointly affective and cognitive 'anticipatory expectations versus retrospective semanticization(s)' largely supplants the thematization of the occurrences during the migratory movement itself. Due to this conspicuously widespread absence, Genette's category of frequency (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 113-160) turns out to be difficult to apply to the movement per se. The question of how often something is thematized by narrative discourse (always in relation to its 'actual' frequency on the story level) can, however, be applied productively to those elements that do receive more textual space and, concomitantly, further concretization in the narrative enactment of transnational migration in contemporary Asian British novels such as departure and arrival scenes and the frequently stark contrast between the expected and actual consequences of migration.

Like all narrative techniques, this representational minimalism vis-à-vis the movement itself is of course not without ideological and political implications¹⁹¹ because, by omitting it in favour of its consequences, the minimalist mode of narrative enactment exposes itself to fundamental postcolonial critique inasmuch as it focuses mostly on transnational migration as experienced by middle-class or even highly privileged elite migrants with access to global air travel. Therewith, it disregards the often harrowing and life-threatening nature of forced migration as experienced by refugees trying to escape from poverty, persecution or civil war with whatever means of transport available. Hence, this minimalistic mode of enacting transnational migration narratively can legitimately be accused of unduly privileging utopian configurations of contemporary transculturalism over their dystopian counterparts.

As we shall see, this widespread silencing of motion furthermore highlights the necessity to distinguish topologically between micro- and macro-structural levels of the narrative enactment of motion in contemporary Asian British novels (cf. Section 4.4.3 of this dissertation). In *A Life Apart* (Mukherjee 2011 [2008]), for instance, the two protagonists' transnational migrations are largely silenced at the textual micro-level by minimalistic modes of representation, whereas the resultant macro-structural

¹⁹¹ Thanks to the works of Hayden White (cf., for instance, White 1973), we have gained the insight that "not only the narrative structures of historiography, but all narrative forms and patterns are themselves semanticized, that is, charged with meaning as well as ideological and political implications" (Nünning 2008a: 23; my translation; cf. *ibid.*). One particularly pertinent historical example can be found in allegedly 'neutral' descriptions of landscapes in the colonial travelogue that, upon closer inspection, reveal themselves to be heavily imbued with imperialist stereotypes of the Other and corollary hierarchizations of one's own and 'foreign' cultural spaces (cf. Neumann 2009: 123-125).

movement pattern renders inferences concerning the complex intertwining of real-and-imagined movements possible (cf. Section 6.5 of this dissertation).

In order to answer the question of how the semanticization of real-and-imagined movements is accomplished narratively in contemporary Asian British novels, it is indispensable to take a closer look at the narrative enactment of mental mobility in these texts. As we have seen in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, real and imagined elements are always inextricably interwoven in any movement, not only in that one can trigger the other, but also, and more fundamentally, in that the act of performing a specific movement in the real world is prefigured by cognitive schemata, mental preconceptions and cultural symbolizations as disseminated by fictional literary texts, films and non-fictional genres like the travel guide. Conversely, our mental mobility is simultaneously shaped to a considerable extent by our pre-experiences in the real world (cf. Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 11, 15-16; Hallet 2009: 89; Nünning 2008a: 12-19). In literary texts, the 'real' component of real-and-imagined movements can obviously only refer to movements performed by characters in the textual *actual* world. By contrast, the imagined component is to be found in the textual possible worlds of the characters' and narrators' mental mobilities. As contemporary Asian British novels largely represent the phenomenon of mental mobility only vis-à-vis characters in the storyworld, the prime mode of conveying this phenomenon to the reader is internal focalization in tandem with the narrative representation of the characters' consciousness. In the following, I will thus shed light on both the functions that mental mobility fulfils in the context of the narrative enactment of real-and-imagined movements in this transcultural mode of writing and the different techniques of representing human consciousness deployed in the process.

Initially, it is useful to make a distinction between a wide and a narrow definition of mental mobility. Whereas the former encompasses any kind of mental activity, including perceptions, thoughts, dreams, hopes, expectations and memories, the latter refers to imagined movements 'proper' only, such as dream and fantasy journeys, which do not necessarily exhibit any contentual connection to characters' movements in the textual actual world. The three major functions of mental mobility discussed in the following are mainly fulfilled by the latter subtype, be it in the shape of conscious cognitive activity or semi-conscious nocturnal and day-dreaming.

First, the narrative enactment of characters' mental mobility can serve a *preparatory* purpose vis-à-vis movements in the textual actual world in contemporary

Asian British novels. In this case, the cognitive prefiguration of the journey in the internal focalizer's mind serves the purpose of preparing it by *anticipating* the measures required for its successful performance under the overall 'real-world' conditions governing the textual actual world. Generally, it is *intended* vectors that fulfil this function of mental mobility, thereby constituting the prospective mental component of real-and-imagined movements. Second, mental mobility frequently fulfils a *reflective* function in relation to its physical, spatial counterpart. Here, the cognitive reconfiguration of a journey already conducted in the textual actual world functions as a medium of comparative reflection in that the internal focalizer compares her hopes and expectations prior to the journey with its actual outcome in terms of experiential intensity, new insights gained and random, but often fruitful, encounters made in its course. This function is performed by retrospective imagined vectors, which thereby represent the retrospective mental component of real-and-imagined movements.

Finally, mental mobility frequently serves a *compensatory* purpose by making up for a character's lack of physical mobility in the textual actual world.¹⁹² Typically, situations of confinement incite the internal focalizer to engage in purely imaginary mental mobility. A paradigmatic example of this functionalization can be found in the narrative representation of the protagonist Pran's mental development during his prison-like detention at the human traffickers' house in the first part of Kunzru's *The Impressionist* (2002), where his highly active mental mobility ultimately results in the dissolution of his personality (cf. Section 5.2 of this dissertation). In the same vein, mental mobility can also perform an *escapist* function by providing a temporary imaginative 'escape route' from an internal focalizer's traumatic 'real-life' circumstances in the textual actual world. The compensatory function is fulfilled by *purely* imagined vectors describing characters' mental processes such as day-dreaming or obsessive escapism, that is, phenomena that are detached from the 'real' element in real-and-imagined movements in the highest possible degree.

In principle, these functions are combinable with one another in narrative configurations of mental mobility: the subsequent reflections on a past journey, for instance, can motivate the internal focalizer to prepare another journey to the same destination but with a completely different purpose or mode of travel. In a sense, the interweaving of different narrative techniques deployable for the representation of mental mobility, such as psycho-narration, free indirect discourse or interior monologue, can be said to reflect the combinability of these selected principal functions

¹⁹² For a specifically postcolonialist examination of the compensatory function of mental mobility in contemporary postcolonial fiction, see also Upstone (2014: 39-56).

of mental mobility (cf. Palmer 2008 [2005]: 602-607). I am using Cohn's concept of "psycho-narration" (Cohn 1978: 21; cf. *ibid.*: 21-57) in conjunction with free indirect discourse (cf., for instance, Fludernik 1993: 72-359) and interior monologue here in order to foreground the varying degrees of narratorial involvement and representational mediacy, that is, to highlight the technique-specific distribution of narrative agency between narrator and character. Whereas with psycho-narration, the character's mental mobility is summed up by the narrator in the latter's idiom (which evidently results in a high degree of mediacy and narratorial agency), free indirect discourse consists in a hybrid mingling of narratorial and character discourse in that it merges the character's idiosyncratic idiom with a certain degree of narratorial presence manifest linguistically in the use of the third person in tandem with the past tense. Finally, interior monologue effaces the narrator's presence to the highest possible degree by rendering the character's mental mobility not only in her own words, but also in the first person combined with the present tense (cf. Fludernik 2008 [2005]: 558-563; Palmer 2008 [2005]: 602-607; Neumann and Nünning 2008: 105-121). When, for instance, the dissolution of Pran's personality is rendered in dissonant psycho-narration (cf. Cohn 1978: 26-33),¹⁹³ the narrator's perspectival and ideological distance from what his protagonist is going through at present is manifest in the narrative technique he deploys in the enactment of this process. It is precisely their conceptual nature as *prototypical* narrative realizations of different gradations of the distribution of agency between narrator and character(s) that makes these traditional terms so useful for my analytical description of the narrative techniques deployed for the enactment of mental mobility as one constituent of real-and-imagined movements.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ Cohn's distinction between "dissonance" and "consonance" in regard to psycho-narration is premised on the recognition that there is a whole continuum of different ways of narrating a fictional consciousness stretching between the poles of dissonant and consonant psycho-narration. Whereas the former "is dominated by a prominent narrator who, even as he focuses intently on an individual psyche, remains emphatically distanced from the consciousness he narrates" (Cohn 1978: 26), the latter "is mediated by a narrator who remains effaced and who readily fuses with the consciousness he narrates" (Cohn 1978: 26; cf. *ibid.*). This distinction proves to be particularly useful in gauging the narrator's compliance (or even complicity) with the ideological perspective endorsed by the internal focalizer whose consciousness he is narrating at that specific point in the story (cf. *ibid.*).

¹⁹⁴ For comprehensive, book-length investigations into the multi-faceted dynamics of the representation of human consciousness, see Dorrit Cohn's path-breaking classic *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (1978), Alan Palmer's *Fictional Minds* (2004) and Stephan Freißmann's *Fictions of Cognition: Representing (Un)Consciousness and Cognitive Science in Contemporary English and American Fiction* (2011). The latter study provides an extremely useful tabular overview of the different competing terminologies for the range of narrative techniques deployed for the representation of human consciousness (cf. Freißmann 2011: 49). In her exhaustive examination of free indirect discourse entitled *The Fictions of Language and the Languages of Fiction: The Linguistic Representation of Speech and Consciousness* (1993), Fludernik expands the scope of this narrative technique beyond the standard (third-person, past-tense) type to include, among others, free indirect discourse in oral language as well.

In the context of the minimalistic mode of enacting real-and-imagined movements narratively, these narrative techniques of representing mental mobility are often functionalized, on a meta-level, to the end of providing the individual and cultural semanticization necessary for embedding the characters' movements across the storyworld in their wider social, historical, cultural and geopolitical contexts. In other words, these prospective and retrospective (re)semanticizations of country of origin and destination on the part of the internal focalizer do fill the gap left by the elliptical narrative enactment of the movement itself, notably in cases of transnational migration. This jointly affective and cognitive comparative juxtaposition of these two cultural spaces in the focalizer's mind (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107) without any lengthy intermediate thematization of the migration itself reflects certain aspects of the extratextual cultural conditions of human motion in the twenty-first century, which is marked by "time-space compression" (Harvey 1990 [1989]: vii; 265) and the standardization of contemporary modes of travel paradigmatically embodied by air travel. By indulging in mental mobility, narrative discourse deliberately privileges the focalizer's individual, yet culturally conditioned, *experiential* perspective on the expectations and consequences of such an undoubtedly biographically momentous event as a transnational migration over the detailed rendering of the physical and spatial act of performing a migratory movement in and of itself. In short, the blatant loss of tellability of the latter – which, again, is most visible in contemporary air travel – frequently sharpens the focus on the former. To conclude, the attribute 'minimalistic' thus applies only to the narrative representation of the physical and spatial component of real-and-imagined movements across the storyworld. Their mental and imaginative component, by contrast, often receives much more detailed and differentiated attention in the context of what I have labelled the minimalistic mode of narrative enactment of human motion.

Evidently, the minimalistic mode is but one option among others that can be deployed for the narrative enactment of real-and-imagined movements. In the eyes of many a contemporary Asian British author, however, representational minimalism seems to constitute the most adequate answer to the ubiquity of highly standardized and globally synchronized "networks of transport" (Ingold 2011b: 151) that have apparently reduced the globe to a web-like grid of direct, point-to-point connections realized via contemporary air travel (cf. *ibid.* 149-153). In tandem with the passivization of the traveller inside the aircraft, the abstraction from unmediated experience of one's spatio-temporal environment implied by this mode of travel accounts for the narrator's refusal to engage in lengthy thematizations of the flight itself. Just as Ingold's networks

of transport can thus be correlated meaningfully with the elliptical mode of enacting journeys narratively, his “meshworks of wayfaring” (Ingold 2011b: 151; cf. *ibid.* 149-153) lend themselves to a productive combination with minimalism’s paradigmatic counterpart: the comprehensive mode of narrative representation, which traditionally consists in the alternation of summary and scene. In short, disparate movement practices promote the use of different narrative modes of representation.

Since the comprehensive mode of enacting journeys narratively – which was frequently deployed in colonial travelogues – represents an appropriate foil against which the representational minimalism prevalent in many a contemporary Asian British novel positions itself, it deserves brief examination here. In terms of narrative saliency, the traditional alternation of summary and scene conventionally corresponded to a clear pattern of distribution: kernels, that is, crucial events propelling the plot forward, were rendered in scenic presentation, whereas satellites, i.e. transitional stages of the action, were summed up more or less briefly by narrative discourse (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 109-110 and Chatman 1978: 53-56). In the colonial travelogue, salient events worthy of scenic presentation included, for instance, the departure from one’s country of origin, unexpected occurrences during the outward journey to the destination or the return journey, the arrival in the colony (or the cultural space to be subjected to colonization by the members of the expedition), the climax of the entire venture (which, depending on the purpose of the journey could come in the shape of, for example, the ‘discovery’ of geographical entities, natural resources or ethnicities hitherto unknown to the European colonizers or the successful conquest of a territory already known), unforeseen encounters with native tribes, new scientific or cartographic recognitions and, finally, the return to the original point of departure (cf. Ette 2003: 31-43). It is precisely the high probability of unexpected encounters, occurrences, twists and turns in the route taken and, as a corollary, the extremely low degree of predictability concerning the eventual outcome of colonial expeditions that justifies the correlation of the comprehensive mode of enacting such ventures narratively in the colonial travelogue with Ingold’s movement practice of wayfaring (cf. Ingold 2011b: 149-153). In particular, the key quality of direct corporeal exposure to a spatio-temporal environment frequently experienced as dangerous, hostile and impenetrable by the colonial explorers and the fact that they often embarked upon their expeditions with only a vague idea of their final geographical destination in mind make the parallels with this movement practice evident.

In contrast to many contemporary Asian British novels, the colonial travelogue thus foregrounds the imperial explorer's extraordinary capabilities in mastering the vicissitudes of the physical act of getting ahead on the ground, of literally breaking a path across deserts, jungles and seemingly insurmountable mountain ranges in great detail.¹⁹⁵ It is precisely the pitfalls, obstacles and further difficulties that randomly pop up during the troublesome journey that accounts for the latter's high degree of tellability. However, the colonial travelogue tends to foreground the imperial explorer's act of *overcoming* this external friction successfully by constructing a linear narrative that sometimes tends to suppress breaks in chronological linearity caused precisely by the presence of various sources of external friction (cf. Fabian 2004: 348-366, particularly 350-352). As we have seen, the tellability of the journey itself is virtually zero in the case of contemporary air travel because here, the routinized functioning of global "mobility systems" (Urry 2007: 185) usually guarantees the smooth and predictable, and hence also monotonous, course of the journey. In a certain sense, the presence or absence of friction thus conditions the degree of tellability accorded to the movement in question. As a result, the radical transformation of predominant movement practices – from wayfaring to transport – often turns the journey itself from a kernel into a satellite, thereby necessitating a permutation of narrative modes of enactment – from comprehensive to elliptical – as well.

Testifying to the historicity of narrative techniques, this diachronic change in literary representations of movement opens up the field of what one might be tempted to label 'movements of representation'. In my view, this conceptual field encompasses not only the diachronic evolution of preferences for certain narrative techniques and modes of representation over others, but also the vast domain of intertextual references incorporated into literary texts. In contemporary Asian British novels, the phenomenon of intertextuality oscillates between mere intertextual references and the postcolonial practice of rewriting colonial classics. When, for instance, Hari Kunzru's protagonist Jonathan Bridgeman (alias Pran Nath Razdan) embarks upon an anthropological expedition to a fictitious West African colony called "Oil Coast" in the final part of *The Impressionist* (2002), the narrative enactment of this journey up an unspecified African river evokes strong reminiscences of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1994 [1902]). By integrating references to this and other colonial novels, such as Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1994 [1901]) or E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*

¹⁹⁵ Despite their blatant differences regarding, for instance, the claim to referentiality to extratextual cultural phenomena, I argue that it does make sense to refer to the travelogue here because, whether activated textually or not, the genre of the travelogue is part of the wider historical and cultural context in which contemporary Asian British novels locate their narrative enactment of human motion.

(1989 [1924]), Kunzru draws up an entire web of intertextual relations between these colonial classics and his own debut novel (cf. Griem 2007: 89-103; see also Chapter 5 of this dissertation). The intertextualities thus generated embed this Asian British novel in larger, transcultural models of cultural mobility. The narrative reconfiguration of selected elements from these canonical classics of English colonial literature opens up transcultural “memory spaces” (Assmann 1999) in which the different imperialist stances they endorse can be questioned, subverted and renegotiated.

The crucial point here is that these transcultural intertextualities leave none of the literary works involved in these Asian British “passages” (Döring 2002) unaffected: the foreignizing, that is, both defamiliarizing and transformative agency of their translation (cf. Döring 2002: 209) into a contemporary Asian British context not only impacts upon the narrative representation of space and motion in Kunzru’s *The Impressionist*, but also alters the way we (as contemporary recipients) read these colonial classics themselves (cf. Döring 2002: 1-19, 203-209). To conclude, such narrative configurations of intertextuality thus draw attention to the fact that contemporary Asian British novels not only enact movement narratively (‘representations of movement’), but are also themselves embedded in overarching metaphorical patterns and models of (trans)cultural motion and mobility (‘movements of representation’). Both representations of movement and movements of representation are inevitably subject to historicity, that is, to diachronic evolution in the course of literary and cultural history.

Having presented a necessarily selective methodological enquiry into salient issues that are at stake in the narrative enactment of real-and-imagined movements in contemporary Asian British novels, I will conclude by returning to the primary text example from Chapter 2 of this dissertation – Ormus Cama’s airplane trip from Bombay to London in Salman Rushdie’s *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]; abbreviated as *TGBHF* in the following text notes). While in Section 2.4, my primary focus was on demonstrating the usefulness of my trialectics of motion for coming to terms with this migratory movement, I now want to take a closer look at the genuinely *narratological* aspect of how this transcontinental journey is enacted narratively.

With a total of 20 pages devoted to the flight itself (18 pages) and the arrival scene (two pages), the narrative enactment of the protagonist’s airplane trip from India to Europe clearly qualifies as instantiating the comprehensive mode (cf. *TGBHF* 250-270). In the context of my research interest, four properties of this narrative enactment

deserve closer inspection. First, the narrator's deployment of the comprehensive mode at first glance contradicts my contention that Asian British authors generally prefer elliptical modes to represent air travel narratively. A closer look at the actual selection structure and narrative configuration of this trip, however, reveals that substantial parts of its narrative enactment are concerned not with the events it comprises in the textual actual world, but with the protagonist's mental mobility and with Genettean anachronies relating either events that have happened before the airplane's take-off or events to come in the future. Qualitatively, I argue, these imagined elements are at least as important as the rendering of the 'real' events taking place during the flight. Accordingly, narrative discourse interlocks the narrative enactment of Ormus's experienced vector with his intended and imagined vectors from the very start. In particular, the future-orientedness of the latter two receives ample attention throughout the internally focalized account of his journey.

As the following quotation shows, the narrative representation of Ormus's dreams of transmigrating to America via Britain is marked by a convergence of intended and imagined vectors in the anticipatory, culturally conditioned semanticization of the place he has chosen as final destination: "These [enthusiastic] reflections before even setting foot in England or America or any place except the land where he was born, which he is leaving for good, without regrets, without a backward glance: I want to be in America, America where everyone's like me, because everyone comes from somewhere else" (*TGBHF* 251-252). While from a contextualist point of view, it is intriguing that Ormus locates the quintessential peculiarity of contemporary America in its being a result of myriad intermingling migrations, the crucial narratological quality of this short passage is its combination of psycho-narration and interior monologue deployed to convey an impression of the protagonist's overly optimistic enthusiasm vis-à-vis his intended ultimate destination.

In fact, the narrator even confirms that these expectations are ultimately justified by taking a spatio-temporal leap ahead in a prolepsis summing up the future course of Ormus's life as a rock musician: "But it's this boy from Bombay who will complete the American story, who will take the music and throw it up in the air and the way it falls will inspire a generation, two generations, three. Yay, America. Play it as it lays" (*TGBHF* 252). Here, the proleptic narratorial summary is supplemented by an enthusiastic statement that can legitimately be ascribed to the protagonist himself. By mingling

external (i.e. narratorial) focalization¹⁹⁶ with internal focalization, narrative discourse brings together different consciousnesses in order to instil a vivid sense of the uninhibited optimism reigning Ormus's mental mobility while on the plane. With this qualitative and quantitative appreciation of the protagonist's mental mobility, narrative discourse thus upvalues the imaginative and intentional components of this journey in relation to their actual counterpart. In the narrative enactment of this real-and-imagined movement, the imagined and intended vectors of the future occupy the same level of narrative saliency as the experienced vector of the transnational migration currently performed by Ormus.

Second, the narrative enactment of this flight is thus of particular interest temporality-wise as well. Generally rendered in chronological narration, the experienced vector of his airplane trip from Bombay to London is nevertheless interspersed with analepses recounting the eventful life story of Ormus's future producer John Mullens Standish up to that point (cf. *TGBHF* 260-261; 261-262) and with prolepses thematizing Ormus's own expectations of transmigrating from India via Britain to the USA. Through the recurrent use of Genettean anachronies in tandem with simple chronological narration, narrative discourse thus intermingles past, present and future in the narrative enactment of this airplane trip. The weighting of narrative elements thus accords approximately equal saliency to the act of travelling itself as to events that took place prior to it and to the desired effects this migratory movement is supposed to yield for the traveller-focalizer Ormus Cama in the future. Although narrative discourse represents this migration in the comprehensive mode of enacting motion narratively, it is crucial to realize the *disruptive* function this recurrent narrative practice of jumping back into the past and ahead into the future performs not only with regard to the chronological linearity of narration, but also vis-à-vis the claim to tellability of air travel that justifies the comprehensiveness of its narrative enactment in the first place. Here, the passenger's condemnation to physical passivity during a flight is counteracted, among other things, through the internally focalized narrative enactment of the protagonist's highly active mental mobility.

Third, narrative discourse here modifies the static and overly generalized representational schema commonly associated with the comprehensive mode by integrating – in addition to the traditionally chronological alternation of summary and scene – multiple further narrative techniques in the enactment of this migratory

¹⁹⁶ Regarding the differentiation between external and internal focalization, I am following Bal's model (cf. Bal 2009: 152, 145-165) rather than Genette's (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 189-211; see also Section 4.2.1 of this dissertation).

movement, such as narrativized descriptions (cf. *TGBHF* 254), internally focalized analeptic accounts of minor characters' life stories up to that point, proleptic advance notices (cf. *TGBHF* 258) and enumerations of band names, musical styles and individual artists (cf. *TGBHF* 251, 252, 258, 261), the mentioning of which produces a contextualizing Barthesian reality effect (cf. Barthes 1968 [1953]). Fourth, the protagonist's single-mindedness in making his dreams of a glorious future as legendary rock musician come true is accentuated narratively not only by means of the frequency with which his monumental aspirations are thematized, but also via the affective intensity Ormus grafts onto his individual semanticization of this intended vector:

He is clear about his purpose: by his labours to make himself worthy of her [Vina Apsara] again. And when he's ready he'll find her, he'll make her real by touching her kissing her caressing her, and she'll do the same for him. Vina I'll be the ground beneath your feet and you, in this happy ending, will be all the earth I need. He walks towards her, away from his mother, into the music. (*TGBHF* 270)

Centred on his former and future lover, Vina Apsara, the crystallization point of all his aspirations, his past turns into his future: "The past is dropping away from him. Vina has escaped from his yesterdays and is now waiting up ahead, she is his only future" (*TGBHF* 253). The interlocking of imagined, experienced and intended vectors in Ormus's unalterable resolve to regain his lover by climbing the narrow and tricky stairway to musical stardom culminates in this collapse of past into future. More precisely, Ormus's absolute determination to win Vina's heart again constitutes an attempt to repeat a beautiful past by building a successful future. In terms of affective semanticization, the protagonist's intention to perform the macro-structural movement pattern of an incomplete triangle by transmigrating from India via Britain to the USA thus turns out to be a circular movement. By taking a courageous leap ahead into the future, Ormus wants to escape the unsatisfactory present and, ultimately, fulfil his longing for the (evidently impossible) return to the beautiful past he shared with his beloved Vina.

To conclude, the protagonist's affective semanticization of his journey westward takes precedence over the precise cognitive retracing of the actual route the airplane takes. In the narrative enactment of his experience of flying, the thematization of emotionality, intentionality and volitionality through techniques of representing mental mobility clearly dominates the recounting of actual events during the flight qualitatively. Freed from the cognitive and physical necessity of assuring his own spatio-temporal progression on the jet plane, the protagonist can afford to indulge in extensive imaginative day-dreaming. This is why the foregrounding of imagined and intended

vectors abounds in the narrative configuration and perspectivization of Ormus's experienced vector.

Having tentatively analysed the narrative representation of air travel in this primary text example through the lens of my narratology of motion, I will conclude my methodology part by contextualizing my narratology of motion with regard to the cultural dimension. More concretely, the following section will deal with the intersection of cultural contextualization and narratological analysis in the narrative enactment of human motion by treating the narrative strategies deployed for the evocation of storyworld topologies in contemporary Asian British novels in tandem with their relation to extratextual cultural contexts.

Given the widespread absence of lengthy accounts of individual journeys in many an Asian British novel, this final step is indispensable, for, whenever narrative discourse refrains from providing *detailed* empirical evidence of agents' movements across the storyworld, the social, spatial, historical and cultural contextualization of these movements becomes all the more important. In other words, if the concrete evocation of these movements' ontological vectorialities via the complex functioning of narratological vectoriality cannot be observed directly for want of detailed explicit thematization, the missing elements must be reconstructed by pertinent inferences from the bits and pieces of contextual information narrative discourse offers. The more elliptical the narrative enactment of a particular journey, the more the reader is called upon to retrace it by actively drawing inferences from the textual cues he gets (however minimal they may be) in tandem with the cognitive activation of pertinent sections of his extratextual cultural world knowledge.

4.4.3 The Generation of Narratologies in Contemporary Asian British Novels

Proceeding, once again, from Ricoeur's assumption that literary texts are co-creative vis-à-vis their contexts – that is, they are shaped by the extratextual historical, social and cultural contexts in which they are written, while in turn, they themselves reshape these very contexts (cf. Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52-87) – in this section I will exemplify the intersection of text and context through a jointly cognitive and context-oriented

narratological investigation into the generation of narratologies in contemporary Asian British novels. To this end, I shall proceed in three steps: first, a two-pronged definition of the concept of 'narratology' will clarify what exactly this neologism denotes; second, a highly selective overview of narrative strategies deployable for the evocation of narratologies will be given; and third, the relationship between the dialectics of motion and the generation of narratologies in contemporary Asian British novels will be examined briefly.

To begin with, I argue that, building on the general hypothesis that macro-structural movement patterns (emerging, in the case of narrative texts, from the evocation of characters' various movements across the storyworld in the reader's mind) play a decisive role in the generation of different types of topologies (cf. Section 3.4 of this dissertation), the narrative enactment of motion (and ensuing movement patterns) on the story level can justifiably be posited as the crucial connector between postclassical, notably cognitive and contextualist, narratology on the one hand, and topology on the other. This intrinsic interrelatedness of cognitive and contextualist narratology and cultural topology via motion is what I attempt to capture through the neologism 'narratology'.

Actually, this concept thus refers to two closely related, yet theoretically separable, things. On the theoretical level, narratology constitutes an interdisciplinary field concerned with the study of the narrative formation process, the different narrative configurations, the diachronic variability or evolution (both within a single narrative text and across the epochs of literary and cultural history), the referentiality to extratextual cultural phenomena and, finally, the narratological saliency of narratively evoked storyworld topologies, i.e. the degree to which these textual topologies are relevant to the development and structure of a novel's plot. On the concrete textual level, the neologism 'narratology' denotes the outcome of narrative discourse in terms of such storyworld topologies, which are describable by means of the criteria I have listed in the first definition. All in all, narratology thus denotes either the topological product of the narrative representation of space and motion or the interdisciplinary field dealing with the systematic analysis of such narratively generated topologies. In principle, however, we have to keep in mind that these narratologies are merely mental constructs emerging in the reader's mind, not entities that can make any claim to an ontologically autonomous existence.

Due to their nature as extremely abstract mental maps of the storyworld, the central narratological question to be tackled with regard to narratologies is the following: how is the reader incited to project such abstract macro-level deep-structures onto the concrete topographical configuration of the storyworld at all? And, following up on that, what textually actualized features of this topographical surface configuration justify the classification of the emergent narratologies as colonial, postcolonial or transcultural ones (cf. Section 3.4 of this dissertation for a detailed exposition of this tripartite typology)?

In order to find one's bearings in these intricate questions, it is, first and foremost, indispensable to realize that, from a cognitive narratological point of view, narratologies emerge from the complex interplay of pertinent textual cues provided by narrative discourse and the reader's extratextual cultural world knowledge in the latter's mind (cf. Section 4.3.2 of this dissertation). Consequently, due to their being removed to the utmost degree of abstraction, the emergence of narratologies depends entirely on the reader's cognitive-intellectual capacity to draw upon her general world knowledge in order to make pertinent inferences from the scattered bits and pieces of textual information she is given on the fictional semanticization and functionalization of both migratory movements performed by characters across the storyworld and the narrative configuration of its spatial dimension. Combined with the hypothesis concerning the crucial part played by movements and movement patterns in the emergence of narratologies, this means that all narrative strategies of representing space and motion contribute to the generation of narratologies in the reader's mind. In other words, it is legitimate to conceptualize narratologies as the most abstract, culturally prefigured results of the agentive space-time configurations (cf. my dynamization of Bakhtin's chronotope in Section 2.2 of this dissertation) that constitute a novel's storyworld, which, in turn, are a product of the narrative enactment of space and motion.

In the following second part of this section, I will therefore present a highly selective overview of different narrative strategies of representing space and motion that are of particular relevance in coming to terms with the generation of narratologies in contemporary Asian British novels. First, the simplest and thus prototypical narrative strategy consists in the explicit narrativized description (cf. Mosher 1991: 426-427 and Ronen 1997: 274-286) of the traveller-focalizer's route by enumerating the geographical reference points that the vehicle in which he travels passes by. Evidently, this strategy necessarily entails mentioning the pertinent

toponyms.¹⁹⁷ In the context of the narrative enactment of space and motion in contemporary Asian British novels, this strategy frequently occurs in conjunction with the postcolonial strategies of rewriting colonial classics and, above all, remapping imperialist cartography (cf. Neumann 2009: 129-131) from the particular point of view of formerly colonized and marginalized ethnicities. This constellation substantially shapes the narrative configuration, perspectivization and semanticization of a novel's narratopology.

When, for example, narrative discourse has an Indian protagonist redraw the map of imperialist geopolitical topology in the process of performing a transnational migration from the Indian subcontinent to England, this act of evoking certain toponyms (such as England itself, Dover or London) while simultaneously resemanticizing them from his postcolonial point of view does exert a subversive effect vis-à-vis the deeply entrenched stereotypical cultural semantics traditionally projected upon these places (cf. Neumann 2009: 128-135). In the Asian British context, the most notorious example is the resemanticization of London – traditionally cast as the imperial centre of the (former) British Empire in English literature – as a highly hybrid, multicultural and postcolonial metropolis (cf. Hallet 2009: 102-107) in novels like Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990) and Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* (2006 [1988]).

Second, the reader can infer the existence of certain distinct deep-structural narratologies from the evocation of characters' "mental maps" (Jameson 1988: 353) – or, more precisely, mental (geo)topologies¹⁹⁸ of the storyworld – through narrative techniques of representing consciousness such as, most prominently, psycho-narration, free indirect discourse and interior monologue. Third, narrative discourse can render inferences concerning characters' mental (geo)topologies possible via the scenic presentation of their ideologically coloured utterances in dialogues with other characters or by the integration of pertinent written statements on their part (in letters, diaries, newspaper articles, blogs and so on). An example of the latter technique is the

¹⁹⁷ Cf. also the representational technique that Mahler labels "referential constitution of a city" (Mahler 1999a: 14; my translation), which, in its basic configuration, produces a text-context relationship simply by mentioning extratextual real-world toponyms in a novel's title, the introductory exposition of its setting or anywhere else in the course of the narrative (cf. Mahler 1999a: 14).

¹⁹⁸ For Jameson's Marxist conceptualization of "cognitive mapping" (Jameson 1988: 347), cf. Jameson (1988: 347-357, particularly 353 and 356). In comparison with the general term 'mental map', the concept of mental topology lays more pronounced emphasis on the hierarchical structuration of heterogeneous spaces implied by such ubiquitous cognitive constructs in people's minds. More specifically, the concept of mental geotopology refers to such hierarchically structured mental maps of disparate national, cultural, religious and other spaces in the context of global geopolitics (cf. Jameson 1988: 347-360; Bachmann-Medick 2014 [2006]: 300-303).

deliberate insertion of Indian newspaper reports on the indigenous population's reaction to Lord Curzon's partition of Bengal (1905) in Neel Mukherjee's debut novel *A Life Apart* (2011 [2008]): although they represent different poles on the Indian political spectrum in Bengal, all of these journalistic accounts subscribe to an overly optimistic nationalist position by highlighting the alleged peacefulness of Bengal resistance against this unjust act of division. As the protagonists' individual experience of this extremely tense situation differs considerably from this official Indian version, the propagandistic quality of these newspaper reports is laid bare by narrative discourse. Hence, this technique gives the reader an impression of the co-existence of disparate and ultimately irreconcilable mental (geo)topologies that can be held accountable for the complex conflict situation dominating the narratopology of the historical strand of this novel's plot. The recognition that this narratopology of the historical storyworld follows the imperialist structuration pattern of centre versus periphery hinges upon the reader's cognitive ability to interpret the pertinent textual hints meaningfully by activating his extratextual cultural world knowledge because, rather than being directly accessible through explicit characterizations of Britain as the all-important imperial centre, this narratopology must be inferred from derogatory comments about the Indians made by Raj representatives (in both direct speech and writing) and from the justified critique of British imperialist arrogance and exploitation voiced by Indians (in dialogues or newspaper articles; cf. Section 6.4 of this dissertation).

Fourth, contemporary Asian British novels can resort to an *intermingling* of character dialogue (between a postcolonial Indian student at a British university and his British fellow students, for example) and the representation of the Indian protagonist's consciousness in order to enact the diachronic persistence of neo-imperialist mindsets in the British characters' mental geotopologies. Here, the important point is that the degree to which their casual statements in the contemporary age are still imbued with colonialism's exoticist stereotypes of former colonies such as India is refracted through the representation of the Indian protagonist's consciousness, who not only identifies, but also reflects upon the traces of benevolent paternalism or outright (neo-)imperialist arrogance discernible in these utterances. Caused – among other things – by the persistence of such neo-imperialist mindsets, postcolonial migrants' experiences of disillusionment after arrival in the destination produce severe ruptures in their internally focalized mental geotopologies, thereby transforming the configuration and semanticization of the latter. However, such a forced resemanticization of the recipient country can also motivate the internal focalizer to strive for a change of the concrete political and socioeconomic configuration of storyworld narratologies, for example by

fighting racism in Britain or by committing oneself to charity initiatives in India. Fifth, narrative discourse can grant the reader access to the character-focalizer's affective mental topology of the storyworld by means of internally focalized descriptions of certain places as well.

Sixth, multiperspectival narration can be deployed to evoke competing mental geotologies endorsed by different characters and thus to configure the contestedness of certain cultural spaces within the storyworld. In the example mentioned above, narrative discourse accomplishes the polyphonic narrative enactment of Bengal as a contested space by consistently giving voice to various political and socioeconomic stakeholders, whose heterogeneous viewpoints eventually turn out to be incompatible. Seventh, even the two elliptical techniques of enacting human motion elaborated upon in Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation are capable of contributing to the narrative configuration of storyworld narratologies inasmuch as the silencing of migratory movements at the textual micro-level often goes hand in hand with the narrative foregrounding of the (con)textual interrelatedness of such movements at the topological macro-level of a novel's storyworld.

Eighth, the gradations of the presence or absence of internal and external friction in the overall narrative configuration of a novel's storyworld provide valuable clues to its underlying narratological deep-structure. In particular, the narrative constitution of friction potentially represents a salient indicator of the *type* of narratology the reader is confronted with in a particular novel: colonial and postcolonial narratologies tend to exhibit relatively high degrees of frictionality for (post)colonial protagonists, whereas transcultural narratologies are often marked by a defrictionalization of space through contemporary air travel (cf. Section 3.4 of this dissertation for a detailed exposition of my tripartite typology of topologies in contemporary Asian British novels). In the same vein, both the narrative generation of (utopian) transcultural third spaces and the narrative evocation of transcultural and transdifferential identity configurations – as a result of the narrative enactment of transnational migratory movements– constitute strong indicators in favour of the emergence of a transcultural narratology in the novel concerned. Accordingly, it is due to the multiplicity of their transnational movements, attendant acts of border-crossing and ambiguous cultural affiliations that the protagonists of Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]) qualify as transcultural go-betweens that function as the driving force behind the constant transformations of this novel's narratology (cf. Section 3.4 of this dissertation). In addition to characters' movements

across the storyworld, narratologies can also be altered significantly through the narrative device of metalepsis (cf. Genette 1980: 234-237; Genette 1988 [1983]: 88). Cutting through the neat compartmentalization of a novel's "narrative universe" (Ryan 2014 [2012]: n. pag.) by performing a counterfactual leap across its ontological borders, metalepses effect a profound disruption of its ontological and topological order. It is important to note that this narrative device can occur in two different directions: either a character from a structurally subordinate metadiegetic narrative intrudes into the superordinate (intra)diegetic narrative, or the same procedure is enacted inversely (cf. Pier 2005: 252-253; Pier 2008 [2005]: 304 and Pier 2014 [2011]: n. pag.; see also Genette 1980: 234-237; Genette 1988 [1983]: 88).

Subsequent to this selective survey of narrative techniques of representing space and motion that exhibit potential for semanticization and functionalization with regard to narratively enacted storyworld topologies, the third and final part of this section will reflect upon the relationship between my trialectics of motion and the generation of narratologies in contemporary Asian British novels. In principle, this relationship can be described as follows: just as any *individual* movement in the storyworld emerges from ontological vectoriality as constituted qua narratological vectoriality, narratologies are the result of a *network* of such different movements – and movement patterns, each of which, in turn, has been generated by the case-specific combinatorial interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality as enacted via identifiable narrative strategies. Consequently, while commonly viewed as primarily spatial structures, macro-structural movement patterns are, more to the point, agentic spatio-temporal macro-structures because, at the end of the day, they emerge from a particular conjunction of individual movements' ontological vectorialities generated via the latter's respective narratological vectorialities. Using the salient example of transnational migratory movements,¹⁹⁹ I will thus briefly sketch a tentative typology of such movements according to the three criteria of agency, spatiality and temporality:

Regarding the agentic dimension, the narrative configuration of the following four parameters is of particular relevance: first, the purpose of the transnational migration (to find work, pursue career opportunities, survive, unite with family and so on); second, the momentum, i.e. the protagonist's degree of commitment to the transnational migration (compare, for example, the stark contrast between forced and voluntary migration); third, the external conditions under which the protagonist performs her migration, that is, its historical context (which generally does have a major impact

¹⁹⁹ For more sophisticated investigations into the complex sociocultural and political dynamics of migration, cf. Castles, de Haas and Miller (2014 [1993]: 1-24; 25-54; 147-171 and 317-331).

upon the decision to migrate and the protagonist's experientiality of the migratory movement and its consequences); and finally, the protagonist's overall spatial mobility within the storyworld. The different degrees of spatial mobility granted to the characters in different novels are one indicator of the type of narratopology underlying the topographical surface configurations of the respective novel's storyworld. A high degree of characters' spatial mobility, for instance, can be a clue to the deep-structural pattern of a transcultural narratopology. Of course, the synchronic overlapping and diachronic succession of different types of narratologies in one and the same novel are entirely possible, thus producing hybrid and ambiguous narratologies that effect a profound dynamization of my tripartite typology of prototypical narratologies (cf. Section 3.4 of this dissertation).

As far as the spatial dimension is concerned, it is vital to recognize that, instead of being *exclusively* spatial entities, narratologies are agentive spatio-temporal deep-structures discernible at a novel's textual macro-level from the organization of narrative space in terms of explicit or implicit political, social, economic and cultural power relations between different spatial and sociocultural settings and the agents living there under specific historical circumstances. Therefore, the interplay of the paradigmatic axis of selection, the syntagmatic axis of combination/configuration and the discursive axis of perspectivization (cf. Nünning 2009: 39-44) in the narrative representation of cultural spaces and the movements performed between them should be scrutinized with the help of the following questions. Which places and cultural spaces are selected for narrative representation? How are they weighted in terms of frequency of thematization and significance for the novel's plot? What is the relationship between their text-internal saliency and their text-external importance in the fields of geopolitics, the global economy and finance and global culture? What kinds of movements (and other structural, semiotic and cultural relations) conjoin them with one another in the narrative constitution of the novel's overall storyworld? How are they semanticized culturally, ideologically and otherwise, and what larger spatial entities do they represent metonymically or synecdochically? From whose perspective is the reader acquainted with them? Which narrative techniques are deployed to enact each of these aspects on the syntagmatic and discursive axes (cf. Nünning 2009: 39-44)?

Again, meaningful answers to these questions can be found only by jointly taking recourse in narratological categories and the reader's extratextual cultural world knowledge. In particular, the interrelationship between the textual fictional representation of a geographical place and the extratextual cultural semanticization of

its real-world counterpart requires taking into account the narrative techniques deployed, their conventionalized semanticization, the concrete function they fulfil in the example under scrutiny and the accumulated semantics traditionally projected upon the place concerned in literary and other discourses (and, therefore, ultimately in extratextual cultural reality at large).

In this analytical context, the concept of the hub – itself a spatial metaphor used in everyday language (in contemporary air travel, for instance, where it designates highly frequented airports) – shall be reserved for those spatial and sociocultural settings that can be singled out as particularly salient ones on the grounds of their high frequency of thematization, affective significance for the protagonist(s) and/or accumulated density of overall socioeconomic and cultural semanticization actualized in their fictional narrative representation. In their metaphorical role as hubs around which the novel's plot revolves, specific places, whose degree of remediated semanticization has reached the level of stereotypical ubiquity in the course of the cultural history of colonialism (London, Calcutta), frequently do serve as metonymies or synecdoches for the larger cultural spaces they represent (England and the British Empire, or Bengal and India). In contemporary Asian British novels, the narrative (re)enactment of such densely populated and semanticized hubs most often has a postcolonial revisionary impetus; that is, it aims to break up the alleged homogeneity of stereotypical semanticizations by inverting them or by coming up with innovative alternatives (cf. Neumann 2009: 129-133).

In order to specify the spatial dimension of narratologies further, I will briefly focus on the significance of the directionality of migratory movements, the topological consequences of the multiple acts of border-crossing on different geographical scales they usually entail (cf. Lotman 1977 [1971]: 229-241; Ette 2005: 23-26) and the macro-structural movement patterns (cf. Ette 2003: 38-48) they engender in the following. As for directionality, it does make a significant difference whether the experienced vectors of migratory movements are headed in an eastward or westward direction, because the historical sedimentation of cultural semanticizations requires us to interpret any movement from Britain to India, for instance, against the backdrop of colonial exploratory, commercial, military and missionary voyages undertaken in this direction, while migratory movements in the reverse direction are likewise endowed with semantic charging by their historical predecessors, such as the several waves of postcolonial migration from the Indian subcontinent to Britain after the Second World War (cf. Ette 2005: 11-12). Moreover, it is essential to clarify whether we are dealing

with the experienced vector of an outward or a return journey in the narrative enactment of a particular journey, for a return to one's country of origin commonly kicks off a process of resemanticizing the initial outward movement as well (cf. *ibid.*). In the same vein, unidirectional migratory movements must thus be distinguished from more complex patterns involving, for instance, remigration or transmigration (cf. Section 3.4 of this dissertation).

As far as the characters' acts of border-crossing on various geographical scales of movement are concerned, it is vital to recognize that Lotman's basic structuralist model of the storyworld (cf. Lotman 1977 [1971]: 229-241) must be refined in at least two regards in order to render it applicable to the narrative enactment of migratory movements in contemporary Asian British novels. (Due to their particular relevance for the emergence of narratologies, the two adaptations thematized in the following have been selected from the list of five necessary modifications of Lotman's original model enumerated in Section 4.2.2 of this dissertation.) First, it is necessary to take into account the heightened degree of complexity of their storyworlds resulting from the multiplication of translocal, transregional, transnational, transareal and transcontinental (migratory) movements and attendant acts of border-crossing (cf. Ette 2005: 23-26; particularly 23; see also Section 2.1 of this dissertation). Obviously, this constellation produces a multiplied cognitive-imaginative co-presence of most heterogeneous cultural spaces in the internal focalizer's (and, ultimately, the reader's) mind as well (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107). Second, the profound resemanticization of such narratively salient acts of border-crossing in this transcultural mode of writing must be taken into consideration: no longer cast as transgressions of any ethical dividing-line whatsoever, these border-crossings are endowed with positive connotations, such as fostering intercultural exchange or overcoming prejudiced and narrow-minded traditional cultural demarcations, instead. This narrative strategy of resemanticization is most evident in contemporary Asian British novels of the optimistic transcultural type, such as *The Pleasure Seekers* (Doshi 2010) or *One Hundred Shades of White* (Nair 2003). However, it can likewise be deployed in Asian British novels set in the colonial era, where go-betweens' movements usually transform the novel's narratology by questioning the dichotomization of disparate cultural spaces (cf. Neumann 2009: 129-133).

The identification of the geographical scales of movement and the concomitant border-crossings depends – once again – on the intricate interplay of textual cues (in this case, the toponyms of point of departure and destination provided by narrative

discourse), the reader's extratextual geographical knowledge and his cognitive capacity to link the two in his mental (geo)topology of the novel's storyworld. This cognitive task is rendered more difficult by the fact that, in many literary texts, Ette's five different geographical planes of movement (cf. Ette 2005: 23-26; particularly 23; see also Section 2.1 of this dissertation) are frequently interwoven to the extent that it is only possible to distinguish them from one another from an analytical point of view: if, for example, a character crosses the suspension bridge over the Bosphorus in Istanbul, he performs not only a translocal movement (from the Asian part of the metropolis to the European one), but also a transareal one (from Western Asia to South Eastern Europe) and a transcontinental movement (from Asia to Europe; cf. Ette 2005: 23-24). Hence, the multi-layered intertwining of these different planes of movement creates its extremely high degree of semantic complexity, and it is this intricate synthesis that has to be scrutinized meticulously by the literary scholar in order to come to grips with the topological dimension of the narrative enactment of human motion in literary texts (cf. *ibid.* 23-26).

Regarding macro-structural movement patterns, it is indispensable to draw attention to the fact that each of them emerges as a result of specific combinations of ontological vectorialities, that is, from the joint co-presence of the individual movements that enable the reader to infer the existence of such deep-structural patterns behind the topographical surface configurations of these different movements. Therefore, no matter which concrete pattern we are dealing with, it is always necessary to scrutinize the combinatorial interplay of agency, spatiality and temporality that accounts for the emergence of its constituent movements (as mediated by narratological vectoriality). For the purpose of explaining the emergence of such movement patterns, we are obliged to return to Ette's pertinent argumentation in *Literature on the Move* (2003): to begin with, Ette posits that "journeys can be comprehended [...] as movements of understanding in space" (2003: 39). This is precisely why, he continues, "it seems possible, starting from the specific staging of each location and the vectors lying in between, to distinguish several basic figures of travel literary movements" (*ibid.*). In the following, Ette analyses five such patterns – the circle, the pendulum, the line, the star and the jump (cf. Ette 2003: 39-48). With all of these, he corroborates his underlying hypothesis that the respective movement pattern on the level of the text frequently corresponds to the reader's movement of understanding indispensable to make sense of the journey enacted in the text (cf. *ibid.*: 40).

Therewith, Ette refers to a complex cognitive process involving the naming of the respective toponyms by narrative discourse, the reader's knowledge of their geographical location in extratextual cultural reality and his familiarity with these basic geometrical shapes. In the first step, the reader is called upon to activate his extratextual cultural world knowledge in the identification of these toponyms with the geographical places they designate. In the second step, the recipient must then synthesize the migratory movements between them into one of those geometrical shapes. Subsequent to this process of abstraction, the reader then confers certain cultural semanticizations upon these geometrical movement patterns. In a final step, this combination of abstract geometrical figures with concrete cultural semanticizations enables him to classify the narratopology that emerges from these patterns, for example according to my typology of prototypical narratologies (colonial versus postcolonial versus transcultural ones; cf. Section 3.4 of this dissertation). If a movement pattern turns out to be circular or stellate, for instance, the reader can only infer from this piece of information that the underlying narratopology of the novel concerned is probably a colonial one on condition that he has at his disposal the profound cultural knowledge required to make such inferences. All in all, the scrutiny of the generation of distinct narratologies from the narrative enactment of migratory movements and corresponding macro-structural patterns thus requires an intricate combination of cognitive and contextual capacities on the part of the reader or literary scholar, respectively. This is all the more true as macro-structural movement patterns and the narratologies they help produce can fulfil heterogeneous functions in different novels. Consequently, an unequivocal form-to-function correlation is inexistent, as the same movement patterns and corresponding narratologies can be deployed to various ends (and vice versa). Likewise, the same movement pattern can generate different narratologies in different novels (and vice versa).

Concerning the temporal dimension of migratory movements and the narratologies they generate, it is first necessary to refer back to the Janus-faced character of temporality as both historical context in which this movement is situated and the narrative representation of (the experience of) temporality (cf. Sections 2.3 and 4.2.3 of this dissertation). Regarding the former aspect, the central questions to be asked are the following. How do contemporary Asian British novels (re)configure extratextual cultural topologies through the narrative enactment of space and motion? What sections of historical or contemporary extratextual cultural reality are selected for narrative representation? How are these sections semanticized narratively? Does the internal or external focalizer through whose eyes the reader is acquainted with these

events take an affirmative or subversive stance on them, i.e. does her perspective endorse the cultural mainstream opinion or deviate from it?

As the narratologies of contemporary Asian British novels are to a large extent prefigured by the extratextual cultural topologies of the historical contexts in which they are written and / or with which they deal, these questions are of paramount importance in coming to terms with these narratologies from a jointly cognitive and contextualist perspective. When, for instance, the term 'Third World' is mentioned in tandem with India by a British character in one of these novels, the reader is called upon to draw upon his real-world knowledge in order to connect this designation with the condescending and supercilious topological structuration of the globe into a First World (the prosperous and dominant capitalist West), a Second World (the monolithic block of Communist countries in the East), and a Third World (the destitute and underdeveloped Global South) that used to dominate Western discourses about socioeconomic and technological development from the 1950s to the late 1980s (cf. Thieme 2003: 259). From a cognitive point of view, mentioning two terms (Third World and India, for example) thus suffices to evoke an entire historical context replete with affective semanticizations (such as media images of starving children meant to make the Western viewer feel compassionate and donate generously) in the contemporary reader's mind.

Concerning the latter aspect – the narrative *representation* of temporality, it is legitimate to argue that Genette's three major analytical categories – order, duration and frequency (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 33-160) – do lend themselves to application to this migratory context. First, the temporal ordering of different migratory movements and their divergent, inverse or parallel directionalities must be identified and semanticized (does narrative discourse recount the return journey before the initial outward migration, and if so, what does this mean for the overall semanticization of each of these experienced vectors?). Second, the length of text devoted to the migratory movement itself, to its consequences and to the subsequent stay in the recipient country should be scrutinized in relation to the 'actual' duration of this migration (which hinges on the mode of travel used) and the sojourn in the destination (temporary or permanent?) in terms of story time, because the relationship between these two temporal levels sheds light on the distribution of narrative saliency among these stages of a migration. The same holds true for frequency, for the relationship between how often a particular unidirectional migration, remigration or transmigration is thematized by narrative discourse and its actual frequency of occurrence in the

storyworld likewise promises relevant insights into this distribution and into the affective intensity of the experience of this migration for the internal focalizer. In addition to these classical Genettean categories, one is required to take the diachronic evolution of narratologies over the whole course of a narrative into due account. Frequently, it is disastrous or fortunate events that transform its structure fundamentally (cf., for example, the role of earthquakes in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (Rushdie 2000 [1999]); see Bachmann-Medick (2014 [2006]: 270-271), and Section 3.4 of this dissertation for this aspect).

All in all, this section has shown how elliptical strategies for enacting motion narratively are complemented by alternative techniques of representing space and motion in contemporary Asian British novels. In particular, it has scrutinized the emergence of deep-structural narratologies from the complex interplay of textual cues with the reader's cognitive capacities and their extratextual cultural, that is, contextual, world knowledge. Finally, it has correlated my heuristic trialectics of motion with the narrative enactment of transnational migratory movements in contemporary Asian British novels by focusing on aspects such as the geographical scales of movement and the semanticization of multiple acts of border crossing involved, as well as the macro-structural movement patterns emerging from these migrations. As we have seen, all these aspects constitute factors that enable the reader to infer the 'existence' of narratologies from the concrete topographical surface configuration of the storyworld across which characters move, just as they permit her to classify the respective narratology according to the tripartite typology proposed in Section 3.4 of this dissertation.

4.5 Summary of the Cultural Narratology of Motion

This chapter has elaborated a jointly cognitive and context-oriented methodological framework for the narratological analysis of the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels – in short, a cultural narratology of motion – in three major steps. As regards the first step, Section 4.2 has delineated prolegomena for a cultural narratology of motion by examining the contributions that the narratological analysis of each of the three constitutive dimensions of motion – agency (Section 4.2.1), spatiality (Section 4.2.2) and temporality (Section 4.2.3) – can make to this

methodological endeavour. Regarding the first of these dimensions, it has proved necessary to differentiate agency on the level of narrative transmission from agency in the fictional storyworld according to the text-specific distribution of the textual functions of narrator and focalizer. As for agency on the story level, I have reconceptualized it as the setting off of protagonists from the background of the storyworld in terms of its resources in the context of human motion – subjectivity, motivationality, corporeality, and experientiality – effected by narrative discourse. Concerning the second dimension, spatiality, Section 4.2.2 has scrutinized its double-edged role as prime source of external friction and therefore shaping factor of characters' mobility (spatial formation of movement) on the one hand, and as effect of characters' movements across the storyworld (movement-bound formation of space) on the other. In particular, the latter perspective has proved fruitful for my research interest for two reasons: first, because the internal focalizer's individual experientiality of motion constitutes the reader's prime point of access to the spatio-temporal configuration of the storyworld, and, second, because narratively enacted movement functions as the pivot around which the sequencing, relationing and (re)semanticization of different settings revolves. As for the third dimension, temporality, Section 4.2.3 has highlighted the nexus between the historical context in which a novel's action is set, the modes of travel available to the characters in this context and the narrative strategies preferably deployed for the enactment of human motion. As well, it has taken recourse in Genette's seminal framework for the narratological examination of the narrative representation of time in order to analyse the specifically narratological characteristics of the respective internal focalizer's experience of time while on the move, such as foregrounding pertinent frictional discontinuities by means of narrative anachronies, as well as further temporal aspects of the narrative enactment of motion in general.

As regards the second major step, Section 4.3 has drawn on the central category of embodiment in order to elucidate both the character's affective semanticization of her movements – which, in turn, constitutes one major indicator of the narrative saliency of these movements (cf. Section 4.3.1) – and the reader's cognitive retracing of such movements across the storyworld in its dependence on the narrative techniques deployed for the representation of space and movement across it (cf. Section 4.3.2).

As regards the third major step, Section 4.4 has integrated and condensed the preceding reflections into an innovative narratological semantics for the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels, once again in three

steps. Subsequent to the crucial complementation of my concept of ontological vectoriality (defined as the combinatorial interplay of the three formative dimensions agency, spatiality and temporality in the extratextual cultural or textual fictional configuration of individual movements in Chapter 2 of this dissertation) with a specifically narratological concept of vectoriality (narratological vectoriality as the combinatorial interplay of the paradigmatic axis of selection, the syntagmatic axis of combination and the discursive axis of perspectivization in the narrative configuration of individual movements; cf. Section 4.4 of this dissertation), in a first step Section 4.4.1 has reflected upon the implications of transferring the mathematical concept of the vector to narratology as a conceptual metaphor for motion. Based on my definition of a narrative vector as a cognitive construct representing the multidimensionally configured directionality of an agent's movement across the novel's storyworld, I have furthermore developed a tripartite typology of narrative vectors according to the function they fulfil in the narrative enactment of different configurational stages of movement, thus differentiating between intended, experienced and imagined vectors.

In a second step, Section 4.4.2 has elaborated a precise narratological vocabulary for the narrative enactment of real-and-imagined movements. To this end, it has, first of all, described the emergence of ontological vectoriality in narrative texts as a result of the evocation of the illusion of a character moving across the storyworld in the reader's mind through the complex functioning of narratological vectoriality. Second, it has provided a differentiated correlation of my functional typology of vectors with my reconceptualization of Genettean anachronies as mental movements in time and space. Although there is of course no one-to-one form-to-function correspondence between these anachronies and my functional triad of vectors, intended vectors are typically represented by means of (mental) prolepses, experienced vectors via analepses, and imagined vectors by either (mental) prolepses or analepses. Third, this section has examined the minimalistic mode of representing journeys narratively as a recurrent pattern of the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels. In order to make this pattern accessible to context-oriented narratological scrutiny, I have delineated a problem-oriented simplification of Genette's sophisticated framework for the examination of ellipses by merely distinguishing between two prototypical narrative configurations. Whereas the elisive mode designates complete omissions of the journey in question without anticipatory hints or retrospective accounts, the ellipsoidal mode covers the entire range from the mere mention of a verb of departing, travelling or arriving to brief retrospective accounts of its

course actualized narratively by means of the pattern 'ellipsis plus completing analepsis'.

In the process, I have moreover contextualized the minimalistic mode of enacting journeys narratively with regard to air travel, which constitutes the mode of travel typically represented by this pattern in contemporary Asian British novels. Furthermore, I have pointed to the problematic ideological implications of employing the minimalistic mode for the narrative enactment of human motion in postcolonial contexts, which arise from its silencing of the horrid conditions refugees and so-called illegal migrants face on their life-threatening journeys from war-torn destitute home countries to their destination in the West. Consequently, it is justified to criticize this mode of narrative representation as unduly privileging the cognitive and affective experience of motion characteristic of well-to-do middle- and upper-class travellers over desperate refugees' traumatizing experience of transnational migration.

Fourth, Section 4.4.2 has scrutinized the functions performed by mental mobility in the context of the narrative enactment of real-and-imagined movements in tandem with the narrative techniques deployed for the representation of such mental movements. Fulfilling preparatory, reflective or compensatory functions, mental mobility often supplies relevant information on the traveller-focalizer's individual affective semanticization of a transnational migration treated elliptically by narrative discourse and on the contextual dimension of such a biographically momentous experience. Subsequent to this detailed narratological investigation into narrative representations of real-and-imagined movements in contemporary Asian British novels, this section included a tentative examination of 'movements of representation', viz., diachronic changes in the preferences for certain narrative techniques of representing real-and-imagined movements and the phenomenon of intertextuality. The particular relevance of the latter in this context lies in the fact that it embeds the narrative representation of real-and-imagined movements in contemporary Asian British novels in transcultural patterns of mobility in literature and culture. Finally, Section 4.4.2 has taken up the primary text example from Section 2.4 – Ormus Cama's airplane trip from India to England in Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]) – in order to tentatively demonstrate the productivity of my cultural narratology of motion for the narrative enactment of this transnational migration.

In the third and final step of Section 4.4, Section 4.4.3 has scrutinized the generation of narratively evoked storyworld topologies – or narratologies (as I call

them) – in contemporary Asian British novels as a prime example of the intersection of cognitive and contextualist narratological approaches in the narrative enactment of human motion and its consequences. Building on my two-pronged definition of the concept ‘narratopology’ – which refers to both the product of the narrative representation of space and motion in terms of such storyworld topologies and to the interdisciplinary field concerned with their study – I have supplied a highly selective overview of different narrative strategies deployable for the evocation of narratologies before concluding with a brief analysis of the relationship between my trialectics of motion and the generation of narratologies in contemporary Asian British novels. All in all, Chapter 4 has thus developed the cultural narratology of motion, that is, the context-oriented narratological semantics for the narrative enactment of real-and-imagined human movements, that shall be tested for its productivity in coming to terms with the narrative representation of this multifaceted phenomenon in three selected Asian British novels in the following chapters.

5 Against Eurocentric Linearity: Re-orienting Colonial Movement Patterns in *The Impressionist* (2002)

5.1 Introduction

Hari Kunzru's debut novel *The Impressionist* (2002; abbreviated as *TI* in the following text notes) is a particularly apt testing ground for my cultural narratology of motion because it combines a pronounced engagement with issues related to physical and mental motion and mobility with a frequently ironic, jointly postcolonial and postmodern deconstruction of Western imperialist myths. Recounting the picaresque life story of its hybrid Anglo-Indian protagonist Pran Nath Razdan, alias "the impressionist", which leads him from India via England to Africa, Kunzru's novel exemplifies the author's obsession with "shape-shifting" (Upstone 2010: 145) in that the central character and prime internal focalizer²⁰⁰ adopts and discards no less than five identity configurations (cf. Section 5.2 of this dissertation) ranging from wealthy, high-caste Indian boy via destitute sex slave to undergraduate assistant of a famous Oxford professor of anthropology. Each of these identity configurations is punctuated by a transformative physical movement that initiates the protagonist's concomitant, caterpillar-like reinvention of himself in a new guise (cf. Nyman 2009: 93-97). It is this extremely high degree of adaptability and inventiveness that turns him into the quintessential embodiment of chameleon-like mutability: As a perpetually shape-shifting hybrid obsessed with mimicking the colonizers, Pran Nath evokes reminiscences of the ancient Greek hero Odysseus due to his astuteness in exploiting sudden changes of external circumstances for his personal advantage. In conjunction with his picaresque journeys, it is this extraordinary quality that makes this character so fruitful for my research interest, which consists – among other things – in exploring the experiential dimension of human motion.

While it may initially seem odd to resort to a contemporary Asian British novel exclusively concerned with the historical era of the early twentieth-century British Empire as a first object of analysis for the cultural narratology of motion elaborated in Chapter 4, I have done so to underline the crucial point that global intercultural

²⁰⁰ *The Impressionist* features heterodiegetic narration in conjunction with internal focalization, with the protagonist Pran functioning as the prime (but, due to certain exceptions, not the sole) internal focalizer.

intertwinements are by no means merely a recent phenomenon (cf. Ette 2012: 1-26). In the following four sections, I accordingly want to scrutinize the narrative enactment of such inter- and potentially transcultural intertwinelements in four regards: the protagonist's identity configurations in tandem with his varying degrees of agency (5.2), the movement patterns resulting from his picaresque journeys (5.3), his individual experience of space and its reverberations on imperial topology (5.4) and the alternatives to the cultural linearity of time suggested by his subjective experience of temporality (5.5). As can easily be seen, this choice reflects the constitutive dimensions of my trialectics of motion as laid out in Chapter 2.

In accordance with these foci, I contend that the representation of space and movement in *The Impressionist* serves the purpose of deconstructing Western preconceptions of spatiality, agency and temporality from a jointly postcolonial and postmodern vantage point. With the latter two dimensions, it is particularly their culture-specific intertwinement with Western notions of history and subjectivity that is being critiqued narratively in Kunzru's debut novel. In my research hypothesis for *The Impressionist*, I accordingly expand Nyman's (cf. 2009: 93-97) argument that this novel deconstructs the essentially Eurocentric generic conventions of the classical *Bildungsroman*²⁰¹ of the nineteenth century to the three dimensions of human motion. To the end of thoroughly deconstructing preconceptions of spatiality, agency/subjectivity/identity and temporality/history originating in Western modernity, I argue, the seemingly ascending linearity of the protagonist's step-by-step movement towards the status of a 'true' Englishman is undermined by various other, essentially different movement patterns fulfilling a variety of different functions, most notably that of subverting this idea of teleological progress towards a predetermined end.

²⁰¹ Whereas Nyman (cf. 2009: 93-107) conceives of the journey merely as a trope for the hero's processual development of a stable personality in the *Bildungsroman* and thus thematizes the protagonist's journeys in Kunzru's debut novel only insofar as they impinge upon his performances of identity (cf. Nyman 2009: 93-96), I will take into account the full complexity of the phenomenon of human motion in *The Impressionist* by examining both the narrative configuration of its three constituent dimensions – agency (Section 5.2), spatiality (Section 5.4) and temporality (Section 5.5) – and the narrative enactment of motion itself (Section 5.3 of this dissertation).

5.2 (De)Constructing the Hybrid Chameleon:²⁰² Postcolonial and Postmodern Problematizations of Western Identity Concepts

In this section, the first dimension of human motion – agency – shall occupy centre-stage in the analysis of the narrative enactment of motion and mobility in Hari Kunzru's first novel *The Impressionist* from 2002. More precisely, the development of the narrative configurations of the protagonist's agency shall be scrutinized meticulously, in particular regarding their reciprocal intertwining with the problematic category of his identity. The central themes of the protagonist Pran's hybridity and mutability are invoked by the epigraph programmatically placed before the beginning of the first part of the novel, which consists of two quotations from Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1994 [1901]):²⁰³

“Remember, I can change swiftly. It will all be as it was when I first spoke to thee under Zam-Zammah the great gun –“

“As a boy in the dress of white men – when I first went to the Wonder House. And a second time thou wast a Hindu. What shall the third incarnation be?” (Quoted as epigraph in *The Impressionist* [Kunzru 2002])

While the two quotations differ in that, formally speaking, the former constitutes an explicit self-characterization of Kipling's adolescent protagonist, whereas the latter is an explicit characterization of Kim uttered by the lama, Kim's elderly travel companion, they are congruent inasmuch as they highlight the protagonist's extraordinary giftedness regarding adaptability, mutability and shape-shifting (cf. Boehmer 2005: 64, 68). In what follows, I argue that, in Kunzru's *The Impressionist* as well, the hybrid protagonist Pran's principal resource of agency lies in his extraordinary capacity for chameleon-like shape-shifting,²⁰⁴ which is actualized throughout the novel by his successive performance of a wide variety of essentially different identity configurations, ranging from androgynous sex slave to undergraduate assistant of a famous Oxford professor of anthropology. Accordingly, his individual agency oscillates between total passivity and a relatively high degree of activeness. The respective degree of autonomy he is granted at any point of the narrative is, in turn, directly related to the identity configuration he is currently displaying. Thus, this section will be concerned

²⁰² I have adopted the term “chameleon” from the title of the following review of Kunzru's novel: “Karma Chameleon” by Daniel Mendelsohn, published by the *New York Magazine* on 1 April 2002 (see List of References for further bibliographical details); cf. also Griem (2007: 95).

²⁰³ Cf. Griem (2007: 95).

²⁰⁴ Cf. Upstone (2010: 145) and “Signs of the Times”, an article by Alastair Sooke published in the *New Statesman* on 6 September 2007 (see List of References for further bibliographical details).

with retracing the causes, configurations and effects of his numerous identity transformations (cf. Nyman 2009: 93), particularly in order to demonstrate how each of them correlates with one of the major journeys the protagonist undertakes in the course of the novel. This way, I intend to show that, in the caterpillar-like figure of the protagonist, various processes of constructing (and, eventually, also deconstructing) a hybrid chameleon are condensed in one person to the end of problematizing static and simplistic Western identity concepts from a jointly postcolonial and postmodern point of view.

Transgressing the Miscegenation Taboo: The Conception Scene

To begin with, I will focus on the introductory scene, which prefigures some of the central issues that will be at stake throughout the novel: the novel begins with a quasi-prologue that narratively enacts the events leading to the protagonist's conception. From the outset, the contingency of the circumstances enabling this coition is foregrounded: Ronald Forrester, an unmarried English forester whose expertise lies in fighting dust by planting trees, accidentally encounters Amrita, aged 19, a young Indian woman who is on her way to Agra in order to get married there. As for the question of which stages of their movements are selected for representation, it is highly significant that the narrative representation of the two disparate transregional journeys whose trajectories are about to cross by chance is interspersed with relatively long analepses that provide the reader with salient information on the biography, social background and character of the two proto-protagonists prior to their encounter in an unspecified desert valley in northern India (cf. *TI* 3-5 for Forrester's biographical background, and *TI* 9-10 for Amrita's). From the very beginning, this constellation suggests, the narrative enactment of the prospective and retrospective semanticization of a journey is given (at least) equal weight as the representation of the course of this journey itself.

In spite of her explicitly foregrounded initial passivity, which, according to early twentieth-century imperialist rhetoric, constituted a typical feature of all 'Orientals', Amrita is the one to eventually survive the imminent monsoon. From a postcolonial point of view, this outcome can be interpreted as a deeply ironic comment on both the colonialist stereotypes propagated by imperialist rhetoric and the obsession with goal-directed action, which used to be regarded as a primarily Western phenomenon in the imperialist discourse of those days, in general: instead of Forrester and Amrita's servants, who actively try to set up their tents as shelters from the storm, it is idle and

inactive Amrita who is finally granted the prerogative of survival. Up to the conception scene itself, she appears as the stereotypical embodiment of passive Eastern femininity, whereas Ronald Forrester seems to be the exact opposite, i.e. the active Western agent of imperialism. In this context, their professional background is highly relevant as well: In contrast to Amrita, who has none, Ronald is a forester who has devoted his life to teaching Indians how to fight soil erosion by planting trees in the hillsides of the Himalayan promontory. Accordingly, his job basically consists in imparting his superior, practical Western know-how regarding soil conservation to inferior 'natives', who would otherwise be unable to solve the problem themselves. Colonial rule exists for the betterment of the colonized, for the superior Western know-how improves their overall living conditions, in this case by alleviating the devastating consequences of logging and grazing through sound measures of soil conservation that prevent karstification. Thus far, this reads like a reiteration of a classical colonialist motif, according to which the colonizer is indispensable because the natives are allegedly incapable of solving their problems on their own (cf. Boehmer 2005: 78).

In the conception scene itself, however, a radical inversion of the two proto-protagonists' roles is enacted in that, suddenly, it is Amrita who takes the active part and Forrester who largely remains passive. Eastern femininity guides Western masculinity to the act of copulation, which creates a new human being, who, as a hybrid fusion of the two, is bound to be neither the one nor the other, but a genuine go-between throughout his life. Moreover, the protagonist's individual agency will oscillate between the two poles represented alternately by Ronald Forrester and Amrita, i.e. between passivity, dependence on other agents and external circumstances, on the one hand, and activity, free will and practical expertise, on the other.

As far as the narrative representation of this conception is concerned, it is important that, like the entire first chapter, it is rendered through the lens of two major alternating internal focalizers, Amrita and Forrester, and hence exhibits multiperspectival narration, or, more precisely, multiple internal focalization. Throughout the first chapter, the perception of both internal focalizers is marked to some extent by a blurring of the boundary between perceptible focalizeds and imperceptible ones (cf. Bal 2009: 156, 153-160). This results in the intermingling of external physical stimuli and internal dreams, reflections and hallucinations, with the latter being particularly strong in Amrita's case due to her opium addiction. In tandem with the reserved heterodiegetic narrator, who, particularly during the two successive accounts of their sexual intercourse, largely refrains from psychologizing introspection

and concentrates on the depiction of their perceptible activity instead, this narrative mode leads not to the impression of a deeper understanding of the proto-protagonists' inner life here, but, quite to the contrary, to the impression of a peculiar but mysterious superficiality, because, despite the explicit thematization of their mental activities, the reader is never acquainted with an essentializable core of their selfhood to be found in classical and modern realist novels (cf. Upstone 2010: 146-147). This paradoxical constellation results in what might be labelled 'present distance in absent intimacy' with the characters' inner life and 'true' self, respectively. In order to illustrate the points I have made so far, let me now quote the passage in which the conception of the later protagonist is rendered from Amrita's perspective:

Then he is naked and although he is helpless he is very beautiful. Amrita traces the line of his hip, the arrow of hair leading down from his navel. In small extraordinary stages, his hands start to return her touch, and soon she does something she has only imagined, and pulls him downward.

Their sex is inexpert and violent, more fight than sex as they roll and claw across the packed earth floor. It happens quickly and then for a long time they lie tangled together and breathing hard. The unprecedented sensations of each other's bodies make them start again and they do this twice more, roll and claw, then lie exquisitely, drunkenly still. By the last time the fire has guttered and sweat and dust has turned their skins to an identical red-brown color. The color of the earth. (*TI* 15)

All in all, the entire passage concentrates primarily on narrating sensory perceptions, motives for actions and the actions themselves, abstaining from indulging in any prolonged attempt at profound introspection regarding the emotional state Amrita and Forrester find themselves in during their very first time. Accordingly, the twofold repetition of their coitus is explained in purely physical terms: "The unprecedented sensations of each other's bodies make them start again [...]" (*TI* 15). In keeping with the absence of psychological depth, a cognitive narratological perspective on this conception scene reveals that the sequence of her actions seems to follow the logic of a primitively natural script (cf. Herman 2002: 85-113; Neumann and Nünning 2008: 157) of human priorities: first, she secures their survival by dragging Forrester into a cave, then she lights a fire in order to make the atmosphere in their temporary shelter more comfortable and eventually she engages her male companion in a primeval act of reproduction.

In addition, the fact that, in her opium-induced hallucinations, Amrita sees herself, quite megalomaniacally, as the "mother of the new [world]" (*TI* 14) fits nicely into the overall picture evoking reminiscences of a primordial world in which humans are at the mercy of elemental natural forces that, in turn, are at the disposal of anthropomorphic, omnipotent gods and goddesses. As well, it is Amrita's highly active

mental mobility that motivates her to take the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to assert her independent agency – first in the textual possible world of her day-dreaming imagination and then in the ‘real’ performance of her first sexual intercourse in the textual actual world (cf. Ryan 1985: 719-720 ; 1991: vii).

The most salient respect in which the recurrent key theme of hybridity is hinted at in this passage is the fusion of the two proto-protagonists’ skin colour (“By the last time the fire has guttered and sweat and dust has turned their skins to an identical red-brown color. The color of the earth” [TI 15]), first, because it suspends the racialized difference between the Englishman and the Indian woman at least temporarily (cf. Griem 2007: 89-90), and second, because it prefigures the protagonist’s lot as a go-between *in nuce*, both with regard to the racist criterion of skin colour and, on a more abstract level, in respect of the essentially problematic issue of his personal identity configurations. While one might theoretically assume that the conception of a hybrid child opens up the option of utopian transculturality, it is necessary to stress the fact that, on account of the historical sociocultural environment the protagonist is born and will grow up in – early twentieth-century British India – this option cannot and will not be actualized in the further course of the novel (cf. Griem 2007: 89). According to both official imperialist ideology and the ensuing, deeply racist contemporary mentality, miscegenation was a taboo. Hence, this coition is a moral transgression according to early twentieth-century standards. As a consequence, the protagonist will suffer from the discrimination against hybrids (also called half-castes or half-breeds), who, back then, were respected by neither the English colonizers nor the Indians.

Accordingly, the protagonist will have to grapple with his insecure social status as a go-between throughout his life. What distinguishes him from a mere passive victim of the social and cultural circumstances of his existence, however, is his personal agency manifest, above all, in his creative and opportunistic ability to utilize and take advantage of this interstitial positionality by means of his extraordinary talent for shape-shifting, that is, his gift of recognizing chance incidents and sudden changes in his external circumstances as opportunities to re-create himself through the successive adoption of myriad identity configurations. It is this chameleon-like quality that enables him to survive even the most perilous situations and finally emerge as the last man standing at the very end of the novel (cf. Upstone 2010: 151). Calling him a hybrid character necessitates one crucial caveat, though, because he is not a one-to-one narrative representation of Bhabha’s concept of hybridity (cf. Bhabha 1994b: 28-56; Lösch 2005: 40-41). As we shall see, in this case, hybridity does not mean the merging

of two pre-existent, essentialist identity configurations into a new, hybrid one, for Pran does not exhibit any kind of essentialist identity core, but rather performs a series of identity *enactments* that he adopts and discards like theatre costumes, thereby narratively exemplifying Kunzru's obsession with "shape-shifting" (cf. Upstone 2010: 144-145; Sooke 2007).

Pran Nath Razdan:²⁰⁵ An Egocentric Teenager

As we shall see, the protagonist, Pran Nath Razdan, is spared the awareness of his mixed parentage and, concomitantly, the truth about his conception for the first 15 years of his life. Accordingly, subsequent to an extensive description of the protagonist's hometown of Agra in the final year of the First World War, with the influenza epidemic ravaging this city like so many others all across the globe, narrative discourse, having jumped ahead in time (from 1903 to 1918) in a Genettean ellipsis (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 106-109) zooms in upon adolescent Pran, who, lying on the roof of his father's house, is masturbating with one hand inside his pyjamas and considering sexually motivated advances on the servant girl Gita beside him. The superior, elevated position he occupies in the "story space" (Chatman 1978: 96; cf. *ibid.* 96-107) at present is indicative of his self-understanding, for young Pran sees himself as nothing less than the hub of the world. While most of the other inhabitants of his hometown are desperately trying to avoid an infection with the lethal influenza, Pran is primarily concerned with satisfying his emergent sexual desires.

In terms of spatial mobility, the protagonist's "world is comfortably circumscribed by the walls of his family house" (*TI* 19). In times of such a devastating epidemic, however, this restriction of his sphere of action is more of a prerogative than a drawback. As "[t]he only son of the distinguished court pleader Pandit Amar Nath Razdan, he is heir to a fortune of many lakhs of rupees and future owner of the roof he lies on [...]" (*TI* 19). Judged by materialist criteria, his future prospects thus could not be brighter. Being the only child of a wealthy high-caste Hindu, Pran does in fact have high expectations for his life. Moreover, it is, ironically enough, his extraordinarily white skin and resultant light complexion that guarantees him the affection and appreciation

²⁰⁵ The following subheadings in this section (5.2) largely follow the titles of the seven parts of Kunzru's debut novel, because, with the exception of Parts 3 and 6, each of these titles corresponds directly to one of the protagonist's identity configurations: Pran Nath (Part 1, pp. 1-66); Rukhsana (pp. 67-171); White Boy (pp. 173-184); Pretty Bobby (pp. 185-278); Jonathan Bridgeman (pp. 279-326); Bridgeman, J. P. (Barab.; pp. 327-405), and The Impressionist (pp. 407-465).

of his relatives: “Pran Nath’s skin is a source of pride to everyone. [...] it is proof, cluck the aunties, of the family’s superior blood” (*TI* 20). Consequently, the boy’s good looks fit nicely with his extremely privileged sociocultural positionality: “As Kashmiri pandits, the Razdans belong to one of the highest and most exclusive castes in all Hindustan” (*TI* 20).

This seemingly perfect picture of the protagonist, however, is seriously disrupted by the totally negative assessment of his character in an analeptic account of his birth, infancy and childhood several pages later (cf. *TI* 27-28), where he is described as a dreadful little “monster” (*TI* 27) from infancy onwards. Devoid of any inclination towards good behaviour, let alone moral qualities, the young boy displays a craving for destruction in tandem with a remarkable “talent for mimicry” (*TI* 28) that he deploys solely to malicious ends, mostly to ridicule the manners and habits of his contemporaries. As a consequence of this antisocial behaviour, all the members of his father’s household soon agree with the cook’s withering assessment: “[T]he boy [is] a curse” (*TI* 28). Yet, according to the official discourse authorized by his reclusive father, Pran is nevertheless the praiseworthy oldest and only son of the Razdan family, and the solely legitimate verdict on him consists in affirming that “everything he [says] or [does is], by definition, perfect” (*TI* 28). In conjunction with the fact that, being an only child confined to his father’s house, Pran is deprived of the opportunity to play with peers and is therefore a pretty lonesome boy suffering from a discernible lack of vital everyday communication throughout his childhood, it is this monstrous, yawning abyss between his clearly antisocial behavioural tendencies and his exaggeratedly positive self-image (fed, no doubt, by his father’s official version of his son’s qualities) that accounts for a good deal of what Upstone labels Pran’s emerging “multiple personality disorder” (2010: 149). According to Upstone (cf. 2010: 145-163), this disorder is at the heart of the protagonist’s later cravings for the complete adoption of various shifting identity configurations. For the time being, however, Pran is still a somewhat megalomaniacally egocentric teenager, “supremely convinced of his central position in the cosmos” (*TI* 28), and, at the same time, completely unaware of the strong antipathy his bad behaviour has caused in the servants surrounding him. It is this prevalent aversion, however, that will soon be unleashed in the protagonist’s pitiless expulsion from his home.

In addition, the Genettean analepsis (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 35-85) summing up Pran’s life up to the present moment also proves to be highly revealing in that it contains an astrological prediction of the future course of his life. The astrologer

charged with the delicate task of interpreting the stellar constellations in terms of the new-born child's future produces an astrological chart that proves to be remarkably correct: "To the astrologer this distribution [of stellar influences] looked impossible. Forces tugged in all directions, the malefic qualities of the moon and Saturn auguring transmutations of every kind. It was a shapeshifting chart. A chart full of lies. [...] The boy's future was obscure" (*TI* 26). Not only does this astrological forecast prefigure Pran's obsessive preoccupation with shape-shifting, that is, with changing both outward appearances and identity configurations, it also admits to the fundamental insincerity of his obsession with enacting simulations of other people's identities and concedes the impossibility of predicting the exact course of his life beyond this characteristic feature. Ironically enough, the astrologer eventually decides to dump this alarming chart and present Pandit Amar Nath Razdan with an overly optimistic one instead. Thus, Pran's life begins to unfold in a sphere of disingenuousness and dissimulation, in which the splendid veneer counts more than any kind of essentialized truth, from the very beginning (cf. Upstone 2010: 147).

Immediately after Pran's failed attempt to make a dirty pass at Gita, Anjali, Gita's mother, puts her vow into practice by telling his moribund father that "his only son [...] is in fact the bastard child of a casteless, filth-eating, left-and-right-hand-confusing Englishman" (*TI* 39), a shocking revelation followed by a long harangue expounding the ill results produced by miscegenation in general, which Anjali the servant ends by playing her trump card: the old photograph showing Ronald Forrester. The evident similarity between him and Pran forecloses any possibility of contradiction. After the death of influenza-infected Pandit Amar Nath Razdan, the servants take cruel revenge upon Pran by throwing him out into the street instantly. Out of pure desperation, he finally makes up his mind to follow the advice an old beggar gave him and try a mysterious address in the jewellers' bazaar, where he succeeds in being accepted as a new 'protégé' of the owners, who pretend to be running a charitable organization in their house, giving shelter and food to homeless children. While initially extremely grateful, Pran soon realizes that there is something decidedly dubious about these people's activities, a terrible secret lurking behind the purportedly decent façade. This haunting suspicion is corroborated by the horrid routine the protagonist is forced to follow during the subsequent weeks, which consists mainly of alternating periods of sleeping, being beaten up by the wrestler Balraj, and regularly drinking a mysterious 'lassi' drink. While Pran is unable to come to the conclusion that, in fact, he has been caught in the clutches of evil human traffickers, he nevertheless realizes that the owners, "Ma-ji and Balraj [,] have designs that are not honorable" (*TI* 60). Due to the

dire consequences of the forced consumption of 'lassi' drinks, which make his legs wobbly, he is, however, incapable of undertaking any attempt at escaping from the small and dirty room he is confined to. Consequently, he remains largely passive, engaging in prolonged phases of drug-induced dreaming and seemingly profound reflections on his dissolving selfhood and agency instead:

Pran moving outward from the center, gathering momentum. Whoever might be in charge, it is certainly not him. "Him," in fact, is fast becoming an issue. How long has he been in the room? Long enough for things to unravel. Long enough for that important faculty to atrophy (call it the pearl faculty, the faculty that secretes selfhood around some initial grain), leaving its residue dispersed in a sea of sensation, waiting to be reassembled from a primal soup of emotions and memories. Nothing so coherent as a personality. Some kind of Being still happening in there, but nothing you could take hold of.

You could think of it in cyclical terms. The endlessly repeated day of Brahman – before any act of creation the old world must be destroyed. Pran is now in pieces. A pile of Pran rubble, ready for the next chance event to put it back together in a new order. (*T/65*)

In this passage, which largely consists of what Cohn (cf. 1978: 26-33) labels dissonant psycho-narration, Pran clearly finds himself in a state of severe disorientation. His audiovisual hallucinations are caused by the 'lassi' drink he is forced to consume at regular intervals, which contains mind-altering drugs (probably some sort of hallucinogenic substance in conjunction with a sedative). With this measure, his captors probably intend to make him forget as much as possible about his current circumstances, just as they want to make him unable to attempt an escape from his captivity in their house. What is immediately striking is that, as far as mental mobility is concerned, Pran is highly active in this chapter, whereas in terms of physical spatial mobility, his activities are restricted to sporadic, desultory movements within the small, dark and dirty room to which his sphere of action has been restricted by his captors. This stark contrast is rendered in dissonant psycho-narration, for in this passage it is clearly the narrator who sums up Pran's mental processes in his idiom and from his superior point of view. As well, this passage narratively enacts a dissolution of the boundaries of Pran's self (cf. Upstone 2010: 146-147).

In addition, it reveals that the human drive towards spatial and/or mental mobility, or, more broadly, towards any activity at all, is an essential part of human survival strategies, for engaging in any sort of activity – be it physical (walking up and down the room) or mental (intense cogitations) – is commonly held to be one of the prime strategies to avoid going mad in situations of confinement, such as during a kidnapping. This passage – and Kunzru's novel as a whole – suggests that this obsession with being active may have something to do with the superficiality of human

self-constructions, or, to put it more directly, with the nothingness residing at the heart of them (cf. Upstone 2010: 146-147). Hence, human beings typically engage in frantically doing something – anything – in order to conceal the void lurking behind the surface of their narrative self-constructions from others and from themselves. Brutally stripped of all possibilities to commit himself to any activity other than hallucinating by his current external situation, Pran cannot help but eventually watch his self disintegrate. In short, frantic mental activity compensates for his deprivation of physical agency in the textual actual world. In terms of the trialectics of motion elaborated in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, both this discursive deconstruction of agency and the protagonist's concomitant, essentially non-linear and discontinuous experience of temporality are conditioned by his current spatial situation, that is, his confinement in a dark and dirty small bedroom. With all three parameters of human motion, this precarious narrative configuration of his current ontological vectoriality is responsible for his physical immobility.

As far as structural features are concerned, this eventual outcome – the complete dissolution of what the reader might initially have assumed to be the protagonist's self – is reached in a classical climactic intensification inasmuch as the first three sentences are marked by a rising scope of the entities affected by the predicate. While the very first sentence represents Pran as moving away from the centre at accelerating pace, the second unequivocally states that he has been deprived of his individual physical 'real-world' agency. To make matters worse, the third sentence even suggests the imminent loss of his self in its entirety due to the gradual dissolution of its formerly clear boundaries. Moreover, the representational mode employed here can be classified as dissonant psycho-narration, because at no point in these first three sentences is there any indication of a fusion between the character's fictional mind and the rather distanced narratorial discourse summarizing the chaotic mental processes going on within it (cf. Cohn 1978: 26-33).

As for the first step of this climax, the centrifugal movement it explicitly thematizes can be interpreted in two ways: first, as a movement away from the centre of one's own self, and second, on a metaphorical meta-level, as a movement away from the centre of the Empire. Clearly, the second interpretation epitomizes a genuinely postcolonial concern. Kunzru's novel, however, amplifies the classical postcolonial argumentation by suggesting that these two movements are complementary in that they contribute (each in their respective sphere) to the purposeful deconstruction of Western notions of selfhood, space and time. While the first of these concerns – the

deconstruction of Romantic conceptions of selfhood – has been highlighted as the major concern in Kunzru’s writing as a whole by Upstone (cf. 2010: 144-147, particularly 145-146), I expand this line of thought to the other two categories, which simultaneously constitute the other two dimensions of human motion, by asserting that, with regard to all three dimensions of motion – agency/selfhood, space and time, the main concern of Kunzru’s debut novel lies in deconstructing specifically Western conceptualizations.

Regarding the agentic dimension of human motion, the dissolution of the protagonist’s personality is not represented as a token of insanity, but rather as an eventually inevitable process of disassembling the whole, of taking apart the personality construction into its components, which results in a “primal soup of emotions and memories” (71 65). This will then be reassembled into an integral whole in an endless cycle of creation, destruction and re-creation that, in essence, is deliberately modelled on the concept of *samsara* in Hindu philosophy.²⁰⁶

According to Harzer’s entry on this concept in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Hinduism* (cf. Harzer 2010 [2008]: 750-751), “[t]he term *samsara* literally means ‘passage’, as in passing through a succession of states” (ibid. 750). Again, it is highly significant here that the mode of representing consciousness deployed in the second paragraph of this extract is dissonant psycho-narration (cf. Cohn 1978: 26-33), because it is the narrator who, from his elevated and distant point of view, likens his summary of Pran’s mental development in captivity to the fundamentally Hinduist notion of a cycle of rebirths. The common translation of *samsara* is “‘cycle of lives’ or transmigration” (Harzer 2010: 750). The origin of the perpetual cycle of birth, death and rebirth in this world lies in human ignorance, as the following quotation explicates:

The cause was found in not knowing things as they are, and therefore a person engaged in an indiscriminate action, either physical, mental or vocal, could commit some inconsequential acts. Action was stimulated by desire and desire arose again from ignorance of the state of affairs. Any act (karma) of an ordinary mortal will accrue effects which will be positive, negative or even neutral. These karmic effects function as seeds for the subsequent formation of an individual’s future life. Everything in this universe repeats itself in one form or another. It is the contingency of the effects which will determine the quality of the future life. (Harzer 2010: 750-751)

This conceptualization of *samsara* exhibits parallels with the protagonist’s further development in two respects. First, Pran will reconstruct his self again and

²⁰⁶ All subsequent information about the philosophy and mythology of Hinduism has been taken from the pertinent entries in *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Hinduism* (Cush, Robinson and York [eds.]: 2010 [2008]).

again around different “identity configurations” (Welsch 2009: 9), each of which will then be destroyed to give way to a successor. As the last three sentences in the passage quoted from Kunzru’s novel above illustrate, this process of self-re-creation mirrors the Hindu concept of *samsara* in its emphasis on both contingency and interminability: “The endlessly repeated day of Brahman – before any act of creation the old world must be destroyed. Pran is now in pieces. A pile of Pran rubble, ready for the next chance event to put it back together in a new order” (*TI* 65). Second, a further parallel lies in the fact that, according to Hindu terminology, Pran’s fundamental flaw is his emerging desire to be something he is not, i.e. a ‘true’ Englishman. This desire sets the wheel of *samsara* in motion. As we shall see, the novel’s ending leaves the question of whether the final exorcism performed upon the protagonist really results in *moksha*,²⁰⁷ i.e. his liberation from the cycle of rebirths (cf. Sharma 2010 [2008]: 504-508) deliberately in abeyance, for its plot is by no means an exercise in religious didacticism.

Moreover, Pran’s hallucinatory reflections on selfhood are indeed deeply suffused with another core concept of Hindu philosophy: the explicitly mentioned concept of *Brahman*,²⁰⁸ which likewise plays a central role here. According to the *Upanishads*,²⁰⁹ the term *Brahman* can denote ‘speech’. Yet early versions of this classical Hindu text corpus nevertheless interpret *Brahman* as the creator and origin of all things extant at the same time (cf. Scharf 2010b [2008]: 114-116). It is this suggestive association of speech with universal power that I want to make productive for the interpretation of the selected passage from Kunzru’s novel here. The mention of the polyseme *Brahman*, I contend, constitutes a subtle play with connotations, for speech is traditionally one of the main means and media of self-representation and self-enactment, which, in turn, form one of the cornerstones of individual identity

²⁰⁷ In order to contextualize the concept of *moksha* with regard to Hindu philosophy, I quote from the pertinent entry in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Hinduism*: “The word *moksha* [...] is usually rendered by the word ‘liberation’ in English and constitutes the counterpart to ‘salvation’ in the Abrahamic religions. [...] *moksha* [...] is attained by the *jiva*, or the embodied being; *moksha* is for bliss or perfect and permanent happiness and *moksha* constitutes freedom from being trapped in the endless cycle of birth and death, in which one is continually reborn in accordance with one’s *karma* and in which the experience of supreme felicity which comes from transcending the karmic involvement in *samsara* is denied one” (Sharma 2010: 504).

²⁰⁸ According to Scharf (2010b: 114-116), “[t]he Sanskrit neuter noun *Brahman* usually denotes the one supreme, absolute being from which the entire universe develops, which pervades the entire universe, and into which the universe merges when it dissolves, and which, as pure consciousness, is the innermost self (*Atman*) of every being. The term also commonly denotes liberation (*Moksha*), vedic text, or the *Brahmana* class”. In addition, the polyseme *Brahman* can also denote “speech, [...] breath, sight, hearing, mind and the heart” (Scharf 2010b: 115).

²⁰⁹ As Roebuck points out, “[t]he *Upanishads* are among the most significant sacred texts of India, embodying ideas about the nature of the individual and of the universe which have remained central to the philosophy of Hinduism” (Roebuck 2010 [2008]: 894).

configurations. Therefore, the use of *Brahman* in the double sense of 'speech' and 'supreme, omnipotent being' here can be interpreted as underpinning Kunzru's hypothesis that there is no essence, no core of individual (and collective) human identities. Accordingly, the primary function fulfilled by dissonant psycho-narration in the selected extract consists in presenting a summary of Pran's mental development (cf. Neumann and Nünning 2008: 118) under the dire conditions of solitary confinement, or, to put it more precisely, in enacting the dissolution of any illusion of the protagonist's having a fixed and stable personality.

The recognition of the inexistence of an immutable core of individual human selfhood or identity, stands in stark contrast to the subject-centeredness to be found in many strands of Western philosophy (cf. Scharf 2010a [2008]: 53-54). In addition, it is necessary to note that in Hindu philosophy, "the type of cognition" – traditionally pursued in Western thinking – "that depends upon the duality of knower and known ceases when the subject-object duality itself is transcended upon recognizing the identity of everything with one's self" (Scharf 2010a: 54).²¹⁰ In the final analysis, I assert, the entire passage from *The Impressionist* quoted above can be interpreted along these lines. More generally, I think that on an epistemological meta-level, Hindu philosophy argues along very much the same lines as many postmodern approaches in that it emphasizes the interminability of the generation of new knowledge: there are no immutable truths transcending real-world (or fictional) configurations of selfhood/agency, spatiality and temporality.

In conclusion, I contend that this passage is paradigmatic for major concerns negotiated in the entire novel inasmuch as it narratively prefigures the deconstruction of philosophical conceptions central to Western thinking and self-image on all three levels of human motion: the dissolution of an allegedly stable and fixed self, the abandoning of imperialist concepts of space such as the centre-periphery dichotomy, and the melting away of clock-time in the indiscriminate flux of mind-time. Thus, this passage prefigures the narrative configuration of the three interacting dimensions of the trialectics of motion (cf. Chapter 2 of this dissertation) and their joint deployment to this deconstructionist end. Moreover, this passage nicely epitomizes that mental

²¹⁰ As the following quotation from Scharf (cf. 2010a: 52-54) corroborates, the identification of every being's self (Atman) with the supreme being simultaneously ruling and transcending the profane world (Brahman) constitutes one of the central contentions of Hinduism: "The Upanishads are pre-eminently known, however, for distinguishing the individual self [Atman] from all limiting characteristics and identifying it with the absolute essence of the world, Brahman. The innermost self that is ordinarily identified as the subject of all one's intellectual and affective experiences and the agent of all one's volition and action is the essence of what is ordinarily perceived to be the external world" (Scharf 2010a: 53).

movements in novels can be just as relevant as physical spatial movement to the novel's plot development (this is the first dissolution of Pran's self-construction(s)), to the central thematic concerns negotiated in this novel and, ultimately, also to the entire project of developing a cultural narratology of motion.

Rukhsana the Subaltern Sex Slave

To return to the novel's plot itself, Pran is sold to two mysterious women directly after his hallucinatory reflections on selfhood. For the time being, Pran is glad for the opportunity to leave the human traffickers' house, and so he embarks upon a train journey without being granted the privilege of knowing where the two mysterious women in whose company he is travelling are taking him. In spite of his initial relief, though, his motivation for this trip to a destination unknown to him is primarily extrinsic, for he is merely following these two women mechanically. Deprived of his autonomous physical agency, the protagonist is moved around like a commodity by his 'owners'. As can be seen in the following quotation, the experience of travelling by train initially gives Pran an indeterminate sense of comfort, though only up to the moment in which his travel companions reveal the true reason for their journey to him, which strikes him like a bolt out of the blue:

Slowly something begins to congeal in the Pran flux. The pearl faculty is recovering. So he is traveling. Something new is happening. There is still hope. The women argue. "What shall we call her?" "What do you think?" "Zia?" "Tuhina?" "Noor?" "*Rukhsana*." "Call who?" asks Pran. The women laugh, hearty rasping guffaws that show off mossy teeth and viperous tongues. "Little one," they say. "We mean *you*, of course. Rukhsana, the nawab of Fatehpur's new hijra." Some questions are better left unasked. Others, if asked, are better left unanswered. All the progress Pran has made in self-reassembly, all the comforting hours of tea and train travel, fall apart in an instant.

Pran has seen hijras. They are frightening women-men who dance outside weddings, banging drums and mocking the guests as they go in and out. When a child is born, they appear, as if by magic, heralding the infant with lewd mimes and filthy parodic songs. To make them go away again you must give them money, otherwise they will curse your household. They are outcasts, as ancient as the hills, a human dirty joke that has been told and retold since the hero Arjun was cursed to spend a year as a hermaphrodite conjurer. Arjun the great warrior, going from village to village in his skirts: *Now, then, ladies and gents, if someone has a bangle they could lend ...* Some hijras look after the zenanas in rich noble houses, accompanying the women on journeys, acting as gatekeepers, policemen and chaperones. Rich noble houses like that, perhaps, of the nawab of Fatehpur. (*TI* 71-72)

The slow process of recovery initiated in Pran's mind (once again represented through psycho-narration) is brutally destroyed, all of a sudden, when he learns that he is supposed to be turned into a hijra, that is, a peculiar kind of transvestite hermaphrodite frequently serving as harem guards at the courts of Indian principalities. In contrast to his previous lack of awareness, the sudden mention of this lexeme triggers the anticipation of his future role at the Nawab of Fatehpur's court in Pran's mind. Due to his familiarity with this concept, the realization that he is jumping from the frying pan into the fire, in that he is approaching a second, even more appalling stage of captivity, dawns on Pran.

In the context of postcolonial concerns, the social and sexual status these "frightening women-men" (*TI* 72) occupy in Indian society deserves attention, for in both respects, their status is a precarious and marginalized one. Societally speaking, they constitute classical outcasts deprived of all civil rights, excluded from ordinary professions and thus forced to lead a life on the margins of Indian society. In terms of their sex, they can be classified as genuine go-betweens, owing to the fact that, biologically speaking, they actually are neither 'real' women nor 'proper' men. In addition to the sociocultural contextualization of hijras provided from Pran's perspective, the intertextual reference to the mythological warrior Arjun's fate recounted in the great Indian epic *Mahabharata*, where he is forced to undergo the cruel humiliation of having to live as a hijra for an entire year (cf. Thomas 2010 [2008]: 469-471), narratively prefigures the identical destiny awaiting Pran in the principality of Fatehpur. It is symptomatic of the protagonist's confused state of mind, however, that he remembers the most important generally known fact about hijras last: "They are eunuchs" (*TI* 72). This shocking recollection adds yet another aggravating aspect to Pran's mental picture of his imminent future, for not only will he be dehumanized as one of his owners' sex slaves, but, in addition, he must fear instant emasculation upon arrival in Fatehpur. Together with the loss of his independent physical agency, this horrid threat of castration would, if actually put into practice, complete the hideous process of joint dehumanization and feminization the protagonist is cruelly subjected to in this part of the novel.

Ethically speaking, Pran's fate constitutes an outrageous crime committed on a defenceless adolescent minor. The fact that he is deprived of all human rights, sold and abducted to the Nawab of Fatehpur's decadent household, where he is supposed to lead a dreary life as a sex slave indicates a simultaneous objectification and commodification of the protagonist that must be condemned as an insidious act of

inhumanity. With this said, it is all the more striking that narrative discourse largely refrains from indulging in explicit thematization of Pran's presumably miserable emotional state after these shocking revelations. The narratorial stance towards the protagonist's inner life remains, for the most part of this extract, restricted to rendering his individual perceptions and his externally perceptible actions. In line with this general tendency, his eventual intuitive act of "cup[ping] a hand to his lap" (TI 72) after realizing the imminent threat of castration is not combined with a detailed rendering of his affective semanticization of this shocking insight; instead, narrative discourse merely presents the externally perceptible reaction of the two hijras accompanying Pran, which consists in a malicious broadening of their hideous smiles, interpreted by the protagonist as an indicator of their joint awareness of what is on his mind, i.e. the nightmarish fear of emasculation. Eventually, it is of course also the involuntary change of his first name – from Pran to Rukhsana – that symbolizes this teenager's forced feminization and his concomitant total loss of agency in the textual actual world.

From the very beginning of his stay at the New Palace of Fatehpur, Pran's status as a passive victim is underpinned by the high frequency of passive verb constructions in conjunction with what he does, or, rather, with what is done to him: "So Pran is ushered inside a gateau [...]" (TI 77); "[t]he hijras walk Pran past liveried guards dozing against old-fashioned pikes [...]" (TI 77), until he arrives at "the zenana, the women's quarters of the palace" (TI 77). Focusing on the (absence of) Pran's individual 'real-world' agency at Fatehpur Palace, the following has to be said: in accordance with his status at the bottom of the social scale, Pran is deprived of free, autonomous mobility; he is treated and moved around like a piece of furniture, a commodity that possesses no value other than its practical utility as a means to the morally questionable ends pursued by the principal agents in the intrigues and power struggles shaping quotidian life at court. According to Herman's semantic continuum of thematic roles (cf. Herman 2002: 157-163; adapted from van Valin 1993a), Pran's role thus oscillates between that of a patient and that of a passive experiencer, since he does not show any indication of taking an active part in the machinations and counter-intrigues at the palace.

Accordingly, his individual agency is virtually reduced to zero, for, apart from the will to adapt in order to survive, Pran's dreary existence at Fatehpur Palace is marked by what the khwaja-sara, i.e. the head of the hijras, brutally communicates to the desolate teenager: "You are *nothing*, do you understand me? Nothing!" (TI 80). Disenfranchised, defenceless and desperate, Pran has turned into the sport of evil

powers. As far as his identity configurations are concerned, it becomes evident that obstinate, egocentric and self-righteous Pran gradually mutates into submissive, silent and subaltern Rukhsana, whereby his first identity transformation (cf. Nyman 2009: 93) comes into effect. Pran is subjected to an inhumane, most unworthy existence as the powerless plaything of decadent and unscrupulous aristocrats “who would prostitute him for political purposes” (Upstone 2010: 150) without batting an eyelash. Pran is indeed very soon forced to realize that this is exactly the role intended for him when the khwaja-sara shows him Major Privett-Clampe, the British representative at Fatehpur Court, who, as the chief hijra explains, “holds the fate of our beloved kingdom in his hands”, adding that “[l]uckily, he has a weakness [for] beautiful boy-girls [like Rukhsana]” (T/ 85).

In order to understand what Major Privett-Clampe’s soft spot for androgynous young boys has to do with the future of the principality of Fatehpur, a brief contextualizing excursus on the administrative hierarchy of British India is required. As the local representative of the British Raj, it is Major Privett-Clampe’s job to watch over the proceedings in local politics; hence, without his approval, there will be neither government funding for new construction projects nor any further eccentric luxuries for the ruling clan. Additionally, he is therefore also the key figure in any attempt to change the line of succession in this principality (cf. T/ 90-97, particularly 95). This is exactly what Prince Firoz, the Nawab’s brother, has in mind: since it is common knowledge at court that Nawab Murad is obviously incapable of begetting a successor, Prince Firoz intends to take advantage of this delicate ‘succession problem’ by forcing Major Privett-Clampe to enable him to succeed his brother. This is where Pran comes into play; basically, the prince and his fellow conspirators plan to have the court photographer take pictures of Major Privett-Clampe and Pran in an unequivocally compromising situation in order to blackmail the major afterwards (cf. T/ 103-104).

On the whole, the subsequent narratorial account of the outrageous crime of rape committed upon Pran by the major is marked by the drug-induced slow-down of information-processing within the protagonist’s mind, and by the pitiless attitude the narrator takes towards the boy’s cruel fate (cf. T/ 95-96). As the latter aspect can be brought together with both a postcolonial interpretation of the protagonist’s current situation on a micro-structural level and an extremely radical stance on European imperialism in general on a global level, the corresponding passage shall be quoted in full:

Some may be tempted to view this as primarily a political situation. It is, after all, Pran’s first direct contact with the machinery of Imperial

Government. Sadists, mothers of vulnerable servant girls, or those with a straightforward taste for retribution may prefer to call it cosmic justice. Traditionally the consequences of our actions in this life are only felt in the next one, a quick inter-carnational karmic tally moving us down the evolutionary scoreboard in the direction of sweeper, dog, and fish, or up toward Brahminhood and eventual escape from the cycle of action and suffering. Pran's accounting is happening with unusual speed. (TI 96)

The misanthropic cynicism apparently underlying this evaluative narratorial comment constitutes nothing less than a downright negation of liberal-humanist values as officially propagated by Western imperialists. By refraining from any compassionate utterance, the narrator clearly distances himself from the victim, whereby his own moral standards are rendered extremely questionable as well. The irony of this situation, however, lies in the fact that it is a high official of the British Raj – and, consequently, a representative of Western imperialism – who commits this outrageous crime upon defenceless Pran. In the depraved character of Major Augustus Privett-Clampe, the eminent virtues traditionally ascribed to British officers and administrators are deconstructed ambivalently. While, on the one hand, he is represented as having been a great sportsman and a dutiful brave soldier in his youth (cf. TI 91-92; 105-110 and 116-129), he is now shown as a lazy, debauched pederast suffering from severe alcoholism who spends his days drinking whisky and violating young boys. Thus, by the time Pran encounters him, Major Privett-Clampe has been reduced to a mere caricature of the allegedly virtuous British Raj official. From an – admittedly radical – postcolonial point of view, I would even go so far as to interpret the act of sodomy committed by the major on Pran as a metaphor for the treatment of the colonized territories in the system of European imperialism in general. Accordingly, the fundamental hypocrisy of a hegemonic system that purported to be in place for the benefit of the 'natives', but was, in fact, tantamount to their ruthless economic exploitation, military subjugation and political oppression by the colonizers is mirrored in the Janus-faced character of Major Privett-Clampe, whose official function consists in the political supervision of the principality of Fatehpur, whereas secretly he indulges in infamous homoerotic activities with minor victims. In conclusion, his literal act of anal intercourse with Pran stands metaphorically for the British colonizers' general policy of – figuratively speaking – taking their colonies from behind in a simultaneously economic, military and political sense.

In addition to this political interpretation, the above-quoted passage suggests a second possible interpretation that is clearly inspired by the Hindu concept of *karma*. While the literal translation of the original Sanskrit term '*karman*' into English is "simply 'action' or 'deed' [, t]he nominative singular karma in English refers to the quality of

deeds as determining the quality of subsequent experience: good and bad deeds cause subsequent enjoyment and suffering, respectively, to their agent, possibly in a subsequent state of existence” (Scharf 2010c [2008]: 410; cf. *ibid.* 410-413). Again, from a liberal-humanist perspective, the cynicism of this narratorial evaluation becomes evident insofar as the narrating instance insinuates that Pran deserves to be raped because he tried to make sexual advances to the servant girl Gita. It has to be pointed out, though, that, as the preceding quotation from the pertinent entry in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Hinduism* (Cush, Robinson and York [eds.] 2010 [2008]) confirms, the narrator’s interpretation is – at least formally – in line with the ethical theory underlying the concept of karma in Hinduism. Formally speaking, it is additionally clear that the narrator ascribes the views he utters to indeterminate third parties instead of presenting them straightforwardly as ‘universal truths’. Moreover, the narrator simply juxtaposes the postcolonial and Hinduist interpretations without elaborating any further on their mutual relationship, let alone potential imbrications. To conclude, I would like to highlight that this extreme narratorial restraint regarding unambiguous ethical judgments based on Western concepts of morality may be linked to a general scepticism among Asian British authors regarding the universal, decontextualized application of such one-sided, overly rigid and absolutist ethical standards, because, after all, it was precisely this Eurocentric practice that discredited Western imperialism – in terms of ethics – as pure hypocrisy in Indian eyes.

As far as Pran’s personal development is concerned, it is clear that the dehumanizing treatment he is subjected to at Fatehpur Palace does indeed produce the desired effect in that his identity transformation (cf. Nyman 2009: 93) from egocentric Pran Nath Razdan to ego-less Rukhsana is gradually perfected: “With every swish of the broom Pran Nath Razdan is falling away. In his place, silent and compliant, emerges Rukhsana” (*TI* 99). In addition, his sphere of action is rigorously confined to the hijras’ rooms, whereby he turns into a peculiar kind of go-between, literally limited to the spaces in between: “[F]or several weeks his existence is bounded by the tiny, cramped spaces of the eunuch’s quarters. Nor has he access to the mardana, the men’s wing, or to the zenana proper. Rukhsana, floating between worlds” (*TI* 99).

Ironically enough, it is only when Major Privett-Clampe wants to have him brought to the British Residency that Pran is allowed to leave the palace. This time, however, their encounter turns out to be less devastating for the protagonist, since the major does not even touch him, but instead gives him a Christmas present (a British

school uniform in the same colours he used to wear as a pupil) and has him recite his favourite Victorian poem. Very much to the detriment of the machinators around Prince Firoz, this ritual turns into a weekly routine, whereby the protagonist starts to learn the basics about Englishness:

[G]radually his English accent improves, and he learns stirring passages from Victorian poets about martial prowess and the sacred duty of keeping one's word. The poetry baffles him [...], but he discerns that it is in some way responsible for Privett-Clampe's importance, and the importance of Englishmen in general, so he pays attention to it, hoping to divine its secret. (TI 110)

Thus, Pran's talent for mimicry has found a new sphere of action; thereby, the first seeds for his eventual transformation into a 'proper' Englishman are planted. In Privett-Clampe's eyes, he mutates into Clive (cf. TI 128), the quintessential incarnation of an English schoolboy, albeit a pretty androgynous one (cf. TI 105-110; 128-129).

Finally, the protagonist is offered a lucky chance to escape from his ignominious, totally heteronomous existence at the principal court of Fatehpur during an imperial tiger hunt, which ends in a ridiculous scene of total chaos. Again, it is characteristic of Pran's immediate response that, at first, he is merely observing this chaotic scene as if in trance. Only slowly does he realize that this is the chance he has been waiting for throughout his captivity at Fatehpur Palace:

Pran watches with a strange sense of disconnection. This is nothing to do with him. Fatehpur has breathed him in, and now it is exhaling. He takes a single, dreamlike pace backward. No reaction. No one will notice. No one will care. He turns, takes another, then another. Slowly, steadily, he begins to walk away through the forest. (TI 170-171)

Just like in the scene on the train to Lahore, Pran experiences the psychoanalytical phenomenon of belatedness (cf. Kirchhoff 2009: 141-232; Laplanche and Pontalis 1972 [1967]: 313-317; see also West-Pavlov 2013: 116-119) inasmuch as his mind starts co-operating with his body only gradually, as if his consciousness were working in a delayed-action mode. While his body keeps recording the external sensory impressions pouring in upon him incessantly, it takes his mind some time to realize that this chaos is his unexpected, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to escape from his dire, ignominious existence as a sex slave at Fatehpur Court. However, Pran meets his tormentor, Major Privett-Clampe, one last time, watching the fatally wounded Raj official collapse right in front of him. Retribution has obviously reached the perpetrators of Fatehpur's feudal decadence, for Prince Firoz and Nawab Murad himself also succumb to their gunshot wounds. After watching the major's corpse for some time, Pran "carries on walking. After a while he realizes he is not alone. Four reflective eyes. A rumble of hot breath. The tigers have also had enough. They are leaving too.

Together they walk on, heading toward the border with British India” (TI 171). From a postcolonial point of view, it is of course very tempting to interpret this last sentence of the second part of *The Impressionist* as a proleptic anticipation of the eventual downfall of the Raj. Although Pran’s escape from Fatehpur is treated relatively briefly by narrative discourse, I would like to conclude my analysis of the second part by highlighting the fact that its narrative saliency is nonetheless very high, for, after all, it triggers the next stage of the plot.

As far as the narrative representation of his escape is concerned, the brief account of his slinking away from the chaotic scene of the nocturnal tiger hunt at the end of the second part of the novel is directly followed by an ellipsis, for the third part begins with Pran sitting on a bullock-cart, about an hour away from Amritsar. In the mode of scenic presentation, narrative discourse then relates his encounter with English soldiers who mistake him for a white boy. The realization that, provided he gets rid of the remainder of his Indian accent, he can easily pass for an English boy sparks off a crucial turning point in the protagonist’s self-definition. Without being recognized as a ‘half-and-half’, he succeeds in getting on the train to Bombay, where he will construct a new identity configuration for himself in the fourth part of this novel.

In respect of Pran’s agency, his lucky escape from Fatehpur brings in its wake a fundamental reassertion of his individual subjectivity in several regards. In line with his exclusively intrinsic motivation for this flight, he recovers his self-esteem and personal freedom of action, thus achieving his own rehumanization and resubjectification. Having shaken of the yoke of his ignominious captivity there, Pran likewise leaves behind the all-embracing external friction that had dominated his miserable life at court and destroyed his real-world physical agency. Further, since he has succeeded in preserving his physical integrity and, in addition, is no longer forced to wear women’s clothes, one can justifiably speak of a remasculinization as well. Rukhsana has remutated into Pran Nath.

Liminal Self-fashioning in Bombay: Pretty Bobby the Pimp

The fourth part of the novel, entitled “Pretty Bobby” (TI 185), deals with the new existence Pran Nath constructs for himself in Bombay, where he finds shelter with a couple of Scottish missionaries, Andrew and Elspeth Macfarlane, for whom he works as a servant by day. At night, by contrast, he roams the streets around Falkland Road,

working as a freelance pimp who charges a commission for acquainting his clients – mostly British soldiers – with the local brothels most attuned to their individual tastes. Having reached an unprecedented degree of autonomous agency, Pran Nath, alias Pretty Bobby has successfully turned the tables: not only is he no longer subjected to an abominable existence as defenceless sex slave, but, quite to the contrary, he is now the one who brings British soldiers and local prostitutes together, acting as a kind of broker or intermediary in the Bombay red-light district. The money he earns in this morally dubitable way gives him a certain degree of economic freedom, enabling him to pursue his strategy of self-fashioning by buying posh clothes.

In the following, I thus want to take a closer look at Pran Nath's third identity configuration – as Pretty Bobby. More precisely, I argue that this identity configuration is characterized by three interrelated principal features: first, his near-perfect capability for mimicry; second, its inherent superficiality; and third, the liminality of the entire construct 'Pretty Bobby'. Regarding the first feature, Bobby gradually perfects his capability for mimicry by imitating his clients' regional accents on a daily basis. As the heterodiegetic narrator unequivocally states, his obsession with mimicry hinges, at least partially, upon a very pragmatic, down-to-earth motive: "Bobby's capacity for mimicry helps in his work" (*TI* 231). Thus, the process of his gradual assimilation to the British has reached its second stage, in which the protagonist is deliberately aspiring to the highest possible degree of similarity with the British colonizers. At present, however, Bhabha's delineation of mimicry as the processual reproduction of the colonized subject as "almost the same, but not quite" (Bhabha 1994e: 122; see also Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2007 [2000]: 125) still applies to Pretty Bobby. While it is thus true that, for the time being, the outcome of Bobby's mimicry still consists in a "blurred copy of the colonizer" (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2007: 125), the difference between him and other colonial mimics lies in the fact that, in the further course of the novel, he will push this mimicry to a degree of perfection that leaves even true-born Englishmen unable to divine the secret behind his mask. Or, as Upstone puts it: "[T]he central character of Pran [...] tak[es] on new personae so completely that his former selves are no longer referenced or reflected upon" (Upstone 2010: 146).

A first climax of Bobby's gradual transformation into a 'true' Englishman comes when an English officer mistakes him for one of his fellow countrymen outside a stationery shop, recommending to Bobby that he wear a hat to protect himself from the blazing sun (cf. *TI* 237-238). Too surprised to utter a reply, Bobby remains silent but takes this occurrence as a confirmation of his efforts, greeting English people by tipping

his newly purchased “Curzon topi” (*TI* 238)²¹¹ from then on. Despite his growing success at passing for an Englishman, however, Bobby will nevertheless retain the “*double* vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority” (Bhabha 1994e: 126; italics in original) characteristic of colonial mimics throughout the novel. To conclude, the fact that, in contrast to most other “mimic men” (Naipaul 1978 [1967]), who remain trapped in their interstitial positionality of “[a]lmost the same but not white” (Bhabha 1994e: 128), Pran Nath, alias Pretty Bobby, finally succeeds in adopting the identity of a ‘true’ Englishman due to his fair skin colour points to the instability of the then-prevalent cultural definition of Englishness. In short, by virtue of his undisputable success at fooling the English as to his cultural origin and hybrid identity, Bobby also calls into question the colonizers’ self-definition by drawing attention to its unstable contingency.

As far as the second feature is concerned, it is clear that Pran’s third identity configuration²¹² – as Pretty Bobby – exhibits the shallow superficiality of all the ‘roles’ he performs in the course of the novel in prototypical fashion. By dint of his craving for (almost) complete adaptation to the speech and behavioural habits of his interlocutors (British sailors and/or soldiers, for the most part), Pretty-Bobby-the-pimp almost succeeds in becoming one with his clients without ever disclosing anything about his own biographical background: “When he [Bobby] is talking to you, he seems to fall in with the rhythm of your voice. He will stand how you stand, making remarks that seem somehow tailored to your sense of humor. For all his swagger and beauty and flamboyance, there is something in Bobby that craves invisibility” (*TI* 231). Thus, in spite of his good looks and fashionable clothes, Bobby remains a shadow, an unmemorable figure to his clients, someone they tend to forget as easily as any chance acquaintance on the street.

As far as the third feature is concerned, Bobby can clearly be classified as a liminal character for two reasons. First, as a hybrid pimp mimicking the colonizers, he is never granted the privilege of access to the English-only clubs to which he takes his clients. Second, his “crav[ing for] invisibility” (*TI* 231) likewise contributes substantially to his liminality. As indicated above, Bobby always assures his British clients of his discretion and taciturnity, thereby turning himself into some kind of benevolent and subservient spectre:

²¹¹ A special type of tropical hat named after Lord Curzon, former British viceroy in India.

²¹² As the third part of the novel, “White Boy” (*TI* 173-184), constitutes a prelude to the fourth part, “Pretty Bobby” (*TI* 185-278), I do not count it as an identity configuration in its own right.

Bobby is a ghost, haunting thresholds, pools of electric light. He hovers at the limit of perception, materializing in his collar and his tie like someone only semireal, ethereal enough to trust with your secrets, safe in the knowledge that he would melt in direct sunlight. Bobby has never been inside the places he watches. (*TI* 231)

In conclusion, one can thus justifiably argue that, despite certain discernible tendencies for implicit contestation, Bobby's "strateg[y] for personal [...] selfhood" (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2007: 117), which consists in appropriating as many of the British colonizers' perceptible habits, manners and traits of character as possible, never explicitly calls into question their cultural superiority. Therefore, while Bhabha's observation that "liminality and hybridity go hand in hand" (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2007: 118) is also true of *Pretty Bobby*, this literary character differs from Bhabha's characterization of liminality in that his hybridity, mimicry and liminality lay no explicit claim to questioning the extant cultural hierarchy of 'centre and periphery' (cf. Bhabha 1994a: 5). Taken together, the three central features I have elaborated upon make up the defining quality of performativity that, while also characteristic of Pran Nath, alias Rukhsana, applies particularly well to Pran Nath's third identity configuration, the role of 'Pretty Bobby'. The fact that 'Pretty Bobby' is the result of a deliberately enacted and gradually perfected performance rather than an essential quality inherent in the protagonist himself epitomizes the fundamental insight that "identity is an effect rather than a cause" (Nyman 2009: 97; cf. *ibid.* and Butler 1990), a mask the protagonist can easily dispense with as soon as the opportunity arises.

When, during a night of anti-British riots in Bombay, *Pretty Bobby* accidentally encounters Jonathan Pelchat Bridgeman, a young Englishman born and bred in India who is scheduled to board a ship to England the next morning, this chance encounter proves to be precisely this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, for, after a joint visit to a local brothel called the Goa House, the young drunkard Jonathan is beaten to death by a bunch of Indian rioters in an alley off Falkland Road, whereas sober Bobby manages to run away, leaving his companion to his cruel fate. In terms of the narrative representation of agency, it is evident that Bobby is the sole internal focalizer throughout the scenic presentation of the last night of his stay in Bombay, which consists of a tour through the red-light district with drunken young Jonathan Bridgeman. This formal feature of fixed internal focalization produces highly significant implications for the distribution of agency: Bobby is and remains the person in control of the situation, whereas the young drunkard can barely walk on his own, particularly after their visit to the brothel.

This scene therefore foregrounds the fact that, in his guise as Pretty Bobby, Pran Nath has turned from the totally helpless victim Rukhsana into a self-reliant human being in full charge and possession of his individual agency again. Accordingly, the protagonist has definitely remutated from a passive experiencer into a fully fledged agent. Unlike in dangerous situations he has previously had to master, this time Bobby is aware of the threat to his life caused by the anti-British riots in Bombay: as a half-breed young man, he finds himself in immediate danger precisely due to his fair skin colour that, ironically enough, earned him so much admiration in the past and, what is more, helped him get out of Amritsar in the first place. Despite being aware of the great peril looming over their nocturnal tour of the city and of the concomitant risk they take in this heated atmosphere of anti-English resentments among the Indians, Bobby leads Bridgeman wherever the latter wants to go instead of bringing him back to his hotel. The irresponsibility of this behaviour, however, is barely thematized by narrative discourse.

Having stolen the dead man's official documents, Bobby instantly makes up his mind to travel to England in Jonathan's place. Due to the extremely bad quality of the latter's passport photograph, there is virtually no obstacle remaining to the realization of this plan. Having lost the Independent Scottish Mission among the Heathen (I.S.M.H.) and his caregivers there (Reverend Andrew Macfarlane and his wife Elspeth), Pretty Bobby hence makes up his mind to travel to England on the *SS Loch Lomond* in Jonathan Bridgeman's place on the spur of the moment. In terms of motivationality, one can justifiably find a commingling of extrinsic and intrinsic motives for this decision. On the one hand, the particular external circumstances – the anti-British riots all over Bombay, the arrest of Mrs Macfarlane and the destruction of the Mission – definitely play an important role, while on the other hand, internal factors are of equal significance, notably his fascination with imitating and studying England and English culture. With Jonathan's violent death, Bobby's secret dream of going there one day suddenly turns into a realistic option. As Nyman rightly points out, Bobby's first and only deliberate identity theft – simultaneously also Pran Nath's third identity transformation – is "narrated as a rebirth" (Nyman 2009: 100):

Bridgeman, the actual physical Jonathan Bridgeman, is already fading. Someone known for a few hours only. Emptied and reinhabited. He grins. How easy it is to slough off one life and take up another! Easy when there is nothing to anchor you. He marvels at the existence of people who can know themselves by kneeling down and picking up a handful of soil. Man was created out of dust, says the reverend. But if men and women are made of dust, then he is not one of them. If they feel a pulse through their bare feet and call it home, if they look out on a familiar landscape and see themselves reflected back, he is not one of them. Man out of earth, says

the reverend. Earth out of man, say the Vedas, like the sun and the moon and all other creation, born out of the body of the Primal Man. But he feels he has nothing of the earth in him at all. When he moves across it, his feet do not touch the surface. So he must have come from somewhere else, some other element. (TI 276)

As this quotation nicely illustrates, Bobby experiences no sense of belonging to Bombay or anywhere else, because he is not rooted to any place on earth. Identifying neither with the Christian version of human genealogy nor with its Hindu counterpart, Bobby thinks that he must have sprung from some kind of other, third element. Thus, the protagonist's conscious act of locating his origin in some vague notion of a third space (cf. Bhabha 1994b: 28-56), which may be interpreted as an example of *thirthing-as-othering* (cf. Soja 1996: 60-70), highlights his awareness of his own anachronistic alterity. Feeling intrinsically different from most of his contemporaries in that he does not cling to any romantic, idealized notion of home, Bobby exhibits certain constitutive traits of a rootless postmodern subject. This tentative classification is corroborated by the last sentence of Part Four, where Bobby's conspicuous sense of unbelonging and rootlessness is complemented by his engaging in the postmodern fantasy of frictionless physical movement. Although narrative discourse previously stated that he himself is moving as well, the protagonist has the momentary impression that he is standing still, while the earth is moving under his feet: "There is nothing here for him anymore, nothing to make him stay. He feels the earth, moving swift and frictionless beneath his feet" (TI 278).

Jonathan Bridgeman: The Colonial Hybrid as 'True' Englishman

In the fifth and sixth parts of the novel, Pretty Bobby alias Jonathan Bridgeman takes two further decisive steps towards the status of a 'true' Englishman by attending Chopham Hall, a fictitious public school of middle rank in Norfolk, and by enrolling as a first-year student of history at Oxford University afterwards. Having enjoyed a brief glimpse of the upper-class way of life in 1920s London, Jonathan is sent to Chopham Hall by his legal guardian, the solicitor Samuel Spavin, in order to finish his secondary education at a proper English public school, with the long-term goal of admission to Oxford University. This constitutes a prerequisite for obtaining access to his inheritance, which, according to Bridgeman senior's last will and testament, Spavin is supposed to transfer to Jonathan as of the latter's twenty-first birthday. It has to be pointed out, therefore, that Jonathan's motivation for attending Chopham Hall is entirely extrinsic: whereas the young man himself would have preferred to stay in London in

order to pursue his obsession with getting accustomed to the upper-class way of life there (which includes, above all, getting rid of his deficiencies in tennis and dancing as well as acquiring a driving licence), his conservative legal guardian, the lawyer Samuel Spavin, who is of the opinion that Jonathan's dancing lessons are an indication of his turn towards a decadent lifestyle, sends him to this Norfolk boarding school with the intention of preparing him for academic life at Oxford University. Therefore, Jonathan departs for Chopham Hall because he is ordered to do so, reluctantly leaving behind his metropolitan city life in London. To conclude, a brief interval of relatively independent and autonomous agency is followed by a long period of rigorous public-school education, which traditionally assigns highest priority to discipline, submission and *esprit de corps*.

Having completed his preparations for university at Chopham Hall, Jonathan takes the next step on the stairway to being a 'true' English gentleman by enrolling at Oxford University as a first-year history student. This time, the configuration of his motivationality is more complex in that it exhibits a mingling of extrinsic and intrinsic motives: his father's last will and his legal guardian expect him to study there, but, in addition, Jonathan has obsessively internalized the goal of becoming a 'true' English gentleman. Consequently, taking up studies at Oxford University constitutes the next logical step on his path to this destination.

To what extent Jonathan has internalized the crudely racist attitudes towards and stereotypical representations of non-European ethnicities exhibited by the English in those days becomes evident on the occasion of his visit to the British Empire Exhibition (1924-1925) in Wembley. Having come there on the initiative of Astarte Chapel, the eccentric only daughter of Henry Chapel, professor of anthropology at Oxford, Jonathan is suddenly confronted with the Fotseland pavilion, which consists of nothing more than "a group of Negroes in khaki shorts, sitting glumly around a fire in front of a conical hut" (*TI* 367). While before, Jonathan has only known of the Fotse tribe living in British West Africa, from Professor Chapel's enthusiastic anthropological lectures on their complex language, customs, manners and traditions, he is now appalled by their unadorned and, above all, unmediated corporeal presence: "Yet here, in all its horror, is blackness" (*TI* 367).

Just like the subsequent denigrating description of their outward appearance – "[t]heir red eyeballs and dull sooty skin, their whispering mouths full of yellow-white teeth, every feature low and disgusting" (*TI* 367) – this blunt association of blackness

with horror speaks volumes about the degree to which Jonathan's self-indoctrination with the cultural mentality of a 'true' English gentleman is suffused with deeply racist hetero-images of the African as the quintessential embodiment of a primitive, backward and savage way of life. The irony of the situation, however, lies in the protagonist's total obliviousness to the fact that, being a hybrid half-and-half, he himself used to suffer from the racist discrimination against non-white ethnicities and children of interracial relationships and that, therefore, the outright condemnation of blackness he displays here can be classified, paraphrasing Bhabha's interpretation of Fanon's postcolonial theory of identification, as the paradigmatic self-hatred instilled in the split-subject of the colonized by dominant colonialist discourses (cf. Bhabha 1994c: 86-91).

In addition, this scene constitutes an ironic comment on the theory-laden nature of early twentieth-century European anthropology inasmuch as Jonathan, who has been attending quite a few of Professor Chapel's famous lectures on the Fotse after his change of subject at university, "has always thought of the Fotse in a very vague way; as a collection of attributes, a set of practices and artifacts only dimly attached to real bodies. Like that they had seemed rather noble; keepers of the past, possessors of ancient wisdom" (*TI* 367). Whereas Jonathan has thus been able to develop a certain interest in this tribe as long as it remained an abstract object of research to be analysed, classified and dissected like a dead body for the sake of progress in anatomy according to the Eurocentric compartmentalization of academic disciplines, the sudden confrontation with living specimens of this tribe reveals the fact that his pseudo-scientific interest in the Fotse is bare of any human empathy for them.

Detached from the blunt reality of colonialist structures of subjugation and exploitation, relegated to the 'timeless eternal' of primeval African tribes by imperialist discourse, Jonathan can accommodate the Fotse very well at the lower end of his grid of evolutionary stages of humankind (cf. Fabian 2002 [1983]: 1-35); upon beholding them in 'reality', however, his response to their physical presence abruptly turns into the colonizer's derisive contempt for so-called 'primitive' ethnicities: "Tribes and origins? It is like a bad joke. Why, to please her [Astarte], should he have to spend so much time thinking about savages? It is like staring into the toilet bowl, looking at what he has expelled from himself" (*TI* 367). As this last simile shows once again, Jonathan has indeed internalized the bluntly racist, highly discriminating topoi of colonialist discourse on non-white ethnicities completely, with the effect of demonstrating that all previous, self-conscious awareness of his precarious status as a hybrid chameleon passing for a 'true' Englishman has been lost. As we shall see in the analysis of the

seventh and final part of *The Impressionist*, however, it is precisely this consciousness of his peculiar in-between positionality as a hybrid go-between that will be reactivated when the prefiguration of his later journey to Fotseland contained in the scene just examined is actualized in the narrative enactment of Jonathan's participation in Professor Chapel's last expedition to this tribe's area of settlement in British West Africa.

Deconstructing the Impressionist: From Mimicry to Nomadism

In my analysis and interpretation of this final identity transformation, I take up, once again, my initial hypothesis that the seemingly ascending linearity of Jonathan's step-by-step movement to the status of a 'true' Englishman is complemented throughout the novel by various other, essentially different movement patterns that fulfil a variety of different functions, such as subverting this notion of progress towards a preordained end. As we shall see, the interrelationship between Jonathan's act of abandoning his craving for the performance of heterogeneous identity configurations and his eventual 'return' to physical nomadism is particularly insightful for coming to terms with the narrative configuration of his agency in this last part of the novel.

To begin with, the protagonist's ultimate journey is of particular significance not only due to its structural position, but also because it leads Jonathan to Africa for the very first time in his life: as undergraduate assistant of a renowned Oxford professor of anthropology, Henry Chapel, he takes part in an anthropological expedition to the territory of a West African tribe called the Fotse. From the very beginning, the other participants, above all the arrogant, boastful and condescending Dr. Gittens, communicate to Jonathan very clearly that, in their eyes, he is a mere underling, an undergraduate factotum in charge of all the tedious organizational matters the academics are unwilling to engage in themselves. Hence, from a hierarchical perspective, Jonathan occupies the lowest rank among the members of the inner circle of this expedition. Beneath him, there are only the stevedores and porters responsible for the transport of the survival and scientific equipment. Consequently, there are definite limitations to his individual 'real-world' agency resulting from the fact that as chief organizer, he is responsible for the smooth procedure of the entire venture.

Moreover, his motivation for joining this risky expedition is evidently of a primarily extrinsic nature, because, from Jonathan's point of view, it would have been

both impolite and detrimental to his further academic career to reject Professor Chapel's seemingly generous offer of becoming his assistant on the next expedition to Fotseland, particularly considering the fact that such a post is only very rarely granted to a mere undergraduate student. Notwithstanding the fact that he himself would prefer to stay with Professor Chapel's lovely eccentric daughter Astarte, Jonathan therefore feels compelled to accept his offer right away. From this constellation, one can infer a basic psychological conflict in the protagonist's mind resulting from the collision of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, for, with regard to the former, Jonathan simply must take this unique career opportunity, whereas the latter is clearly geared towards spending more of his time with Astarte. However, the fact that Professor Chapel is Astarte's father complicates the situation even more because Jonathan has to fear that rejecting the professor's offer may entail losing Astarte as well. This is why Jonathan spontaneously makes up his mind to prioritize career opportunities and social obligations over his individual affective preferences.

The prime factors motivating this decision suddenly become virtually irrelevant, however, when, during their stopover in Paris, Jonathan accidentally makes the acquaintance of Sweets, a Parisian bar pianist of African origin, who proves to be the man Astarte wants to spend the rest of her life with. This bolt of lightning strikes Jonathan, who, in order to make his own aspirations towards Astarte official, was about to present an engagement ring to her, completely out of the blue. All of a sudden, his entire plans for their common future have been shattered. The degree to which this sudden revelation shocks Jonathan cannot be overestimated, for in an instant his entire, carefully constructed English identity configuration is blown apart; the fundamental reverberations of this painful rejection will resurface again and again throughout the rest of the novel.

Jonathan's major goal in life, to become as quintessentially English as is possible for a camouflaged hybrid subject, is suddenly rendered pointless when Astarte reveals to him that she is tired of typical English gentlemen like Jonathan, whom she associates with the tedious boredom of a preordained, highly conventionalized lifestyle, and that she is searching for exotic adventurers, who, like Sweets, are equipped with the harsh experience only 'real life' can provide (cf. *TI* 398-404). If *The Impressionist* were an ancient Greek drama, interpreters would probably agree that the fundamental tragedy of the protagonist lies in his constant striving to be something he is not (the quintessential embodiment of Englishness), while, in effect, his true identity as a hybrid Anglo-Indian subject endowed with an equally turbulent biography full of twists of fate

would guarantee him affection and interest from Astarte, the young woman he truly adores from the very first time he lays eyes upon her in Oxford. While it certainly would have its merits, such an interpretation could arguably be accused of actualizing a purely hypothetical option, though, because Jonathan cannot reveal his true identity to his beloved Astarte, for this would entail confessing the identity theft he committed when he stole the 'real' Jonathan Bridgeman's official documents after the latter had been beaten to death by a bunch of rioters in Bombay's red-light district. Therefore, Jonathan, alias Pran Nath, alias Pretty Bobby remains trapped in a cage of his own devising.

The degree to which the protagonist's English identity is a purely artificial construct – just like all the other identity configurations he has assumed before that – becomes evident in the scene directly following Astarte's revelation, which is simultaneously the end of the novel's penultimate part: here, Jonathan, who is still completely perplexed by what he has just learned, enters a Russian cabaret in Paris, on the stage of which appears a small man whose entire performance consists of imitating a varied set of essentially different characters. Although Jonathan is unable to understand a single word the performer says, the visual activity of watching his performance is enough to trigger a sudden, yet profound and far-reaching, process of self-revelation in the protagonist's consciousness:

Jonathan does not understand what he is saying, but he cannot take his eyes away from the man. One after the other, characters appear. One with a deep baritone voice. Another with a little cap and a hectoring way of talking. Each lasts a few seconds, a minute. Each erases the last. The man becomes these other people so completely that nothing of his own is visible. A coldness starts to rise in Jonathan's gut, cutting through the vodka. He watches intently, praying that he is wrong, that he has missed something. There is no escaping it. In between each impression, just at the moment when one person falls away and the next has yet to take possession, the impressionist is completely blank. There is nothing there at all. (T/ 404-405)

In this paragraph, the rising feeling of uneasiness the protagonist is experiencing is precisely due to the fact that a fundamental and harrowing realization is gradually taking shape in his mind: this cabaret performer is Jonathan's alter ego inasmuch as they are both impressionists, that is, human beings who are so obsessed with imitating other persons' outward appearance, manners, typical behaviour and traits of character that they virtually assume the respective person's identity configuration. In short, they completely lack an identity configuration of their own; their sole ability consists in mimicking other human beings as perfectly as possible. Accordingly, they are both condemned to a shallow existence teeming with superficiality precisely because, identity-wise, they are devoid of any essence

whatsoever. Beneath his elaborate surface, Jonathan realizes, there is nothing but bottomless emptiness, a human vacuum. Consequently, this seemingly trivial scene contains the *drama in nuce* of the entire novel's plot: Jonathan's monomaniac obsession with mimicry, imitation and appearances strips him of any opportunity to acquire a stable, let alone fixed, identity. Considering the fact that *The Impressionist* is a postcolonial novel written by an Asian British author, this central theme of the plotline can justifiably be interpreted as a deeply ironic problematization of the essentialization of a fixed personal identity as the ultimate (or even the only possible) goal to be pursued by the protagonist of a *Bildungsroman* (cf. Nyman 2009: 93-97). Moreover, it lays bare the constructivity of any process and result of individual identity formation (cf. *ibid.*).

During the tedious journey up an unspecified West African river, the chameleon-like protagonist, who used to engage in perpetual motion both on the spatio-physical plane and with regard to his numerous identity configurations, is compelled, for the first time in his life, to bear the burden of being at a virtual standstill, to confront the shallow superficiality of his entire existence. As the revelatory experience in the Russian cabaret examined above suggests, Jonathan's identity configuration is like that of a famous actor: if you take away the glamorous masks of his best roles, there is nothing left but sheer emptiness; the protagonist is completely devoid of any essentializable identity core, for the surface itself is the essence.

Thus, while on the geographical plane, Jonathan is steadily moving towards the destination of the expedition, his process of identity performances (cf. Nyman 2009: 97-107) has come to a halt, for all his desperate efforts to grasp the essence of his identity are bound to fail due to the inexistence of any such thing. Moreover, the fact that his ability to make up his mind to do anything has plummeted to zero is a further indicator of the severity of his personality crisis, as is revealed by the simile of "his motivation for even the simplest thing fleeing before his introspection like a dream figure down a corridor" (TI 422-423).

As I intend to show in my analysis of the following extract, Jonathan is the only participant in the expedition to finally take the decisive step of embarking upon a fundamental critique of the alleged purpose of their anthropological expedition, which functions as a synecdoche for the all-encompassing project of British imperialism in general. In the end, I argue, it is precisely this crucial move of recognizing the futility of their venture and his subsequent abandoning of the expedition team that enables

Jonathan to survive the massacre eventually committed by the Fotses upon them. Thus, from a motion-oriented point of view, one could justifiably claim that dynamic movement – both on the spatial and the ideological plane – on Jonathan's part wins over stubborn, immobile stasis as practised by Professor Chapel and his colleagues.

The passage I will quote deals with Jonathan's profound self-questioning after he has had to realize that conducting a census of the Fotses population is a pointless project due to the incommensurability of Western statistical procedures with the social structuration, stratification and customs of this West African tribe:

He knows that he has come to the end of something. It is a shock, like diving off the high board and touching the bottom of the pool with your hands. Why should he do this? As the hours wear on, the heat of the day seeps back out of the earth and out of his limbs, until he is chilled through, and finally faces the possibility that what he has found the bottom of is himself.

Why count the Fotses? Who could be so upside down? Of course he knows why – for God and England and the Empire and Civilization and Progress and Uplift and Morality and Honor. He has it all written down in his notebooks; but though it is in his notebooks, it is not in him. He finds he does not really care about any of those words. He does not feel them, and that lack of feeling marks the tiled bottom of the pool. Jonathan Bridgeman can go so deep but no deeper. If he felt the words, he would have the will to count the people, and the will to transform them according to his counting. He does not feel the words.

Self-pity sets in with the cold. He starts to mutter to himself. It was supposed to be an adventure. Bridgeman would find it an adventure. By now he would be an imperial hero, dashing and wise: Beau Bridgeman of Fotseland, the most English man in Africa. What is he doing here? Since he has been Jonathan, he has tried never to think like this, never to imagine that the fit between the two of them could be anything less than perfect. Whenever there was doubt, he shook it off. What would he do anywhere else? (TI 447)

Throughout this passage, two parallel mental movements are inextricably intertwined: the protagonist calls into question both his own, maniacally mimetic habit of performing various identity configurations and the whole imperialist project brutally imposed upon non-European ethnicities, such as the Fotses, by the European colonizers. Jonathan's fundamental insight that his frantic aspirations to become a true Englishman have been shallow and obsessively superficial goes hand in hand with a second, more far-reaching recognition: the Empire is bound to fail due to the sheer impossibility of transplanting Eurocentric Western notions of empirical science, civilizational progress and Christian religion into cultures that rest upon completely different principles of making sense of the world. Thus, Jonathan's individual failure in turning himself from a "mimic man" (cf. the title of Naipaul's novel *The Mimic Men* 1978

[1967]) into a true Englishman mirrors the miscarriage of the imperialist project as a whole, for, as Homi Bhabha has convincingly shown in his reflections on mimicry (cf. Bhabha 1994e: 121-131), any attempt to transplant cultural elements into incommensurable cultural environments necessarily results in a somewhat distorted copy of the original.

In addition, during a pseudo-philosophical polylogue among the members of this expedition about the inevitability of the expansion of Western notions of efficiency, modernity and progress all over the world (cf. *TI* 452-454), Jonathan is the only character who feels compelled to give expression to an alternative point of view at all: first, when he hints at the possibility that African tribes like the Fotse might not be willing to be deported to another area of settlement; and second, when he envisages the high likelihood that they would prefer to be left alone by the British in a somewhat rhetorical question (cf. *TI* 453). Naturally, even these two timid attempts at providing a counterpoint to the bulk of imperialist ideology unanimously propagated by the others earns him nothing but cold, self-righteous contempt from them, making him all the more suspicious in their eyes. Having had to endure the professor's complacent reproach of lacking team spirit in conjunction with his concession that he ought to have chosen someone else as factotum-underling for this venture, Jonathan heads off the next morning, despite being devoid of any idea of where to go or what to do. Thus, he embarks on an erratic movement (cf. Ette 2003: 47-48) that will save his life.

However, it is not exclusively due to an agentive act of volitionality that Jonathan is saved from the fate awaiting the other members of the anthropological expedition: rather, he suffers a heat stroke while wandering around in the blazing sun, whereupon the Fotse carry him to an underground cave system that, going by the name of "the caves of the dead" (*TI* 458), serves as their spiritual place of worship. Here, the Fotse's elderly priest performs a cruel ritual exorcism on defenceless Jonathan, which he regards as an inevitable measure in order to drive the evil "European spirit" (*TI* 460) out of the protagonist. In addition, the protagonist gradually learns from this priest the essentials of the Fotse worldview: in their eyes, the European intruders are sorcerers troubling the lives of the innocent, happy and peaceful indigenous population. Moreover, he accuses them of perversely inverting ethical values and informs Jonathan of the retaliation measures the Fotse are about to take.

According to narrative discourse, the ritual appears to produce the desired effect, although for Jonathan, the physical ordeal he goes through coincides with a harrowing realization: “As he is pulled apart the world is pulled apart with him and he screams again, because without anything to screen it reality is unbearable and he is an abyss, and the thing he thought was himself is plucked out and flung away, leaving only a nightmare, a monstrous disorder” (TI 462). Again, this reveals that the impressionist is essentially a surface phenomenon, for, as this quotation underlines, the violent destruction of his mask of make-shift appearances leaves behind nothing but a yawning gap, a horrific chaos (cf. TI 456-462). Having been stripped of all his identity performances, the hybrid chameleon turns out to be a blank slate.

Whereas all the other participants in Professor Chapel’s anthropological expedition are murdered by the Fotse warriors, Jonathan thus ends up as a nomadic camel driver, devoid of any purpose in life but moving on. Whether this commitment to constant motion really does solve the psychological crisis he had been suffering from before the exorcism is a fundamental question that is deliberately left open; the novel ends without a proper dénouement of this central strand of the plot. It is of course tempting to interpret Jonathan’s eventual return to the traditional simplicity of the nomadic way of life of camel drivers in the Sahara as a quintessentially postmodern ending, as the parallels to the categorical nomadism propagated by quite a few postmodern scholars, such as Henri Lefebvre, Edward Soja, Jacques Derrida and Rosi Braidotti, are evident, despite the fact that in the former case, we are notably dealing with literal physical nomadism, whereas in the latter context, the nomadism aspired to relates primarily to the intellectual sphere (cf. Nyman 2009: 106-107).

With the macro-context of this ending marked by the violent clash of the indigenous population and the colonial government of the fictitious West African colony Oil Coast, the radical openness of Jonathan’s future is nevertheless remarkable. Faced with the irreconcilable and indissoluble dichotomy of European modernity and African traditionalism, the protagonist evades the seemingly inevitable confrontation between these incommensurable cultures by selecting a third way that distinguishes itself primarily by a high degree of adaptability to extremely adverse external living conditions. It is this flexibility, the ending of *The Impressionist* seems to suggest, that, given the indissoluble rift between the two cultural spheres involved, constitutes an indispensable precondition for survival in this specific environment, for their obstinate adherence to an alleged epistemological certainty is what causes the downfall of all the other participants in the Chapel expedition. Their unwavering belief in the universal

superiority of Western civilization makes them blind for the imminent danger emanating from the Fotse, who, in addition to refusing to cooperate with the scientists, are about to launch a devastating counter-attack on them. However, given the highly asymmetrical power constellation of this colonial setting, their victory over the imperialist malefactors and the subsequent restoration of their primeval sociocultural order prove to be short-lived, as the preparations for a military retaliation campaign on the part of the British colonial government are already well under way (cf. *TI* 464). In this climate, governed by the logic of mutual destruction between European imperialist expansionism and the centuries-old traditions of tribal cultures in West Africa, Jonathan's decision to join a nomadic group of camel drivers in the Sahara is definitely a wise one. Being constantly on the move in a largely inaccessible desert hostile to systematic settlement appears to be the only way to escape these on-going violent antagonisms.

With regard to agency, it becomes evident that Jonathan's individual agency is finally reduced to the mere will to trudge on, leading his camel across the blazing hot desert. Consequently, perpetual mobility is in his case represented as an at least preliminary solution to the impossibility of defining his individual identity configuration in terms of a fixed and stable set of attributes. For the protagonist, the ending of *The Impressionist* seems to suggest, abandoning a preconceived linear path of life towards an allegedly guaranteed end constitutes the only option left, after all his pseudo-magical powers of performing ever-changing identity configurations have run out of fuel. The hybrid chameleon has eventually been thoroughly deconstructed. With all his former fake selves having faded away, the impressionist ends up as a nameless nomad, cured of the Western craze for constructing make-shift, larger-than-life images of oneself for one's contemporaries. The impressionist's comprehensive capacity for (self-)delusion has been deprived of its context and, consequently, its legitimacy, for, without an audience, there is no point in staging a play. Thus, Jonathan's (alias Pran Nath's, alias Pretty Bobby's) obsession with mimicry is a thing of the past – comparable to a formerly mighty river that has run dry in the desert. Erratic nomadism has taken the place of obsessive impressionism.

With this *moksha*, that is, his liberation from *samsara*, the cycle of identity-configurational rebirths (cf. Sharma 2010: 504-508; Harzer 2010: 750-752), Pran Nath, alias Rukhsana, alias White Boy, alias Pretty Bobby, alias Jonathan Bridgeman has eventually abandoned his obsessive rotation around the issue of mimicry, or, more generally, performing identity configurations (cf. Nyman 2009: 93-107). One feature,

however, seems to remain in respect of the mutually interwoven issues of identity, agency and movement across space: whereas the protagonist follows myriad *routes* throughout the novel, he does not possess *roots* (cf. Clifford 1997: 251), i.e. his affective attachment to the places he lives in temporarily and travels through oscillates around zero. In the following section, I accordingly want to retrace the routes he travels along on his major journeys in order to show the particular fashion in which they correlate with his minor movements.

5.3 Circularity Disrupted: The Incomplete Triangle as a (Post)Colonial Movement Pattern

Predicated upon my fundamental hypothesis that the representation of space and movement in *The Impressionist* (2002) serves the purpose of deconstructing Western preconceptions of spatiality, temporality / history and agency / identity, this section is concerned with a contextualized analysis and interpretation of the narrative configurations of movement, mobility, and friction in this novel. More specifically, I argue that, to the end of thoroughly deconstructing those preconceptions, the seemingly ascending linearity of Pran Nath's alias Jonathan's step-by-step movement towards the status of a 'true' Englishman is complemented by various other, essentially different movement patterns throughout the novel. These other, heterogeneous movement patterns, I contend, fulfil different functions, most notably that of subverting a simplistic notion of linear progress towards a fixed and stable, preordained destination. Thus, these additional movements, which, following Urry, I call horizontal or lateral because, in terms of social mobility, they do not involve any linear ascent (cf. Urry 2007: 8), call into question the Enlightenment master narrative of human history as a single teleological path towards European modernity and, by extension, analogous Western preconceptions regarding spatiality and agency/identity as well. Thereby, they contribute significantly to the overall deconstruction of such Eurocentric notions in the novel at large. Therefore, I will retrace both types of movement patterns – the ascending linear and the horizontal or lateral ones – in the following.

From High-caste Affluence to Subaltern Destitution: Pran's Experience of the Journey from Agra to Fatehpur

Having been sold to two hijras officially acting on behalf of the Nawab of Fatehpur, Pran embarks upon a train journey from Agra to Lahore in their company. By analysing one conspicuous passage, I want to shed light on the protagonist's experientiality of this train journey in the following. As my analysis of this passage intends to show, Pran is suffering from a fundamental disconnectedness of body and mind here. While his bodily capacity for perception is intact, it is disentangled from the equally important, but currently suspended, cognitive capacity of making sense of the external stimuli pouring in upon his mind:

Afternoon turns to evening. Windows are clicked shut against the cold. A man comes to take orders for food, shouting through the closed door, then returning with metal tiffin-boxes of dhal and chapatis, which he leaves outside in the corridor. Purdah, complete and airtight, even on the move.

Pran tastes the food in his mouth, but cannot tell what he is eating. None of the objects around him have names. They are just things, vibrations on the eye and ear. Something crucial in his mind has been disconnected, and is refusing to recognize the present. *All that misplaced consciousness is backed up somewhere, imagining itself lying on the roof of a big house, hearing the swish-swish of a maid's broom. Yet his body carries on recording.* The rhythm of the tracks, the texture of mashed lentils, the sensation of an old cut on his forehead, the aches and emptiness of weeks lying in a cell: these things filter through, knocking on the door, inviting him to step back out into the now. (TI 70-71; italics mine)

Despite his ignorance of the appalling situation he is in at present, Pran feels displaced and somehow disconnected from the real world. As a consequence, he experiences the train journey as if in trance; his current company and the landscape floating by seem strangely unreal to him. This passage thus narratively enacts the psychoanalytical phenomenon of belatedness by foregrounding the pertinent dissociation of bodily and mental activity: although his bodily capacity for sensory perception is intact, his consciousness reacts in a delayed-action mode (cf. Kirchhoff 2009: 141-232; Laplanche and Pontalis 1972 [1967]: 313-317; see also West-Pavlov 2013: 116-119, and Section 4.2.3 of this dissertation), thus seeming strangely detached from the influx of sensory stimuli like an electric household appliance that has been disconnected from the socket. As a result, the objects in Pran's actual spatial environment acquire a somewhat surreal character.

This deferral of mental realization is indicative of his transformation into a helpless victim: caught in a "[p]urdah, complete and airtight, even on the move" (TI 70), Pran's autonomous mobility is zero even though he is travelling. Thus, his individual

experience of space and time in this scene is a direct result of his deprivation of 'real-world' agency. In addition, this passage contradicts Urry's observation that trains "undercut the spatial divide of the 'public' and the 'private'" (Urry 2007: 91-92, citing Sheller and Urry 2003), because this observation definitely does not apply to the secluded space of the first-class compartment Pran finds himself in. Rather, this scene corroborates de Certeau's characterization of the railway as "a travelling incarceration" (de Certeau 1984 [1980]: 111): "Immobile inside the train, seeing immobile things slip by. What is happening? Nothing is moving inside or outside the train" (ibid.). It is this specific constellation of stasis with regard to both the subject of the protagonist in the compartment and the landscape outside and movement of the train that finds an equivalent in the (physical and mental) constitution of the protagonist, for, just as the train cuts through an immobile landscape, the sensory perceptions pouring in upon him have to grapple with the monolithic block of the beautiful memories of his past life and with his current de facto state of confinement. In contrast to the train, though, the sensory perceptions do not succeed in establishing a viable long-term connection between the different domains of Pran's inner landscape at present.

Thus, while the protagonist's perceptual faculty is mechanically recording all sensory impressions related to his current spatial environment in the textual actual world, his consciousness indulges in recalling the beautiful life he used to lead until a few weeks ago in the textual possible world of his imagination. The resulting dissociation of the protagonist's actual physical movement across the storyworld in the present from his mental movement to the imaginary space of his past is what I describe in the terminology of the cultural narratology of motion developed in Chapter 4 of this dissertation as a particular constellation in which the retrospective imagined vector of his personal memories and the experienced vector of his actual spatial movement are headed in diametrically opposite directions in a double sense: first, with regard to temporality, as the experienced vector is geared towards the future, whereas the imagined vector is headed towards the past; and, second, with regard to spatiality, since the experienced vector of the protagonist's actual journey leads him from Agra via Lahore to Fatehpur, while his imagined vector takes him back to the comfortable and carefree life he used to lead in his hometown Agra.

The ontological vectoriality of his current movement in the textual actual world – marked by his blatant loss of agency and the resultant belatedness of his experience of space and time – is complemented by the imagined vectoriality of his memories in the textual possible world of his mind. Stripped of his physical 'real-world' agency, the

protagonist indulges in mental mobility in order to compensate affectively for this shocking experience. In essence, it is the blatant failure in congruency between dreadful current experience in the textual actual world and wishful longing back to his former life in the textual possible world of his memories that accounts for the severe disruption of the protagonist's mental capacity to process the sensory impressions registered by his body in this passage.

As for the narrative mode of representation deployed, the heterodiegetic narrator resorts to scenic presentation in conjunction with fixed internal focalization here, with Pran functioning as the only traveller-focalizer. In accordance with my preceding observations, the extradiegetic, internally focalized description (cf. Nünning 2007: 114-116) of the scenery floating by is characterized by the intermingling of the protagonist's perceptible and imperceptible focalizeds. This narrative mode of representation thus nicely exemplifies Urry's recognition that, in "modernity", [...] enormously powerful machines are imbricated within human experience" (Urry 2007: 93) inasmuch as the train's physical movement turns into one of the constitutive factors of Pran's current experientiality, producing a particular mode of perception. In total, this passage is thus marked by a fundamental dissociation of the external physical sphere (i.e. the textual actual world) and its internal mental counterpart (i.e. the textual possible world of the protagonist's consciousness). As the following quotation shows, Pran, being totally absorbed by his pseudo-introspective reflections, remains completely unaware of the imminent danger to his physical integrity and is even able to derive some consolation from the feeling of being on the move (until the purpose of this journey is bluntly revealed to him by his travel companions [cf. Section 5.2 of this dissertation]):

For hours he sits and stares into the darkness beyond the grimy window. Gradually the sensation of movement becomes comforting. The metronomic clatter of the pistons, the rush of displaced air; all of it hints at change, progress. Slowly something begins to congeal in the Pran flux. The pearl faculty is recovering. So he is traveling. Something new is happening. There is still hope. (TI 71)

In order to contextualize these two passages intratextually, some complementary observations regarding the narrative representation of the journey from Agra to Fatehpur as a whole are required. Regarding the first dimension of narratological vectoriality, that is, the question of which stages of this transregional movement (from Agra via Lahore to Fatehpur) are selected for representation, narrative discourse starts with an extensive scenic presentation of the hustle and bustle at Agra's Fort Station, with the focus of attention subsequently zooming in on Pran and the two hijras leading him to their reserved compartment on the train. In what follows,

Pran's experience of the train journey is recounted extensively by means of extradiegetic, internally focalized, mono-perspectival and explicit description (cf. Nünning 2007: 114-116) of the spatial environment through which the train is moving. After communicating the appalling realization that Pran will be turned into a hijra, narrative discourse repeatedly resorts to merely enumerating the cities, towns and regions the train passes by on its way north (cf. *TI* 72-73). This explicit naming of the route taken is interspersed with the internally focalized description of what Pran perceives while looking out of the window.

Subsequent to the brief mention of the three travellers' leaving the train at Lahore station, there is an extensive description of the luxury car waiting for them, followed by an internally focalized account of the drive to the Nawab of Fatehpur's new palace, which is, in turn, described in elaborate detail in the final paragraph of this chapter. All in all, the narrative representation of this journey is thus a rather comprehensive and detailed one that, while it gives the most weight to Pran's experience of the train journey itself, does justice to the departure scene and the drive in one of the Nawab's luxury automobiles as well. The only part that is represented minimalistically is their arrival at Fatehpur Palace, which is immediately preceded by an elaborate description of the fairy-tale-like new palace itself.

As for the movement pattern underlying this journey undertaken on the story level, the basic movement pattern it follows can unequivocally be classified as a linear one (cf. Ette 2003: 43-45). In terms of the underlying concept of mobility, the journey epitomizes, from a Western perspective, standard mobility on the technological level inasmuch as trains and cars (although the latter less so than the railway) had become part of everyday life in Europe and North America by 1918. As the reaction of the peasants and labourers on the fields and in the villages shows, however, the same was not yet true in rural India. From their point of view, the modes of travel used by Pran and the two hijras constitute a miraculous intrusion of the modern world into the highly confined horizon of their centuries-old, traditional way of life. On a micro-structural level, the storyworld is therefore subdivided into the mobile Westernized world of the upper classes as epitomized by the train and, in particular, by the luxurious fast car, and the seemingly unchanging traditional world of rural India as exemplified by the peasants watching the train (or the luxury car, respectively) speeding by, "all of them stopping for a brief moment to watch the train as it cuts supernaturally through their slow-paced world" (*TI* 73). Thus, Urry's claim that the railway effected a "public circulating mobilization across a society" (Urry 2007: 92) does not hold true for the

early twentieth-century society of the Raj, for it remains divided into affluent, high-caste or European travellers and the largely immobile poor rural population.

In terms of social stratification, this journey clearly constitutes downward social mobility for the protagonist, since his descent from a wealthy, high-caste boy to the status of a sex slave without rights will be cemented in the destination. In respect of narrative saliency, this journey's relevance results from its triggering the second stage of this novel's plot inasmuch as Pran's abduction to Fatehpur constitutes both the first among several journeys and in that the concomitant metamorphosis of his outward appearance, together with the forced transformation of his identity configuration, sets the wheel of (outward and inward) malleability of his subjectivity in motion. As has been analysed in Section 5.2 of this dissertation, Pran's autonomous spatial mobility is non-existent during his stay at Fatehpur Palace; thus, rather than moving about on his own, he is moved around by his captors like a commodity. In terms of vertical social mobility, the protagonist's sharp decline – from an affluent and spoilt heir to a sex slave at the rock bottom of British Indian society – therefore vigorously counteracts any simplistic notion of straightforwardly ascending linearity on his path to Englishness.

Due to this overall absence of autonomous spatial and vertical social mobilities, all that is left to Pran is heteronomous and horizontal spatial mobility, which – largely undertaken at the command of his tormentors – remains restricted to the interstice of the eunuchs' quarters. The resultant interstitial mobility is, in turn, indicative of his peculiar positionality as a hybrid being who, in accordance with his brutal objectification, is denied any kind of autonomous individual agency commonly associated with basic human rights. The negative climax of this ordeal is the rape scene in the Chinese Room (cf. Section 5.2 of this dissertation). With this extremely humiliating experience, the downward trajectory of the protagonist's victimization reaches its rock bottom, so that, once again, it has to be concluded that, in the first two parts of the novel, his vertical social mobility describes a steeply declining curve that mirrors and, at the same time, subverts his later ascent to quintessential Englishness.

Ironically enough, it is the paedophilic major who unwittingly gives Pran the first opportunity to leave the decadent court society of Fatehpur Palace temporarily when he invites the boy to the British Residency in order to have him recite poetry and wear his own old school uniform there. This pseudo-ritualistic procedure is even turned into a regular routine by the powerful British officer, and it is this homoerotic ritual that provides Pran with a new field of application for his talent at mimicry and thereby

constitutes a first, barely discernible turning point bringing him on the track towards the allegedly 'holy grail' of Englishness 'pure and simple'. By imitating the English colonizers as best he can at present, Pran hopes to discover the secret of their authority and, sooner or later, get a piece of this cake for himself (cf. *TI* 110). Thus, his timid horizontal moves at Major Privett-Clampe's mansion are exercises performed at a peculiar sort of parade ground that will help him in the gradual perfection of his mimicking behaviour later. By practising these rhetorical and behavioural moves on the horizontal plane, that is, without any change in his social positionality, Pran prepares the ground for his subsequently ascending linear movement in the British Empire's social hierarchy. Finally, in what constitutes a second, more evident turning point in the protagonist's biography, Pran succeeds in restoring his autonomous mobility by dint of his lucky escape from the thoroughly ridiculed scene of the spectacularly failed imperial tiger hunt that will later be referred to as the "Fatehpur Incident" (cf. *TI* 169-171).

As for the types of external friction that exist, it has to be noted that the friction inhibiting Pran's autonomous mobility in this part consists of an intricately intertwined combination of *concrete* external friction in the shape of the guards posted everywhere, who are ready to capture the protagonist should he dare to attempt an escape, and *abstract* external friction as manifest in the societal convention according to which it is legitimate to treat hijras in such an abominable manner due to their legal and sociocultural status as objectified sex slaves without human rights. Accordingly, Pran's spatial sphere of action is restricted to the eunuch's quarters. While the architectural topography of this palace constitutes a real labyrinth, its cultural topology is nevertheless structured hierarchically, primarily according to the category of gender: first, there is the mardana, i.e. the men's splendid apartments; second, the zenana, i.e. the women's quarters; and third, the eunuch's rooms (cf. *TI* 99).

Pran's Flight to Freedom:

His Experience of the Successful Escape from Fatehpur to Bombay

Having regained his personal freedom and autonomous spatial mobility by shaking off the fetters of his confinement at Fatehpur Palace, Pran engages in a movement that is simultaneously erratic and linear (cf. Ette 2003: 43-45, 47-48), for, on the one hand, he walks away without really knowing where he is heading and is thus devoid of a fixed destination, while, on the other, he succeeds in escaping from the forests of Fatehpur and finds a bullock-cart, the owners of which agree to take him to the city of Amritsar.

As for the first dimension of narratological vectoriality – that is, the selection of stages of this movement for narrative representation – this sequence has to be inferred by the reader because the entire third part of *The Impressionist* is bracketed by two Genettean ellipses (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 106-109), the first omitting the precise course of Pran's flight up to the scene on the cart, directly prior to his arrival in Amritsar, and the second leaving out the subsequent train journey to Bombay itself. Hence, his flight from Fatehpur to Bombay is clearly enacted in the ellipsoidal mode of narrative representation inasmuch as some but not all stages of this journey are left out. Moreover, the heterodiegetic narrator presents Part 3 of this novel largely by means of multiple internal focalization, with Pran's part – as the prime character-focalizer – interspersed with short passages in which stunned Indian passers-by function as minor internal focalizers.

Reaching Amritsar just one week after the massacre at the Jallianwalla Bagh (13 April 1919),²¹³ Pran walks by the site of this horrid crime, sensing the atmosphere of shock, horror and tension reigning over the entire city without knowing anything about the preceding events. Interrupted by two Genettean analepses²¹⁴ (cf. *TI* 176 and 178-179), the bulk of Part 3 consists of scenic presentation, recounting Pran's arrival and walk through Amritsar. Again, initially erratic movement turns into a linear one (first, to Amritsar Railway Station, and then to Bombay by train). In terms of mobility, all modes of travel used by Pran (bullock-cart, walking and railway) are standard ones according to the historical context in which the action is situated. As for social mobility, the third part witnesses a consolidation of his regained freedom of action, which prepares the ground for the modest upward social movement the protagonist will perform in Part 4. Accordingly, his horizontal movements in this part lay the foundation for the steadily ascending linearity of his social ascent in subsequent parts.

²¹³ Following intense political unrest in the Punjab in the wake of the passing of the so-called Rowlatt Acts (which, in effect, extended the application of martial law in India beyond the end of the First World War; cf. Wolpert 2009 [1991]: 105-106), the British military authorities deemed it 'necessary' to demonstrate their force to the Indians: "General Dyer selected an unauthorized meeting in the Jallianwalla Bagh of Amritsar for this purpose. This is a square surrounded by walls, which prevent a dispersal of a crowd, even if given due notice and enough time. General Dyer, in fact, did not give the crowd much of a chance to disperse and ordered his soldiers to fire several rounds until hundreds of people were dead. The 'Massacre', as it came to be known, conveyed a message quite the reverse of what General Dyer had intended: this was not a show of force, but of a nervousness which indicated the beginning of the end of the British Indian empire" (Kulke and Rothermund 2010 [1986]: 218; cf. *ibid.* 217-218).

²¹⁴ The first analepsis gives an overview of the events that have caused the tense political situation in the Punjab, while the second represents a narrative account of the Amritsar Massacre.

The crucial turning point around which the third part, tellingly entitled “White Boy” (TI 173), is structured is the scene in which Pran succeeds in passing for an English boy by deploying his skills in mimicking the British accent Major Privett-Clampe has taught him. In terms of mobility, the significance of this encounter lies in the protagonist’s realization that this expansion of his spatial mobility is his only chance to get out of Amritsar. Simultaneously, it dawns on Pran that his ability to pass for an Englishman is likely to promote his personal advancement far beyond the current emergency. Thus heading for the train station in a linear movement, a second coincidence – a poster saying “*Visit Bombay. The Gateway of India*” (TI 183; italics in original) – sparks off yet another idea in the protagonist’s mind. Unchecked, he succeeds in jumping on board a freight train that, again by accident, is just arriving at Amritsar Station. To conclude, the one thing that is foregrounded by narrative discourse in this sequence is the contingency of the circumstances enabling this successful flight, alongside with Pran’s extraordinary ability to take advantage of them on the spur of the moment.

It is this spontaneous adaptability, that is, the protagonist’s capacity to take advantage of contingently changing circumstances, that turns Pran into the epitome of a practitioner of what de Certeau labels “transverse *tactics*” (de Certeau 1984 [1980]: 29; italics in original): by “trac[ing] ‘indeterminate trajectories’ that are apparently meaningless, since they do not cohere with the constructed, written, and prefabricated space through which they move” (de Certeau 1984: 34), Pran severely disrupts the colonizers’ strategy of imposing their allegedly consistent order upon the colonial space(s) of British India and thereby also calls the exhaustive enforcement of their authority into question. Thus, Pran’s partially erratic movements in Amritsar not only subvert the notion of straight linearity as to his path of life, but also problematize the claim to omnipresence and omnipotence of the British colonizers’ authority as articulated in their imperialist rhetoric. Therefore, although his transverse tactic of walking is – quite typically – marked by “the absence of power” (de Certeau 1984: 38), his subversively erratic movements nonetheless rattle at the universal “postulation of power” (de Certeau 1984: 38) that de Certeau identifies as the organizational principle of any strategy (cf. *ibid.*), hence notably also of that pursued by the colonial authorities. This lends a profoundly political dimension to Pran’s encounter with the English soldiers, who represent the authority of the colonial administration of British India synecdochically.

As far as the border-crossings involved in Pran's successful escape are concerned, they are merely implied by the fact that, in order to carry out the transregional movement from the principality of Fatehpur via Amritsar to Bombay, Pran has to cross the borders of several administrative territories of British India. By contrast, his ethical transgression²¹⁵ of passing for a white boy is thematized intensively via scenic representation in tandem with Pran's function as the major internal focalizer. At the same time, it is this transgression that accounts for his lucky escape from the heated atmosphere in Amritsar and triggers the next stage of the novel's plot. Moreover, the transgression opens up a whole new array of possibilities for the future in that Pran, the deliberate identity performer (cf. Nyman 2009: 97-107), is born at this very moment. His liberation from physical and mental captivity culminates in this purposeful act. No longer a passive victim of external circumstances to be shuffled around at other people's discretion, the protagonist is (of course within the limits of human agency) the architect of his own fortune from now on, able and willing to utilize his widely adaptable performative capacities for the pursuit of his own well-being. In conclusion, the resultant simultaneous expansion of his spatial, mental and agentic mobility has endowed Pran with unprecedented freedom. Marked by the restoration of his 'real-world' agency, the ontological vectoriality of this successful flight represents the experiential antipode of his abduction into captivity analysed above.

In Bombay, Pran, alias Pretty Bobby (also the title of the fourth part) the pimp engages in iterative stellate and horizontal movements (cf. Ette 2003: 45-47) through Bombay's red-light district off Falkland Road. It is Reverend Andrew Macfarlane's "Independent Scottish Mission among the Heathen", Bobby's current place of residence, that functions as the centre of the stellate movement pattern formed by his mainly nocturnal excursions to the world of prostitution. Bobby's horizontal and lateral spatial mobility problematizes not only, once again, any simplistic notion of linear progress on his personal stairway to Englishness, but also Ette's category of translocal movement, for his wandering around town is intraurban (and therefore not translocal, contrary to Ette [cf. 2005: 23]), and at the same time translocal in that it leads him from one location to the next. What is interesting in Bobby's case is that, although he is involved in the business of prostitution, he cannot be classified as a regular pimp because he does not possess a brothel of his own, but rather functions as some kind of intermediary or broker between the British sailors and the local brothels. Thus, once

²¹⁵ According to modern-day standards, this performative act naturally no longer represents any moral transgression whatsoever; however, according to the deeply racist world view of early twentieth-century European imperialists, a hybrid's attempt to pass for a white person clearly constituted a severe ethical offence.

again, his spatial mobility is based on a peculiar interstitial positionality that qualifies Bobby as a go-between. In addition to this spatially intermediate position, he is a hypocritical, transgressive go-between also in a moralist Christian sense, living as the obedient servant and student of Reverend Macfarlane at the latter's mission by day, while roaming about in the red-light district by night.

Discovering the Occident: Bobby's Voyage from Bombay to Dover

Having lost the mission in an arson-induced fire but gained a new identity due to his encounter with Jonathan Bridgeman and the latter's violent death in the riots raging all over Bombay (cf. Section 5.2 of this dissertation), Bobby embarks upon a voyage from India to England in Jonathan's place the very next day. This voyage is of particular relevance to my motion-oriented analysis of *The Impressionist* for two reasons: first, it occupies a central position in the macro-structural movement pattern of the entire novel; and second, it is composed of various layers in that it qualifies simultaneously as a translocal (from Bombay to Dover), transregional (from Maharashtra, India to South England), transnational (from India to England), transareal (from South Asia to Western Europe) and transcontinental (from Asia to Europe) journey (cf. Ette 2005: 23-24). It is this multi-tiered structure that accounts for the high degree of semantic complexity involved in the narrative enactment of Jonathan's voyage from India to the Occident (cf. *ibid.*).

To elaborate on the first point, I contend that the macro-structural movement pattern of *The Impressionist* forms an incomplete triangle, because the protagonist travels from India to England and from there to Africa without ever returning to the country of his birth. While the bulk of the novel (Parts 1-4) is set on Indian ground, the remainder is set in the other two hubs,²¹⁶ England (Parts 5-6) and Africa (Part 7). Therefore, the protagonist's voyage from Bombay to Dover is assigned a pivotal role in this pattern, for it constitutes the first side of the incomplete triangle India – England – Africa. The text-specific sequencing of these cultural spaces functioning as hubs in this movement pattern is important here because it configures an inversion of imperial, Eurocentric geographies (cf. Nyman 2009: 96). It is through this macro-structural movement pattern of the *incomplete* triangle that Kunzru's debut novel narratively enacts a fundamental disruption of the (frequently triangular) circularity of economic exchange between Britain and its colonies within the overarching framework of the

²¹⁶ For my topological conceptualization of 'hubs', see Section 4.4.3 of this dissertation.

Empire. The cultural topology of Empire marked by the triangular circularity of imperial movement patterns (cf., for instance, the notorious example of the transatlantic triangular trade practised by British merchants for centuries, which, due to its regular and routinized repetition, exhibited a certain circularity) is deconstructed discursively here through the narrative enactment of an *incomplete* triangle as the prime macro-structural movement pattern and the attendant emergence of a fictional postcolonial narratopology. The narrative configuration of the ontological vectorialities from which this macro-structural movement pattern emerges thus clearly disrupts the circularity of extratextual cultural movement patterns and the resulting colonial topology characteristic of British imperialism.

In addition, the intriguing thing about this pattern of the protagonist's spatial mobility is that it is complemented by a likewise incomplete triangle as the macro-structural pattern of his social mobility: he starts out as a wealthy high-caste Indian boy (Pran) and is then brutally cast down to the status of an objectified sex slave (Rukhsana), before he begins a gradual ascent to the position of a 'true' Englishman (Pretty Bobby, Jonathan Bridgeman). The crucial difference between these two patterns is that, according to the mental mapping typical of early twentieth-century imperialist discourse, the trajectory of his spatial mobility leads upward first (from India to England) and then downward (from England to Africa), whereas the path of his social mobility begins with a steep and sudden descent (from Pran to Rukhsana) before setting out on a step-by-step ascent to 'true' Englishness (from White Boy via Pretty Bobby to Jonathan Bridgeman). In conclusion, I therefore contend that, at this highly abstract level of analytical scrutiny, these two incomplete triangles mirror each other, their mutual relationship thus being specular.

Building upon Ette's concept of "vectorization" (Ette 2005: 11), which posits that past journeys – particularly those along the same or similar routes²¹⁷ – prefigure Jonathan's voyage from Bombay to Dover (cf. Ette 2005: 11-12, 23), I argue that, in this case, such a contextualization does make particular sense in respect of the exploratory and commercial voyages undertaken in the early days of European colonialism and the later increasingly rationalized commercial exchange between Britain and India under the auspices of the East India Company and the countless voyages of British administrators, soldiers, civil servants, educators, missionaries and

²¹⁷ In contrast to early exploratory voyages to India from 1498 onwards, which still had to take the longer route around the Cape of Good Hope, the *SS Loch Lomond*, travelling in the early twentieth century, of course does have the advantage of passing through the Suez Canal (opened in 1869), which shortened the whole journey considerably.

scholars, often in the company of their wives and children, but also with regard to those voyages undertaken by Indians for the purpose of studying in England.

In comparison with the first category, Jonathan's voyage follows the inverse route of the European colonizers' outward journeys. This inversion of the experienced vector goes hand in hand with a sarcastic inversion of imperialist stereotypes in the narrative representation of Jonathan's voyage effected, for example, by describing England as situated "beyond the earth altogether" (TI 281). This radical Othering of the imperial metropolis from the point of view of a hybrid colonial subject not only constitutes a satirical instance of the postcolonial strategy of *writing back* (cf. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2009 [1989]), but also reflects the traditional mental map of Hinduism, according to which India is the cradle of civilization and the centre of the world. In addition, for traditionalist Hindus, leaving India by ship is a sacrilege, a religious transgression, for it involves travelling across the oceans semanticized as *kala pani*, that is, as black water, something that must be avoided because any contact with it would destroy the individual's purity and thus eventually annihilate or at least considerably lessen his chance of attaining *moksha*, i.e. liberation from the cycle of rebirths. It is this religious context that the following quotation evokes: "Though he [Jonathan] is crossing the black water, the *kala pani*, he feels no ill effects, no draining away of caste or merit" (TI 281).

In addition to sacrilege, I contend that Jonathan's voyage also represents an initiation not only to Europe, but also to the secrets of heterosexual love, for, although it is not explicitly stated by narrative discourse, the reader can infer that the protagonist has his first (hetero-)sexual intercourse with Amanda Jellicoe, one of the unmarried young English women on board the ship. This inference is corroborated by the passage quoted in the following: "To Jonathan she is a first, a revelation, as much of a crossing as that of the black water itself. Her smell, her colors, even the texture of her hair, are all tiny victories to him, and as he stands at the rail with her scent in his nostrils each time he lifts his cigarette, he feels like an explorer" (TI 283). Thus, apart from being a transgression in Hinduism, this journey also represents a rite of initiation in the eyes of the protagonist. What is more, the act of copulation with Amanda constitutes a moral transgression in respect of imperialist ideology as well, for the latter discourse was predicated, among other axioms, on an outright condemnation of the practice of miscegenation.

Finally, the affective semanticization of this intercourse as an act of exploration on the part of Jonathan evokes another stereotypical association characteristic of imperialist discourse: the imaginative linking of the exploration of a female body with that of an unknown geographical territory (cf. Neumann 2009: 125). Again, however, the ironical postcolonial twist lies in the inversion of the typical roles in the narrative re-enactment of this scenario: here, it is a hybrid colonial subject who explores the female body of an Englishwoman, just as he will explore the topography of England later. By having an Anglo-Indian 'conquer' a young Englishwoman, narrative discourse turns stereotypical colonial parameters upside down inasmuch as both agency and the cultural authority of perception are transferred from colonizer to colonized. In conclusion, I would thus like to highlight the extremely high degree of semantic density of the narrative enactment of this voyage, which arises from the artful and complex interweaving of various different layers of contextualization offered by the literary text.

As for the first dimension of narratological vectoriality, the question of which stages of this journey are selected for narrative representation, the following can be ascertained: subsequent to a Genettean ellipsis,²¹⁸ the scenic presentation of "Jonathan Bridgeman stand[ing] at the stern rail of the *SS Loch Lomond*" (TI 281) is followed by a prospective enumeration of the various geographical reference points the ocean liner will pass by on its way from Bombay to Dover, including Aden, the Red Sea, the Suez Canal, the Mediterranean Sea and Cape Finisterre (in Spain; cf. TI 281), place names indicating that the ship is taking the standard route from the Indian port to South England. The reality effect *sensu* Barthes (1968 [1953]) triggered by this realist narrative technique of simply naming the geographical entities involved in the realization of this trajectory is combined with a parodic mock-Occidentalism ("Ah, the mystic Occident! Land of wool and cabbage and lecherous round-eyed girls!" [TI 281]) that, once again, inverts the direction of classical imperialist hetero-images subsumed under Said's concept of Orientalism (2003 [1978]; cf. Nyman 2009: 96). As to the mode of travel used, Jonathan's voyage represents standard mobility, for in the first decades of the twentieth century, the motor ship embodied the international mobility of the British Empire inasmuch as it was the standard vessel of global transportation systems. In terms of social stratification, this journey instantiates upward social mobility, because, as a consequence of his identity theft, Bobby, alias Jonathan is now the heir

²¹⁸ Between Chapters 31 and 32, the entire interval in-between the destruction of the mission and the scene in which Bobby, alias Jonathan is shown standing on the stern deck of the *SS Loch Lomond* is omitted.

of a medium-sized fortune that, however, will only be transferred to him on his twenty-first birthday.²¹⁹

What is striking about Jonathan's subjective, jointly cognitive and affective experientiality of this voyage is that it is marked by a wariness of drawing too much attention to himself, which clearly does have its roots in his fear of being detected as an identity thief. While in the opening scene of the fifth part (cf. *TI* 281-282), he seems to be in a positive and content mood, he is nevertheless forced to solve some practical problems, such as his lack of cash and the unfortunate circumstance that the 'real' Jonathan Bridgeman left too few and, above all, ill-fitting clothes. The protagonist's attempts at overcoming these difficulties by petty criminal offences (such as having clothes stolen from wealthier passengers by Ganesh, a member of the crew, or cheating in poker games) eventually prove to be unsuccessful.

As a result, Jonathan's affective experience of the ship as a temporary spatial environment is heavily marked by a topology of fear, camouflage and suspicion. This manifests itself, for instance, in the protagonist's tactic of avoiding dark and lonely places due to his fear of being beaten up again by those he cheated at poker. Once again, the seeming linearity of the protagonist's journey is therefore counteracted and disrupted by the defensive, non-linear movement pattern implied by his tactic of dodging, i.e. the ruses and techniques of those who are inferior in terms of power and physical strength, such as hiding away, making oneself as invisible as possible. In the same vein as earlier instances, these lateral movements testify to the overall zigzag course the protagonist's life story takes on his stairway to Englishness.

The comparatively comprehensive narrative enactment of this linear transcontinental voyage, which sets the stage for the penultimate phase in Pran Nath's, alias Jonathan's turbulent life story, closes with the scenic presentation of the ship's arrival at Dover, in which Jonathan realizes that, despite all his obsessively accumulated theoretical knowledge of England, he does not feel any kind of emotional attachment to this country:

Squinting over the water at the green-rimmed chalk cliffs, he is struck by something like awe. To the people around him this has meaning. Only now does he realize that though he has studied England obsessively, he has never really believed in it. The place has always retained an abstract quality, like a philosophical hypothesis, or a problem in geometry. [...] He

²¹⁹ Like the 'real' Jonathan Bridgeman, Bobby is circa 18 years old now, so this journey must take place around 1921. According to English law, he is thus still a minor, which is why, according to his father's last will, the London solicitor Samuel Spavin is supposed to act as his legal guardian until he comes of age (cf. *TI* 267-289).

tries to feel what the others feel, and wonders nervously what he has become. (TI 284-285)

This sudden recognition upon confrontation with the materiality of the famous White Cliffs of Dover narratively configures, once again, the prime characteristic of Jonathan's affective experience of space, that is, the conspicuous absence of any kind of rootedness in a particular place in tandem with a profound sense of unbelonging. While to the other passengers, this arrival scene means a return to their beloved home country, it is a leap into the unknown for Jonathan: at that particular moment, he realizes that all his successes at mimicking the English in India were merely preparatory in character, whereas now he will face the ultimate acid test: his initiation into 'true' Englishness has only just begun.

Deconstructing the Heart of Darkness: The Paradigmatic Disaster of the Chapel Expedition

Finally, I now turn to the narrative enactment of the Chapel expedition, which, as the protagonist's final journey, proves to be of particular relevance because it constitutes the second side of the incomplete triangle formed by Jonathan's movements on the macro-structural narratological plane. Moreover, I want to take up, once again, my initial thesis that, in the narrative representation of space and motion (and beyond), the recurrent procedure of supplementing Jonathan's linear stairway to Englishness with subversive lateral movement patterns serves the purpose of narratively enacting a fundamental postcolonial critique of Western conceptions of history as a linear, teleological path towards European modernity.

This project of deconstructing the imperialist myth of linear progress towards Western civilization culminates in the narrative representation of Professor Chapel's anthropological expedition to Fotseland in West Africa inasmuch as it is, once again, non-linear movement patterns that undermine, counteract and finally destroy the ascending linearity of the European path towards more knowledge and power as epitomized by this eventually fatal research endeavour. As I intend to show, the narrative enactment of this final journey constitutes a narrative configuration in miniature of the premonition that the entire *mission civilisatrice* of European imperialism is doomed to failure, that is, the former prefigures the fate of the latter as a genuine *drama in nuce*.

On the whole, I furthermore argue that, while his individual cognitive-affective experientiality of the spatial environment during this expedition bears striking resemblances to the narrative representation of Africa in Joseph Conrad's novella *Heart of Darkness* (1994 [1902]; cf. Section 5.4 of this dissertation),²²⁰ there is nevertheless also an additional dimension to his experience of African spaces because, from the moment of their arrival in a West African port onwards, Jonathan experiences this spatial environment not only through the 'colonial glasses' he has been taught to put on in England, but also with a definite awareness of the recurrence of certain topological features in colonial settings of the British Empire all around the globe:

Jonathan stares at Africa with uneasy recognition, the visor of his sun helmet taking a black bite out of the scene. All along the quayside battered cargo vessels are emptying their bellies of canned goods and corrugated-iron siding, and taking on an equal volume in palm oil and bales of cotton and tobacco. They are fed by antlike lines of men who jog up and down the bucking gangplanks, urged on by foremen with manifests and holstered pistols. In front of one ship a contingent of West Indian troops sit out in the heat, waiting to be told to board. Above them, positioned for enfilading fire, is a whitewashed slave fort, named for St James, though it might as well have been George or John; one of the English-sounding saints who would brook no nonsense and give a good account of themselves in a fight. From the fort's crumbling parapet the muzzle of a modern six-inch siege gun pokes out at the sea. The contents of this vista are new to him, but something in its arrangement is familiar. After years in Europe he is back in a two-speed world, one part digging in its heels as the other part drives it forward. He knows the logic at work here; the system is etched into his skin. (*TI* 409-410)

From the outset, Jonathan's mood on arrival in Africa is characterized as "uneasy recognition" (*TI* 409), which implies that, although he has never been to this continent before, there are certain elements of this colonial setting that somehow seem familiar to the protagonist. This general impression is intensified when the heterodiegetic narrator states that "[t]he contents of this vista are new to him, but something in its arrangement is familiar" (*TI* 410). As Jonathan, alias Pran Nath Razdan, spent part of his youth in Bombay, he is familiar with the *topology* of a colonial port in the British Empire; that is, although the surface configuration or *topography* of this West African port is new to him, he nevertheless recognizes several characteristic elements that, taken together, account for his impression of vague familiarity with the spatial deep-structure – or topology – of this place.

²²⁰ For a brief analysis of the role that intertextual relations to colonial classics of English literature play in the context of the narrative enactment of space, motion and mobility in *The Impressionist* (Kunzru 2002), see Section 5.4 of this dissertation. For a detailed examination of intertextuality in this novel, cf. Griem (2007: 89-103).

The first of these components mentioned by the narrator is the group of run-down cargo ships that are being stevedored while the expedition arrives. From a postcolonial perspective, it is highly significant that the goods unloaded consist entirely of finished industrial products, whereas those carried on board are agricultural raw materials that will be processed in Britain. Thus, the bustle Jonathan is watching epitomizes the economic mobility that constitutes one of the cornerstones of the system called Empire, for, particularly in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, Britain systematically exploited the natural and agricultural resources of its colonies in order to meet the demand of its domestic industries, which then exported the completed products all around the world, with the colonies functioning as principal sales markets. Hence, this arrival scene stands metonymically for the global system of capitalist exploitation and domination that formed the economic bedrock of the British Empire up until the first half of the twentieth century.

The economic component of this global system is complemented by the military aspect, embodied by the West Indian troops waiting for the order to go aboard their ship. Again, it is significant that this contingent is not from Africa, but from the Caribbean islands, for these soldiers represent the military mobility of the Empire, effected by a global network of military bases at strategic locations connected by troopships that guarantee the all-important capacity to dislocate troop contingents to wherever their deployment is required within a reasonable amount of time (cf. Boehmer 2005: 53). In addition to the West Indian soldiers, the military strength of the British Empire is represented by the slave fort St James towering over the whole port scene. Equipped with a “modern six-inch siege gun” (*TI* 410), it is supposed to be a stone incarnation of imperial firepower; however, the poor condition of its walls clearly indicates otherwise. Yet the combined presence of military manpower and firepower still functions as a metonymy for the unshaken will to power of the British colonizers. The narrator’s comment that it might as well have been named after St George or St John does add a subtle note of parodist irony, though, inasmuch as it suggests that the choice of name does not really matter as long as the referent is an English saint: what does count in a colonial context, however, are the typical attributes ascribed to these saints by imperialist rhetoric, among which qualities like stern discipline, fortitude, military prowess and audacity figure most prominently. The narrator alludes to two of the British virtues that are of particular relevance in the context of Empire in his characterization of a quintessentially English saint: stern moral and educational authority towards the natives (“who would brook no nonsense” [*TI* 410]) and martial prowess (“and give a good account of themselves in a fight” [*TI* 410]). Moreover, the

virtual interchangeability of these names indicates the high degree of arbitrariness, yet at the same time also of conventionalization and stylization of the content of imperialist rhetoric.

All in all, the description of the *topography* of this West African port reveals the stereotypical nature of the underlying colonial *topology*: it is essentially a dichotomous one, with the allegedly superior British colonizers dominating the entire scene by means of symbols of their military hegemony (the fort, the troopship, the troops themselves) and of their economic supremacy (the cargo ships, the goods stevedored), and the allegedly inferior colonized ethnicities functioning as underlings and rank and file, that is, as the powerless and substitutable cogs in the giant machinery of Empire. The fact that these very symbols of power are all in a rather deplorable condition (the cargo ships are battered, the walls of the fort are crumbling), though, subtly hints at the slow process of decline of Britain's imperial hegemony, which, in the 1920s, is already well under way.

From a motion-oriented perspective, it is particularly intriguing to observe how this arrival scene combines various sectors of imperialist mobility – notably economic, military and scientific mobilities – into one prototypical picture of a quintessentially colonial port setting that, in fact, could be situated in any British colony. Therefore, this scenic presentation amounts to a somewhat oxymoronic 'mobile still life' of such a colonial port, and, by extension, of the system 'British Empire' at large. Essentially, this effect is accomplished by the intersection of commercial, military and scientific experienced vectors in the narrative representation of this West African colonial port, which, in this process, turns into a virtual synecdoche of the system 'British Empire', because each of the salient elements of this setting (the cargo ships, the fort and so on) stands for one component of the imperial machinery (international trade, military strength) in a classical *pars pro toto* relationship. All in all, this scene therefore narratively configures the stereotypical topology of a colonial transshipment point that simultaneously functions as a hub for raw materials, completed products, troop contingents and explorers or scientists.

Hence, it is the intersection of various, highly heterogeneous experienced vectors that accounts for the dynamic but discontinuous nature of the resultant narratopology, which is marked by a highly asymmetrical power constellation, for the British colonizers are in total command of their colonial underlings, whereas members of colonized ethnicities appear only as mere recipients of orders. The fact that

Jonathan has internalized this power asymmetry (almost) perfectly nicely illustrates the pervasive influence of colonialist rhetoric on subjugated peoples. In his case, it is furthermore possible to ascertain the cognitive co-presence of an experienced vector (the entire expedition has just arrived in Africa, thereby completing the first part of their journey) in the textual actual world and an imagined vector inasmuch as the sight of the West African port setting triggers memories of his youth in India, particularly his time in Bombay. While the first of these vectors plays a rather straightforward role, the second one merits closer examination due to its internal complexity, for it is not only imaginative but also retrospective in nature: as Jonathan evidently perceives a certain degree of deep-structural equivalence between the unnamed West African port he is arriving at and Bombay with regard to their role as maritime (and naval) transshipment points in the colonial economy, the sight of the former incites him to instantly remember the latter, together with its characteristically imperialist distribution of power, wealth and social status.

Thus, it is this cognitive co-presence of his current surroundings and the recollected environment of his former life (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107) – in particular with regard to their deep-structural similarities – that is responsible for his overall mood of “uneasy recognition” (TI 409), because, although Jonathan has never been to Africa before, the confrontation with this colonial port constitutes in his eyes a *déjà-vu* insofar as the topological structure, the characteristic movement patterns and the asymmetrical power relations are familiar to him from India. In this sense, the blending of his experienced vector in the textual actual world and his imagined vector in the textual possible world of his imagination creates a heuristic surplus value for the protagonist, for, in contrast to his travel companions, Jonathan “knows the logic at work here; the system is etched into his skin” (TI 410).

In addition, the resultant narratopology of this scene constitutes an accumulation of all movements involving this port in the past, the present and even in the future inasmuch as the present configuration of topological elements has been shaped by its predecessors and will in turn predetermine future configurations (cf. Ette 2005: 11-12, 23). Thus, from a cognitive-narratological point of view, it is justified to claim that the description of this arrival scene evokes stereotypical images of colonial port settings stored in the reader’s mind – a resource Ricoeur labels prefiguration; as the narrative representation of this specific setting in *The Impressionist* – Ricoeur’s configuration (cf. Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52-87) – does in fact do little to incite the reader to revise such images, it is to be expected that this arrival scene will contribute to the

persistence of the underlying imperialist mind-set. In this context, the distribution of individual agency to different groups of characters is revealing, because throughout the entire scene, the members of colonized ethnicities are represented as either operators (the stevedores) or passive groups (the waiting West Indian troops), but never as individualized agents in their own right. This constellation reinforces the overall impression that this arrival scene is an exemplary miniature representation of how the British Empire works; it depicts the gigantic machinery of economic exploitation and political-military domination *in nuce*.

As a hybrid subject, the protagonist somehow feels caught between the dichotomy of colonizer and colonized; for this reason, it is significant that Jonathan appears as a passive observer of the bustling port who, due to the sun helmet he is wearing, can merely see a small part of the entire scene. This constriction of his “field of vision” (Zoran 1984: 324; cf. *ibid.* 323-327) can be interpreted as a metaphor for the highly biased ideological framing of the Europeans’ perception of their colonies, because, just like the visor that restricts the protagonist’s field of vision considerably, the stance the European colonizers took towards their colonies was prefigured by the bulk of imperialist rhetoric they were inevitably heavily exposed to in those days.

Moreover, the protagonist, who functions as the character-focalizer or simply the perceiver of this arrival scene, watches the port from the deck of an incoming English ship; this circumstance endows him with a superior vantage point, for he can contemplate the whole setting from the highly privileged, hegemonic position of a colonizer arriving in a colonial port. It is also highly significant that the perceiver is situated on a mobile entity (cf. Dennerlein 2009: 207), a steamship, which in the mid-1920s still symbolized British seapower – the structural mainstay of the Empire – inasmuch as it guaranteed the vital mobility of goods, troops and administrative staff. This is why the incoming vessel embodies the universally flexible agency of the global imperial machinery. Despite his privileged spatial position, Jonathan remains a passive observer of the entire port scene; accordingly, narrative discourse focuses primarily on the detailed description of the contents of his field of vision and on the subtle evocation of the co-presence of three cultural spaces in his mind: on the surface level of concrete visual perception, he is watching the hustle and bustle of a minor colonial port in West Africa, which, on the mental level, triggers an immediate comparison of this current actual setting with both the English environment he has been living in for the past few years and the colonial Indian setting he grew up in. Hence, this merging – or, rather, short-circuiting – of the current textual actual world with two textual possible worlds in

his mind (cf. Ryan 1985: 719-720; 1991: vii), the recollection of which is activated due to the visual stimuli provided by the colonial topology of the West African port, exemplifies the very capacity of literature to enact the simultaneous co-presence of two (or more) spaces in one and the same scene (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107).

Having analysed the arrival scene in Africa in detail, I will now turn to the narrative representation of the next stage of the expedition – the journey up an unspecified African river. In contrast to the voyage from Marseilles to the West African port on the fictitious Oil Coast, which is enacted in the ellipsoidal mode of narrative representation – that is, the course of the journey itself is not rendered at all, and only the arrival is represented via scenic presentation – the next stage of the expedition is thematized at length. In the following, I will analyse two selected extracts from the narrative enactment of the steamboat trip up a West African river. The first of these deals with the gradual transformation of Jonathan's experientiality caused largely by the fact that the actual landscape they are travelling through does run – at least partially – counter to his expectations of the cultural space 'Africa':

Weed clogs the wheel. The *Nelly* grounds on a bank, and the crew have to lever it off with long wooden poles. [...] There are no surprises, except from the land. Jonathan is waiting to be swallowed by towering forest trees, to feel he is approaching the primeval heart of a little-known continent: this is what happens when you go up an African river. Yet instead of closing in, the country opens up, the skies widening and the foliage on the banks thinning to tracts of low acacia scrub. Along the banks the settlements are fewer. The European trading posts space themselves farther apart and the native villages get smaller, meaner looking. The one positive thing about the tedium of life on the boat is the sense of traveling in a straight line, of sedate movement from a beginning toward some guaranteed end. Little by little this ebbs away, the line of water unfolding another dimension, that of the truly unfamiliar, the unforeseen. (*TI* 422-423)

Setting in with two instances of natural external friction ("Weed clogs the wheel. The *Nelly* grounds on a bank, ..." [*TI* 422]), this passage focuses on the overall effects the journey upriver exerts on the protagonist and his European travel companions. In terms of Jonathan's identity configuration, it becomes evident, once again, that Astarte Chapel's thwarting of his marriage plans has left him with little more than a human void inside. The atmosphere of bored and idle inactivity aboard the steamer *Nelly* prevents Jonathan from escaping this unpleasant recognition; after his future plans have been shattered, he feels completely unable to regain inner stability by flinging himself into pleasure, work or any other suitable distraction from this misery.

Moreover, the planned ascending linearity of the journey dwindles in the face of the erratic arbitrariness of possible occurrences during a journey into the African

continent: "The one positive thing about the tedium of life on the boat is the sense of traveling in a straight line, of sedate movement from a beginning toward some guaranteed end. Little by little this ebbs away, the line of water unfolding another dimension, that of the truly unfamiliar, the unforeseen" (TI 423). Accordingly, the actual space Jonathan is confronted with contradicts his stereotypical expectations of a journey into the *Heart of Darkness* (Conrad 1994 [1902]):

There are no surprises, except from the land. Jonathan is waiting to be swallowed by towering forest trees, to feel he is approaching the primeval heart of a little-known continent: this is what happens when you go up an African river. Yet instead of closing in, the country opens up, the skies widening and the foliage on the banks thinning to tracts of low acacia scrub. (TI 423)

On the whole, a fundamental conflict arises between the linearity of the expedition's spatial movement and the iterative circularity of their daily routine aboard the steamer (cf. Ette 2003: 39-43, 43-45). The linear path towards a preordained end is undermined by a second movement pattern that eludes the grid of rationality, precision and goal orientation typical of European conceptions of temporality in the modern age. The monotony of the protagonists' mind-time renders clock-time virtually meaningless; the unfolding of the journey's own temporality disrupts their usual patterns of coming to terms with the passing of time (cf. Ette 2003: 21-23). Likewise, the space they are travelling through does not conform to Jonathan's expectations of Africa, which are likely to have been prefigured by his reading Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1994 [1902]) and similar colonial texts about the 'dark continent' (cf. Boehmer 2005: 92). This running counter to his stereotypical expectations performed by Africa as his current spatial environment in the textual actual world already hints at the comprehensive deconstruction of the entire expedition's romantically idealized, highly exoticized image of Africa as the quintessential materialization of pre-civilizational otherness that will follow throughout the further course of this imperialist venture. The narrative configuration of the ontological vectoriality of this expedition thus deconstructs imperialist concepts of masculine mobility by foregrounding the incongruity of the protagonist's highly stereotypical prospective expectations with his actual cognitive-affective experience of space and time during this journey in the present. Moreover, the narrative foregrounding of boredom, inertia and friction in the enactment of this journey contributes to the discursive deconstruction of the allegedly very high degree of agency traditionally associated with the male imperial explorer (cf. Fabian 2004: 350-363). With all three dimensions of human motion, the narratively enacted ontological vectoriality of this expedition in the textual actual world runs counter to its prospectively imagined vectoriality as manifest in the protagonist's thwarted expectations.

In the following, I will augment from a distinctly motion-oriented perspective my analysis (cf. Section 5.2, pp. 312-314 of this dissertation) of the passage dealing with Jonathan's profound self-questioning in conjunction with his doubts as to the successful completion of their expedition after the failure of conducting a census of the Fotse tribe (cf. *Tl* 447). More specifically, I claim that the two hermeneutic movements underlying this passage – Jonathan's process of individual self-questioning and his ideological move towards a profound scepticism concerning the present and future prospects of the British Empire on the geopolitical and cultural plane (as epitomized synecdochically by the Chapel expedition) – coincide in one crucial point: the insight into the inevitable incongruence of the imagined vector of the imperialist endeavour and its experienced vector, i.e. the real trajectory of imperialism's material and psychological consequences both for the colonizers and the colonized. The wider the gap between the alleged goals of the European *mission civilisatrice* (progress, morality, uplift, humanity and so on) and its actual practice (ruthless economic exploitation, political oppression and military subjection), Jonathan's reflections seem to suggest, the more futile the whole project becomes (cf. Boehmer 2005: 87). Just as the protagonist himself recognizes in this scene that his high degree of physical spatial mobility and his extreme flexibility regarding his individual self-construction (in the guise of several, highly heterogeneous identity configurations) cannot save him from finally having to face the senselessness of dedicating one's entire existence to the perfecting of mimicry, the various forms of physical and imaginative mobility constituting the sophisticated, gigantic machinery of the British Empire will not be able to prevent its eventual dissolution, because the entire imperialist endeavour rests upon fundamentally flawed ideological premises.

In conclusion, I therefore contend that in both cases, a high degree of *locomobility*, i.e. physical spatial mobility, proves to be unable to compensate effectively for a fundamental lack of *ideomobility*, that is, mobility on the plane of ideology and cultural epistemology (as perceptible in the culture-specific presuppositions governing the Europeans' approach to intercultural contacts; cf. Bhabha 1994c: 85-86). The fundamental, deep-structural incongruity of imagined and experienced vectors turns out to be insurmountable by means of motion on the surface level – both on the individual plane of the protagonist's psychological self-construction and on the global plane of cultural topology. Therefore, his eventual decision to forsake the circular movement of census taking testifies – once again – to his outstanding ability to adapt very swiftly to abruptly changing external circumstances, an ability that will save his life, just as the others' stubborn sticking to their guns in terms of spatial

and ideological immobility will precipitate their downfall. The persistence of this – eventually self-destructive – ignorant and, above all, imprudent attitude throughout the entire expedition adds an ironic twist to the purported inevitability of the triumph of Western modernity over African traditionalism. Finally, the fatal ending of this risky venture seems to suggest that the brutal violence of colonial expansion turns back upon the colonizers themselves.

In the context of my research interest, this ironic plot twist is highly significant because it illustrates one central point: the anthropologists' craze to expand their academic knowledge about the Fotse in a Eurocentric, hermeneutically circular movement (mainly inspired by a relentless belief in the power of systematic and reliable scientific knowledge) is literally blown apart in a disastrous failure, whereas Jonathan turns out to be the only survivor precisely because he abandons this one-way road of the hermeneutic circle in time and engages – albeit partially involuntarily – in deliberately erratic movement instead. To put it in a nutshell, flexibility with regard to the movement pattern underlying one's own movement beats obstinate adherence to Eurocentric movement patterns. This ending, which lends itself to being interpreted as a paradigmatically postcolonial one not only with regard to its clear distribution of poetic justice, but in several other respects as well, constitutes a powerful statement on the uselessness of certain traditional Eurocentric patterns of motion and mobility in (post)colonial contexts.

Having embarked upon an increasingly desperate erratic movement across the desert, Jonathan suffers heat stroke, whereupon the Fotse carry him to the “caves of the dead” (*TI* 458) in order to subject him to a ritual act of exorcism aimed at liberating him from European influences. Before the start of this exorcism, Jonathan is given a thick, bitter drink that makes him embark upon a nightmarish hallucinatory journey in which he imagines getting out of the cave, floating high above the ground and seeing his travel companions having supper in their camp for the very last time. It is highly significant that Jonathan already seems to have adopted the Fotse perspective, for the last sentence of this paragraph reads: “Everything about them is upside down” (*TI* 461).

What makes this passage so relevant for my research interest is its specific combination of the protagonist's spatial immobility with his mental mobility, which is enacted as a nightmare-like imaginary journey fuelled by the hallucinogenic substance the drink evidently contains. The narrative representation of his consciousness here enacts the split nature of his perception, his pseudo-schizophrenic “double vision” (Said

2001 [1984]: 189 and Bhabha 1994e: 126): on the one hand, he is very well aware of his actual physical stasis inside the cave, where his body is undergoing a brutal ritual involving being branded with symbolic marks in several spots; on the other hand, however, his mind simultaneously indulges in hallucinatory visions. In addition, it is intriguing to take into account the metaphysical purpose of this cruel ritual: it consists not only in freeing Jonathan from the evil European spirit the Fotses believe him to be possessed by, but also in establishing an indestructible bond between the protagonist and the place he is in at present. From a postcolonial point of view, these two goals can rightly be interpreted as two sides of the same coin, because the evil nature of European colonialism lay precisely in its insatiable appetite for the subjection of ever more non-European territories the colonizers were not in any way affectively tied to (cf. Upstone 2009: 1-24).

In the overall context of my research interest, it is furthermore crucial to highlight the fact that the violent confrontations resulting from this relentless expansionism affect all three dimensions of human motion I specified in my theory and methodology chapters (cf. Chapters 2 and 4 of this dissertation): spatiality (cf. Section 5.4), agency (cf. Section 5.2) and temporality (cf. Section 5.5). In conclusion, I therefore want to highlight that, by leaving the future course of its protagonist's fate up to the randomness of the deliberately discontinuous, jumpy and erratic ontological vectoriality of West Saharan nomadism, this novel radically calls into question the allegedly inevitable triumph of Western notions of linear progress in the history of mankind, the individual quest for a fixed identity configuration and the hierarchical, dichotomous and obsessively systematic structuration of space as the single possible stairway to the 'universal perfection' of the entire world.

With all three dimensions of human motion, the ignorant and supercilious postulate that the idiosyncratic European configurations of these three parameters – spatiality, agency, and temporality – constitute the shining example to be replicated by all non-European ethnicities is vigorously refuted. Their arrogant claim to universality is ridiculed by exposing the culture-specificity of these configurations as well as the narrow-mindedness of their colonial representatives, who stick to their guns to the point of self-destruction. To conclude, I would thus like to point out that the narrative representation of motion in *The Impressionist* does indeed contribute substantially to the novel's deconstruction of fixed Western notions of space, time and individual (as well as collective) identity. The alternative that the novel's ending proposes – physical (and intellectual) nomadism – remains, however, an extremely vague sketch. This very

nebulous, sketchy draft, essentially devoid of any further concrete delineation, stands in stark contrast to the highly detailed, fully fledged thematization of the protagonist's myriad transformations of his individual identity configurations that narrative discourse has indulged in so extensively throughout the entire novel.

While this section has scrutinized the various narrative configurations of motion and mobility in *The Impressionist*, the next section will be concerned with the concomitant aspect of the consequences the protagonist's high degree of spatial and social mobility brings about for the narrative representation of space in this novel.

5.4 Interspatiality in the Empire: Re-drawing Imperial Topology from the Margins

In this section, the narrative representation of space in *The Impressionist* shall be analysed in its interlocking with the protagonist's journeys across the Empire. Taking up, once again, my initial hypothesis that the narrative representation of space and motion in this novel serves the purpose of deconstructing Western preconceptions of these parameters, I will examine three paradigmatic examples – the principality of Fatehpur in India, London and the Fotsé territory in the colony of British West Africa. These places, I contend, can be considered paradigmatic because, as synecdoches, they represent the larger cultural spaces that function as hubs of this novel's postcolonial narratopology – the Indian subcontinent, Britain and Africa – in a classic *pars pro toto* relationship.

Furthermore, I argue that, by virtue of his various movements across its topography, the protagonist disrupts the established topological order of the British Empire, thereby revealing the constructedness of its Eurocentric, imperialist organization of space into centre and periphery. Therefore, he continually contributes to a process of hybridizing the cultural spaces unilaterally subsumed under the designation 'Empire' by the British colonizers. In turn, it is this hybridization that causes severe ruptures in the allegedly monolithic block 'Empire' as propagated by the metaphors of imperialist discourse (the Empire as a family or a tree, for instance; cf. Nünning 1996: 91-120). In addition, I would like to draw attention to the fact that, according to the terminology of imperialist topology, the sequence of cultural spaces

the protagonist travels through results in the pattern 'periphery (India) – centre (Britain) – periphery (Africa)'. Due to the absence of a final return to his country of origin, the movement pattern performed by the protagonist is that of an incomplete triangle (cf. Section 5.3 of this dissertation). In a postcolonial context, it is highly significant that the missing link, i.e. the inexistent side of this triangle, is the direct connection between Africa and India; that is, the two peripheries are linked with one another only via the intermediary instance of the imperial centre. This stellate fixation of the movement patterns within the Empire on the metropolis (cf. Ette 2003: 45-47) reflects one of the constitutive structural features of imperial topology, namely its exclusive attunement to the socioeconomic needs of the 'mother country'.

While the novel thus cites the topological organization of the British Empire in this particular respect, it does so with a jointly postmodern and postcolonial twist inasmuch as the protagonist comes to eventually abandon any kind of prefabricated hegemonic topology by joining camel drivers in the Sahara, thus criss-crossing the colonizers' grid (cf. Upstone 2009: 1-24) and thereby eluding its grasp. All in all, it is this postmodern and postcolonial twist that emerges as one of the central characteristics of the narrative representation of space in this novel, which can be classified, more precisely, as a "re-representation" (Xiaoqing 2004: 78; see also Nyman 2009: 100-101) of colonial spaces in that it works with a dense network of intertextual references, allusions, citations and parodies of the narrative representation of space in colonial classics, most notably Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1994 [1901]), Edward Morgan Forster's *A Passage to India* (1989 [1924]) and Joseph Conrad's novella *Heart of Darkness* (1994 [1902]); (cf. Nyman 2009: 96-97, 100-101; Griem 2007: 89-103).

As a narrative configuration of what I have called 'movements of representation' in Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation, this network of intertextual references and allusions deserves special attention. By establishing intertextual relations between *The Impressionist* (Kunzru 2002) and classics of English colonial literature, it opens up a transcultural "memory space" (Assmann 1999) in which traditional imperialist semanticizations of cultural spaces (such as Africa as the quintessential *Heart of Darkness* [Conrad 1902]) can be renegotiated, for example by citing them with a deconstructive postcolonial twist (cf. Döring 2002: 79-108; Griem 2007: 89-103). As a performative intervention in extratextual cultural contexts, such intertextualities highlight the fact that Asian British novels like *The Impressionist* (Kunzru 2002) not only narratively enact human motion, but are themselves embedded in metaphorical patterns of transcultural mobility. From the perspective of translation theory, the crucial

point here is that the foreignizing agency of translating colonial classics into postcolonial Asian British novels (cf. Döring 2002: 209) always transforms both sides implicated in this translation process (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2012: 23-43, particularly 30). Subsequent to *The Impressionist* (Kunzru 2002), *Heart of Darkness* must be read differently as well (cf. Döring 2002: 1-19, 79-108, 203-209; Griem 2007: 89-103). Accordingly, the transcultural “passages” (Döring 2002) engendered through this dense network of intertextualities narratively configure (and store) spatial and movement knowledge (cf. Ette 2005: 11-12; 2012: 29-49) in such highly metaphorical transcultural “memory spaces” (Assmann 1999), thereby enriching the cultural domain of movements of representation (cf. Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation) considerably.

This high degree of intertextuality, I assert, finds a structural equivalent in the “interspatial[ity]” (Ette 2005: 22) of the cultural spaces represented in *The Impressionist*. According to Ette, “an interspatial structure of spaces” is marked by their “communicat[ing] with each other intensively without merging into one another” (Ette 2005: 22; my translation). As I intend to show, this is precisely the constellation we find in Kunzru’s debut novel. While it accordingly features myriad interspatial connections (actualized primarily through the protagonist’s picaresque journeys), it does not exhibit any “transspatial structurations [...]”, defined by Ette as being “marked by constant crossings and hybridizations of heterogeneous spaces” (Ette 2005: 22; my translation). India, Britain and Africa do get in touch with one another through the hybrid figure of the protagonist, but they by no means merge in any way whatsoever in this novel. To this absence of “transspatial[ity]” (Ette 2005: 22) corresponds the inexistence of utopian transculturality in this literary work: despite the narrative enactment of various intercultural contact situations, there seems to be no room at all for the emergence of *utopian* transcultural third spaces pointing to a possibly better future. This overall impression is corroborated by the fact that Pran’s affective semanticization of the cultural spaces and places he travels through is marked by its conspicuous absence. The narrative representation of space and motion in this novel is therefore characterized by the presence of motion in tandem with the absence of emotion. This absence of emotion, in turn, correlates with the absence of any room for utopian third spaces of transculturality in *The Impressionist*.

To begin with, I will focus on the narrative representation of the site of Pran’s captivity in the guise of Rukhsana (cf. *TI* 67-171), viz. the New Palace of Fatehpur. From the moment of Pran’s arrival onwards, the representation of the idiosyncratic space of the New Palace at Fatehpur serves the purpose of reflecting the court

society's flamboyant and eccentric decadence in architectural terms; the corresponding narrative-rhetorical strategy of representation is one of 'deconstruction through exposure of its decadence'. As we shall see, this mode of representation is complemented by three other narrative strategies of representing selected cultural spaces of the Empire in the course of this novel.

Because the architecture of this palace consists of a randomly eclectic fusion of Indian, Islamic and European styles, it stands metonymically for the cultural structuration of the court society itself, and, by extension, for that of British India as a whole (cf. Boehmer 2005: 62-63). Upon approaching the palace, Pran's first impression is that of "a vast mass, a disturbing mirage of spikes and pinkness" (*TI* 74). The bewildering mixture of architectural elements testifies to the preference for radical eclecticism its builders evidently displayed: "On each side of the main cluster of domes perhaps half a dozen spires and minarets poke up, some ending in Rajput domes, some tipped by shining gold crescents, and one tapering into a Gothic steeple" (*TI* 74). It is important to note that the architectural elements mentioned here stem from the three cultural spheres named above: minarets and spires crowned by shining gold crescents stand emblematically for Islamic architecture, while the Rajput²²¹ domes represent an originally Indian architectural style and the Gothic church tower testifies to European influences. On a more abstract level, this idiosyncratic mixture of heterogeneous architectural traditions also stands metonymically for the three major sociocultural groups the society of British India is composed of: Hindus, the vast majority, Muslims and the tiny but powerful minority of British colonizers.

Subsequent to Pran's arrival at the New Palace of Fatehpur, narrative discourse recounts – in a Genettean pause (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 99-106) – the history of its construction, focusing primarily on the personal biographies and architectural tastes of its three architects as intertwined with the then-Nawab's predilection for having his megalomaniac representational aspirations carved in stone. From a postcolonial perspective, two things are highly significant: first, all three architects were of European origin, and, second, the construction materials for the new palace were imported from all over the world, such as, for instance, "colored marble from Ferrara, [and] stained glass from Oxford" (*TI* 76). Therefore, this palace also embodies the high degree of connectivity of the global economy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

²²¹ Until their final subjugation by the Islamic invaders, the Rajputs were a powerful Hindu warrior dynasty that ruled several North Indian principalities (cf. Kulke and Rothermund 2010 [1986]: 76-78; 114-116; 143; 188).

As for the selection of architects, this choice lends itself very well to a postcolonial interpretation because the fact that the Nawab chose only Europeans for the job reiterates the classical imperialist argument that, in order to make their eccentric, in this case architectural visions come true, the decadent rulers of Indian principalities were completely dependent on state-of-the-art Western know-how. However, Kunzru adds a subtle note of irony inasmuch as all three of them failed to live up to the Nawab's high expectations in one way or another: the first one, a Scottish disciple of John Ruskin,²²² was fired because his architectural drafts were considered far too modest and restrained by the Nawab; the second, "a Palladian [...] of delicate health and fine artistic sensibility" (TI 75-76) succumbed to the extremely high pressure he was exposed to and finally committed suicide, and the third, "a syphilitic Italian adventurer called Tacchini" (TI 76), who did not even possess a formal education in architecture, eventually went mad and was committed to a lunatic asylum (cf. TI 75-77). As a result of this peculiar mixture of English restraint, Renaissance genius and eccentric, overly enthusiastic amateurish self-actualization, the finished palace eventually "resembles a large pink iced cake" (TI 77).

All in all, this new palace thus constitutes an exaggerated parodic caricature of late-nineteenth-century Indo-European architecture. Moreover, its flamboyant and ridiculously exaggerated decadence also contradicts the myth of rationalist efficiency propagated as one of the defining features of the Raj by imperialist discourse, because it exemplifies the spendthrift policy of financing even the most absurd and grotesque wishes of subordinate Indian rulers in order to side-line them politically. Therefore, the extravagant, Disneyland-like architecture of Fatehpur Palace contributes substantially to the deconstruction of the Western myth of colonial space(s) as something that can be ordered uncompromisingly according to modern-day European ideas of rationality, efficiency and functionality (as epitomized also by the road grid imposed upon the Fotse territory in the last part of this novel).

On the whole, it is primarily the labyrinthine internal structure of Fatehpur Palace that renders any attempt to impose a rationalized square grid upon it futile. With

²²² John Ruskin, a versatile and ingenious nineteenth-century English prophet-philosopher and art critic, was a passionate proponent of a conservative Christian aesthetic that regards beauty as a gift of God manifest in nature. According to Ruskin, the artist's task hence consists in the true-to-life depiction of nature's beauty, as epitomized by William Turner's landscape paintings. Ruskin condemned the Renaissance tradition of foregrounding the artist's own creative genius instead of praising God's creation. With regard to architectural styles, Ruskin advocated equivalent positions, thus hailing Romanic and Gothic architecture as the apex of Christian ecclesiastical architecture and interpreting their Renaissance counterpart as the beginning of the decline of European architecture (cf. Meyer 2006: 497-498).

its intransparent maze of hallways, rooms and secret passages, the architecture of this palace thus simultaneously enacts and undermines the asymmetrical power relations at the heart of Fatehpur court society (cf. Beck 2014: 31-33): whereas the original intention of its builders clearly lay in displaying the Nawab's pseudo-omnipotence over his principality, its labyrinthine architectural configuration invites, as it were, secret machinations, intrigues and conspiracies like those initiated by Prince Firoz, the current Nawab's brother, which are ultimately aimed at deposing the present ruler (cf. Section 5.2 of this dissertation for details on this conspiracy).

The relevance of this intrigue for a context-oriented analysis of the representation of space in *The Impressionist* lies in the fact that Nawab Murad and his brother are not only rivals to the throne of the principality of Fatehpur, but also represent the two major political factions within this fictitious territory. Regarding the shaping of its future, they consequently have diametrically opposed objectives in mind. While the current ruler stands for the rigorous preservation of Islamic traditions on Indian soil and, accordingly, despises most of the sociocultural and technological innovations brought about by European modernity, Prince Firoz enthusiastically embraces the latter developments, particularly inasmuch as they promote his primary goal in life, the hedonistic savouring of sensual pleasure. Therefore, while the Nawab emblematically embodies a rigid conservatism, Prince Firoz can be characterized as a passionate advocate of relentless, Western-style modernization in respects as varied as industrialization and amusement (he is the proud owner of the only cinema within the palatial premises and several Rolls Royce luxury automobiles, and he is the centre of a circle of friends who devote their time to the uncritical celebration of contemporary Western culture as epitomized by the latest dance styles). The prince should thus be the ideal candidate for the throne of Fatehpur in the eyes of the British administration; however, his cost-intensive way of life, which notably involves a spendthrift personal expenditure policy sparked by his eccentric decadence, somewhat undermines this general impression.

As a consequence of their incompatible political views, the two brothers additionally stand for diametrically opposite ideas regarding the shaping of the cultural space Fatehpur: in stark contrast to his brother, who is mainly intent on preserving its feudal agricultural society, Prince Firoz would love to have factories – the emblem of Western industrialization – built in his principality (cf. *T* 98-137). Thus, the two brothers are incarnations of irreconcilably dichotomous conceptualizations of space, which, in turn, are inextricably intertwined with specific notions of temporality: ruthless industrial

modernization versus conservative preservation of a traditionally feudal societal space marked by the dominance of agriculture. According to the one-dimensional timeline of modern-day Western temporality, Prince Firoz accordingly embodies progress and therefore orientation towards the future, whereas Nawab Murad incarnates tradition, i.e. orientation towards the past. Such a one-sided and naïve interpretation is undermined, however, by the figure of Prince Firoz himself, who can rightly be counted among the most decadent individuals at court, and by the fact that his machinations to take over the throne of Fatehpur eventually turn out to be a disastrous failure. This outcome constitutes a powerfully ironic, jointly postmodern and postcolonial comment on the European notion of history as a single, linear and teleological path towards Western modernity in that it undermines this Eurocentric view by ridiculing one of its most determined adherents in this novel.

In addition, the fact that all three architects of this palace were of European origin likewise adds a subtle note of jointly postmodern and postcolonial irony to the narrative treatment of the architectural configuration of Fatehpur Palace in that it not only questions the possibility of transplanting concepts of space from European modernity to non-European contexts but also points to the fact that these modern-day 'ideals' of spatial ordering are merely the radical inversion of a long tradition of flamboyant decadence native to Europe itself, as embodied paradigmatically by the architectural and artistic masterpieces of the Renaissance and Baroque epochs. With this ironic twist, the narratively enacted critique of Western concepts of spatiality in this novel takes on a further contextual dimension.

While the architecture of Fatehpur Palace functions as the foundation of the climactic intensification of this fundamental critique of Western preconceptions, the second, intermediate stage is formed by the act of rape committed upon the protagonist by Major Privett-Clampe, an alcoholic and paedophilic Raj official (cf. Section 5.2 of this dissertation). Finally, the climactic process of thoroughly deconstructing the official image of British India's efficient and well-organized administration and exposing the debauched decadence of the entire court society at the New Palace of Fatehpur culminates in the hilarious failure of an imperial tiger hunt, the narratorial account of which is nothing less than a merciless ridicule of this sacrosanct ritual of the Raj. Therefore, the representational technique deployed here consists of what I call a narrative strategy of 'deconstruction through ridicule'.

In a jointly postcolonial and postmodern context, it is highly significant that the narrative account of this disastrous tiger hunt starts with a proleptic problematization of the accuracy of the various retrospective reports on this fateful night circulating within the administrative machinery of the British Raj in the following months. As the following quotation shows, however, it is not only the resultant reports that are called into question, but notably also the colonizers' epistemological craving for unified master narratives on each and every incident in British India in general:

In subsequent months various accounts will be given of what happens next. Some will be dictated to officials, others written or submitted as verbal depositions to civil-service superiors. Most of these statements will differ wildly from one another about even the most basic facts, although by the bureaucratic alchemy of the India Office these differences will eventually be resolved and a unified narrative presented in the form of a two-page memorandum. [...] It will be seen as forming the final and definitive word on the Fatehpur Incident, and will, needless to say, be incorrect in almost every particular. (TI 169)

Thus, with regard to the chaotic tiger hunt in the forests of Fatehpur, which is tellingly labelled the "Fatehpur Incident" in official investigation afterwards, the narrator points out that the empirically motivated official search for the one single truth about what really happened that night is rendered pointless by the highly heterogeneous and therefore incompatible versions the 'eye witnesses' give afterwards. Nevertheless, the narrator sarcastically remarks, "the bureaucratic alchemy of the India Office" (TI 169) finally succeeds in bending these versions to the extent that they become presentable in the shape of "a unified narrative" (TI 169). Hence, the dubitable procedures surrounding the production of an official report on this particular incident stand – as a genuine *drama in nuce* – for the fundamental epistemological flaw in the entire imperialist project, which stemmed from its reliance on Eurocentric master narratives that, first and foremost, served the purpose of legitimizing colonial rule itself. Here, this pseudo-empirical strategy is thoroughly deconstructed by the evident incongruence of the so-called 'eye-witness reports' of the Fatehpur Incident. All in all, this metafictional deconstruction of any notion of retrospective accuracy in narratively relaying historical events configures a classical postmodern concern, epitomized in the quintessentially postmodernist literary genre of historiographic metafiction (cf. Nünning 2008b: 289-290).

Subsequently, narrative discourse enacts the chaotic failure of this tiger hunt in the mode of scenic presentation. First, Cornwell Birch, an American movie director, kicks off a hilarious but macabre scene of total confusion among the participants by "launching a military flare, as used by Uncle Sam's doughboys on the murky Western Front" (TI 169) in order to light up the nocturnal scenery, so that the court photographer

can make a final attempt to take compromising pictures of the major and one of his boys in action. The happenings on the ground, which the narrator calls – in typical Hollywood jargon – “sensational” (*TI* 170), thereby explicitly evoking the association with a Hollywood scene in a telling intermedial reference, reveal the whole scope of the devastating effects the movie director’s brilliant idea has on those present: just like most of the other hunters, the major is not to be found on his high seat, but defecating down in the woods. Because they are collectively suffering from sudden diarrhoea (probably caused by the addition of a laxative to their drinks), none of them stays where they are supposed to be; instead, they disappear into the forest in order to relieve themselves. Shocked by the sudden flare, they start panicking and shooting each other with their hunting rifles. Decadence is devouring its children (or, rather, its most passionate practitioners).

The narrative enactment of this hilarious scene, which, in order to formally underline the association with a movie scene, is rendered completely in the present tense, amounts to nothing less than a thorough deconstruction of the metaphorical myth of the Empire as a family in which the mother (country) cares for her children who, in turn, support their ‘parents’: random mutual destruction instead of benevolent and consistent co-operation based upon mutual trust and understanding clearly dominates this scene (cf. Nünning and Nünning 2004: 70-72). Instead of mutual support between colonizer and colonized, the amused contemporary reader is confronted with a chaotic scene reigned by total confusion and panic in which Indian rulers and British representatives of the Raj shoot each other randomly. To conclude, the narrative enactment of the “Fatehpur Incident” constitutes a merciless exposure of some of the major inconsistencies in the logic of the Raj, thereby not only disrupting the official image of its allegedly smooth proceedings, but also prefiguring its eventual dissolution.

In stark contrast, the narrative representation of Jonathan’s individual experience of the cultural space London seems to convey – at least at first glance – a straightforward impression of ‘true’ fascination with the capital and topological centre of the British Empire, notably its path-breaking modernity and quintessential Britishness. A closer look at the form and content of some of the actual statements made, however, reveals that what appears to be an unequivocal celebration of the splendour of the metropolis is actually the result of a narrative strategy that I call ‘subtle critique through ironic mock admiration’. This mock admiration, I contend, finds its rhetorical expression in a series of hyperboles, ironic play with imperialist stereotypes of London as the

centre of the Empire and the narrative enactment of Jonathan's "double vision" (Said 2001 [1984]: 189 and Bhabha 1994e: 126). It is these three narrative-rhetorical strategies that shall be analysed in the following.

Opening with the ludicrously hyperbolic statement that "[i]n London the streets are paved with gold [...]" (*TI* 290), Chapter 34 of *The Impressionist* exhibits a whole series of ironic hyperboles, as the following quotation illustrates: "In London the rain sparkles with stray energies, and the dirty water that runs in the gutters is notable because it is London water, and carries along with it Morse-code oddments, leaflets and candy wrappers and cigarette ends that telegraph clues to London life and thinking" (*TI* 290). The hyperbolic characterization of "rain sparkl[ing] with stray energies" (*TI* 290), however, not only exaggerates the allegedly distinct quality of rain in London, but, in its very excess, also ridicules the imperialist dichotomy of 'active West' and 'passive East' inasmuch as the energies allegedly transported by London rain are stray ones, that is, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*, energies that "ha[ve] wandered from confinement or control and go free" (*OED* entry for the adjective "stray", sense 1.a., last retrieved 22.09.2015).²²³ Hence, from a motion-oriented perspective, the vectors of these energies are completely erratic (cf. Ette 2003: 47-48), for they lack any kind of clear direction. It is this absence of any kind of directedness, I argue, that can be interpreted as a subtle comment on the nature of imperial expansion at large, which, in the British context, was frequently devoid of a clear strategic direction as well, rather being the result of random and arbitrary commercial ventures and acquisitions.

In a similar vein, the characterization of something as trivial as dirty water in the gutters as "notable because it is London water" (*TI* 290) points, on a meta-level, to the emptiness underlying imperialist discourse, because the ridiculous association of dirty water with pre-eminence is justified exclusively by its London origin, just like colonialist discourse attributed moral superiority vis-à-vis the natives to the British colonizers, regardless of the latter's actual moral qualities. The ironic hyperbole implied in this quotation is intensified by the metaphor of the water in the London gutters as some kind of liquid telegraph line transmitting fractions of Morse-code messages about "London life and thinking" (*TI* 290) to the uninitiated via "Morse-code oddments, leaflets and candy wrappers and cigarette ends" (*TI* 290). While the notion that telegrams are being transported through the medium of water already seems quite ludicrous, the enumeration of Morse-code oddments in one breath with leaflets, candy wrappers and

²²³ See List of References for bibliographical details.

cigarette butts produces a climactic intensification of the merciless ridicule of arrogant and supercilious presumptions and convictions held by the British colonizers about their all-important capital. By transferring the salient feature of being able to transport electric messages from the source domain (early twentieth-century telegraphy) to the target domain (the filthy water running in the London gutters, including the waste it contains), this catachresis deconstructs the colonizers' claim to universal technological supremacy by ridiculing it, once again, through the astute deployment of ironic hyperbole.

Having analysed the deconstruction of stereotypical imperialist tenets through the intertwining of the rhetorical figures of irony and hyperbole, I now turn to the narrative enactment of Jonathan's "double vision" (Said 2001 [1984]: 189 and Bhabha 1994e: 126) triggered by his confrontation with cultural landscapes traditionally considered the quintessential spatialization of Britishness:

The parks that open out between its tall buildings yield expanses of rich green lawn, and for the first time he understands what the British have tried unsuccessfully to replicate in India. Velvet green. Pulsing with life. The homesickness that India's brown and patchy open spaces must inspire in these people! Here in their own place, in the fug of their dampness, they finally make sense. (*T*/290)

Having been granted the opportunity to behold an original English lawn for the very first time in his life, Jonathan cannot help but compare it to the 'bad copies' he is used to from India. Therefore, this passage epitomizes a particular capacity of literary texts – the ability to represent the cognitive short-circuiting of two distant cultural spaces in a character's mind (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107), which results in the protagonist's "double vision" (Said 2001 [1984]: 189 and Bhabha 1994e: 126) and concomitant "double consciousness" (Gilroy 1993) of metropolis and periphery here. What is more, the sensory perception of the metropolitan original enables the protagonist to gain a heuristic surplus value in that he is now capable of understanding the homesickness felt by the British colonizers in India in view of the entirely different landscapes that dominate the topography of the subcontinent. This impression of an additional awareness of the British perspective gained by Jonathan during his stay in London is corroborated by the following quotation, in which the protagonist finally arrives at a jointly innovative and subversive definition of Britishness:

Everywhere Jonathan finds the originals of copies he has grown up with, all the absurdities of British India restored to sense by their natural environment. Here dark suits and high collars are the right thing to wear. Here thick black doors lead away from the electric streets into cluttered drawing rooms, with narrow windows to frame squares of cold watery London light. Cocooned in a leather armchair Jonathan understands for the first time the English word *cosy*, the need their climate instills in them to

pad their blue-veined bodies with layers of horsehair and mahogany, aspidistras and antimacassars, history, tradition, and share certificates. Being British, he decides, is primarily a matter of insulation. (*TI* 291)

While the first part of this passage sums up the effect the sudden confrontation with the inimitable originals of everything the colonized peoples of British India have been caused to imitate (for the sake of the colonizers' well-being on the subcontinent) upon the protagonist, the second part – beginning with “[c]ocooned in a leather armchair Jonathan understands for the first time the English word cosy” (*TI* 291) – establishes a direct connection between the humid and cold English climate and the British colonizers' propensity to keep a distance between themselves and their external environment at all times and in all geographical places. This strategy of “insulation” (*TI* 291), narrative discourse suggests, is rooted in the physiological necessity of protecting one's own body from the humid cold in England by means of additional layers of clothing, shelter and furniture. From these roots, however, it has spread to virtually all areas of contemporary British life, as the enumeration of items as varied as “horsehair and mahogany, aspidistras and antimacassars, history, tradition, and share certificates” (*TI* 291) in one breath²²⁴ nicely demonstrates. Jonathan's conclusion that “[be]ing British [...] is primarily a matter of insulation” (*TI* 291) thus bestows a postcolonial twist upon traditional definitions of Britishness propagated by imperialist discourse throughout the world as being characterized by discipline, stern morality, patriotism, sincerity, self-sacrifice and a strong sense of duty. In sharp contradistinction to these essentialized qualities, Jonathan's definition of Britishness reveals a deeply ironic and thus typically postmodern attitude towards essentialism.

In conclusion, it can thus be argued that, while on a superficial level, Jonathan appears to be completely fascinated by London, the city's geotopological role as the centre of the British Empire, its metropolitan modernity, its quintessential Englishness, the flamboyant lifestyle of the upper classes (as epitomized by young Mr. Muskett, who is assigned the task of initiating Jonathan to tennis, dancing and other cornerstones of the elite way of life; cf. *TI* 292-295), a close reading of the narrative representation of his first weeks in London reveals that the narrative enactment of this highly symbolic cultural space is accomplished by rhetorical strategies that deliberately undermine any such naïve interpretation. True, London is represented as the original and quintessential embodiment of English values, manners, culture and technological advancement – in short, of all that makes the English way of life distinct from others –

²²⁴ It is important to note that quite a few of the items jumbled together by narrative discourse here are synecdoches standing, for example, for modern-day British capitalism (share certificates) or the large-scale importation of exotic raw materials (such as mahogany) to the capital of the Empire and Britain as a whole.

but always with a sometimes postmodern, yet primarily postcolonial twist expressed via hyperboles, ironies, the catachrestic disruption of colonialist metaphors and the fictional short-circuiting of incommensurable distant cultural spaces. All of these rhetorical and narrative devices contribute to the overall strategy of critiquing and, in this very process, deconstructing one-sided, stereotypical imperialist semanticizations of early twentieth-century London as the quintessential and inimitable spearhead of modern civilization.

To conclude, I now turn to the narrative representation of Africa as a cultural space in the final part of *The Impressionist*. Here, I argue, narrative discourse follows a strategy of 'deconstruction through destruction' in the enactment of Professor Chapel's eventually fatal anthropological expedition to the territory of Fotseland in West Africa, because it subverts Western preconceptions of the continent of Africa as a whole, thereby also questioning the Eurocentric myth of the universal applicability of European concepts of spatial ordering (cf. Upstone 2009: 4-11). What is more, it likewise shakes the foundations of Western science and epistemology by demonstrating their uselessness in the face of incommensurable societal structures and customs. On the whole, the narrative representation of West Africa in the last part of *The Impressionist* accordingly bears a strong resemblance to the representation of the Congo in Joseph Conrad's novella *Heart of Darkness* (1994 [1902]). In fact, it draws up an entire web of intertextual references and parallels, such as the Europeans' degeneration into savagery, alcoholism and disease as well as the frequently stereotypical representation of Africans, or the naming of the steamboat ("*Nelly*" [TI 422]) taking the Chapel expedition up the unnamed West African river after the boat on the Thames that functions as the setting of the framing narrative of Marlow's story in Conrad's novella (cf. Griem 2007: 93-95).

However, there are also substantial, albeit frequently subtle and therefore less easily detectable, differences between the representation of Africa in *The Impressionist* and its counterpart in Conrad's classic: most importantly, instead of representing its native inhabitants as a nameless collective of "black shapes" (Conrad 1994 [1902]: 24), Kunzru's novel allows them to gradually reassert their autonomous agency and, what is more, their own concepts of space, independent of and opposed to those of the European colonizers. Similarly to Conrad's novella, though, the Europeans have lost their function as a shining example to be followed by the Africans in *The Impressionist*; consequently, they are met with hostility and mockery instead of the warm welcome they expected. The Fotse in particular consistently refuse to be reduced to a mere part

of the overall setting of the expedition, for instance by integrating a mercilessly ridiculing mimicry of the Western anthropologists into one of their ritual performances (cf. *TI* 441). The process of the Fotse turning into active agents in their own right eventually culminates in their act of retaliation committed upon the arrogantly ignorant participants of the Chapel expedition (cf. Section 5.2 of this dissertation).

It is this powerful fictional reassertion of this indigenous tribe's autonomous agency that renders the Africans in Kunzru's debut novel markedly different from their counterpart in *Heart of Darkness*. In contrast to Conrad, Kunzru has the allegedly passive black shadows come to life. Thus, his narrative representation of the native population eventually grants the Africans the status of human subjects capable of distinguishing themselves by their determination to enforce their own culture-specific vision of the world, which encompasses, apart from idiosyncratic societal structures, sociocultural customs and religious rituals, above all their culture-specific topological structuration of the cultural space they inhabit, the borderlands of the Sahara.

What is more, Kunzru's fictional enactment of the fatal failure of the Chapel expedition not only demonstrates the incompatibility of the partly rhizomatic (cf. Deleuze and Guattari 1977 [1976]; see also Frank 2008b: 626-627) Fotse concepts of space with the overly systematic European grid of spatial ordering (as epitomized by the planned system of roads dividing the Fotse territory into manageable square chunks), science, epistemology and technology, but, by extension, also radically calls into question the Western myth of the transplantability of the achievements brought about by European modernity to markedly different sociocultural contexts all around the globe (cf. Upstone 2009: 1-24, particularly 4-11; Boehmer 2005: 87). It is precisely this erroneous belief, the novel suggests, that is responsible for the violent "clash of civilizations" (Huntington 1996) produced, first and foremost, by relentlessly expansionist European colonialism. Therefore, this narrative enactment of the failure of Professor Chapel's anthropological expedition points beyond the realm of fiction to extratextual cultural contexts both with regard to the early twentieth-century decline of the British Empire and in respect of contemporary phenomena of globalization, such as the Bush administration's "War on Terror" in general and the war in Iraq in particular, because in both cases, the one-to-one transplantation of Western concepts and structures has failed tremendously. The fatal ending of the Chapel expedition thus not only prefigures the demise of the Empire as a *drama in nuce* but also points ahead in time to contemporary intercultural conflicts.

All in all, the lethal threat posed by the Fotse tribe therefore constitutes the crucial final rupture in the imperial topology of the British Empire as laid out in the narrative representation of space throughout this novel. While there have been severe fissures in the seemingly stable and fixed dichotomy of 'centre' and 'periphery' characteristic of this colonial narratopology from the very beginning of *The Impressionist*, the resilient incommensurability of the Fotse eventually crushes this imperialist topology discursively, albeit only in synecdochical fashion. The fact that the imminent retaliation campaign initiated by the British is not granted the privilege of being represented comprehensively by narrative discourse, but is merely anticipated in a telegram, fits nicely into this overall picture. While from a colonialist stance, the murdering of the members of the Chapel expedition may of course be interpreted as a barbaric act of brutish savagery, no such one-sided interpretation is endorsed by narrative discourse: On the contrary, the Fotse tribe's vengeance is represented as a justified act of retribution for the destruction of their indigenous societal structures and way of life by the European invaders. Thus, not only is the imperialist topology of the British Empire destroyed exemplarily here, but the very foundations of its alleged legitimacy are also questioned by this emerging postcolonial narratopology.

In conclusion, I accordingly want to highlight that all of the narrative-rhetorical strategies deployed for the representation of three paradigmatic cultural spaces of the British Empire – India, Britain (as epitomized by London) and Africa – in *The Impressionist* serve the purpose of subverting the colonialist topology propagated by imperialist discourse as being the solely legitimate spatial structuration of the Empire by questioning the fundamental tenets on which this topology rests: its alleged 'unity in diversity', its metaphorical reinterpretation as a family or a tree and its highly asymmetrical subdivision into the all-important omnipotent metropolis and the marginalized powerless periphery. Instead of simply contradicting these imperialist axioms openly and explicitly, however, the representation of space in this novel resorts to a more subtle strategy of unveiling their inadequacy by means of at least four different representational modes: first, deconstruction through exposure of the decadence of Fatehpur Palace and its court society; second, deconstruction through merciless ridicule in the case of the Fatehpur Incident; third, critique through ironic mock admiration for London as the quintessential centre of the Empire; and finally, deconstruction through destruction in the case of the ultimate Chapel expedition. It is this opening up of a whole panorama of alternatives to the classical colonialist interpretation of seminal places of and their standing within the dichotomous structure of the British Empire that accounts for the vivid effectiveness of the fundamental

postcolonial critique of stereotypical semanticizations of paradigmatic cultural spaces within the Empire laid out in the postcolonial narratopology of Kunzru's debut novel.

By conceiving an incomplete triangle of journeys performed by the protagonist, *The Impressionist* narratively enacts multiple interconnections between India, Britain and Africa. At the same time, however, the direct connection between the two peripheral cultural spaces – India and Africa – is conspicuous by its absence; the colonies are linked with one another only via the intermediary instance of the metropolis, for the protagonist never returns from Africa to India. In accordance with this circumstance, I have argued, Kunzru's debut novel narratively configures what Ette terms “interspatial[ity]” (Ette 2005: 22), that is, a high degree of intertwinement between the cultural spaces thematized (cf. Ette 2005: 22) without enacting some sort of fusion between them, which would amount to “transspatial[ity]” according to Ette's terminology (Ette 2005: 22). To this constellation corresponds, on a meta-level, the strong presence of myriad intercultural contact situations throughout the novel in tandem with the conspicuous absence of any kind of utopian transculturalism. Therefore, the narrative representation of space and the attendant postcolonial narratopology (revolving around the three hubs of India, England and Africa) in *The Impressionist* do redraw the imperial topology of the British Empire from the margins by means of the incompletely triangular ontological vectoriality performed by its hybrid protagonist, whereas they clearly do not strive to open up any option of transcultural utopianism.

5.5 Linear Progress versus Multiple Temporalities: Subverting the Western Teleology of History

Having analysed the narrative representation of agency (Section 5.2), the narrative enactment of motion and mobility (Section 5.3) and the narrative representation of space (Section 5.4) in *The Impressionist*, I now turn to the narrative representation of temporality²²⁵ in this novel, thereby completing my exemplary *tour d'horizon* of the applicability of my trialectics of motion to the literary representation of its constituents –

²²⁵ In accordance with the motion-oriented conceptualization of temporality as both historical context and subjective time-experience proposed in Section 2.3 of this dissertation, this section shall focus primarily on the narrative interweaving of these two dimensions of temporality in the discursive deconstruction of linear conceptions of time and history as Eurocentric cultural constructs in *The Impressionist* (Kunzru 2002).

agency, spatiality and temporality – as well as their product – motion. In accordance with my overall research hypothesis for this novel, I contend that the representation of time in *The Impressionist* subverts the cultural linearity of time – the prevalent conceptualization of temporality in the historical context of Western modernity (cf. Section 2.3 of this dissertation) – by supplementing it with alternative temporalities that deliberately contradict and counteract the European myth of history as a single teleological path progressing in linear fashion towards a preordained end – Western modernity (cf. West-Pavlov 2013: 158-174; Nyman 2009: 101; see also Upstone 2009: 1-4 and Griem 2003: 157-170). These alternative temporalities lay bare the constructedness, colonialist instrumentalization and culture-specificity of the rationalized, precisely calibrated notion of temporality epitomized by the clock-time of Western industrialization. Consequently, the primary goal of this section lies in excavating these competing temporalities from the novel in order to demonstrate how they undermine the claim to universal validity made by Western clock-time.

To begin with, it is worth noting that the subversion of this claim to universality in *The Impressionist* is in line with the plurality of time concepts (cf. West-Pavlov 2013: 166-170) in Hinduism in that it acknowledges, first, the coexistence of various incompatible human attempts to come to grips with the phenomenon of temporality and, second, the impossibility of capturing the human experience of time solely by means of rationally calibrated, uniform clock-time. While it is not feasible to provide a comprehensive account of the various different, frequently even contradictory conceptualizations of time laid out in the classical Hindu sources (cf. Klostermaier 2010 [2008]: 872-874) here, I at least want to draw attention to one pertinent example, the concept of *samsara*, i.e. the cycle of rebirths, which, as the following quotation illustrates, posits time as an endlessly repetitive cycle of events: “Everything in this universe repeats itself in one form or another” (Harzer 2010 [2008]: 750-751). Evidently, this conceptualization of time as a cyclical entity consisting of a seemingly random sequence of preordained events and contingent happenings, causes and effects powerfully contradicts the cultural linearity of time in Western modernity and thus deconstructs the latter’s presumptuous claim to universality.

A first indication of the deconstruction of the cultural linearity and uniformity of modern-day Western temporality is the brief, partly still-life like, rendering of the initial scene on the roof of Pran’s home immediately prior to his sexual advance on the servant girl Gita (cf. Section 5.2 of this dissertation), which describes this crucial moment as having “a certain frozen grace to it, a fake stillness that approaches the true

stillness of synchronicity" (*TI* 29). Vaguely reminiscent of the gist of Lessing's argumentation in *Laocoon* (2012 [1766]), where he posits that one of the defining secrets of great classical sculpture consists in capturing precisely the very moment before the catastrophe takes its course, this narratorial observation not only alludes to the capacity of photography to capture individual moments and thereby disentangle them from the permanent flux of time, but also implies the counterfactual possibility of bringing the passing of time to a halt and hence undermines the rational-scientific postulate of time as a steadily continuous flow. While achieving a synchronic halt of time is impossible in the actual world, literature (and art in general) is capable of doing so. Thereby, this halt also calls into question the claim to universal validity made by the proponents of rational-scientific clock-time. In the same vein, it highlights the discontinuous, irregular and fragmented character of the individual's subjective experience of time, thus positing the latter as an equally valid conceptualization of temporality based not on the slicing of time into isomorphic, identical, objectively measurable chunks (cf. West-Pavlov 2013: 1-28), but on the subjective notion of time as an alternation of cataclysmic events and phases of stability and relative peacefulness.

This initial hint at the precarious status of clock-time in the experiential dimension is reinforced by the complete dissolution of this category in the narrative representation of Pran's captivity at the human traffickers' house in Agra (cf. Section 5.2 of this dissertation). The rapid disintegration of the cultural linearity of time is stressed by the representation of Pran as being unsure about how much time he has actually spent in his 'prison cell' up to now. In this scene, clock-time, commonly regarded as one of the cornerstones of Western rationalist modernity (cf. West-Pavlov 2013: 13-28), is thus literally melting away into the indiscriminate flux of mind-time. Accordingly, it is highly significant here that the representation of the protagonist's insecurity about the precise duration of his confinement constitutes the only instance of free indirect discourse (cf. Fludernik 1993: 72-359) in the entire extract, which has the effect of presenting his 'inner life' here with a higher degree of immediacy (cf. *TI* 65).

The meta-level correlation between the predominance of different time concepts and the varying degrees of individual agency that emerges in this scene suggests, for the time being, a pretty clear picture inasmuch as the protagonist's forced physical passivity goes hand in hand with the prevalence of mind-time here. This hypothesis can be strengthened by referring to the dialectic of anticipation and belatedness originating in psychoanalytical theory: while in the case of anticipation an individual's

mental mobility proves to be ahead of her actual physical movement, the complementary concept of belatedness implies that mental mobility lags behind physical movement (cf. Kirchhoff 2009: 141-232; Laplanche and Pontalis 1972 [1967]: 313-317; see also West-Pavlov 2013: 116-119). These two dichotomous phenomena do have important repercussions on the individual's agency: while in general, passivity often results from the individual experience of belatedness, the individual experience of anticipation usually goes hand in hand with a high degree of activeness (cf. Kirchhoff 2009: 141-232). In the following, I will briefly analyse the narrative representation of Pran's experience of temporality during his train journey from Agra to Lahore as a paradigmatic example of belatedness.

As I suggested in Section 5.3 (cf. pp. 318-323 of this dissertation), Pran is suffering from a fundamental disconnectedness of body and mind in this passage (cf. *TI* 70-71); that is, while the bodily capacity to perceive sensory impressions is intact, it is clearly dissociated from the temporarily suspended mental ability to process the external stimuli that pour in upon him. This extreme separation between the physical perception and deferred mental processing of the respective sensory stimuli accounts for the belatedness of Pran's experience of his external environment in this scene (cf., for instance, the following quotation: "All that misplaced consciousness is backed up somewhere, imagining itself lying on the roof of a big house, hearing the swish-swish of a maid's broom. Yet his body carries on recording" [*TI* 71]). This experience of belatedness, in turn, cements the protagonist's passivity in this scene.

Accordingly, the narrative deconstruction of linear conceptions of temporality correlates directly with the discursive deconstruction of the protagonist's autonomous 'real-world' agency in this scene. Both of these factors, in turn, account for Pran's peculiar, trance-like experience of his spatial surroundings while on the train. In terms of the trialectics of motion developed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, this scene thus exhibits a specific narrative configuration of ontological vectoriality marked by the protagonist's deprivation of autonomous agency in the textual actual world, the deconstruction of linear temporality and an attendant experience of space. As for the narrative representation of temporality, this scene runs parallel to Pran's subjective experience of his captivity at the human traffickers' house inasmuch as in both cases, the cultural construct 'linearity of time' is deconstructed narratively by foregrounding its blatant loss of significance in such situations, which are essentially characterized by the predominance of indivisible mind-time over precisely measurable clock-time. In essence, the fictional configuration of temporality in this novel thus establishes a

narrative counter-discourse to lopsided Western notions of time as an “ineluctable arrow of motion” (Harvey 1990 [1989]: 203) that flows steadily from past to present.

The entire process of deconstructing the cultural linearity and uniformity of time implied by mechanical clock-time in *The Impressionist* finally culminates in the narrative enactment of the Chapel expedition in the novel's last part. In addition, the narrative representation of the Chapel expedition likewise deconstructs the cognitive scripts (cf. Herman 2002: 85-113; Neumann and Nünning 2008: 157) implied in the imperialist myth of heroic men engaged in straight, linear, continuous and purposeful movement (cf. Fabian 2004: 351) through its emphasis on the external friction caused by adverse circumstances. The representation of time contributes to this deconstruction by stressing the discontinuous, non-linear character of the participants' experience of temporality during the expedition by devoting considerable attention to the stationary and inactive phases that interrupt the actual movement again and again, thus effectively undercutting the imperialist myth of perpetual exploratory motion (cf. *ibid.*). On a meta-level, this strategy of narrative representation subverts the European myth of linear teleology in human history as well.

As for the participants' personal experience of the passing of time during the expedition, the following can be ascertained: in the face of the traditional counterworld of the Fotse tribe and Africa in general, the modern-day European strategy of managing time by subdividing it into neatly separated chunks is repeatedly rendered meaningless. A case in point here is the narrative representation of the journey up an unspecified West African river on a steamer called *Nelly*, the alternative temporality of which is marked by the futility of sticking to a European pattern of daily routines in the face of an indiscriminate, all-engulfing sameness of seemingly static time that renders one moment indistinguishable from the next. The representation of time in a particularly pertinent passage (cf. *TI* 422-423) intensifies the impression of a perceptual standstill or, more precisely, of an iterative monotony that constitutes the prime characteristic of the situation on board the steamer: “Slowly the parade of days falls out of step. Time starts to organize itself in more elusive patterns. Things repeat. Sounds project him forward, or shuffle him back. Minutes or hours? The professor sleeps. Gregg smokes” (*TI* 423). As well, these formulations match Ette's observation that the journey develops a temporality of its own (cf. Ette 2003: 21). In this case, this idiosyncratic temporality stands in stark contrast to the Western concept of time in the modern age, which is characterized by rationality, efficiency and, above all, precise measurement, for the

journey's dull monotony makes this modern conception of time seem superfluous and ludicrous from the participants' subjective experiential point of view.

On the whole, this passage thus prefigures the subsequent deconstruction of the teleology of this anthropological expedition and, by extension, of human history as a whole by hinting at the futility of sticking to Western notions of linearity, progress and civilizational perfectibility of humankind in the face of allegedly 'inscrutable' Africa, a cultural space that distinguishes itself precisely by its very incommensurability with Occidental culture. The sedate linear movement "from the beginning toward some guaranteed end" (*TI* 423) is increasingly undermined by the tropical vastness of the landscape the steamboat travels through, just as the circular monotony of life on board radically erases any attempt to maintain a European daily rhythm made up of clearly separated intervals devoted to work, leisure, relaxation, nourishment and personal hygiene. Thus, while the boat itself is steadily approaching its destination on the geographical plane, its passengers are collectively caught in a vicious circle of boredom and idle inactivity (caused primarily by the unfamiliar climatic conditions) on the agentive plane. Here, it is thus the spatial environment in tandem with its specific circular temporality that accounts for the loss of autonomous agency experienced by the protagonist and his company. Again, the situation-specific narrative configuration of ontological vectoriality discursively deconstructs Western conceptions of linear temporality as well as attendant concepts of spatiality and agency.

In the following, I want to take a closer look at the narrative enactment of temporality in a particularly revealing polylogue between the participants in the expedition (cf. *TI* 452-453), in which two lines of thought all too familiar from colonialist rhetoric play a prominent part: first, the equation of spatial and temporal distance between Western modernity and African traditionalism (cf. Frank 2006: 37-43); and second, the pseudo-altruistic strategy of legitimizing imperialist subjection by the (evidently disputable) assertion that the radical transformation of indigenous cultures is for the benefit of the natives themselves. As to the first of these argumentative strands, a brief excursus is required here.

The essentially anthropological train of thought underlying what Johannes Fabian calls "allochronic discourse" (Fabian 2004: 349),²²⁶ that is, the strategy of

²²⁶ Originally, Johannes Fabian elaborated his theory of "allochronic discourse" in his path-breaking monograph *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (2002 [1983]). The article I am referring to here – "Time, Narration, and the Exploration of central Africa"

relegating traditional tribes to a distant past despite their evident simultaneity (cf. *ibid.*), is coupled, according to Frank (cf. 2006: 41), with the discursive strategy at the heart of Said's concept of "imaginative geography" (2003 [1978]: 54), that is, the relegation of non-European ethnicities to marginalized spaces distant from the imperial metropolis. The resulting "double distancing" (Frank 2006: 41) is described by Frank (2006: 41; cf. *ibid.*) as follows:

The imaginative geography as spatial distancing is underpinned by a temporal geography that links cultural spaces with specific temporal spaces. Taken together, these two strategies of distancing produce a basic scheme that can be summed up, with Tzvetan Todorov, as follows: 'They (*there*) are now as we (*here*) used to be' (Todorov 1985: 201). (Frank 2006: 41)

The prevalence of this "evolutionist paradigm" (Frank 2006: 42) in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century anthropology is re-enacted narratively in the polylogue between the academic and non-academic members of the Chapel expedition: while Professor Chapel and his fellow academics Gittens and Morgan indulge in lamenting the disappearance of "the Africa [they] knew" (*TI* 452), the place where they "used to be able to shake off the cares of modern man" (*TI* 452) or, as Gittens formulates it, "the burdens of civilized society" (*TI* 452), Marchant, one of the two military cartographers in the expedition team, voices his utterly negative opinion of Fotseland in a blunt, deeply racist verdict that reveals his inability to judge the Fotse and their traditional environment against anything but his own cultural background of early twentieth-century British civilization. In contrast to Gittens, who accentuates his romanticized view of Fotseland by taking recourse in the colonialist trope that going there used to be "[l]ike visiting our own distant past" (*TI* 452), Marchant sticks to his synchronic perspective and thus calls the (partly prospective) loss of what Morgan mournfully labels "[a]n Eden" (*TI* 452) a "[g]ood riddance" (*ibid.*). Thus, in addition to laying bare internal differences among the participants in their subjective perspectives on the Fotse, this passage also narratively configures the strategy of double, i.e. spatial and temporal, distancing described by Frank (cf. 2006: 40-43).

Instead of leaving it at the relentless exposure of the Europeans' complacent self-righteousness, *The Impressionist* deliberately goes one step further in that it enacts precisely the tremendous failure of "allochronic discourse" (Fabian 2004: 349) in the case of the Chapel expedition, for, by their act of vengeance upon its participants, the Fotse powerfully assert their claim to "coevalness" (Fabian 2004: 349), thereby literally crushing the supercilious arrogance underlying this discursive strategy. In so

(Fabian 2004: 348-366) – presents, among other things, a condensed version of his original train of thought.

doing, they abrogate the instrumentalization of this culture-specific Western discourse of temporality as an imperialist practice of power for the purposes of colonial expansion (cf. Frank 2006: 40). What is more, they also disrupt the process of Occidental self-constitution by means of a double rejection of the subaltern positionality imposed upon them by the British colonizers: the Fotse reassert their spatial and temporal co-presence by their simultaneous refusal to be dumped on the margins of imperial geography and history. Thus, it is not only the imaginative geography, but also the imaginative *history* of European colonialism that ends up being destroyed discursively by the narrative enactment of the fatal outcome of the Chapel expedition. In particular, the latter mythical construct of imperial expansion is deconstructed by narratively enacting an inglorious counter-history marked by narrow-mindedness, supercilious arrogance, complacent self-righteousness and an eventually self-destructive blindness to alternative viewpoints on the part of the European anthropologists.

All in all, it can thus be argued that the anthropologists' hope of making history through exploration (and subsequently publishing written reports about it; cf. Fabian 2004: 350) is subverted narratively by the revelation of the uselessness of their Western scientific methods – as epitomized by the sociological census Jonathan is supposed to conduct of the Fotse population – when confronted with incommensurable sociocultural structures. Instead of making history by virtue of successful research, the Chapel expedition eventually enters the annals of history merely as a tremendous failure. This final downfall also literally crushes the arrogant claim to universal validity of their culture-specific concept of time (and history) as a linear path made by the West. To conclude, the alternative temporalities proposed in the course of this novel finally supplant the cultural linearity of time characteristic of Western modernity, thus underpinning the need to rethink this concept of temporality, not least because it has proven to be incapable of accounting for the narratively enacted experiential temporalities the protagonist is subject to in the seven parts of *The Impressionist*. On a meta-level, it is moreover possible to conclude from the narrative representation of temporality in this novel that, while it does exhibit a violent clash of incommensurable temporalities, particularly in its final part, *The Impressionist* deliberately chooses not to open up any utopian option of a productive fusion of these heterogeneous time-orders. Or, to put it in Ette's terminology, whereas the novel abounds in "intertemporal" (Ette 2005: 21) relations, there is no merging whatsoever of these relations into "transtemporality" (Ette 2005: 22; cf. *ibid.* 21-22).

5.6 Summary and Conclusion

In Hari Kunzru's debut novel *The Impressionist* (2002), the versatile protagonist's personal development, always in tandem with his spatial and mental movements, occupies centre-stage. On a macro-structural plane, the major spatial movements he performs result in an incomplete triangle with the corner points India, England and Africa. From a postcolonial perspective, it is highly significant that the triangle's incompleteness is caused by the missing direct link between Africa and India because this topological configuration reiterates the classical imperialist constellation in that it exhibits a stellate fixation of colonial movement patterns on the metropolis. This seeming reiteration, however, is given a postcolonial twist in as much as the triangular circularity of the colonialist economy as epitomized by the triangular trade practised, for example, by British merchants across the "Black Atlantic" (Gilroy 1993) for centuries is disrupted narratively in this novel by finally leaving the protagonist to his fate as a nomad in the Sahara instead of having him return successfully to India. The narrative strategy of representation deployed here – apparent citation in conjunction with a deconstructive twist – and the emerging narratopology can thus be subsumed under the intertwined postcolonial strategies of *rewriting* the history of the Empire and *remapping* its imperial topology from the margins. These strategies also manifest themselves in the subtle resemanticization of London from the hybrid protagonist's postcolonial point of view, which calls into question the stereotypical semanticization of the imperial metropolis as the quintessential spearhead of modern civilization prevalent in early twentieth-century imperialist discourse. However, it is indicative of this novel's critical stance on transcultural utopianism that this renegotiation of the traditional semantic charging of the British capital does not produce any transcultural third spaces that might point the way to a better future marked by the equality of all ethnicities, mutual respect, tolerance and understanding.

This abrogation of transcultural utopianism becomes evident in the narrative enactment of the protagonist's various identity configurations as well, because, despite their apparent playful inventiveness, they function primarily as his strategies of survival in different, but always precarious, cultural settings. Therefore, judged from the protagonist's subjective perspective in the storyworld, his numerous identity transformations and the resultant identity configurations are by no means the outcome of the postmodern prerogative of celebrating rootlessness and unbelonging à la Homi Bhabha and Salman Rushdie, but instead always boil down to the necessity of reacting

to sudden changes of his personal situation within the textual actual world. In order to regain or maintain his agency in this frequently hostile and perilous spatial, historical and sociocultural environment, he is *forced* to rely on his extraordinary capacity for shape-shifting. This is why – in this regard – the narrative enactment of his identity performances undermines the unequivocal and uncritical celebration of transdifferential identity configurations practised by postmodern intellectuals. Thus, while this novel does primarily deconstruct the modern-day Western notion of the subject as a stable entity endowed with a fixed identity configuration and a corollary degree of agency, it likewise adds a subtly ironic note to its postmodern counterpart by presenting its protagonist's highly versatile transdifferential identity configuration not as a privilege, but as a necessity for survival. Finally, the deconstruction of Western concepts in *The Impressionist* reaches beyond motion, spatiality and agency/identity to temporality and history as well inasmuch as linear conceptions of these latter two categories are deconstructed discursively throughout the entire novel. Therewith, the arrogant claim to universality made by Western modernity and its prevalent time concept – chronological linearity in tandem with clock-time – is vigorously refuted by the narrative configuration of these parameters in this novel. All in all, *The Impressionist* thus qualifies as a transcultural Asian British novel (according to the four pertinent hypotheses formulated in Section 3.2 of this dissertation), but it definitely does *not* represent a narrative configuration of *utopian* transculturalism.

On a meta-level, it is moreover possible to conclude that, throughout *The Impressionist*, the specific narrative configurations of the constitutive dimensions of the trialectics of motion – agency, spatiality and temporality, of the product motion itself and of the emerging postcolonial narratopology deliberately undercut and thus ultimately deconstruct the dichotomous topological duality of the imperialist opposition of 'centre' and 'periphery'. In the final analysis, it is this blatant incongruity that accounts for the fundamental topological, ontological and epistemological rupture between colonial 'reality' and imperial rhetoric observable in *The Impressionist*.

6 Entangled Vectorialities: Intertwining Past and Present through Real-and-Imagined Movements in *A Life Apart* (2008)

6.1 Introduction

Neel Mukherjee's debut novel *A Life Apart* (2011 [2008]), which was tellingly entitled *Past Continuous* for first publication in India (cf. imprint of ALA²²⁷), recounts the tragic life story of Ritwik Ghosh, a traumatized 22-year-old Indian student who comes to Oxford University on a scholarship in order to do his Master of Arts in English literature. Accustomed to escaping from the bleak reality of his everyday life by immersing himself in all kinds of literature, which serves as the vehicle and stimulus for his mental mobility, from the days of his horrid childhood under the regime of his emotionally unstable and despotic mother Bidisha onwards, the protagonist engages in re-writing Rabindranath Tagore's modern Bengali classic *Ghare Baire* (1916), translated into English as *The Home and the World* (2005 [1919])²²⁸ from the perspective of Miss Maud Gilby, an originally marginalized English character, soon after his arrival in England. In contrast to Ritwik, the middle-aged Englishwoman Miss Gilby has migrated in the reverse direction in order to work as a teacher in English language, literature and culture for the wives of different Indian rulers.

The resultant constellation consists in a fundamental structural parody of postcolonial rewriting inasmuch as here, it is a postcolonial Indian subject (Ritwik) who rewrites a modern *Bengali* novel by India's first Nobel Prize laureate in literature (1913), Rabindranath Tagore, from the perspective of a marginal *English* character, Miss Gilby (who is mentioned but three times in the [English translation of the] original). Consequently, Ritwik's strategy of rewriting a classic of modern Bengali literature from the point of view of a minor English character constitutes a deliberate inversion of the typical postcolonial pattern of rewriting colonial classics of English literature from the perspective of marginalized non-European characters. As far as the structure of narrative transmission is concerned, this constellation thus represents a counterpoint to

²²⁷ The title *A Life Apart* will be abbreviated to ALA in all subsequent text notes.

²²⁸ For a brief discussion of the essential differences between Rabindranath Tagore's Bengali original *Ghare Baire* (1916) and his nephew Surendranath's English translation *The Home and the World* (2005 [1919]), cf. the preface to the 2005 Penguin Classics edition of the latter by William Radice (2005: vii-xv).

the now common pattern of postcolonial rewriting inasmuch as it is a marginalized English character who is given a voice here. Within the two narrated storyworlds (Ritwik's superordinate and Miss Gilby's subordinate one), however, an inverse constellation obtains, for Ritwik is represented as a marginalized, underprivileged subject in both India and England, whereas Miss Gilby occupies a highly privileged sociocultural positionality in the strictly hierarchical society of the British Raj throughout the novel. It is this blatant contrast between narrative structure and content that accounts for the fundamental structural irony (cf. Korthals Altes 2008 [2005]: 261-263) obtaining in *A Life Apart*. As we shall see, this ambivalence in the distribution of agency on different levels of the narrative text may justifiably be interpreted as a pessimistic negation of change in the postcolonial era inasmuch as *narrative* authority has been extended to narrators/characters of Indian origin, whereas *socioeconomic* authority rests with the English.

Accordingly, the narrative enactment of temporality, agency, spatiality and motion in *A Life Apart* (Mukherjee 2011 [2008]) constitutes a *dystopian* counterpoint to *utopian* visions of an allegedly emergent transcultural future by highlighting the continuous repercussions of a conflict-ridden colonial past on an equally problematic postcolonial present. Beyond temporality itself, this persistent presence of the past in the present affects the two further dimensions of human motion – agency and spatiality – as well. Accordingly, narrative discourse interlocks the two chronotopes that function as the primary setting of the novel's contemporary and historical plots – multicultural Britain in the early 1990s and British India at the turn of the (twentieth) century – in multiple ways. Given my overall research interest, the temporal, spatial and agentive entanglements are of utmost importance in this context. Consequently, *A Life Apart* enacts the complex entanglements of colonial history and postcolonial present in the Indo-British context through its narrative configuration of entangled vectorialities, that is, by foregrounding the intricate interlocking of real-and-imagined movements in the days of the British Raj with those set in the contemporary age. It is this insistence on the ineluctable interconnectedness of colonial past and postcolonial present that turns *A Life Apart* into a contrapuntal²²⁹ narrative vis-à-vis one-sided discursive celebrations

²²⁹ With this characterization of *A Life Apart* as a contrapuntal narrative, I am transferring Said's seminal concept of "contrapuntal reading" (Said 1993: 78; cf. *ibid.* 19-20, 36, 49-50, 59-62), which designates an *interpretive* strategy targeted at the uncovering of those gaps and silences in classics of English literature that relate to the extratextual cultural context of British imperialism (cf. *ibid.* and Ashcroft et al. 2007: 49), to the level of the narrative strategies deployed in the literary text itself. Accordingly, I argue that in the case of Mukherjee's debut novel, the contrapuntal foregrounding of the silences and lacunae pertaining to the contemporary discourse of transculturalism constitutes a recurrent narrative strategy at work in the literary text itself, rather than an interpretive method to be applied *a posteriori*.

of an allegedly dawning, glorious age of universal and progressive transculturalism in contemporary cultural theory. The consistent foregrounding of what is silenced by such overly optimistic theories of transculturalism is the most evidently contrapuntal narrative strategy deployed by Mukherjee in his novel. All in all, this novel hence enacts a deeply pessimistic version of contemporary cross-cultural encounters, thereby epitomizing a dystopian narrative comment on the possibility of change for the better through contemporary hybridization (or transculturation) processes.

Before embarking upon a contextualized examination of the ways in which the narrative representation of temporality (Section 6.2), agency/subjectivity (Section 6.3), spatiality (Section 6.4) and motion (Section 6.5) contribute to the fictional configuration of this dystopia of transculturalism, I briefly want to highlight pertinent characteristics of the formal structure and the structure of narrative transmission in *A Life Apart*. As far as the former aspect is concerned, Mukherjee's novel consists of a prologue in which the funeral of Ritwik's mother occupies centre-stage (Chapter Zero, pp. 1-22); Part One (pp. 23-186), which deals with Ritwik's two years as an MA student at Oxford, and Part Two (pp. 187-400), which recounts his dreary struggle for survival as an illegal migrant in London. All of these parts are separated from one another by ellipses (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 106-109). Moreover, the chapters on Ritwik himself and those on 'his' fictive character Miss Gilby alternate throughout Parts One and Two. Consequently, multiple deictic shifts (cf. Herman 2002: 270-274) are demanded of the reader in the cognitive processing of this novel's double plot, for the reader is required to relocate spatio-temporally not only from the present communication situation to Ritwik's mobile situatedness in the storyworld of the first, contemporary plot (that of the framing narrative), but also from there to the storyworld of the second, historical plot (that of the framed narrative) revolving around Miss Gilby. These multiple spatio-temporal deictic shifts are indispensable because of the regular, constant alternation of these two storyworlds and their attendant temporalities in terms of chapter sequence throughout the novel.

As for the latter aspect, the structure of narrative transmission²³⁰ in *A Life Apart* distinguishes itself by its high degree of complexity inasmuch as the real author Neel Mukherjee invents an anonymous and covert (cf. Chatman 1978: 196-219), extra- and heterodiegetic first narrator, who recounts the embedding narrative about the first protagonist and internal focalizer, Ritwik Ghosh. This central character, in turn, is the intradiegetic author of the embedded, metadiegetic narrative about the second

²³⁰ For a general communication model for narrative texts, cf. Neumann and Nünning (2008: 26-28).

protagonist and internal focalizer, Miss Gilby, told by an anonymous and covert, fictive and heterodiegetic second narrator. As we shall see, this doubling of the textual functions of author, narrator and protagonist/focalizer reverberates decisively on this novel's narrative configuration of different temporalities, agencies/subjectivities and spatialities, because it contributes substantially to the consistent foregrounding of their mutual intertwining via the inversely entangled vectorialities of the protagonists' real-and-imagined movements.

6.2 Entangled Temporalities:²³¹ Haunting Past and Disillusioning Present

In this section, I will analyse the narrative configuration of temporality in *A Life Apart* (2011 [2008]), particularly in its reverberations on the transnational migrations performed by the two protagonists, Ritwik Ghosh in the contemporary storyworld, set primarily in the multicultural Britain of the early 1990s,²³² and Miss Maud Gilby in its historical counterpart, early twentieth-century British India. As elaborated in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, the significance of temporality in the context of human motion is a two-pronged affair: it relates to the historical contextualization of the respective movement and to the individual character's subjective experience of time while on the move. Due to its pre-eminent status in *A Life Apart*, the former aspect shall occupy centre-stage in this section.

Taking up my guiding hypothesis (see Section 6.1) on the entangled vectorialities of Ritwik's postcolonial migration and Miss Gilby's directionally inverse

²³¹ I have adopted this title from the heading of a subsection of the chapter on "Postcolonial Temporalities" in West-Pavlov's monograph *Temporalities* (2013), which is entitled "Entangled Multiplanar Temporalities" (West-Pavlov 2013: 170; cf. *ibid.* 170-174). In essence, my title additionally constitutes a slight adaptation of both Dipesh Chakrabarty's concept of "entangled times" (Chakrabarty 2008 [2000]: 243) and Shalini Randeria's concept of "entangled histories" (Randeria 2002). By opting for the term 'temporalities' instead of 'times' or 'histories', I intend to stress the character of time in narrative as the result of a narrative emplotment encompassing both the individual focalizer's experience of time and the historical context she acts in.

²³² As regards the narrative configuration of temporality in this novel, it is highly significant that throughout the entire text, narrative discourse provides the reader with nothing more than a single explicit hint at the precise historical context in which the contemporary plot is set: "It was only a few days ago he [Ritwik] read about how two ten-year-old boys had led a toddler away to a railway siding and battered him to death" (ALA 49). This instance of consonant psycho-narration (cf. Cohn 1978: 21-57) constitutes a direct reality reference to a shocking case of child murder committed by two English youngsters in 1993 (cf. Schmidt 1993).

colonial migration, I intend to spell out the precise nature of this narrative intertwining with regard to temporality²³³ in the following. On the whole, I argue that, by means of the narrative configuration of an interwoven “double temporality” (Farred 2006: 59),²³⁴ *A Life Apart* presents a rigorous postcolonial critique of the persistent impact of colonial patterns of political domination and economic exploitation on present-day configurations of modernity in extratextual cultural reality. Accordingly, my analysis is meant to account for the fact that “[t]o speak of time-consciousness in relation to postcolonial understanding [...] is itself to mark the recursive nature of temporal influence – as it recedes from the present to the past and back into contemporary focus” (Ganguly 2004: 163; cf. also West-Pavlov 2013: 158-174). It is precisely this consistent foregrounding of the complex interrelatedness of colonial past and postcolonial present that characterizes the narrative configuration of temporality in *A Life Apart*. Through its regular spatio-temporal oscillation between the chronotopes of ‘the early 20th-century British Raj’ and ‘contemporary Britain’, this novel exposes “the mutual embeddedness of European and ‘non-Western’ history” (Ganguly 2004: 169) on both the structural and contentual levels. Thereby, it narratively configures a discursive counter-model to the “denial of coevalness” (Fabian 2002 [1983]: 31) to non-Western societies that has been so characteristic of both Western colonial literature and anthropology. The narrative foregrounding of the “intertwined histories” (Said 1993: 1) of the Indian subcontinent and Britain in *A Life Apart* thus functions as an antidote to the erroneous assumption of “the givenness of the world in the present” (Ganguly 2004: 170), consistently reminding the reader of the fact “that all human societies are, in Fabian’s words, ‘of the same age’” (Ganguly 2004: 170; Fabian 2002 [1983]: 159). This strong emphasis on the contemporaneity of heterogeneous cultural configurations of “multiple modernities” (Welz 2009: 37) goes hand in hand, however, with a detailed thematization of the long shadow a traumatic past recurrently casts on a disillusioning present.

As far as contentual aspects are concerned, the problematic legacy of the past accordingly continues to dominate the disenchanting present on both the storyworld’s biographical micro-level and its geopolitical, geocultural and geotopological macro-level. The former aspect manifests itself in the fact that Ritwik is continually haunted by

²³³ The title of Mukherjee’s novel in India – *Past Continuous* – underlines the crucial significance of temporality in *A Life Apart*.

²³⁴ In his article “The Double Temporality of *Lagaan*: Cultural Struggle and Postcolonialism” (2006: 57-84), Grant Farred provides a culturally contextualized analysis of the filmic representation of temporality in the 2001 movie *Lagaan*, arguing that the idealized fictional enactment of “historic [Indian] unity” (Farred 2006: 72) serves as an incisive critique of the interreligious conflicts in the subcontinent’s postcolonial present (cf. Farred 2006: 65-66). As we shall see, the narratively configured double temporality in *A Life Apart* fulfils similar functions.

his traumatic childhood memories, which inhibit him in his freedom of action in the present (cf. *ALA* 46-48 and 143-156). The latter aspect – that is, the long shadow of the colonial past that continues to shatter any hope for improvement in the postcolonial present – becomes evident in various ways, such as in the insinuated claim that present-day poverty in Bengal is a long-term result of British colonialism in India, in the fact that Indian students like Ritwik keep migrating to Britain for their academic education or in the exclusionary immigration policy on the part of the British government that, in effect, forces destitute migrants into illegality. All in all, the narrative enactment of these entangled temporalities thus consistently foregrounds the haunting effect of a traumatic and conflict-ridden past on the sobering present on both the micro- and macro-levels of this novel's narratopology. Because this foregrounding of entangled temporalities and their effects is accomplished by means of various narrative strategies, I will examine each of them separately in the following, providing exemplary passages from the primary text (where necessary) and determining their specific function(s) in the overall framework of the narratively configured multiple entanglements of disparate – historical and contemporary – temporalities along the way.

The first strategy deployed to foreground these entangled temporalities consists in the narrative enactment of the internal focalizer Ritwik's haunting memories of physical abuse by his mother. In the following example, narrative discourse represents the devastating impact of these horrible memories on his freedom of action in the present via a combination of scenic presentation, interior monologue and consonant psycho-narration (cf. Cohn 1978: 21-57). All three narrative techniques serve the purpose of highlighting the way in which Ritwik's traumatic childhood memories render him temporarily unable to act in the present. As his mother died several weeks prior to the narrative present of this scene (her funeral constitutes the prologue of the entire novel; cf. *ALA* 1-22), Ritwik's traumatic experience of her imagined presence in his room at the Oxford student dormitory implies a purely mental – or, in Bal's terminology (cf. 2009 [1985]: 85-88), a subjective – analepsis. Totally inhibited by the frictional impact of his sudden recollections, he proves incapable of performing even the simple everyday cognitive script (cf. Herman 2002: 85-113; Neumann and Nünning 2008: 157) of going to the toilet:

He turns around [in his student dormitory room at Oxford University] to walk towards the light switch. His mother is sitting in the armchair near the door. There is a barely whispered presence in this threshold time of the gathering dark. In a thought-swift instant he understands the expression about hairs standing on end – fear tastes like this; it is the opening of the pores of your face, inside your ears, behind your head. *Don't come back like this you're*

gone you belong elsewhere not here I cannot live on this hinge you've just shown me it's one or the other now or then elsetime elseplace but please please please not me not ever. He suddenly has an urgent need to piss, but it seems he has grown gnarled, hugging roots in the regulation carpet. How can he bring himself to cross the few feet, past that armchair which is charged with her imagined trace, to the toilet outside? Only by this and by this only. (ALA 46; italics in original)

The fact that all three narrative techniques are deployed in the present tense (even psycho-narration, which usually features the past tense) underlines the direct experiential presence of this internal event in the protagonist's consciousness. Highlighted by its typographical rendering in italics, the short interspersed passage of interior monologue in which Ritwik cannot help but imagine his deceased mother speaking to him constitutes the pivot around which this entire situation revolves inasmuch as it triggers the involuntary postponement of his reaction to the physiological need he feels. What follows is a shocking account – again, in detailed scenic presentation – of Ritwik being beaten up by his mother as punishment for a boyish prank he committed when he was about six years old. It is this haunting memory, the imaginative re-experiencing of this brutal act of parental violence, that renders him glued to the spot, unable to rush to the bathroom:

He lets the liquid heat of his piss comfort him in its trickle down the inside of his legs and, when his saturated jeans cannot take it any more, watches it leak through pathetically in weak, stuttering drops on to the carpet. He is pissing, shaking and sobbing beside his desk, his room now completely in the grip of the dark. He feels he can never stop this trembling as he makes his way out, fumbling, to the bathroom. It is only much later that he notices how walking past that armchair is no longer a problem, a consuming terror. (ALA 48)

On the whole, this scene thus features a peculiar kind of belatedness insofar as Ritwik's bodily functions continue to operate, but his mind proves to be temporarily unable to resolve to act as expected of him. It is in this individual, situation-specific belatedness that the devastating effects of his traumatic childhood memories become manifest in the here-and-now of the storyworld's present (cf. Kirchhoff 2009: 141-232; Laplanche and Pontalis 1972 [1967]: 313-317; see also West-Pavlov 2013: 116-119). The traumatic character of these childhood memories manifests itself in the collapsing of different temporal planes – past and present – into one another in the protagonist's affective experience of this occurrence. With this breakdown of conventional, common-sense patterns of ordering temporality in a linear fashion (past versus present versus future), this scene narratively enacts a typical effect of trauma on subjective human experientiality (cf. Neumann 2008: 728-729). The liminality of Ritwik's experiential perspective on what is going on here finds an associative equivalent in the time of day at which this scene occurs, for the "threshold time of the gathering dark" (ALA 46), i.e.

dusk, is of an equally liminal character inasmuch as it constitutes the transition zone between day and night.

The contentual entangling of the protagonist's past and present is underlined formally through the specific ordering of internal and external events in narrative discourse. This becomes evident, for instance, when an analepsis on his traumatic childhood experiences as the prime victim of his emotionally unstable, violent and arbitrary mother is followed directly by the scenic presentation of his homosexual underground activities at the St Giles' public convenience in Oxford in the narrative present (cf. ALA156). In this specific case, one might even be tempted to assume that this narrative order tentatively suggests a causal connection between his horrid childhood and his sexual preferences: having been forced to live under the cruel regime of a tyrannical mother throughout his childhood, Ritwik feels unable to engage in intimate relationships with women. Accordingly, the physical abuse by his mother in the past may partly account for his homosexual orientation in the present. Without lapsing into such psychoanalytical terrain, however, it is possible to conclude that, all in all, both the narrative enactment of his traumatic childhood memories and their sequential contiguity to his homosexual activities in the liminal space of anonymous toilet sex in the present constitute a micro-level *mise en abyme* of the entangled temporalities that dominate this novel's structure and content at the textual macro-level as well.

On this latter level, five different – structural and/or contentual – narrative strategies are deployed to the end of foregrounding these multiply entangled temporalities. First, the reciprocal dependence of past and present is reflected structurally in the rhythmic alternation of chapters on the contemporary plot and those dealing with the historical plot. With this temporal jumping to and fro between the historical era of the British Raj and the early 1990s, *A Life Apart* narratively deconstructs the predominantly Western notion of time as a linear, one-dimensional flow, thereby refuting any assumption of teleology in human history as well. The narrative “synchronicity of the non-synchronous” (Jameson 1991: 307)²³⁵ achieved by means of this regular alternation thus foregrounds not only the fundamental multidimensionality of time in general (cf. Werner 2011: 151), but also the historical and cultural entangling of these specific, heterogeneous temporalities. From the point of

²³⁵ As Jameson himself acknowledges, the concept of “the synchronicity of the non-synchronous”/“the simultaneity of the non-simultaneous” (1991: 307) that he employs in the conclusion of his magisterial study *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991) in order to describe the “coevalness” (Fabian 2002 [1983]: 31) of “uneven modernities” (Randeria 2002) originally stems from a 1977 essay in *New German Critique* by Ernst Bloch.

view of cognitive narratology, the rhythmic alternation of Ritwik's and Miss Gilby's stories moreover produces a notorious co-presence of these two storyworlds in the reader's mind, with the one that is currently not being foregrounded constantly hovering in the back of the recipient's consciousness. This cognitive short-circuiting of two disparate but entangled agentive space-time configurations alternately functioning as figure or ground, thus backs up my central argument concerning the structural and contentual intertwining of these two chronotopes that, taken together, form this novel's narrative universe (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107).

Second, this structural principle is backed up on the content level by the narratively configured co-presence of heterogeneous cultural temporalities within these two interrelated storyworlds. In the contemporary plot, for example, the protagonist Ritwik is confronted with the teleological linearity inherent in the paternalistic "Three Worlds Theory" (cf. e.g. Ahmad 1992)²³⁶ and the condescending concept of a Third World (cf. e.g. Thieme 2003: 259) by his British fellow students, whose view of India still proves to be heavily inflected by Western imperialist stereotypes despite their liberal-humanist worldview. In contrast to them, Ritwik is well aware of the fact that the relentless continuation of neo-colonialist economic policies practised by First World countries like the United Kingdom vis-à-vis their Third World counterparts is the decisive factor that prevents countries like India from catching up with their Western competitors (cf. *ALA* 104-105). Therefore, a paradoxical situation obtains: while First World socioeconomic standards are propagated as the universal ideal to be striven for, it is Western debt policy that prevents Third World countries from attaining these overall standards of living. Western-style modernity is thus posited officially as the universally applicable norm and turned into an unattainable ideal at the same time.

It is this crucial realization that sets Ritwik off from his British contemporaries, who still believe in their 'enlightened' form of benevolent paternalism towards India. This awareness thus constitutes the hallmark of his postcolonial standpoint, which puts

²³⁶ In his path-breaking monograph *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures* (1992), Aijaz Ahmad relentlessly deconstructs the simplistic "Three Worlds Theory" and the attendant concept of "Third World Literature" from a decidedly Marxist perspective, demonstrating their theoretical, methodological and practical inadequacy with sophisticated rigour and a meticulous social, historical and literary contextualization. What I have in mind when talking about the "Three Worlds Theory" in the following, however, is the starkly simplified version of the object of Ahmad's comprehensive critique as used by benevolent and condescending Westerners in everyday contexts up until the collapse of the Soviet power bloc in the late 1980s and early 1990s, for instance in conversations about development aid for the so-called "Third World" (cf. Thieme 2003: 259). This approach is justifiable because it is precisely this simplistic, now largely historical, everyday usage that apparently marks the statements about India made by Ritwik's British fellow students in the contemporary plot, which is set in the early 1990s.

him in clear opposition to the neo-imperialist viewpoint cherished by his British fellow students at Oxford. As the purview of Ritwik's considerations on this issue remains restricted to the representation of his consciousness (cf. *ALA* 104-105), he does not enter into an open discussion of their disparate views on the debt-induced dependence of Third World countries on their First World creditors. In essence, his unwillingness to challenge the self-righteous and condescending attitude displayed by his British peers openly is due to the internal friction caused by his general shyness and reclusiveness as well as his fear of being rejected by them (cf. *ALA* 40-41). Consequently, he proves to be unable to undermine their mental geotopology of the world in this particular regard.

Ritwik does succeed, however, in disrupting the temporal logic inherent in the Three Worlds Theory and in the attendant apotheosis of Western modernity by pointing out to his fellow students that the academic subject 'English Literature' had been introduced in India even before it was established as such in England in the latter half of the nineteenth century:

An important question now seems to be, 'How is it you read English Literature in *India* and came here to do more of it?' He surprises them by revealing that English Literature, as an academic discipline, was first taught in India, not in England; English administrators and policy-makers thought that the study of English Literature would have an ennobling and civilizing effect on the natives. They are thrown a bit, even a little embarrassed by this. (*ALA* 100; italics in original)

Here, Ritwik turns this temporal logic – according to which modern innovations were exported unidirectionally from the metropolitan countries to the colonial peripheries – upside down by highlighting the fact that in this particular case, the institutionalization of a modern academic subject actually constituted a much more complex process involving the 're-import' of the study of English literature from the colonies to the mother country (cf. *ALA* 100). Their astonished, startled and embarrassed reaction to this revelation is indicative of the degree to which this fact disrupts the lopsidedly evolutionist mental topology of world history in the modern age endorsed by his British fellow students.

In the historical storyworld, the co-presence of heterogeneous cultural temporalities is thematized, for instance, through the narrative representation of Miss Gilby's perception of 'Indian' temporality as fundamentally distinct from 'English' temporality. While travelling all across Calcutta in one of her beloved tramcars, Miss Gilby experiences life in the city as being trapped in the directionless repetition of the ever-same practices:

She likes the stillness of these boats; they seem to ply the waters in so leisurely a manner that it is difficult to believe they're going anywhere or transporting people on them. It is the very rhythm of the country, this apparent lack of movement, of any forward motion altogether. Time means an altogether different thing to them. (ALA 88)

The latter – evidently disputable – observation is evidence of the fact that, despite her liberal-humanist ideals, Miss Gilby's view of India is nevertheless strongly inflected by the imperialist mind-set of the early twentieth-century British Raj. Accordingly, she endorses Western concepts of time as a resource, for ascribing slowness and backwardness to colonized peoples belongs to the classical topoi of imperialist discourse and, what is more, was utilized as one of the prime strategies for legitimizing colonial rule. This highly prejudiced view of the Indians as a collective entity leads Miss Gilby to the conclusion that “[t]ime means an altogether different thing to them” (ALA 88). Granted, with this allusion she at least documents her awareness of time concepts other than the Western capitalist notion of 'time is money'. Nonetheless, she proves unable to gauge Indian notions of temporality according to standards other than that posited by the European Enlightenment, which postulated its own rationalist, scientific and technological advancement as a universal measure of progress applicable to all humankind (cf. Frank 2006: 40-43; Fabian 2004: 349). Confronted with essentially different, incommensurable temporalities, she thus cannot help but stick stubbornly to this culture-specific idea of time as an arrow of historical progress.

This typical constellation can be further elucidated by Bhabha's concept of the “time-lag”, which, “despite the fact that it is a disruption of linear *time*” (Upstone 2009: 68; italics in original), is characterized by Bhabha himself as “a *spatial movement* of cultural representation” (Bhabha 1992: 59; italics in original; see also Upstone 2009: 68). With this definition, Bhabha emphasizes that a time-lag can only be posited in relation to some definite stage of cultural development (Western modernity, for example); therefore, it is always relative to the time concept predominant in the observing traveller's particular cultural space of origin. It is this space-dependent relativity of any ascertainment of an alleged time-lag that comes to the fore in the narrative representation of Miss Gilby's perception of Calcutta. As in the examples from the contemporary plotline analysed above, the co-presence of Western and non-Western temporalities is foregrounded narratively here. This short-circuiting of disparate cultural temporalities incites the reader to critically question the ontological and epistemological premises upon which his own culture's concept of temporality rests.

All in all, the examples discussed so far thus epitomize the multiple functionalization of the intertwining of different cultural temporalities in this novel. More precisely, I argue that they fulfil four interrelated functions. First, they reveal the cultural constructedness of all kinds of temporalities. Second, they deconstruct the simplistic binary opposition of 'modern West' and 'traditional East' by highlighting their synchronicity as disparate but simultaneous configurations of modernity. Thereby, third, they break up the alleged homogeneity and uniqueness of Western modernity and its attendant concepts of temporality as a linear, unidirectional vector and of history as a teleological ascension from a primitive past to Western modernity. As a consequence, fourth, they draw attention to "culture's transnational temporalities" (Bhabha 1994g: 315), or, rather, to the transnational entanglements of cultural temporalities, without, however, falling prey to the evolutionist utopia of a dawning era of global transculturalism as the alleged apex of historical teleology.

Third, the narrative foregrounding of the interdependence of time and space contributes substantially to the intertwining of past and present in *A Life Apart*. This fundamental reciprocity becomes manifest in the long-term effects British colonial rule in India has upon the contemporary cultural space Bengal up to the present day. A case in point here is the novel's repetitive thematization of present-day poverty in Bengal as a long-term consequence of the British Raj, a topic that is broached both in its contemporary and historical plots. Thus, there is a contentual correlation between Ritwik's reflections on absolute versus relative poverty (cf. *ALA* 102-103) in the present and Miss Gilby's reading about the ruthless British policy of economic exploitation and starvation of Bengal (cf. *ALA* 212, 219-220) in the historical era of the Raj. Although narrative discourse does not foreground the *causal* connection between the two phenomena explicitly, the reader can infer it from her extratextual cultural world knowledge about the nature of European colonialism and its aftermath in the present. As well, the recurrent thematization of the stark contrast between First World prosperity and Third World poverty in different narrative modes, such as consonant psychonarration, free indirect discourse (cf. Fludernik 1993: 72-359) and narratorial summary, throughout the novel testifies to the central significance of this thematic complex for its overall meaning potential. Accordingly, it is with regard to both frequency and duration (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 86-160) that this thematic complex occupies centre-stage in narrative discourse.

On the whole, this narrative strategy of foregrounding the interrelatedness of time and space functions as an indicator of the contentual contiguity, i.e. the similarity

of macro-structural patterns both among the narratologies of the historical and the contemporary storyworlds and between these narratively enacted topologies and their respective extratextual cultural counterparts, for example with regard to the overall distribution of power, wealth and influence between First and Third World countries. Therefore, it highlights the ‘continuity in discontinuity’ of the geotopological macro-constellations governing the historical and the contemporary storyworlds, particularly in terms of (neo)colonial power asymmetries between Britain and India. In conclusion, I assert, this narrative strategy serves to draw attention to the diachronic and “transspatial” (Ette 2005: 22) persistence of historical configurations at the geopolitical macro-level: the spectre of colonialism continues to haunt the postcolonial present.

On a meta-level, there is thus a structural analogy between these two haunting memories that continually reverberate upon Ritwik’s experience of time and space in the present: just as his individual childhood memories torment him incessantly on the textual micro-level, the exploitative economic policy practised by the British in India in the colonial past still makes itself felt in the postcolonial present on the textual macro-level. The frequency and duration of the narrative thematization of these structurally analogous phenomena are indicative of their high degree of affective significance for the protagonist. Moreover, it is important to note that both of them work transtemporally and transspatially (cf. Ette 2005: 21-22) inasmuch as Ritwik continues to suffer from the haunting memories of his physically abusive and tyrannical mother as well as of his family’s poverty in Calcutta even after his move to England several years later. It is this simultaneously transtemporal and transspatial (cf. Ette 2005: 21-22) effectiveness of these contentual patterns that severely hampers Ritwik’s individual agency in the present. In conclusion, I thus claim that the entangled temporalities enacted in this novel affect the other two dimensions of human motion – spatiality and agency – as well.

Fourth, the diachronic interlocking of different epoch-specific temporalities is intensified by the revelation of Ritwik’s structural function as the fictive author of the novel’s secondary, historical plot revolving around Miss Gilby (cf. *ALA* 55-56). Whereas his experienced vector has led him from India to England in the novel’s here-and-now, Ritwik’s imagined vector²³⁷ takes the inverse direction, going back both spatially (from England to India) and temporally (from the early 1990s to the beginning of the twentieth century). Having performed a transnational migratory movement westward in the textual actual world of the present, the protagonist Ritwik thus makes up his mind to

²³⁷ For the narratological differentiation between experienced and imagined vectors, see Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation.

embark upon an imaginative, spatio-temporal return eastward, to the chronotope of early twentieth-century British India, in the textual possible world (cf. Ryan 1985: 719-720; Ryan 1991: vii). Building on Bhabha's observation that "the performative introduces a temporality of the 'in-between'" (Bhabha 1994f: 212), I contend that, by performing the role of (fictive) author of a novel-in-the-novel, Ritwik creates a third space of "transcultural temporalities" (Wiemann 2009: 103) that deliberately shines a light on the "transspatial" and "transtemporal" (Ette 2005: 22) interconnections between late twentieth-century multicultural Britain and early twentieth-century British India. By disclosing this structural functionalization of the primary narrative's protagonist only *a posteriori*, i.e. subsequent to the first chapter of Miss Gilby's story, the anonymous heterodiegetic narrator disrupts not only the common-sense notion of clear chronological linearity but also the straightforward narratological concept of embedding, which traditionally implies the explication of the contentual link between embedding and embedded narratives before the beginning of the latter.

The narrative structure of Mukherjee's novel is complicated even further by the fact that Ritwik does not set about writing a novel entirely of his own imaginative creativity, but instead opts to re-write Rabindranath Tagore's *Ghare Baire* (translated into English as *The Home and the World*), a classic of modern Bengali literature. To put it in Ricoeur's terminology (cf. Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52-87), the multi-layered narrative configuration of temporality in *A Life Apart* is essentially prefigured by the extratextual cultural history of colonialism, neocolonialism and postcolonialism. In addition, the narrative configuration of temporality in the textual actual world of Ritwik's life story is complemented by his creative reconfiguration of Tagore's *The Home and the World* from Miss Gilby's perspective in the textual fictional world of his imagination.

As a result, the reader is confronted not only with a diachronic intratextual connection between the narrative present of Ritwik's life story, the early 1990s in England, and the historical era of early twentieth-century British India, which functions as the setting of Miss Gilby's story, but also with a synchronic intertextual link between the latter plotline of *A Life Apart* and Tagore's classic. Consequently, this highly sophisticated narrative structure (corresponding to two different but intratextually conjoined narrative temporalities – one contemporary, the other historical) does indeed corroborate my claim that the main feature of this novel's representation of time consists in the multi-layered entanglement of heterogeneous temporalities on both the structural and contentual levels.

Fifth, the metalepsis occurring in the beginning of the novel's second part (cf. ALA 236-237) complicates the intricate structure of narrative transmission characteristic of *A Life Apart* (see Section 6.1) even further. In one of his conversations with Anne Cameron, the elderly lady he nurses, Ritwik learns that a minor character from his fictive narrative about Miss Gilby, Violet Cameron, who is supposed to exist only in the textual fictional world of his imagination, actually is the mother-in-law of his elderly protégée in the textual actual world. Understandably, Ritwik is thunderstruck when he realizes that Anne Cameron is the widow of Christopher, Violet Cameron's only son. Violet, in turn, appears as Miss Gilby's likeminded friend and companion in Ritwik's rewriting of Tagore's *The Home and the World*. Paradoxically, a minor character in the framing narrative (Anne Cameron) is the daughter-in-law of a minor character in the framed narrative (Violet Cameron). This implicit metaleptic connection between the superordinate contemporary plot (Ritwik's story) and his subordinate reconfiguration of Tagore's historical plot (Miss Gilby's story) constitutes the structural climax of the fundamental intertwining of these distinct plots' heterogeneous temporalities.

It is characteristic of this novel's minimalistic strategy of narrative representation, however, that narrative discourse never states this particular type of counterfactual interrelatedness explicitly in the entire novel. Instead, the reader is merely given subtle hints at this crucial interweaving of Ritwik's and Miss Gilby's story, from which it becomes possible to justifiably infer a metaleptic link between them. To name but two pertinent examples, the narratorial description of Violet Cameron's prominent social status as widow of the former Lieutenant-Governor of Allahabad (cf. ALA 89) is taken up by Anne Cameron in her characterization of Christopher as "[s]on of an army bigwig, Lieutenant-General or something" (ALA 236). In addition, Anne Cameron's admiring comments on the brave educational initiatives for Indian girls launched by Christopher's mother during the Raj (cf. ALA 236) nicely match the narratorial characterization of Violet Cameron (ibid. 89-91) as "one of life's great irrepressibles, a true free spirit" who "set[s] up schools for the education of Indian women in her own backyard" (ALA 90), thereby acquiring a peculiar kind of "outcast status" (ibid.) in Anglo-Indian society (cf. ibid. 89-91).

In precise narratological terms, this bottom-up violation of the ontological boundary between embedded and embedding narratives thus constitutes an "ascending metalepsis" (Pier 2005: 252-253; see also Pier 2014 [2011]: n. pag.), because it is a character from the subordinate embedded narrative who crosses the

boundary-line separating it from the superordinate embedding narrative (cf. Pier 2005: 252-253; Pier 2008 [2005]: 304 and Pier 2014 [2011]: n. pag.; see also Genette 1980: 234-237; Genette 1988 [1983]: 88). By means of this “extrametaleptic transgression” (Pier 2008: 304; see also Pier 2014 [2011]: n. pag. and Wagner 2002: 244), it becomes evident that the ontological link between embedding and embedded narratives is not purely unidirectional.

Consequently, this metalepsis introduces a fleeting moment of “transtemporality” (Ette 2005: 22)²³⁸ inasmuch as the bidirectional interlocking of Ritwik’s and Miss Gilby’s life stories suspends the hitherto clear narrative hierarchy. Whereas up to this point, the reader has been led to believe that Ritwik’s function as the fictive author of Miss Gilby’s story renders the narrative level on which he operates superordinate in comparison to the historical plot, this unambiguous hierarchy is disrupted severely now by the disclosing of a direct kinship relation between his elderly protégée Anne Cameron and Miss Gilby’s best friend Violet Cameron. In essence, this metalepsis consequently sublates the “[p]rivileging [of] the ‘now’ of writing” (Ganguly 2004: 170) in favour of acknowledging the reciprocal influence these different temporalities exert upon one another. Therefore, this extrametaleptic transgression *structurally* corroborates my initial hypothesis concerning the diachronically entangled temporalities, i.e. the multi-layered transnational intertwining of colonial past and postcolonial present that is so characteristic of *A Life Apart*. On a meta-level, this metalepsis moreover fulfils the function of calling into question the ontological assumption that there are discrete, neatly separable temporalities by highlighting the diachronic interconnectedness of different cultural temporalities.

Proceeding from the insight that the jumping from one narrative level to another implied by the concept of metalepsis generally affects the spatio-temporal structuration of the entire narrative universe (cf. Pier 2008: 304), I contend that this particular instance of extrametaleptic transgression does serve the purpose of highlighting the fundamental and ineluctable interrelatedness of time and space in general and, more specifically, of the two spatial and historical contexts of present-day multicultural Britain and early twentieth-century British India. This is so precisely because both in extratextual cultural reality and in this novel’s narrative universe, the “entangled

²³⁸ Ette defines “transtemporality” as follows: “*Transtemporal* processes or structurations [...] refer to an incessant crossing of different time levels. The process of such an intertwining of times creates a temporality of its own which, in its transtemporality, strongly foregrounds, above all, transcultural and translingual phenomena” (Ette 2005: 22; my translation; italics in original). In essence, my use of the concept “transtemporality” here conforms to Ette’s definition, although I do lay more emphasis on its interconnectedness with Bhabha’s (1994) concept of “third space” (see below).

histories” (Randeria 2002) of Britain and India have produced the contemporary interrelations between these two cultural spaces. Accordingly, the main function of this metalepsis consists in creating a fleetingly transtemporal third space of entangled temporalities through the extrametaleptic transgression of the ontological boundary between historical and contemporary storyworlds. As well, the overall effect of this metalepsis on the recipient lies in a severe disruption of the mimetic illusion (cf. Pier 2008: 304). This destructive effect goes hand in hand with a purposeful foregrounding of both the cultural constructedness and the fictionality of the intertwined narratives themselves and their attendant temporalities. Accordingly, it is the deployment of this metalepsis that brings the narrative configuration of temporality in this novel close to the Hinduist notion of time as “a figment of the mind” (Klostermaier 2010: 874; cf. Section 2.3 of this dissertation). All in all, this metalepsis therefore introduces a certain metafictional element into the narrative structure of *A Life Apart*.

To sum up my argument in this section, I contend that the functionalization of all the narrative strategies deployed to foreground the entangled temporalities of haunting colonial past and disillusioning postcolonial present on various narrative levels converges in the deeply pessimistic outlook on the future conveyed by the ending of *A Life Apart*. Contrary to Bhabha (cf. 1994g: 336), the novel’s ending does not envisage “the future [...] as an open question” (ibid.), but instead negates the possibility of change for the better. Accordingly, Ritwik’s novelistic project of “reconfiguring the present through the past” (Farred 2006: 81) by rewriting Tagore’s classic is bound to fail because of the persistently devastating impact that historical traumata have on the present with regard to both his individual biography and the “entangled histories” (Randeria 2002) of Britain and India. Consequently, the past does not figure – in postmodernist fashion – as a resource for Ritwik’s self-exploration, but instead displays its own, cruelly disruptive agency in the present. The overall failure of inter- and transcultural negotiation processes in past and present, the last sentence of Ritwik’s tragic life story suggests, prefigures and predetermines the future to such an extent that the continuation of all too well-known practices (such as racism, exclusionary immigration policies and so on) appears as the most probable future course of history. Having been beaten up and stabbed by racist thugs, Ritwik “doesn’t hear [...] the sound of five sets of running, escaping feet, as his thin blood trickles out onto this dark corner of a back street that will be forever England” (ALA 397).

On a meta-level, the bracketing of this novel's plot with thematizations of human death – both its beginning and its ending feature major characters dying²³⁹ – brings about a temporal deep-structure that proves to be reminiscent of both the cyclical concept of temporality in the *Rigveda* and the fatalistic equation of time with the destructive forces of destiny to be found in the *Mahabharata* as described by Klostermaier (cf. 2010 [2008]: 872-873). More precisely, this temporal deep-structure is cyclical because it is marked by the periodic recurrence of certain events (such as death), and it is fatalistic inasmuch as the novel's final sentence suggests that the history of racism will repeat itself over and over again. Accordingly, the temporal deep-structure of *A Life Apart* corroborates the pessimistic negation of the possibility of change for the better in the future conveyed by the narrative closure of its plot. In addition, the implicit usage of time concepts from the philosophy of Hinduism contributes substantially to one of the novel's central concerns: the calling into question of the modern-day Western monoculture of time as a unidirectional linear vector flowing steadily from the past via the present to the future (cf. Section 2.3 of this dissertation). In the same vein, the narrative foregrounding of heterogeneous but coeval and *equivalent* temporalities in *A Life Apart* challenges not only Walter Benjamin's postulate of "homogeneous, empty time" (Benjamin 1968 [1950]: 261) as the single characteristic temporality of rationalized modernity, but also the claim to exclusiveness of its political analogue, the modern Western nation (cf. Anderson 1991 [1983]: 26 and Ganguly 2004: 171-172). Therefore, this novel's revisionary postcolonialist impetus extends to culturally prevalent concepts of both temporality and spatiality.

In conclusion, it is thus justified to claim that, all in all, Mukherjee's debut novel is characterized by a conspicuous tension between narrative structure and content. While the deployment of an extrametaleptic transgression for the purpose of foregrounding the transnational and transtemporal intertwining of the contemporary and historical plotlines clearly adds a postmodernist touch to this novel's complex narrative structuration, its content level is primarily dominated by postcolonialist concerns, such as the diachronic persistence of power and wealth asymmetries between First and Third World countries and issues related to transnational migration in a postcolonial context. In contrast to the general thrust of Salman Rushdie's fiction, the relationship between postmodernism and postcolonialism in *A Life Apart* hence does not constitute a productive fusion, but rather a frictional, conflict-ridden relationship, as the predominance of down-to-earth thematizations of problematic real-world issues like racism and exclusionary immigration policies demonstrates.

²³⁹ Chapter Zero, which functions as a prologue to *A Life Apart*, deals with the death of Ritwik's mother and the subsequent funeral rites that are obligatory in Hinduism (cf. ALA 1-22).

6.3 Liminal Subjectivities: Ritwik and Miss Gilby as Contrapuntal Go-betweens

This section is concerned with analysing the narrative constitution of the two protagonists' liminal positionalities in their respective storyworlds as well as attendant configurations of agency in *A Life Apart*. More precisely, I argue that their liminal²⁴⁰ subjectivities emerge as a result of the text-specific narrative configuration of certain parameters, such as the complex distribution of agency on different structural levels of the novel. In the following, I accordingly want to retrace the narrative configuration of several of these variables and elucidate their particular contribution to the two protagonists' role as contrapuntal go-betweens among heterogeneous sociocultural groups within their respective storyworlds.

In concrete terms, their role as liminal go-betweens on the level of their respective storyworlds turns Ritwik and Miss Gilby into contrapuntal characters in a double sense: first, it does so in the Saidian sense (cf. Said 1993: 78; cf. *ibid.* 19-20, 36, 49-50, 59-62) inasmuch as the characters constitute liminal counterpoints to culturally dominant subjectivities as well as pertinent positionalities and give voice to problematic issues repressed by the latter. As for Miss Gilby, her courageous efforts to set up intercultural contact situations between English and Indian women draw attention to and, at the same time, problematize the strict separation of genders according to patriarchal Indian tradition in the hierarchical society of the British Raj. In a similar vein, the narrative configuration of Ritwik's complex subjectivity simultaneously highlights and problematizes both the paternalistic marginalization of postcolonial subjects in contemporary British society and the social discrimination against homosexuals that forces them to live out their sexual preferences stealthily in liminal spaces. Second, the two protagonists' liminal subjectivities are contrapuntal to one another as well in that the narrative configuration of the main parameters determining Ritwik's subjectivity and attendant positionality (as an underprivileged Indian student at Oxford and later as a destitute illegal immigrant in contemporary multicultural London) constitute a direct counterpoint to Miss Gilby's (as a highly privileged, well-off English woman in the historical society of early twentieth-century British India).

²⁴⁰ I am using the concept of liminality here in Bhabha's sense as one of the defining features of "in-between' spaces" (Bhabha 1994a: 2) or liminal spaces in which alternative subjectivities can emerge (cf. *ibid.*). This particular usage of the term differs from Arnold van Gennep's (cf. 2005 [1909]) and Victor Turner's (cf. 2005 [1969]) conceptualization of liminality in that it is not restricted to "the context of social rituals like rites of passage" (Viljoen and van der Merwe 2007a: 10; cf. *ibid.* 1-26).

To begin with, the narrative constitution of Ritwik's and Miss Gilby's respective subjectivities thus proves to be indissolubly tied to the multi-layered distribution of agency on different structural planes of Mukherjee's debut novel. As regards the level of narrative transmission, Ritwik's structural position is superior to Miss Gilby's on account of his role as the fictive author of her narrative. More precisely, Ritwik is situated on a higher level than Miss Gilby because he invents an implicit, non-individualized narrator recounting her experiences as the tutor and companion of a Bengali zamindar's wife in the early twentieth century. Ontologically, Ritwik thus asserts his independent agency as a writer by opening up a transcultural space of intertextuality: his re-writing of Tagore's modern Bengali classic *Ghare Baire / The Home and the World* creates a transcultural "memory space" (Assmann 1999)²⁴¹ in which the early twentieth-century *swadeshi* movement in Bengal is translated for a Western audience. By endowing an originally silenced English character – Miss Gilby²⁴² – with a voice of her own and upgrading her to the role of sole internal focalizer, Ritwik creates, in addition, a structural parody of postcolonial re-writing that critically comments on the unidirectionality with which this strategy is commonly deployed by postcolonial authors. Through the foreignizing agency of translation (cf. Döring 2002: 209), which leaves neither of the parties involved unchanged (cf. Bachmann-Medick 2012: 23-43, particularly 30), Ritwik thus not only contextualizes the historical setting of Tagore's *The Home and the World* for Westerners, but also alters the way we read this classic itself. Having perused Ritwik's creative adaptation of Tagore's original, which consistently reconfigures the narrative from the perspective of an originally marginalized character (Miss Gilby), we also perceive Tagore's work with different eyes precisely because Ritwik's re-writing consistently foregrounds the silences and gaps left by the original.

All in all, Ritwik's re-writing is thus marked by a double inversion: first, a directional inversion, for the imagined vector of Miss Gilby's journey in the textual possible world (from England to India) heads in the opposite direction of Ritwik's experienced vector in the textual actual world (from India to England); and second, a structural inversion of roles inasmuch as the postcolonial subject Ritwik upgrades a minor English character from a classic of modern Bengali literature (and not, as is common in the strategy of postcolonial re-writing, a minor non-European character

²⁴¹ Cf. Assmann, Aleida (1999): *Erinnerungsräume: Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses*. Munich: Beck.

²⁴² The English translation of Tagore's original mentions the English tutor Miss Gilby but three times in the entire novel, so she can hardly count as a major character there. On the contrary, her individual perspective on the events narrated is silenced completely in Tagore's original, which employs exclusively Bengali characters as rhythmically alternating internal focalizers.

from a colonial classic of English literature). Accordingly, it is a fictitious postcolonial author here who endows a previously peripheralized English character with a voice and a rather high degree of individual agency in the textual possible world of his imagination.

On the level of their respective storyworlds, Miss Gilby consequently occupies a sociocultural positionality that is clearly superior to Ritwik's, for she is an unmarried English upper-class woman enjoying a comparatively high degree of individual freedom of action in the strictly hierarchical society of the British Raj, whereas he turns from an underprivileged Indian student at Oxford University into a destitute and hapless illegal migrant in London who is denied the general freedom of action that is so characteristic of his fictive creation, Miss Gilby. The resulting macro-constellation – a conspicuous lack of agency in the author's sociocultural positionality (in the textual actual world) in conjunction with generous freedom of action granted to his fictive character (in the textual possible world of his imagination) – could easily be explained from a psychoanalytical point of view as a compensatory mechanism involving the fictional realization of the author's great wishful dream in the realm of narrative. From a postcolonial perspective, however, the same constellation reads as a deeply pessimistic comment on the underlying power asymmetries between the (former) English colonizers and the (formerly) colonized ethnicities, the reach of which extends from the colonial past into the postcolonial present. Given this structure of narrative transmission in conjunction with the contrapuntal distribution of socioeconomic and cultural positionalities among the protagonists in their respective storyworlds, Mukherjee's novel confronts the reader with an intricate entanglement of disparate configurations of agency on different levels of the narrative text. While having a superior sociocultural status on the story level, Miss Gilby is structurally subordinate to Ritwik.

Despite their unequal freedom of action on the story level, the individual positionalities occupied by the two protagonists do have one thing in common: their downright liminality within the societal structures of the respective storyworld. In Miss Gilby's case, this is due to her open defiance of powerful sociocultural norms in the British Raj such as, most prominently, the dictate of maintaining an attitude of reserved aloofness, of keeping a clear distance vis-à-vis the 'natives': "It didn't come as a surprise that she was punished for breaking the rules, especially that central rule of the Raj – you didn't treat the natives as equals" (*ALA* 30). Moreover, as an unmarried and childless middle-aged woman, Miss Gilby also refuses to play the role traditionally

assigned to Englishwomen by imperialist discourse – that of “breeders for race and nation” (Nair 2000: 226). Due to her high level of education and privileged social status, Miss Gilby is in a position to reject this “inferior role as the female (colonized) Other” (Nair 2000: 225) for herself and, what is more, to question the rigid boundaries of gender and race prevalent in Raj society, for example by educating Indian girls and women (cf. Boehmer 2005: 71). All these markers of her individual identity configuration turn her into a liminal subject precisely because the price she has to pay for her oppositional individuality is social exclusion from the ‘inner circles’ of the highly secluded world of the English colonizers in India. In Ritwik’s case, his liminality is a question of both his marginalized positionality as a migrant from India studying at Oxford University and of the internal friction that inhibits him in his daily interactions with other people. Consequently, he does not dare challenge heteronormativity openly but lives out his homosexuality only in the clandestine netherworld of anonymous gay sex with strangers.

In terms of different narrative configurations of agency, the spectrum of thematic roles Ritwik plays essentially oscillates between the two dichotomous poles of ‘agent and patient’. With his initial decision to accept the scholarship he is offered and migrate to England, he does perform the role of a relatively autonomous agent, whereas in the analeptic scenes in which he is repeatedly haunted by the horrific memories of physical and emotional abuse by his tyrannical mother, he clearly qualifies as a patient. In the former case, Ritwik’s momentum – that is, the degree of intrinsic commitment he exhibits vis-à-vis his migration to England – is high, because, from his subjective experiential point of view, this transcontinental journey is synonymous with crossing the threshold to adulthood. Above all, it is thus his horrid childhood experiences as the defenceless victim of his mother’s sadistic whims that accounts for the high momentum with which he semanticizes his migration to England. In other words, this journey signifies a leap into freedom from parental domination and a momentous assertion of his independent agency (cf. *ALA* 189). As such, it represents a virtual *rite de passage* (van Gennep 2005 [1909]).²⁴³

²⁴³ Van Gennep (cf. 2005 [1909]: 21) conceptualizes *rites de passage* as a three-stage process of biographical transitions such as initiation (into adulthood), ageing and birth and death. The first stage involves the spatial and symbolic separation of the individuals concerned from their usual social surroundings. The second stage consists in a symbolic transformation of these individuals into ‘new’ subjects, hence its particular significance as “the stage of liminality” (Viljoen and van der Merwe 2007a: 11). The third stage finally comprises the reintegration of these transformed individuals into society (cf. van Gennep 2005 [1909]: 21; see also Viljoen and van der Merwe 2007a: 1-26, particularly 10-12).

The latter case, by contrast, epitomizes the degree to which the internal friction hampering Ritwik's freedom of action in the present is a long-term result of the external friction posed by his mother's tyrannical regime in his childhood and youth. One conspicuous tactic Ritwik has been deploying to cope with these traumatic experiences from childhood onwards consists in reading as a form of escapism from the bleak reality of his family's situation. Accordingly, the protagonist tries to make up for his lack of independent agency in the textual actual world through mental mobility, that is, by immersing himself in the textual possible worlds of his books and his individual imagination (cf. *ALA* 113-117). Consequently, the underlying behavioural pattern is the same as that deployed by Pran Nath Razdan, the protagonist of *The Impressionist* (Kunzru 2002) during his confinement at the human traffickers' place in Agra (cf. Section 5.2 of this dissertation): compensation for being deprived of 'real-world' agency by a heightened degree of mental mobility. Between the two extremes of 'agent and patient', the performative range of agentive roles he plays includes that of effector,²⁴⁴ such as when he makes up his mind to work as a male street prostitute in King's Cross, London, and experiencer²⁴⁵ (as epitomized by his subjective experience of the homosexual underground activities at the St Giles' public convenience in Oxford).

In particular, Ritwik's fascination with the liminal underworld of the St Giles' public convenience is a prime indicator of his equally liminal subjectivity and attendant positionality as an Indian homosexual in early 1990s Britain. Rendered in detailed scenic presentation, the narrative configuration of his experiences there (cf. *ALA* 119-128, 156-161) is marked, above all, by the intricate interplay of cognitive and affective factors that shape his individual experientiality decisively. As for the cognitive aspect, he deploys an elaborate, quasi-mathematical 'tactics of movement' (cf. de Certeau 1984: xix, 35-38) in order to get in touch with promising sex partners there: "[...] it is like a problem in logic: if p, then not q, but only after a finite set of conditions, {a, b, c ... n}, has been satisfied" (*ALA* 123). Although he is cognitively aware of the manifold dangers involved in frequenting such a notorious place, such as, for instance, "picking

²⁴⁴ Herman defines effectors as storyworld participants "that can cause things to happen, without instigating or controlling what happens in the manner of agents" (Herman 2002: 158; cf. *ibid.*). Although this differentiation between agents and effectors is debatable, I think that it does make sense here because the protagonist's resolve to continue his studies of English literature at Oxford on a scholarship endows him with a considerably greater degree of control over his near future than his extremely risky decision to work as a male street prostitute in a dangerous part of London at night.

²⁴⁵ While Herman takes up van Valin's definition of experiencers as storyworld participants who are "the locus of an internal event, but [in a way that is] not wilful, volitional and instigating" (van Valin 1993a: 42; cf. Herman 2002: 157-158), I argue in favour of a more inclusive conceptualization that conceives of experiencers as character-focalizers whose perception of an internal or external event is dominated by their individual *experiential* perspective (cf. also Section 4.2.1 of this dissertation).

up a psycho [or] AIDS" (ALA 157), the affective sensation of the thrill he experiences in going there outweighs all rational consideration of potential risks, turning Ritwik into a gay adrenaline addict: "The elements of danger and fear were at the forefront before. [...] They have all moved back to the shadows, some more, some less. He is now so inured to any sense of danger that if it is there, it is as some complex spicing, present only in the bass notes, resistant to isolation and pinning down" (ALA 157-158). In the scenes enacting his homosexual activities at St Giles', Ritwik qualifies as a full-fledged agent (albeit an addicted one) inasmuch as he is capable of surmounting his internal friction of inhibitedness in this liminal space. Sadly enough, he proves to be unable to transfer this freedom of action from this nocturnal netherworld to the broad daylight of his quotidian life in Britain throughout the novel. His nocturnal homosexual adventures in Oxford are by no means tantamount to an outright, self-empowering liberation from the haunting shadows of his traumatic past; instead, they only cement his positionality as a liminal go-between.

As far as Miss Gilby is concerned, the spectrum of her thematic roles vacillates between the same poles. On the one hand, her initiatives for intercultural encounters between Indian and English women as well as her passionate involvement in Violet Cameron's educational project for the benefit of Indian girls and women unambiguously qualify Miss Gilby as a highly committed agent. On the other hand, however, she is turned into a defenceless patient in the scene where, during one of her rides across the Bengali countryside, she suffers a physical assault in the midst of *swadeshi* agitation. As regards the quantitative distribution of these dichotomous thematic roles between the two protagonists, it is nevertheless evident that Miss Gilby can afford to be a relatively independent agent to a considerably greater extent than Ritwik on account of her highly privileged social status. Accordingly, Ritwik constantly appears to be driven by both his traumatic past and the external circumstances in which he has to act in the present, whereas Miss Gilby can employ her relatively autonomous freedom of action for educational initiatives in favour of Indian women. As a result, the frequency with which she plays the role of agent is considerably higher than in Ritwik's case. This quantitative difference of the role distribution of 'agent and patient' between the two protagonists contributes substantially to the contrapuntal relationship between Miss Gilby's and Ritwik's respective subjectivities and pertinent positionalities.

This quantitative difference notwithstanding, both Ritwik and Miss Gilby do qualify as parallel liminal go-betweens between Indian and English culture due to their peculiar sociocultural interpositionality (cf. Bhabha 1994c: 90), which, in turn, is a result

of their (post)colonial, transnational migratory movement. More precisely, it is the *effects* of this migration on their individual subjectivity and experientiality that make them stand out in comparison to their contemporaries in the respective storyworld. In the following, my analysis will therefore focus on two particularly salient aspects of their interpositionality: their role as border-crossers in a multiple sense and their – eventually fruitless – efforts at intercultural translation.

Concerning the first aspect, it is evident that, by crossing the political border between present-day India and Britain (Ritwik) or Britain and British India in the historical era of the British Raj (Miss Gilby), the two protagonists do not merely cross territorial demarcation lines but also turn themselves into (post)colonial go-betweens predestined to function as cultural intermediaries between their culture of origin and that of their destination. In addition to this role as intercultural translators, they also qualify as liminal subjects in the following because they transgress certain ethical thresholds. Regarding Miss Gilby, a case in point here is her inadvertent entry into the *zenana*²⁴⁶ of the zamindar's residence. As well, her attempts to get in touch with high-caste Indian women in general likewise belong in that category because they clearly represent a violation of a powerful taboo set up by Indian patriarchy, a stark transgression of a traditional ethical limit commonly respected by both colonizer and colonized. In Ritwik's case, the ethical transgressions are more subtle and clandestine, for he engages in homosexual activities only under cover of nocturnal darkness and in liminal spaces like the St. Giles' public convenience (in Oxford). As we shall see, however, the protagonists' multiple acts of border-crossing finally do not succeed in effecting sustainable shifts in the prevalent sociocultural demarcations governing their respective storyworlds: despite various transgressions, the underlying societal boundaries remain stable.

Regarding the issue of intercultural translation, I contend that both protagonists fail – among other reasons – because of their inability to translate their justified concerns into the language of the recipient culture or a third idiom acceptable to both parties involved in the respective intercultural interaction. In Ritwik's case, this failure is primarily caused by the internal friction of his shyness, reclusiveness and inhibitedness in dealing with other human beings. As we have seen in Section 6.2 of this dissertation, these extreme inhibitions are in turn a consequence of the fact that his traumatic childhood memories continually haunt Ritwik (cf. *ALA* 46-48, 143-156): The past reverberates upon the protagonist's present as a starkly frictional factor that severely

²⁴⁶ Like *andarmahal*, the term *zenana* designates “the separate women's quarters in certain Hindu and Muslim homes” (Nair 2000: 240).

curtails his individual freedom of action. Therefore, he often does not even try to translate his postcolonial concerns for fear of rejection by his fellow students at Oxford University (cf. *ALA* 41).

Miss Gilby, by contrast, does not succeed in establishing lasting contacts with Indian women from the ruling classes because she proves unable to translate her benevolent but paternalistic and universalist humanism into the specific contextual requirements posed by the centuries-old confinement of upper-class women to the *zenana*. Coming from a liberal humanist background, Miss Gilby is eager to promote intercultural exchange between English and Indian upper-class women and is therefore unable to grasp the latter group's utter disinterest in intercultural contacts of any sort. With regard to the agentive dimension, this crucial cultural difference becomes particularly evident: due to their lifelong confinement to the palace harem, these high-caste women are anything but prone to aspiring to Miss Gilby's feminist ideal of the independent woman, for such 'progressive' Western concepts of independent and self-reliant female agency mean nothing to them.

As a result, Miss Gilby's attempts to open up a transcultural third space of cross-cultural exchange between English and Indian women come to nothing; her benevolent efforts to create such a utopian interstitial space are crushed by the rigid societal boundaries that confine Indian upper-class women to the *zenana* and by the latter group's resultant reluctance to engage in such cross-cultural communication. Accordingly, it is not only their total socioeconomic dependence on their all-powerful husbands that prevents them from appreciating the potential benefits of intercultural communication among women, but also their culturally conditioned disinterest in such a project. In other words, their complete incomprehension as to why anyone should make such attempts in the first place springs from their traditional upbringing in a rigidly patriarchal society. This abstract sociocultural friction accounts primarily for the failure of Miss Gilby's efforts at cross-cultural translation. As a genuine *mise en abyme* of the imminent fate of her transcultural vision, Miss Gilby's visit to the women of the Maharajah of Mysore's Palace (cf. *ALA* 63-74) paradigmatically enacts the *drama in nuce* of her cross-cultural translational endeavour.

Within this paradigmatic scene, one occurrence epitomizes the pitfalls of intercultural translation in particularly graphic detail. In honour of their English guests, the women of the Maharajah of Mysore's Palace have arranged an appearance of a little prince who is supposed to sing English folk songs to them. The little prince's

hapless performance of English songs he has learned by heart without knowing the language itself stands metonymically for the extreme difficulties involved in intercultural translation across the linguistic, societal, cultural and ethical barriers between incommensurable cultures:

Miss Gilby strained to hear the words of the song to identify it – the tune was practically non-existent – but couldn't make out even one intelligible word. Suddenly the words 'Robin Redbreast' leaped out and it almost made sense: the young prince was singing 'When the snow is on the ground'. But it was obvious the prince didn't know the language; he had learned the song by rote and was eliding and dissecting the words randomly, running three or four words, even a fraction of a word, together, stopping in the middle of one word and joining the rest with the next few ones. It was all dictated by his own aural world; it had no resemblance to English whatsoever. (ALA 71)

In this internally focalized summary of the prince's performance, his practice of "eliding and dissecting the words randomly" (ALA 71) demonstrates the impossibility of conveying meaning in a foreign language without having acquired at least some basic knowledge of its pronunciation rules, vocabulary and grammatical structure beforehand. What is more, it additionally highlights the urgency of embedding foreign language learning in a wider framework of cultural contextualization. In this particular example, the prince's utter failure in cultural translation thus results – in addition to his linguistic incompetence – from the fact that he has most probably seen neither snow nor a robin redbreast in his whole life.

Hence, his performance is doomed to fail due to a double lack of culture-specific knowledge, for both the linguistic and the contextual worlds of English are utterly unfamiliar to the little prince. Consequently, he has no option but to apply the morphological and pronunciation rules of his Indian mother tongue to the English folk song he performs. This, in turn, narratively configures a basic but widespread fallacy that prevents sincere attempts at intercultural translation from succeeding: the universalization of culture-specific presuppositions, codes, rules and practices through their uncritical application to different, frequently even incommensurable cultures. The resulting effect of the prince's performance on Miss Gilby and her English companions is one of defamiliarization with their own popular culture. By listening to his unintelligible rendition of English folk songs, they turn into the performer's mirror image on the recipients' side inasmuch as their extreme difficulties at decoding the lyrics reflect his inability to sing them according to the linguistic standards of the English language. Due to the utter failure of his musical performance, both sides therefore share the lot of mutual incomprehension, which casts a pessimistic light on the possibility of successful intercultural communication in general.

In addition to the little prince's hapless performance as a singer, the interpreter's unprofessional procedure of repeatedly translating private utterances on the part of the Indian women into English further exacerbates the difficulties involved in this communication situation. The evident incompetence the old palace official who has been assigned this role displays as an interpreter (cf. *ALA* 64) thus minimizes the chance of successful intercultural communication and mutual understanding between the English women and their Indian counterparts:

One of the girls said something out loud at which most of the other [Indian] women tittered and laughed. The interpreter's voice droned, 'They ask why you have arms which are being so white they look uncooked and what are the funny things on your head.' In the silence after his words something beyond language passed like an invisible electric current between the three points of contact. Both Indian and British camps realized that the interpreter had translated words that were meant to be private and each was waiting for the other side to react. The seconds ticked away, each one seemed of far longer duration than normal. Then Miss Gilby held her head up, laughed, and said, 'These are hats.' (*ALA* 74)

The narrative enactment of mutual incomprehension between the Indian and English factions in the entire scene culminates in this incident, which, represented by means of a narratorial and therefore externally focalized summary, arises from the Indian camp's apparent unfamiliarity with the clothing item 'hat' and the interpreter's erroneous disclosure of the Indian girl's remark. As in the entire course of this scene, two factors are primarily responsible for the non-emergence of intercultural understanding between the two parties: first, their total incompetence regarding the incommensurable lifeworlds in which the members of the other faction have been brought up and socialized; and second, the inaptitude of the old palace official in his function as interpreter. Concerning the first factor, it becomes evident that "[c]ultural difference" decidedly does not emerge as the result of "the process of transcultural negotiation" (Bhabha 1994f: 232) here, but instead is itself the frictional factor that prevents successful intercultural communication in the first place. Contrary to Bhabha's conceptualization, Mukherjee's debut novel thus enacts cultural difference not as the outcome of transcultural negotiation, but as the very friction that renders the successful conduct of intercultural communication impossible. Therefore, the overall failure of Miss Gilby's attempt to establish a transcultural third space of intercultural exchange between Indian and English women can be attributed, in addition to her own mistakes, to the incommensurability of her own liberal-humanist ideal of independent female agency with the extremely restricted freedom of action the women of Mysore have been accustomed to from birth onwards.

Miss Gilby, however, is not the only character in the novel's historical storyworld who fails in her attempt to make her transcultural vision come true, for her like-minded contemporary and employer, the local zamindar Nikhilesh Roy Chowdhury, also fails to turn his district into a material third space of transculturalism (see Section 6.4 of this dissertation). Since the narrative configuration of the historical storyworld thus largely negates the possibility of 'progressive' change for the better through cross-cultural communication and negotiation, the overall result of the cross-cultural contacts enacted in the historical plot of *A Life Apart* is precisely not a progressively *utopian* transcultural third space, but a totally *dystopian* fictional configuration of intercultural contact situations. If discernible at all, the resultant literary configuration of transculturalism accordingly must be classified as starkly dystopian due to the novel's consistent foregrounding of frictional factors such as the highly asymmetric distribution of power and agency among the sociocultural groups the individual characters represent.

In terms of Miss Gilby's and Ritwik's liminal subjectivities, this means that in *A Life Apart*, the two protagonists cannot fully live up to the expectations raised by Bhabha's characterization of "migrants" as "the marks of a shifting boundary that alienates the frontiers of the modern nation" (Bhabha 1994f: 236), because these two liminal characters eventually fail in their respective endeavour to shift pre-existent societal, cultural and ethical boundaries. In the contemporary storyworld, Ritwik is fatally punished for his liminal activity of 'streetwalking' in King's Cross, while Miss Gilby is finally forced to retreat from the local district of Nawabgunj by the *swadeshi* riots in Bengal. In the final analysis, alternative, liminal subjectivities, positionalities and attendant identity configurations end up being crushed by the external friction of racist hatred and communal violence in both storyworlds.

The failure of Miss Gilby's translational efforts and attendant transcultural vision is therefore as much a result of the persistently negative impact of deeply entrenched societal and political structures on the individual's freedom of action as it is a consequence of personal mistakes on her part. The same is true in Ritwik's case. As for Miss Gilby, it is the deeply entrenched vertical hierarchization and horizontal compartmentalization of early twentieth-century British Indian society that prevents her from realizing the full potential of her individual freedom of action: the strictly patriarchal division of Indian high-caste society along gender lines and the consequent seclusion of the ladies in the *zenana* / *andarmahal* turn her efforts to establish cross-cultural contacts with these women into an extremely difficult and eventually futile endeavour.

In addition to her visit to the women of the Maharajah of Mysore, this futility becomes particularly evident in her intercultural exchange with Bimala, the zamindar Nikhilesh Chowdhury's wife. While Bimala initially seems to develop a certain openness towards Miss Gilby's innovative idea of learning from each another in this intercultural exchange, she gradually starts to see her own potential for personal liberation from patriarchal and imperialist domination in her increasingly impassioned commitment to the *swadeshi* cause (cf. Section 6.4 of this dissertation) rather than in acquiring the basic linguistic and cultural skills required to converse in English and move about in the despised colonizers' world. Granted, Bimala's passionate commitment to the nationalist cause is as much a result of her illicit love affair with Sandip Banerjea, the charismatic and ruthlessly egoistic regional leader of the *swadeshi* movement, as it is a consequence of her struggle to find her own place in early twentieth-century Raj society. Nevertheless, Bimala's rejection of both her husband's and Miss Gilby's paternalistic benevolence towards her reveals a fundamental ambivalence in these self-appointed benefactors' underlying attitudes towards her. Nikhilesh has hired Miss Gilby as tutor in English language, literature and culture and companion for his wife in order to expand her radius of action beyond the secluded world of the *zenana* and endow her with the cultural skills necessary to move about quite freely in the strictly hierarchical society of the British Raj.

What he has not taken into consideration at all is the possibility that Bimala might interpret these unusual efforts not as an unprecedented personal liberation, but as an outright submission, a surrender even, to the societal and cultural hegemony of the highly privileged British colonizers. By refusing to play the part of the grateful 'subaltern' wife who has been generously liberated from the bonds of traditional gender division (as symbolized by the institution of the *zenana*) by her all-powerful husband, Bimala asserts her own individual freedom of action in ways wholly unexpected by her alleged benefactors. With this autonomous act of self-empowerment, she not only thwarts Nikhilesh's and Miss Gilby's attempts to turn her into an intercultural go-between, but also reveals the latter agents' complicity with traditional Indian patriarchy and British imperialism. As far as Miss Gilby is concerned, this complicity with the imperialist project consists in her belief in Western progressivist ideas of reforming and educating the 'natives'. The inextricable intertwining of her liberal-humanist ideal of intercultural exchange with this culture-specific notion of enlightened and rational progressivism adds a subtle note of ambiguity to her own subjectivity, positionality and attendant identity configuration as a liminal go-between.

Regarding Ritwik's existential situation in the second part of the novel, his political and socioeconomic positionality proves to be utterly hopeless. This complete lack of any sustainable perspective regarding the future is due to the – simultaneously abstract and concrete – politico-legal friction posed by the British government's exclusionary immigration policy, which, in effect, forces destitute and jobless migrants like Ritwik into illegality. It is this (nowadays ubiquitous) political discrimination against migrants, particularly 'illegal' ones, through exclusionary immigration policies that forces Ritwik to live in the underground and work in the netherworld of the 'black economy' after his visa has expired. In fact, the expiry of his residence permit leaves him in a quandary: without this document, he cannot get a legal job, but without proper employment the authorities will not prolong his residence permit. In addition, returning to India is not an option either, for, his relatives would want him to take over his deceased father's role as the family's sole source of income. In effect, these external circumstances reduce his freedom of action to zero, and the only feasible option left is to plunge into the underworld of destitute illegal immigrants in London (cf. *ALA* 189-195).

Marked by a day-to-day struggle for badly-paid, insecure work in the black economy, Ritwik's situation there belies Bhabha's assertion that migrants' common liminality necessarily produces a self-empowering solidarity among them. Whereas Bhabha claims that "it is by living on the borderline of history and language, on the limits of race and gender, that we [migrants] are in a position to translate the differences between them [peoples] into a kind of solidarity" (Bhabha 1994f: 244), the situation Ritwik finds himself in in London's netherworld reveals no such solidarity among the illegal migrants he encounters. On the contrary, each of them seems to be so occupied with ensuring his own daily survival and with coming to terms with the traumata of his own past that 'self-empowerment through solidarity' simply proves to be impossible. This critical aspect of their common lot turns them into easy prey for their dubious employers. Deprived of human and civil rights, these migrants cannot react to this treatment by organizing themselves into a political force. Their survival tactic is mute endurance, not self-empowering solidarity. In their weary eyes, Bhabha's vision of liminal solidarity is at best a romantic castle in the air, at worst a cynical joke. Because their common fate of marginality does not enable migrants to translate their cultural differences into a kind of solidarity, Mukherjee's novel takes a considerably more pessimistic stance on the opportunities opened up by processes of intercultural encounter and transcultural negotiation than Bhabha in particular and postcolonial discourse in general. In this regard, *A Life Apart* by no means stands alone, for Kiran

Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) and Hari Kunzru's *Transmission* (2005 [2004]) enact similarly dystopian fictional configurations of contemporary transculturalism narratively as well.

The final stroke of disillusionment hits Ritwik out of the blue when, in the following internally focalized mixture of summary and scenic presentation, he accidentally learns that his wealthy benefactor Zafar, his only benevolent client, who has even opened a path out of nocturnal 'streetwalking' in King's Cross for him, is in truth a dubious, globally active large-scale arms-trader:

He [Ritwik] looks up at the [TV] screen. [...] They [the protesters shown in the news report] are carrying CAAT banners; it takes a while before the running commentary decodes this for him: Campaign Against Arms Trade. They are trying to barricade a convoy of cars – the vehicles of invitees to the Defence System and Equipment International Exhibition at Lydney in Gloucestershire.

He sees a familiar car, a blue Bentley, in the held-up convoy before the heavy police presence disperses the protesters. But perhaps he imagines this flash of blue to accompany the words of the events coordinator of CAAT whose impassioned face appears on the screen and speaks out a new knowledge for him. *'... supply arms to the most detestable and repressive regimes in the world, arms that are used to crush democracy, kill people, extinguish their voices. If you look at some of the countries which have been invited to this fair, you'll be outraged. What are Burma, North Korea, Iraq, Sierra Leone doing here, countries with military juntas and ruthless dictatorships as governments, countries with a proven record of repression and torture? [...] This is just a legitimization of illegal arms dealing and it's being done in broad daylight, with the full knowledge, indeed, approval of the government. We are campaigning to reconcile a foreign policy with ...'* (ALA 391-392; italics in original)

Having lost all illusions of a better future, Ritwik embarks upon a final, suicidal act of 'streetwalking' in King's Cross, London. Although he knows the risk involved in going there again (as a male prostitute) from previous experiences, the semi-conscious, trance-like state he finds himself in after this shocking revelation lures him into taking this risk one final time. Eventually, it almost seems like this sudden disillusionment makes him assert his independent agency one last time out of pure spite vis-à-vis his benefactor's dominance (Zafar always warned him not to go there again); paradoxically, Ritwik reasserts his freedom of action by renouncing his life.

As for the two protagonists' liminal subjectivities, the following larger picture finally obtains: with regard to the dialectical interplay between subjection and subjectedness (cf. Beck 2014: 39; see also Section 2.2 of this dissertation), subjectedness triumphs over its counterpart in the end with both Ritwik and Miss Gilby inasmuch as neither of them succeeds in sustainably transforming their spatial

environment through movement and cross-cultural translation because the discursive and material power of socioeconomic, cultural and religious restrictions upon their individual freedom of action ultimately proves to be too strong. What is more, the contrapuntal relationship between Ritwik's and Miss Gilby's disparate subjectivities and pertinent positionalities is preserved in the end: while both protagonists fail to realize their vision of agency in their respective storyworlds, Miss Gilby's privileged sociocultural positionality at least secures her survival, whereas the murder of Ritwik by racist thugs cruelly corroborates his subaltern positionality as an illegal migrant deprived of civil and human rights one final time.

All in all, this novel's ending thus narratively enacts a fictional scenario marked by a double "failure of agency" (Bhati 2010: 61) because this concept ends up being problematized with both liminal go-betweens: Ritwik's struggle for independent agency finally culminates in a fatal disaster, while the constant communal and anti-British violence in Nawabgunj forces Miss Gilby to retreat and thus to give up her reformist efforts to endow Indian women with at least a modest degree of individual freedom of action through Western education. In conclusion, the fictional narrative configuration of intercultural contact situations in *A Life Apart* therefore calls into question not only transcultural visions of fruitful and peaceful cross-cultural exchange on a par and for the mutual benefit of both parties involved, but also problematizes the concept of autonomous and independent agency itself by negating the possibility of societal and cultural transformations through individual agents in both the historical and contemporary storyworlds.

6.4 Bengal and London as Contested Spaces? The Double Failure of Transcultural Utopianism

This section is concerned with the narrative representation of space in *A Life Apart*. The narrative universe of this novel is subdivided into two storyworlds: the first comprises the settings contemporary Bengal (metonymically represented by Calcutta) and early 1990s England (metonymically represented by Oxford²⁴⁷ in the novel's first

²⁴⁷ Although Oxford itself is never named explicitly in the novel, the reader can infer that Ritwik is studying there in the first part of *A Life Apart* from occasional references to street names like St Giles', Broad Street and Catte Street (cf. ALA 156).

part and London in the second). The second storyworld consists primarily of the setting 'early twentieth-century Bengal', which is, in turn, represented metonymically by Calcutta²⁴⁸ and, above all, by the zamindar Nikhilesh's local district of Nawabgunj. As we have seen in Section 6.2, the contemporary and the historical storyworlds are entwined transtemporally by means of a metalepsis in the novel's second part, which establishes a diachronic syntagmatic relationship between contemporary England and early twentieth-century Bengal.

Through a comparative analysis of selected settings from these two storyworlds – early twentieth-century Bengal (represented in a synecdochical *pars pro toto* relationship by the district of Nawabgunj) and contemporary London (standing for England metonymically), I intend to shed light on this novel's narrative semanticization and functionalization of narrative space in general. In particular, I argue that, with the selection of two cultural spaces replete with historically accumulated cultural semanticizations – London as the quintessential metropolitan centre of the former British Empire and the epitome of a multicultural metropolis in the post-colonial era, Bengal as the extremely wealthy "Paradise of Nations" (*Brick Lane* 194)²⁴⁹ prior to British colonization and the first territorial toehold for the British in India, *A Life Apart* draws on a rich colonial and postcolonial tradition of semanticizing and functionalizing specific spatial entities. Yet, as we shall see, it resemanticizes these "real-and-imagined" (Soja 1996) spaces in specific ways instead of merely reproducing their traditional attributes. More precisely, Mukherjee's debut novel enacts both early twentieth-century Bengal and contemporary London as cultural spaces marked by the dystopian facets of the transcultural interweaving of different cultures. By foregrounding the frictional aspects hampering or even preventing the realization of the ideal of cross-cultural encounters on a par (such as the exclusion of illegal migrants from social life in Britain or communal violence in Bengal), *A Life Apart* rejects both the romanticizing

²⁴⁸ Originally a mere village in the Ganges Delta, Calcutta eventually became "the metropolis of Britain's Indian empire" (Kulke and Rothermund 2010: 161), serving as its capital from the late eighteenth century until the construction of New Delhi in the early twentieth century. As the social, cultural and political centre of Eastern India, Calcutta also constituted the quintessential hub of the "Bengali Renaissance", a revival of Bengali literature and culture hailed by reformist members of the Hindu elite called "*bhadralok* (people of good families)" (Kulke and Rothermund 2010: 196) in Bengali (cf. *ibid.* 161; 196-197). The consistent usage of the colonial designation 'Calcutta' instead of the original name Kolkata, which has been re-established as the official designation for this metropolis in the post-colonial age (cf. *ibid.* 290), formally underlines the macro-structural persistence of colonialist patterns of exploitation. As the sticking to the colonial designation illustrates, this persistence cannot be effaced by a simple name change.

²⁴⁹ This characterization of Bengal, which, in *Brick Lane* (Ali 2003), is mentioned by Chanu, the protagonist Nazneen's husband, is reported to go back to the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb and vividly conveys the agricultural, material and cultural abundance this fertile and prosperous region enjoyed prior to its systematic economic exploitation by the British (cf. Khan 2013).

idealization of the colonial past and the teleological vision of transcultural utopianism in the present.

In addition, the particular relationing of London and Bengal through the two protagonists' colonial and postcolonial migratory movements brings about a narrative reconfiguration of the imperialist dichotomy of 'centre and periphery' in that it foregrounds the *intertwined* histories and *spatial co-presence* of London and Bengal. The spatio-temporal reciprocity of these two settings is achieved by means of the twofold functionalization of each of them: Bengal is both the principal setting of the historical plot and Ritwik's place of origin in the contemporary plot, while London likewise plays a double role inasmuch as it implicitly represents the metropolitan centre of power lurking in the background of the historical plot and explicitly functions as Ritwik's final destination in the contemporary plot (as an illegal migrant, Ritwik ends up in the underbelly of present-day multicultural London). With England serving as Miss Gilby's country of origin in the historical storyworld and as Ritwik's destination in the contemporary one, and India functioning as the latter protagonist's home country in the postcolonial present and the former character's destination in the colonial past, the resulting role swap is evident. This inversion of the opposite roles of 'country of origin and destination' is responsible for the double co-presence of these two cultural spaces in the reader's mind (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107).

Keeping this double spatio-temporal co-presence in mind, I will examine the failure of transculturalism as it is enacted narratively in both the fictional reconfiguration of historical Bengal and present-day London. Regarding the former story space (cf. Chatman 1978: 96-107; Ryan 2014 [2012]: n. pag.), I argue that this failure is enacted by representing early twentieth-century Bengal as contested space, memory space and imaginary homeland, but not, however, as a utopian transcultural third space. On the contrary, the novel's historical plot unfolds against the backdrop of the divisive power struggles and ethnic, religious and socioeconomic conflicts surrounding the impending partition of the Bengal Presidency (1905) by Viceroy Lord Curzon and the ensuing upsurge of nationalist and communal²⁵⁰ sentiment in the oppositional *swadeshi*²⁵¹

²⁵⁰ In the Indian context, the term "communal(ism), [synonymous with] sectarian(ism), has a negative connotation [...] that is absent in England or America; 'communal' does not suggest 'community' in the sense of co-operative harmony, but in Indian usage explicitly means identifying exclusively with one's own religious community, to the detriment of others. In India, a 'communalist' is a bigot; 'communal violence' refers to sectarian rioting" (Tharoor 2011 [1997]: 364).

²⁵¹ Triggered as a large-scale resistance movement primarily by Lord Curzon's partition scheme, the *swadeshi* movement owes its designation to the Bengali collocation "Sva-deshi [meaning of] our own country" (Wolpert 2009: 58). It "gathered momentum from this time

movement. This is why I will interweave the analysis of pertinent passages from Mukherjee's novel with a rough outline of this historical context. In the following, salient aspects of the political, socioeconomic, cultural and religious dimensions of the *swadeshi* movement shall be illuminated briefly in conjunction with their narrative configuration and perspectivization (cf. Nünning 2009: 39-44) in *A Life Apart*.²⁵² Despite the fact that, in contrast to Tagore's original, Mukherjee's adaptation provides a comparatively thorough contextualization of the contested space Bengal with regard to the causes, manifestations and effects of the *swadeshi* movement, it is indispensable to supply additional information from pertinent historical studies in order to render an objective assessment of the novel's fictional reconfiguration of this particular historical context possible.

As regards the political dimension, then-Viceroy Lord Curzon announced his plans to subdivide the Bengal Presidency into a Hindu-majority and a Muslim-majority part in July 1905, only three months prior to the actual implementation of this redrawing of administrative borders.²⁵³ Following the colonialist strategy of 'divide and rule', this measure aimed to weaken Bengal as the stronghold of anti-imperialist Indian resistance to the British Raj. More precisely, Lord Curzon's imperial administration intended to drive a wedge between the well-educated and politically active Hindus, who

onward, supporting indigenous industries in cotton and everything else, from matches to iron and steel" (Wolpert 2009: 58).

²⁵² As he states in his acknowledgements, Neel Mukherjee has drawn inspiration for the historical contextualization of Miss Gilby's narrative from the same source that I consulted during my research visit to the British Library, Sumit Sarkar's historical study *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal 1903-1908* (1973): "It would not have been possible to write Miss Gilby's story without Sumit Sarkar's *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal 1903-1908* (People's Publishing House: New Delhi, 1973, 2nd imprint, 1994). For those interested in the period and in the particulars of this chapter of colonial history, his still remains the most magisterial account: lucid, exhaustive, and deeply intelligent. I [Neel Mukherjee] feel privileged to have taken some bearings from his work in writing my own" (ALA 402).

²⁵³ On the issue of Lord Curzon's partition of Bengal (1905) and its consequences, the historians Kulke and Rothermund (cf. 2010: 214-216) elaborate as follows: "Originally, the partition of this vast province – which at that time still included Assam, Bihar and Orissa, in addition to Bengal proper – was mooted for purely administrative reasons. But when Viceroy Lord Curzon finally executed this administrative act, it was obviously meant to strike at the territorial roots of the nationalist elite of Bengal. The province was split right down the middle: east Bengal and Assam formed one province, and west Bengal, Bihar and Orissa another. Lord Curzon did not hesitate to point out to the Muslims of eastern Bengal that he conceived of this province as Muslim. The Bengali Hindus, on the other hand, noted with dismay that they were in a minority in the new province of [eastern] Bengal. They mounted a furious agitation in which political terrorism became a prominent feature as young 'Extremists' took to the cult of the pistol and the bomb. The repartition of Bengal in 1911 showed that the administrative needs could have been met in a different way to begin with: Bengal was once more amalgamated and Bihar and Orissa formed a new province. Had the British refrained from splitting Bengal in the first place, they would have saved themselves a great deal of trouble. Terrorism now spread in Bengal and increased with every future instance of repression; without this first partition of Bengal, Indian nationalism might have retained more of its liberal features" (Kulke and Rothermund 2010: 214-215).

were the driving force behind nationalist resistance to colonial domination, and the Muslims, who in their majority belonged to the poor and uneducated peasantry of Bengal (cf. Kulke and Rothermund 2010: 214-216; Wolpert 2009: 58 and Sarkar 1973: 78-91, 408). The fact that Miss Gilby's brother James, a high-ranking Raj official, mentions this prime motive behind the imperial government's policy only in passing in a *personal* letter to his sister testifies to the duplicitous attitude of the colonial administrative body towards the Indians in general and Bengali Hindus in particular:

From a political point of view alone, setting aside the enormous administrative difficulties [...] that an undivided Bengal continues to present, partition is most necessary. The Bengalee race, and most predominantly, its power-hungry and overeducated Hindoo population – for it is the Hindoo population that constitutes the political voice of the Presidency, the Mohammedans having remained inactive so far – is given to conspiracies and endless schemes to consolidate its power over that Presidency. Bengal united is a power; Bengal divided will pull in several different ways: that is the current wisdom among us and almost wholly justifies any scheme for division. It is uniformly accepted and acknowledged, although no one will put it down on paper, that one of our main objects is to split up and thereby weaken a solid body of opponents to our rule. (ALA 224-225)

By uniformly ascribing features with clearly negative connotations (such as “power-hungry” and “overeducated”) to all Hindus in Bengal, James Gilby not only reveals his own highly prejudiced and stereotypical view of them, but also insinuates that the current crisis surrounding the planned partition of Bengal is to be blamed entirely on this major religious and sociocultural group. With his Manichean view of the two major population groups of early twentieth-century Bengal (power-hungry, overeducated and scheming Hindus and passive, uneducated and submissive Muslims), he moreover constructs a dichotomy that can then be exploited for the ‘divide and rule’ policy practised by the Imperial Government of India. As the last sentence reveals, this hegemonic strategy of domination constitutes the principal common denominator among British imperialist policy-makers that is tacitly acknowledged and put into practice, however much it is publicly denied.

While James Gilby is right in pointing out that the *swadesh*²⁵⁴ movement was, in essence, a Hindu affair, whereas the majority of Muslims remained hesitant or even completely inactive, he withholds the true socioeconomic cause of this dichotomous

²⁵⁴ In his seminal study *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal 1903-1908* (1973), Indian historian Sumit Sarkar characterizes *swadeshi* as follows: “In its specifically economic aspect, *swadeshi* may be defined as the sentiment – closely associated with many phases of Indian nationalism – that indigenous goods should be preferred by consumers even if they were more expensive than and inferior in quality to their imported substitutes, and that it was the patriotic duty of men with capital to pioneer such industries even though profits initially might be minimal or non-existent” (Sarkar 1973: 92).

distribution of roles. In essence, this role allocation emerged primarily for reasons of social stratification, as the *bhadralok*, the powerful, educated and highly privileged upper class of *zamindars* (large landowners) in Bengal was almost entirely Hindu, whereas the majority of poor, uneducated and hence underprivileged peasants and small-scale traders were Muslims. Since most Muslims could not afford to buy the generally more expensive *swadeshi* products, they refused to join this Hindu-led resistance movement. What is more, due to their underprivileged socioeconomic positionality, they were inclined to view the whole *swadeshi* movement as a dangerous thing, for it threatened their economic survival. Because of this detrimental effect of the Hindus' anti-partition agitation on their daily livelihood, many Muslims agreed that the *swadeshi* movement was nothing but the latest Hindu tactic to preserve their own sociocultural and economic superiority and keep the Muslims trapped in destitution and powerlessness. This is exactly the point of view that Nikhilesh Chowdhury, the moderate and just local *zamindar*, gives voice to in the following statement to Miss Gilby:

'If it's a choice between the Hindu *babu*, who has traditionally been known to be indifferent to Mussulman interests, and the English governor, who dangles the idea of a predominantly Mohammedan province, I too would choose the chance for a change. My villagers now see these Hindu boys, clad in orange, going around the place, calling for boycott of English goods that provide these poor Muslims a livelihood. Is it that extraordinary they should think this whole *swadeshi* business as another Hindu ploy to keep them poor and downtrodden?' (ALA 318)

As a consequence of the communal discord caused, among other factors, by the British imperialists' decades-long policy of instigating mutual hostility, Lord Curzon's strategy initially seems to be working. This much Nikhilesh Chowdhury has to concede in his contextualization of the 'Bengal Crisis' for the uninformed Miss Gilby in their extended dialogue (cf. ALA 316-319). In addition to mere naming, Nikhilesh here evokes Bengal as a contested space riven by interreligious and intercultural conflicts by thematizing the devastating socioeconomic consequences of both traditional social stratification and British colonialism. Despite scattered demonstrations of Hindu-Muslim concord here and there, Lord Curzon's policy of 'divide and rule' succeeds in driving a wedge between the Hindu and Muslim parts of Bengal's population, not least because the poor and underprivileged Muslim peasants fear the continuation of the neglect of their interests by the local Hindu rulers more than the English colonizers:

"Bengal united is a power; Bengal divided will pull in several different ways." Famous words,' he [Nikhilesh Chowdhury] says wryly. There is another long pause. 'Well, the plan seems to be working. Despite isolated shows of Hindu-Muslim unity in rallies and gatherings here and there, the truth is quite different. The Muslims have always been poorer, their interests neglected, their education overlooked, their voices ignored. It's not

surprising they don't think very highly of the Hindus who are their landlords, or bureaucrats or government servants. So if a separate province is promised them where Mohammedan interests would be strongly represented, if not predominant, how can we blame them for falling for it?' (ALA 317-318)

By giving voice to his Muslim villagers' point of view on the partition of Bengal, Nikhilesh Chowdhury proves to be a common-sense moderate intent on taking into consideration the justified concerns of all relevant stakeholders involved in this political affair within the bounds of his district. The deep tragedy of this character thus lies in the fact that, instead of earning him the reputation of a just, cautious and rational local ruler, this wise and hesitant approach to the problematic of Hindu-Muslim relations makes him a traitor in the eyes of both religious communities. Exacerbated by the crisis caused by the partition of Bengal, the socioeconomic and cultural gap between affluent Hindus and poor Muslim peasants ultimately proves to be so explosive that Nikhilesh himself perishes in a brave but ill-fated attempt to smooth over the blatant differences between them by virtue of his authority as *zamindar*.

In stark contrast to Nikhilesh Chowdhury's account of the crisis precipitated by the partition of Bengal, right-wing and centre Bengali newspapers in English celebrated the day the partition officially came into effect (16 October 1905) as a landmark event in the peaceful, jointly Hindu and Muslim resistance against the divisive and unjust policy of the Imperial Government of the British Raj as embodied by Viceroy Lord Curzon. The following two articles from *The Bengalee* and the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* – “representing broadly speaking the right [and] the centre [...] in the national movement of those days” (Sarkar 1973: 6), which are inserted into the historical narrative of *A Life Apart*, provide a journalistic counterpoint to the pessimism with which Nikhilesh's account is soaked:

Despite the earnest protests of millions of people, the Government has gone through with its insidious and deplorable partition of Bengal on the 16th of October. In anticipation of large-scale rioting and disorderly protests, an unprecedented number of policemen were deployed on the streets of Calcutta but it gives us great satisfaction to report that the infamous day passed peacefully in the city and hundreds of other towns and villages all over undivided Bengal. [...] We will turn all actions against us to our advantage, our silent and peaceful resistance will be our biggest victory. This was the day when Lord Curzon went down in the annals of history but not for the reasons he understands: for this was the day when the clock started ticking for the English Government in India and the man who set it ticking was Lord Curzon. (From *The Bengalee*, Calcutta, 18 October 1905; quoted in ALA 254)

In the same vein, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* interprets the joint Hindu-Muslim protests in Calcutta as a grand opening of the vigorous but peaceful nationalist Indian resistance

to come. Allegedly, it was Lord Curzon's administrative partition of Bengal that forged an unprecedented brotherhood between Hindus and Muslims, whose joint protest against colonial oppression prefigures the innovative strategies of resistance deployed by the Indian national movement for independence in later years:

But if the Government was afraid, indeed expectant of any violence or disorder that was being predicted, the disciplined Bengalis took the very wind out of their sails by turning the day into one of pride in the unity and brotherhood of all Bengali men, Hindus and Mussulmans, scholar and worker, farmer and lawyer. The streets of Calcutta were thronged with people from all backgrounds, singing *Amaar sonar Bangla* and *Bande Mataram*, the sky resounding with the sound of proud nationhood.

We can only thank Lord Curzon, for the act which was meant to divide Bengal, administratively, geographically, racially, has brought us all together as brothers. The strength of the Bengali will has been put to the test and we have come out triumphant. History will have more to show. Simla, take note. (From the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta, 18 October 1905; quoted in *ALA* 255)

With this euphemistic representation of Bengali resistance against the Viceroy's scheme of division, these two newspaper reports evoke the nationalist myth of a pre-colonial 'golden age' of peaceful and equitable co-existence of Hindus and Muslims in India shattered by the British imperialists' divisive ploys (cf. Sarkar 1973: 405-406). Their anti-imperialist standpoint completes the triangle of principal stakeholders involved in the partition of the Bengal Presidency and the *swadeshi* movement: while James Gilby's letter delineated the British imperialist point of view, Nikhilesh Chowdhury's utterances in his dialogue with Miss Gilby show him as the moderate representative of a difficult position between the irreconcilably hostile camps of British Raj officials and radical Hindu *swadeshi* agitators. With his expression of sincere understanding for many Muslims' motivation not to join the latter's resistance, Nikhilesh definitively falls between the cracks of political, religious and sociocultural enmities between these communities. Tragically, it is precisely his conciliatory interpositionality that eventually proves to be lethal for this noble *zamindar*.

All in all, the above-quoted representative primary text passages testify to the polyphonic narrative enactment of Bengal as a contested space in which heterogeneous stakeholders are given the opportunity to voice their viewpoint on the controversial partition of Bengal. By providing the reader with conflicting, contradictory accounts of the consequences of the partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon (1905), Mukherjee's novel narratively enacts a polyphonic multiperspectivity in this one respect that is otherwise conspicuous by its peculiar absence from the historical plot of *A Life Apart*, which is narrated by an unspecified heterodiegetic narrator, with Miss Gilby functioning as sole internal focalizer throughout the novel. With regard to the narrative

representation of the contested space Bengal, *A Life Apart* thus temporarily suspends its otherwise monoperspectival focalization, thereby approaching the fundamental multiperspectivity of Tagore's original, where Bimala, Nikhilesh and Sandip Banerjee function as alternating homodiegetic narrators and internal focalizers.

The enactment of early twentieth-century Bengal via a modest degree of multiperspectival narration in *A Life Apart* fulfils a variety of functions. First, the contradictory accounts of the political conflict situation relativize one another and thereby highlight each other's subjective bias conditioned by the individual (and collective) agents' ethnic, cultural and socioeconomic positionalities and resultant political affiliations. Therewith, they also foreground the constructedness of cultural spaces and their attendant semanticizations by different political stakeholders. Whereas the British view Bengal merely as a political territory to be divided in order to crush Hindu resistance to their hegemony over the Indian subcontinent, the radical *swadeshi* activists semanticize it affectively as their ancestral homeland. The Muslim population, by contrast, eyes the Hindus' *swadeshi* movement with deep suspicion, considering it yet another Hindu gambit to cement the Muslims' inferior socioeconomic positionality. The local *zamindar* Nikhilesh occupies a difficult interpositionality between the warring factions, as he expresses his understanding for the underprivileged Muslims' point of view and tries to do justice to their interests as well. On a meta-level, the different factions' conflicting accounts narratively enact Lefebvre's postmodern recognition that space is the outcome of a sociocultural production process (cf. Lefebvre 1991 [1974]: 26; see also Section 2.1 of this dissertation). Also, by enacting the contested nature of the cultural space 'early twentieth-century Bengal' as a result of the frequently violent clash of these communities' incompatible semanticizations of the very same spatial entity, these accounts likewise configure Lefebvre's insight into the fundamental relationality of the sociocultural product 'space' (cf. Lefebvre 1991: 46; see also Beck 2014: 29). Finally, by including political, ethnic, social, economic, cultural and religious dimensions of the conflict triggered by Lord Curzon's partition scheme, the fictional configuration of early twentieth-century Bengal narratively enacts the multidimensionality of space.

Having elaborated upon the functions of multiperspectivity in *A Life Apart*, I now want to take a closer look at why it proved so difficult to unite Hindus and Muslims in joint resistance against the British Imperial Government's plans to split up their homeland into two separate administrative territories. As Sumit Sarkar explicates in the following quotation, there are two incompatibly dichotomous but equally myopic

historical explanations for the two groups' differing degree of commitment to the *swadeshi* movement:

On the one hand there is the belief in a kind of golden age of Hindu-Muslim amity, deliberately destroyed by the British through their divide-and-rule techniques – with Curzon, Fuller and Minto figuring prominently among the villains of the piece. [...] The polar opposite of this viewpoint is of course the famous (or notorious) 'two-nation theory', according to which Hindus and Muslims have always been entities fundamentally distinct in ethnic origin, language and culture as well as in religion. Given classic form in the Pakistan resolution of the Muslim League in 1940, this theory has had many non-Muslim adherents, more or less outspoken. From the days of Dufferin and Lord Cross, the separate 'interests of the Mohammedans' served as the most convenient British conservative pretext for obstructing or delaying political reform in India. Among the majority community, too, there has never been any lack of support for the view that India has been and must remain primarily the land of the Hindus, in which the Muslims are outsiders who must be kept in their place and should never be trusted because of their allegedly incorrigible communal proclivities.

Both stereotypes oversimplify (though not probably to the same extent) the complex and changing realities of our subcontinent. Hindu-Muslim relations in fact seem to have varied greatly with region and time, and have always been bound up in an extremely complicated manner with socioeconomic, political and cultural developments. (Sarkar 1973: 405–406)

In its narrative representation of the communal violence between Hindus and Muslims in the wake of the *swadeshi* movement, *A Life Apart* deliberately takes an intermediary position between these two stereotypical poles, because, instead of representing Bengal as either a transcultural third space of peaceful Hindu-Muslim co-existence prior to British colonization or a space populated by two incommensurable and therefore irreconcilable religious groups, it opts to enact the conflict potential dominating this historical cultural space as a result of the blatant socioeconomic asymmetry between these two groups. By blaming the *swadeshi* riots and further violent confrontations neither exclusively on the British nor on an allegedly unbridgeable rift between Hindus and Muslims, Mukherjee's novel thus endorses Nikhilesh Chowdhury's balanced and mediating stance on this conflict in its multiperspectival narrative enactment of the contested space 'Bengal'. In addition, the marginalization of Nikhilesh's rival, the charismatic, ruthless and opportunistic *swadeshi* leader Sandip Banerjea, who functions as one of the homodiegetic narrators, internal focalizers and protagonists in Tagore's original, further contributes to this fundamental shift in steering the reader's sympathy towards the tragic figure of Nikhilesh. The antagonism between the two characters constitutes a local *mise en abyme* of the differences in concrete strategies of resistance pursued by the larger political factions in Bengal represented by Nikhilesh and Sandip. As Sarkar points out

in the following quotation, there were, in essence, four such major factions in early twentieth-century Bengal:

A fourfold classification thus begins to emerge – moderates; the trend towards self-development without inviting an immediate political clash (which I have decided to call 'constructive swadeshi' for want of a better name); political extremism using 'extended boycott' or passive resistance in addition to self-help efforts; and terrorism. (Sarkar 1973: 33)

Within this spectrum, Nikhilesh Chowdhury represents the moderates and advocates of “constructive *swadeshi*”, whereas his antagonist Sandip Banerjea stands for political extremism and even terrorism. With his moderate position on the ‘Bengal Crisis’, Nikhilesh Chowdhury is literally caught between the two stools of British imperialist policy and radical Bengali resistance to it. His difficult position betwixt and between the two camps is narratively enacted by means of the above-quoted explicatory summary of the underlying conflict between Hindus and Muslims that he gives to Miss Gilby, which occupies an interstitial ideological position between the letter by her brother James (representing the British imperialist point of view) and the two articles from Bengali newspapers (representing the anti-imperialist Indian standpoint). The fact that Nikhilesh finally perishes in the Hindu-Muslim riots points up the dangers of falling between the cracks in such a delicate political situation, thus casting a pessimistic light on the possibility of achieving ‘true’ understanding through cross-cultural interaction.

In the following, I want to take a closer look at why Nikhilesh Chowdhury fails in his attempts to turn his residence and, by extension, his entire local district of Nawabgunj into a transcultural third space of interreligious tolerance, mutual respect and enlightened reason. In essence, his failure is due to a variety of reasons. First, his insufficient acknowledgement of the persistently *frictional* power of centuries-old societal and cultural traditions and of his contemporaries’ resultant parochial and prejudiced communal narrow-mindedness, which accounts for their incomprehension for his transcultural project, clearly plays an important role. Second, the rigorously hierarchized societal structures in rural Bengal likewise minimize his endeavour’s chances of success. Third, the conflict-ridden external historical constellation – marked by Lord Curzon’s partition of Bengal (1905), the *swadeshi* movement and ensuing communal riots between Hindus and Muslims – puts the boot into Nikhilesh’s ambitious hopes. As well, his wife Bimala’s increasing reluctance to be turned into his model subject of enlightened cosmopolitanism²⁵⁵ narratively prefigures his ultimate failure in

²⁵⁵ Under the influence of her lover Sandip Banerjea, Bimala finally stops attending the regular lessons with Miss Gilby that she initially seemed to enjoy. Therewith, Bimala expresses her opposition to the ambitious plans her husband has for her.

the fashion of a domestic *mise en abyme* (cf. Nelles 2008 [2005]: 312-313). In short, Nikhilesh's own inability to recognize in time that this is an inauspicious time for his highly sophisticated idealism is what turns him into a tragic character. The tragedy of this progressive zamindar's failure to realize his vision of transcultural utopianism in his local district lies in the fact that it is precisely his efforts to take into account the perspective of each and every stakeholder in his decision-making as a local ruler that gradually earns him the reputation of a passive weakling (at best) or a downright traitor (at worst) among each of these factions.

On the whole, it is, above all, the absence of a sustainably transcultural element that disqualifies the narrative configuration of his district as a transcultural third space (my second criterion; cf. Sections 3.1 and 3.3.3 of this dissertation). Moreover, Miss Gilby, Bimala and Nikhilesh do not redefine their individual identity in any substantial way (my third criterion). While Bimala's freedom of action is superficially expanded by her husband (my fourth criterion), she ends up refusing this expansion due to her impassioned commitment for the *swadeshi* movement. What is more, she even transgresses the boundary of 'respectable Indian womanhood' by committing adultery with Sandip Banerjea, the charismatic leader of the regional *swadeshi* movement. Thus, the only criterion that is unequivocally applicable to this setting is the first one, because it is due to Nikhilesh's act of employing Miss Gilby (who has migrated from England to India) as a tutor for his wife that the possibility of the emergence of a transcultural third space opens up in the first place. Within the fictional configuration of the historical cultural space 'early twentieth-century Bengal', Nikhilesh's failure to create a transcultural third space in his district stands metonymically for the overall failure of similar efforts to organize joint Hindu-Muslim and landlord-peasant resistance against the British policy of 'divide et impera' in the *swadeshi* movement.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁶ Despite its failure, it is important to remember that, in many regards, the *swadeshi* movement prefigured the tendencies, forces, strategies and forms of nationalist Indian resistance against British colonial rule that remained characteristic of that movement until Independence: "[...] What remains remarkable about the *swadeshi* age is the simultaneous presence in it, at least in germ, of so many of the tendencies and forces which went on shaping the life of our people till 1947 and even beyond. The growing conviction that British and Indian interests were irreconcilable, and hence that what was needed was the clean surgical break of *swaraj*, not partial reforms within the system; the associated confidence in India's potentialities, making of *swaraj* a realisable goal; the first dim awareness of worldwide anti-imperialist – and socialist – currents; efforts to promote the autonomous development of national life through *swadeshi* industries and crafts, national schools and village societies; boycott of foreign goods, generalised step by step into a programme of passive resistance, anticipating in virtually every detail (minus the non-violence dogma) the techniques of Gandhian non-cooperation; [...] the use of the religious medium to overcome the barrier between the elite and the masses, and its unforeseen consequences in the sharpening of Hindu-Muslim tensions; the cult of the bomb – in all this and much more, the years 1903-1908 were a microcosm revealing the rich diversity and the multifarious facets of Indian nationalism" (Sarkar 1973: 493–494).

With this general orientation of his historical setting Bengal, Mukherjee narratively re-enacts precisely those two major reasons that the Indian historian Sumit Sarkar identifies as the actual cause for the eventual failure of this resistance movement:

[... T]he swadeshi movement in all its multifarious aspects – boycott and industrial revival [...] – was brought to a halt primarily by internal weaknesses, and particularly by the failure to close the age-old gap between the *bhadralok* and the masses. The real Achilles' heel of the movement was its lack of a peasant programme, its inability to mobilise the peasants on issues and through idioms which could have had a direct appeal for them – once again the contrast with Gandhism is illuminating. (Sarkar 1973: 78)

In addition to this failure to motivate the poor and uneducated masses to join the resistance initiated by the *bhadralok*– the “[p]eople of good family, a Bengali term which refers to the upper castes of *brahmins*, *kayasths* and *vaidyas*, more specifically to their educated members” (Kulke and Rothermund 2010: 289) – a further crucial shortcoming of the *swadeshi* agitators was their inability to bridge the communal gap between Hindus and Muslims:

The second, related failure was of course in the region of Hindu-Muslim relations, where as elsewhere the *swadeshi* pattern was one of earnest efforts, initial successes and ultimate frustration. There were many heart-warming scenes of unity, particularly in the early days, and the movement threw up a considerable number of Muslim *swadeshi* leaders, every bit as patriotic as their Hindu counterparts [...]. But meanwhile Muslim separatism was gaining strength [...]. (Sarkar 1973: 79)

In addition to aspiring to a high degree of historical realism in his narrative re-enactment of early twentieth-century Bengal, Mukherjee's characterization of Nikhilesh likewise strives for mimetic imitation in that it follows the rough lines set by the original. As the following quotations show, far-sighted and high-spirited but ineffective idealism was the prime characteristic of both the author Rabindranath Tagore²⁵⁷ himself and his fictional character Nikhilesh:

Above all, Rabindranath [Tagore] could not really suggest any concrete social or economic programme with which to rouse the uneducated masses. His constructive rural work amounted to little more than humanitarianism, the appeal to *zamindars* was surely utopian, and the basic problems of land relations remained untouched. Thus while aware of the crucial need to bridge the gap between the *bhadralok* and the masses, Rabindranath could not suggest any real solution to the problem, and his growing isolation was only to be expected. (Sarkar 1973: 91)

²⁵⁷ A further parallel between the historical author Rabindranath Tagore and his fictional character Nikhilesh lies in the fact that, in 1890, Rabindranath Tagore took over responsibility for his family's far-flung estates in East Bengal from his father Debendranath Tagore, an experience that was to change the author profoundly and enrich his writing with new poetic themes (cf. Alam and Chakravarty 2011a: 6-7).

The parallels between this characterization of the historical figure Tagore and the prime qualities of both Tagore's and Mukherjee's fictional representations of Nikhilesh are evident. As for Tagore's original rendition of Nikhilesh, the historian Sumit Sarkar formulates the following verdict, which can be transferred one-to-one to Mukherjee's fictional re-enactment of this protagonist:

[W]e meet instead the noble but rather ineffective figure of Nikhilesh of *Ghare-Baire* (*The Home and the World*) – the enlightened and progressive zamindar who had tried to promote self-reliance and swadeshi long before these became fashionable, but who now faces isolation, ridicule and hostility due to his opposition to the coercive methods being used by political leaders like Sandip against his tenants who are too poor to afford swadeshi goods. A believer in the emancipation of women, he has to watch his wife Bimala being swept off her feet by the virile but essentially nihilistic personality of Sandip. (Sarkar 1973: 91)

All in all, it is thus justifiable to conclude that, by sticking to extratextual historical 'reality' (as far as possible) and the intertextual example of Tagore's original text in his narrative re-enactment of early twentieth-century Bengal and the protagonist Nikhilesh, respectively, Mukherjee underlines – once again – the persistence of certain macro- and micro-structural patterns of domination, exploitation and the individual agent's powerlessness against such deeply engrained structures. As we shall see in the analysis of this novel's enactment of contemporary London, this persistence not only concerns the colonial past, but also extends into the postcolonial present. Therefore, the transtemporal and intertextual passage opened up by Ritwik's re-writing of Tagore's modern Bengali classic is marked primarily not by mobility and fluidity, but by stasis and immobility. With its pronounced emphasis on the spatio-temporal self-reproduction of (neo)colonial structures of political oppression and economic exploitation, Mukherjee's novel thus represents a decided counterpoint to overly optimistic postmodern celebrations of freely shifting agentive space-time configurations that allegedly epitomize contemporary migrancy. By opting for a high degree of realism in its narrative configuration of early twentieth-century Bengal, Mukherjee's novel furthermore calls into question the (post)modern axiom of the alleged obsolescence of this strategy of narrative representation. Social realism, Mukherjee seems to suggest, is a representational necessity if one really wishes to engage with problematic real-world issues that continue to shape the contours of our globe today precisely because it is the only strategy that, despite its fundamental and undeniable deficiencies, at least makes the attempt to represent things as they are in extratextual cultural reality.

Having elaborated upon the narrative enactment of early twentieth-century Bengal as a contested space in *A Life Apart*, I now want to briefly focus on two further

functions this historical setting fulfils in the context of the entire novel's narrative universe. Through Ritwik's fictional imaginative reconfiguration of Tagore's *The Home and the World*, Bengal is furthermore enacted narratively as an intertextual memory space in *A Life Apart*. In the same vein, it arguably functions as an "imaginary homeland" (Rushdie 1991a [1982]: 10) for the isolated migrant protagonist. In order to assess commonalities and differences between Rushdie's original definition of this concept and Mukherjee's narrative reconfiguration of it in his novel, it is worth recalling Rushdie's exact formulation:

It may be that writers in my position, exiles or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt. But if we do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge – which gives rise to profound uncertainties – that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be able to reclaim precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind. (Rushdie 1991a [1982]: 10)

It is true that, shortly after his arrival in England, Ritwik sets about creating a fictional reconfiguration of a historical cultural space – early twentieth-century Bengal – that serves as a peculiar kind of "imaginary homeland" for himself. Ironically, however, it is by re-imagining the colonial past from the point of view of an originally marginalized English character that Ritwik attempts to combat his disillusionment with the postcolonial present he experiences in the textual actual world of early 1990s England. Compared to Rushdie's definition, two things are thus remarkable. First, Ritwik does not reclaim his own personal past but an era he merely knows from history books. Second, he parodies the postcolonial strategy of re-writing by making a peripheral English character from Tagore's original novel the sole internal focalizer of his adaptation.

There is, however, one respect in which Ritwik's motivation to re-write Tagore's classic matches the particular condition of migrancy described by Rushdie in the following quotation:

It may be argued that the past is a country from which we have all emigrated, that its loss is part of our common humanity. Which seems to me self-evidently true; but I suggest that the writer who is out-of-country and even out-of-language may experience this loss in an intensified form. It is made more concrete for him by the physical fact of discontinuity, of his present being in a different place from his past, of his being 'elsewhere'. This may enable him to speak properly and concretely on a subject of universal significance and appeal. (Rushdie 1991a [1982]: 12)

Mukherjee's narrative representation of his shy, reclusive and lonely migrant protagonist exemplifies this peculiar 'migrant condition' inasmuch as the deixis of Ritwik's being elsewhere than in his country of origin makes him long for a past that he

has never experienced himself. As a consequence of his postcolonial migration, Ritwik can supply precisely the “double perspective” (Rushdie 1991a [1982]: 19) that Rushdie considers to be the unique contribution of migrants to images of contemporary Britain:

Indian writers in these islands, like others who have migrated into the north from the south, are capable of writing from a kind of double perspective: because they, we, are at one and the same time insiders and outsiders in this society. This stereoscopic vision is perhaps what we can offer in place of ‘whole sight’. (Rushdie 1991a [1982]: 19)

In comparison with this characterization of the migrant writer’s interpositionality, Mukherjee’s protagonist Ritwik distinguishes himself by providing such a “double perspective” on both Britain *and* India: due to his postcolonial migration, there is a constant cognitive co-presence of these two cultural spaces in his fictional mind, which renders him acutely aware of both their intertwined histories and the consequences of this shared legacy of colonialism in the present, for instance regarding the disparate distribution of socioeconomic prosperity.

What is remarkable, however, is the high degree of realistic precision with which Ritwik reconstructs the tensions and conflicts characteristic of early twentieth-century Bengal. Therefore, Ritwik can by no means be accused of rendering this historical cultural space in an overly idealized way; his vision is not blurred by the embellishing lens of long spatio-temporal distance that sometimes characterizes migrants’ imaginative reconfigurations of their home country. Accordingly, Ritwik’s fictional reconfiguration of early twentieth-century Bengal distinguishes itself precisely by the *absence* of the high degree of romanticizing idealization that is commonly assumed to be a characteristic feature of such imaginary homelands created for the purpose of psychological compensation in the present. Although in Ritwik’s case, this compensatory mechanism of mental mobility (that is, of overcoming loneliness by immersing himself in a fictional reconfiguration of the past) is clearly at work in his re-writing of Tagore’s modern Bengali classic, he does not fall prey to the naïve illusion of a harmonious and peaceful past that can be contrasted all too easily with his disenchanting situation in the present. Consequently, the Bengal of the early twentieth century portrayed in his narrative betrays no traces of such credulous romanticization.

Nevertheless, his envisioning of the cultural memory space ‘early twentieth-century Bengal’ fulfils several compensatory functions for the individual protagonist Ritwik: it helps him construct and stabilize his personal identity configuration as a marginalized outsider in British society; it gives his life a certain sense beyond the mere ‘keep calm and carry on’ of his daily struggle in Oxford and, later, in London; it endows his individual agency with a domain of autonomous artistic freedom; and, for all these

reasons, it provides him with at least a minimum of orientation in his everyday life as a student at Oxford and, in the novel's second part, as an illegal migrant in London (cf. Assmann 1999: 408). By means of Ritwik's look back on a past he has never experienced himself, *A Life Apart* thus "illuminate[s] a section of the past from a specific present, [with the effect] that this reconstruction opens up a vista of the future" (Assmann 1999: 408). Due to the conspicuous realism employed by Ritwik in his imaginative reconstruction of early twentieth-century Bengal, however, this vista of the future can only be a dystopian one. On the whole, both the retrospectively imagined Bengal of the *swadeshi* movement and present-day multicultural London as experienced by the protagonist therefore shatter any hope for substantial change through cross-cultural encounters, thereby giving the lie to both romantically idealized literary and media representations of the British Raj and progressivist visions of a supposedly dawning era of transcultural utopianism.

Despite its evident pessimism, however, Mukherjee's historical plot does narratively re-map the colonial topology of the British Raj. By focusing on the conflictual co-presence of British imperialist arrogance and Bengali resistance (the *swadeshi* movement), he deconstructs the presumptuous British claim to a monopoly on political and representational power. What is more, he goes beyond that inasmuch as he focuses on the complex and intricate "intertwined histories" (Said 1993: 72) / "entangled histories" (Randeria 2002) of British rule in India and indigenous communal conflicts between Hindus and Muslims as well. Finally, this simultaneous re-mapping of imperialist cartography (cf. Neumann 2009: 129-131) and re-writing of hegemonic master narratives of British colonial history likewise exemplifies the intertwining of space and time narratively. Instead of representing the classical imperialist dichotomy of 'centre and periphery' as a one-directional dependence of the latter upon the former, this relationship – between London and Bengal – is further enacted as one marked by spatial co-presence and intertwined histories in *A Life Apart*. Both the spatial and the historical interconnections between these two cultural spaces are configured in Mukherjee's novel as the outcome of myriad reciprocal movements, of which Ritwik's and Miss Gilby's directionally inverse migrations are metonymical cases in point. Again, the narrative mode employed for the representation of this intertwining of London and Bengal is minimalistic, which necessitates pertinent inferences (from her extratextual cultural knowledge) on the part of the reader.

While the fictional configuration of early twentieth-century Bengal epitomizes a *historical* cultural space marked by the failure of transcultural utopianism à la Nikhilesh

Chowdhury, London functions as its analogue in the *contemporary* storyworld. The parallels between the narrative enactment of Bengal and that of London in this novel are obvious. Just like the fictional narrative configuration of early twentieth-century Bengal epitomizes the failure of transculturalism in a historical context, present-day multicultural London is narratively enacted as a contemporary dystopia of the progressivist master narrative of transculturalism. The fact that, with Ritwik, an illegal migrant holds the structural position of sole internal focalizer in the novel's contemporary plot does have important repercussions on the way London is resemanticized.²⁵⁸ Representing an extremely marginalized group subject to social exclusion and deprivation of civil rights, Ritwik's personal perspective on the "urban monster" (ALA 324) London stands out from the crowd of (sometimes overly) optimistic literary representations of the British capital as a multicultural space in postcolonial Asian British novels like Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990).

At the same time, Ritwik's mere presence in the British metropolis disrupts the clear topological dichotomization of 'centre and periphery', thereby pointing out that this binary spatial structuration has lost much, though not all, of its significance in contemporary multicultural societies. As a result, the *semantic* boundaries between these two concepts are blurred to a certain extent (cf. Beck 2014: 109), whereas the underlying *geotopological* power constellation (marked by stark disparities in the distribution of economic prosperity between the erstwhile centre and the former colonies) remains largely intact. With this fictional configuration of its macro-level narratopology, *A Life Apart* narratively enacts the continuation of colonialist patterns of economic exploitation in the post-colonial era that is so ubiquitous in extratextual cultural contexts of present-day multinational capitalism as well. It also demonstrates the insufficiency of deconstructing instances of binarist thinking such as 'centre versus periphery' merely in the linguistic subdiscipline of semantics or the cultural medium of fiction for the project of improving concrete living conditions for migrants in general and illegal ones in particular. Without concrete initiatives for their political and socioeconomic self-empowerment in extratextual cultural reality, Mukherjee's novel insinuates, it will be impossible to effect any change for the better. In this context, Ritwik's tragic fate foregrounds the pointlessness of trying to achieve this goal on one's own; only through collective action might the prospect of change dawn on the horizon at all.

²⁵⁸ In *A Life Apart*, there is a stark contrast between Ritwik's powerful *structural* position as the only character-focalizer of the contemporary plotline and the fictive author of its historical counterpart on the one hand and his extremely powerless and disenfranchised socioeconomic, cultural and sexual positionality in the contemporary storyworld on the other (cf. Section 6.3 of this dissertation).

While it is no longer the all-important metropolitan centre of the historical colonial geotopology nor an exemplary space of successful multicultural co-existence and intercultural understanding, present-day London is presented here as a transcultural space marked by persistent power asymmetries (between the white British majority and ethnic minorities and between legal and illegal migrants), socioeconomic inequalities and, as a result, starkly disparate degrees of agency available to the different individual characters. Hence, it is reminiscent more of Pratt's definition of contact zones as "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other [...], often within radically asymmetrical relations of power" (Pratt 1992: 4, 7) than of any kind of utopian third space of transculturalism. In addition, *A Life Apart* also narratively configures the British capital as a contemporary dystopia of transculturalism by negating the possibility of further sociocultural *transformation* of the cityscape London through the clandestine presence of illegal migrants like Ritwik. In the following, I therefore want to analyse how the cityscape of present-day London is narratively configured as a contemporary dystopia of transculturalism by way of three exemplary passages. In the first, Ritwik's insecurity in identifying many a major sight of the British capital symbolizes the exclusion from regular social life and the powerlessness vis-à-vis the state authorities from which he suffers as an illegal migrant:

Ritwik [...] concentrated on the view smoothly slipping past. Row after row of detached white houses, grand and elegant. There was a big walled garden along the entire stretch of the road. 'Buckin Ham Palace,' Saeed said. 'That? On the right?' Once again, no answer: conversation was going to happen strictly on Saeed's terms.

Suddenly there was a spacious roundabout, with monuments and victory arches, a hint of a large expanse of green, which soon broadened out to what Ritwik considered the countryside, yet along the other side of the green-bisected road, there was a series of swish, ritzy hotels, Hilton, Park, Dorchester.

'Rich place. Is called Park Lane. Rich people and rich foreigners here,' Saeed said, being surprisingly chatty. 'Is that Hyde Park?' Ritwik asked. Saeed nodded, driving past another arch and into a long road. Instantly, the scenery changed, like a swift, rumbling movement of theatre backdrop ushering in a new time, a new place. The shops, cafés, restaurants, juice bars, grocery stores, takeaways were almost without exception Arabic – Lebanese, Egyptian, Middle Eastern. 'Edgware Road,' Saeed said, laconic as always [...]. (ALA 261)

This realistic, internally focalized description (cf. Nünning 2007: 114-116) of London's West End from Ritwik's point of view is interspersed with the evocation of this story space through character dialogue between Ritwik and Saeed (the middleman who is supposed to find illegal work for Ritwik). By naming famous London sights (Buckingham Palace, Hyde Park) as well as posh avenues (Park Lane) and hotels

(Hilton, Park, Dorchester), the narrator evokes a mental map of the West End in the reader's mind. Apart from the hotels, Ritwik proves to be largely unable to identify these landmarks on his own; only with Saeed's help does he finally succeed in recognizing them. This delayed identification and the protagonist's dependence on an intermediary narratively configure the recognition that these epitomes of affluent grandeur are out of reach for the protagonist.

In particular, the fact that Ritwik does not recognize Buckingham Palace on his own is indicative of his subaltern status as an illegal migrant who, because he lives in the underbelly of present-day multicultural London, does not have the leisure to go on a sightseeing tour of the British capital. This brings him in diametrical opposition to affluent postmodern tourists who come to London for precisely this purpose. In contrast to Western tourists and readers, Ritwik does have difficulty in recognizing this quintessential London sight. The resultant effect of defamiliarization highlights "the subjectivity of space" (Beck 2014: 120), or, more precisely, the subjective dimension of orientation in and semanticization of cultural spaces (cf. Beck 2014: 119-120). In addition, this desolate personal situation likewise contrasts Ritwik's narrativized experience of London with the narrative enactment of sightseeing tours undertaken by postcolonial migrants in other Asian British novels, such as *One Hundred Shades of White* (Nair 2003), where the protagonist Nalini can afford to take her two children on a tour of London's most famous sights after relaunching herself as an independent small-scale entrepreneur:

We drove into the city. I realized I had never taken my children to properly see it and that day, it seemed so beautiful. We drove around Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square, the Tower of London and then we went to Madame Tussauds. They loved it. (*One Hundred Shades of White* 117)

Although the narrative strategy deployed here is, in essence, the same as in the above-quoted passage from *A Life Apart*, that is, cognitive evocation of quintessential London sights by simple naming, the affective semanticizations suggested differ substantially because, in contrast to Ritwik, Nalini is a legal migrant, and she has taken the chance of establishing her own little pickle-producing company. Therefore, she enjoys a socioeconomic positionality and attendant freedom of action that Ritwik can only dream of. Whereas Nalini's tour of London is a one-day excursion undertaken for the sake of mere pleasure, Ritwik gets to know a few of London's sights in passing only, that is, on his early morning way to illegal and badly paid manual labour in the countryside. In stark contrast to the short excerpt from Nair's novel, the above-quoted passage from *A Life Apart* thus underlines Ritwik's social and cultural positionality as a peripheralized subject forced to live on the shadowy margins of British society because

of his subaltern status as an illegal migrant. At the same time, it also demonstrates that he makes no postcolonial claim whatsoever to renegotiate the socioeconomic and topological power constellation governing the British capital. Because he is trapped in poverty and deprived of civil rights, and due to the resultant daily struggle for survival, Ritwik does not have any ability to challenge the white British hegemony over London. The only option left to him is to try to survive in the clandestine netherworld of the British capital through a combined tactic of camouflage, inconspicuousness and prostitution. The fact that, in the quotation above, Ritwik is *being* driven through London further corroborates his overall situation of being doomed to passivity and desperate struggle for survival.

As the sudden change of spatial frames (cf. Ryan 2014 [2012]: n. pag.) in the latter part of the above-quoted passage hints, the fictional configuration of London in *A Life Apart* is further marked by extremely affluent and ordinary, lower-middle-class social strata living next-door to one another. The above-quoted passage evokes this spatial co-presence (of the West End and adjacent immigrant quarters) in the reader's mind by naming the ethnic affiliations of the restaurants in Edgware Road (Lebanese, Egyptian and so on) directly subsequent to the thematization of famous London sights in the dialogue between Ritwik and Saeed. In the subsequent quotation, the narrator makes this peculiar spatial closeness of extreme wealth and relative poverty explicit:

Ritwik was going to discover this abiding aspect of London: with one corner turned or a side-street stepped into, the whole landscape could change, from Georgian terrace to postwar prefab, tree-lined red brick suburbia to outbreaks of high-rise council estate rashes with cruel names to their buildings: Ullswater, Windermere, Grasmere, Keswick. The demarcations were sudden and jagged. (ALA 263)

In this internally focalized passage, Ritwik realizes the side-by-side co-existence of wealth and destitution prevalent in the metropolitan cultural space London. The antithetical enumeration of different architectural epochs and styles, as well as the name-dropping of ghastly council estate buildings, serves to evoke in the reader's mind a cognitive map of London marked by the stark spatial co-presence of these socioeconomic antipodes. Regarding these council estate buildings, it is, more precisely, the stark contrast between their actual ugliness and the associations with the beautiful scenery of the Lake District their names evoke²⁵⁹ that accounts for the 'cruelty' of this choice and, by extension, intensifies the atmosphere of despair they exude. Within this novel's narratological structure of the contemporary cityscape London,

²⁵⁹ Ullswater and Windermere are the two largest lakes in England's Lake District National Park; Grasmere and Keswick are a village and small town, respectively, in this area (cf. Leapman et al. 2009 [1995]: 359, 366-367).

the seedy and dilapidated district of King's Cross²⁶⁰ occupies the lowest rank, for its description from Ritwik's point of view evokes an atmosphere of utter hopelessness, absolute material and mental impoverishment and omnipresent menace:

Boarded up windows invariably remind Ritwik of gouged out eyes. A large number of houses in the back streets around King's Cross look as if they have been forcibly blinded, with cheap plywood squares nailed into where windows once were. Abandoned buildings with broken windows; bold swirling graffiti [...]; detritus-blown streets: newspapers, empty cartons, kebab wrappings and takeaway boxes [...] – in a different country, with different building materials, this would have been called a slum. This is a dead appendage of the urban monster, awaiting amputation or, as they call it here, regeneration. Every building and warehouse along these streets seems to have conspired with the other to induce instant depression and exude an unnameable threat. This is their only resounding achievement. Under the dull, gunmetal London sky, Crinan Street, Delhi Street, Randell's Road, Bingfield Street, Goods Way, Camley Street, Earlsferry Way, all make suicide seem sensible, natural, even desirable.

At night, the drama changes. The dark hides the cracking plaster, the details of the decrepitude, and the emphasis moves from desolation to fear. These are the streets that everyone has learned to call 'soulless', 'dangerous', 'crime hotspot', but no word approaches the shadowy menace always out of the field of vision, always imminent, but never realized. Add to that the impoverishment, this interminable locked-in dance with squalor, and the mixture explodes in little tingles in the skin's pores as you walk down these streets. (ALA 324-325)

Accordingly, this comprehensive, internally focalized block description (cf. Nünning 2007: 114-116) of the slum area around King's Cross Station from Ritwik's perspective vividly conveys the affective semanticization of this place as an ever-menacing topology of danger, fear and squalor. The anthropomorphizing metaphors of "gouged out eyes" and "houses [...] forcibly blinded" underline the nature of this place as a liminal space of hopelessness and pointless violence. Moreover, the enumeration of garbage items polluting the streets and the stereotypical characterization of this slum area through an accumulation of pertinent, utterly negative adjectives like "soulless" and "dangerous" exacerbate the atmosphere of depression, despair and destitution, turning the King's Cross quarter into a quintessential "crime hotspot". The negative semanticization of this place culminates in two narratorial statements: first, the

²⁶⁰ In the early 1990s, the precise era in which the contemporary strand of Mukherjee's novel is set, King's Cross was still notorious as a "crime hotspot" dominated by poverty, prostitution and drug abuse. In the wake of its increased attractiveness to artists (due to low rents) and the renovation of King's Cross Station, however, this area has experienced a steady upturn within the last two decades. Ironically, the internally focalized characterization of King's Cross as "a dead appendage of the urban monster, awaiting amputation, or, as they call it here, regeneration" (ALA 324) thus narratively prefigures the future regeneration project to be launched by the urban authorities in order to utilize the King's Cross area according to the logic of postmodern capitalist expansion (cf. Muriel Bailly's article [13.11.2013] "A Little History of King's Cross", accessed at <http://blog.welcomollection.org/2013/11/13/a-little-history-of-kings-cross/> on 11.11.2014).

succession of street names that are said to provoke a suicidal death wish in the passer-by's mind; and second, his thematization of the unspeakable, indiscernible and yet constantly present sense of a "shadowy menace" lurking at every corner, both of which bring the infernal 'aura' of this place to a boil. All in all, the narrative enactment of Ritwik's experience of walking through King's Cross thus epitomizes the degree to which a character's current spatial environment can impact upon his subjective mood and motivational disposition.

Despite Ritwik's timid attempts to gain a foothold in London, the sociotopological order of this cityscape, i.e. white English hegemony over it, is finally confirmed as the protagonist dies in a violent racist attack. Accordingly, the macro-level of this novel's narratopology remains marked by persistent socioeconomic power asymmetries between the hubs London (which stands metonymically for the whole of England) and Bengal until the very end. All in all, the imaginative spatial co-presence of these two cultural spaces in the reader's mind (cf. Hallet 2009: 89; 102-107), which is itself a result of the consistent alternation between these two settings in the novel's second part, therefore takes the shape of a *contrapuntal parallelism*; that is, their spatio-temporal juxtaposition reveals their simultaneous functionalization as both *counterpoints* to one another (in terms of the relative distribution of power and wealth) and *parallel* settings (regarding, for instance, the dystopian predominance of violence in arguing out different sociocultural groups' conflicting interests). It is precisely the alternating juxtaposition of contemporary London and early twentieth-century Bengal that accounts for this cognitive short-circuiting of these two chronotopes in the reader's mind (cf. Hallet 2009: 89; 102-107), thereby highlighting the multiple interconnections between these hubs across history and geographical distance. Therefore, this novel's narratopology decidedly does not reproduce the imperialist dogma of the allegedly *intrinsic* inferiority of the colonized periphery, but instead reconfigures it by foregrounding the fact that the socioeconomic inequalities between the former imperial centre and its myriad peripheries are a direct result of the ruthlessly exploitative economic policy pursued by the British over centuries. Therewith, Mukherjee's debut novel narratively configures a decidedly *post-colonial* topology that distinguishes itself by its critical stance on the stereotypical colonialist dichotomization and hierarchization of 'centre' and 'periphery'.

In conclusion, I thus contend that this contrapuntal parallelism of the metonymical chronotopes 'contemporary London' and 'early twentieth-century Bengal',

which function as the prime hubs²⁶¹ of this novel's overall postcolonial narratopology, reflects the two-pronged argumentative thrust of the narrative representation of space in Mukherjee's novel. On the one hand, it foregrounds the persistence of geopolitical and geotopological power asymmetries between the erstwhile imperial centre and the former colonies (contrapuntal aspect), while, on the other, it highlights certain parallels in the topological configurations of these seemingly disparate chronotopes, such as the negotiation of intercultural conflicts through (communal and racist, respectively) violence. As a result, the fictional configuration of both cultural spaces betrays no sign of the successful realization of transcultural utopianism; on the contrary, Mukherjee's novel enacts them narratively as historical and contemporary dystopias of transculturalism. What is even more important, however, is the multiple causal interpenetration of these two chronotopes' topological configurations, for the power asymmetries between the hubs London and Bengal directly result from the impact of British colonialism upon the latter cultural space, while at the same time, both communal violence in early twentieth-century Bengal and racist violence against migrants from the former colonies in contemporary London are likewise causally entangled with these cultural spaces' intertwined histories of colonialism and postcolonialism. On the whole, the postcolonial narratopology of *A Life Apart* accordingly mirrors one of the central issues with which this novel grapples, that is, the myriad transtemporal and transspatial entanglements between England (metonymically represented by Oxford in the first part and London in the second) and India (metonymically represented by Bengal), interrelations that are foregrounded in their contrapuntal, parallel and causal aspects.

6.5 Inverse Vectorialities: Colonial versus Postcolonial Migrations

While the three preceding sections focused on the narrative configurations of temporality, agency and spatiality in *A Life Apart*, this one will be concerned with synthesizing the insights gained in the separate examination of these three constituents of my trialectics of motion in a thorough analysis of the narrative enactment of the protagonists' colonial and post-colonial migrations. In this process, particular emphasis shall be laid upon the narrative intertwining of real and imagined

²⁶¹ For the topological conceptualization of 'hubs' used in this study, cf. Section 4.4.3.

movements, that is, movements taking place in the textual actual world in contradistinction to those that are situated in the textual possible world of a character's imagination. Following Soja (1996), I intend to highlight their interpenetration and mutual conditionality as "'real-and-imagined' (or perhaps 'realandimagined?')" (Soja 1996: 11) movements. In this context, it is important to remember that the novel's narrative structure itself immediately suggests such a focus of analysis inasmuch as Ritwik, the protagonist of the primary narrative, starts writing a fictional, metadiegetic narrative about Miss Gilby's colonial migration from England to India in the heyday of the British Raj shortly after he himself has migrated in the opposite direction in the early 1990s. While the experienced vector of his postcolonial migration has led Ritwik from India to England, his retrospective imagined vector takes him back to early twentieth-century British India.

This duplication with a difference of the act of migrating results in a doubling of Saidian spatial counterpoints. In the exemplification of his interpretative strategy of *contrapuntal reading*, Edward Said stipulates that "[w]e should try to discern [...] a counterpoint between overt patterns in British writing about Britain and representations of the world beyond the British Isles", adding that "[t]he inherent mode for this counterpoint is not temporal but spatial" (Said 1993: 97). In contrast to Said's example, I argue, *A Life Apart* narratively enacts a *doubling* of such spatial counterpoints. Whereas in Said's example, the narrative authority of presenting one's view of one's country of origin and the world beyond rests entirely with the British narrator and focal characters, Mukherjee's novel features both the English perspective on India (Miss Gilby as internal focalizer) and the Indian perspective on England (Ritwik as internal focalizer). As far as the structure of narrative mediation is concerned, this novel therefore gives equal weight to English and Indian points of view, which results in a quadruple analytical matrix: Ritwik's perspective on India and England as juxtaposed with Miss Gilby's on England and India. (It has to be noted, however, that Miss Gilby's view of her home country must largely be inferred from her comments on India, since, throughout the entire novel, she rarely ever makes explicit evaluative statements about her own country of origin.) This doubling of spatial counterpoints, in turn, results from the narrative enactment of Ritwik's and Miss Gilby's inverse vectorialities; that is, it is only through the act of travelling to their respective destinations in person that they acquire the narrative authority of making comments and value judgements about them. In this context, it is highly significant that the macro-structural movement pattern emerging from the narrative enactment of the inversely entangled ontological vectorialities of their migrations narratively configures the topological figure of

contrapuntal parallelism inasmuch as the two characters roughly follow parallel routes but in opposite directions (India – England versus England – India). As the narrative configuration of their migrations is responsible for connecting and relating the two hubs of this novel's postcolonial narratopology – India and England – it is no coincidence that, as we have seen in Section 6.4, this topological pattern – contrapuntal parallelism – applies to the interrelationship of these spatial and cultural settings as well.

As we shall see, this doubling of spatial counterpoints and individual perspectives on the cultural spaces 'India' and 'England' goes hand in hand with a pronounced focus on the *effects* of their respective migration on the two protagonists rather than on the detailed rendering of the actual course of the journey itself. This widespread silencing of the performative act of moving itself via elusive or ellipsoidal narrative representation, I argue, stands metonymically for a counter-discourse to utopian visions of transculturalism that propagate, above all, the myth that global mobility is available to anyone. As we have seen, this overly optimistic viewpoint is called into question, undermined and ultimately deconstructed in *A Life Apart* by the narrative enactment of Ritwik's tragic fate as an illegal migrant in London. With this silencing of the journey itself, Mukherjee's novel thus narratively configures a postcolonial counterpoint to both the colonial travelogue's extensive thematization of adventurous exploratory journeys to unknown parts of the globe and postmodern celebrations of universally available global freedom of movement. In this novel, the silencing of motion is therefore tantamount to the silencing of utopian transculturalism.

This widespread silencing of the act of moving itself dynamizes my heuristic theoretical model – the trialectics of motion elaborated in Chapter 2 – by pointing up its limits of applicability, or, more precisely, by highlighting the necessity to distinguish between the macro- and micro-structural levels in its application to the narrative enactment of motion in contemporary Asian British novels. As regards *A Life Apart*, the relationship between these planes is fundamentally ambivalent: whereas the entangled ontological vectorialities of the two protagonists' directionally inverse migrations can be inferred at the macro-structural level (for instance from the topological macro-constellation in the two interwoven storyworlds), the combinatorial interplay of agency, spatiality and temporality is largely silenced at the textual micro-level because of the minimalistic mode employed to represent these transcontinental migratory movements. This constellation – macro-structural foregrounding of entangled ontological vectorialities versus micro-structural silencing of motion itself – is indicative of the

novel's pessimistic stance on the postmodern celebration of 'free global mobility for everybody' and attendant discourses of utopian transculturalism. The prime reason for this is that the novel consistently highlights the disparate distribution of agency among different socioeconomic and cultural types of travellers as epitomized metonymically by the contrast between Ritwik (representative of the formerly colonized) and Miss Gilby (representative of the colonizers). Therefore, I contend that *A Life Apart* decidedly abrogates such lopsidedly celebratory Western discourses of global freedom of movement by undermining their claim to universal applicability through the consistent foregrounding of the unjust geotopological power constellations lurking behind this myth of contemporary globalization as a glorious age of universal transculturalism. As we have seen, the narrative configuration of this geopolitical power distribution in Mukherjee's novel still largely follows similar lines today as it did in the age of 'classical' imperialism.

Accordingly, the narrative enactment of Ritwik's postcolonial and Miss Gilby's colonial migrations shall be retraced comparatively in the following. By juxtaposing them, I will highlight the multiple entanglements of their respective ontological vectorialities. In particular, I intend to show that these entangled vectorialities represent dichotomous poles with regard to all three constitutive dimensions of human motion: spatiality, agency and temporality. Hence, their mutual relationship is marked by inversion, or, more precisely, contrapuntal parallelism.

As far as Ritwik's postcolonial migration from India to England is concerned, the silencing of motion takes its most extreme form: elision.²⁶² Not only is the journey itself omitted completely, but, in addition, the fact that he has actually travelled from Calcutta to Oxford must be inferred by the reader from the deictic indication of his different spatial locations: In Chapter Zero (which functions as a prologue), he is attending his mother's funeral in Calcutta, whereas at the beginning of Chapter One, he is leaning out the window of his room in a student dormitory at Oxford University. Because narrative discourse supplies not even a verb of departing, travelling or arriving, Ritwik's transcontinental migration is clearly enacted in the elisive mode. Thus, the narratological vectoriality – that is, the combinatorial interplay of the paradigmatic axis of selection, the syntagmatic axis of combination and the discursive axis of perspectivization (cf. Nünning 2008a: 19-26, particularly 21, and Section 4.4 of this dissertation) in the narrative enactment of this biographically momentous migration—cannot be observed directly, but must be reconstructed actively by the reader from the

²⁶² For the heuristic differentiation between elisive and ellipsoidal modes of representing movements narratively, cf. Chapter 4.4.2 of this dissertation.

scattered bits and pieces of pertinent information provided by narrative discourse in the course of the novel. Considering Ritwik's ultimate fate, this absence of a conventional narrative account of his transcontinental migration correlates with the large-scale silencing of utopian transculturalism in the novel's contemporary storyworld. What narrative discourse does represent in more detail, however, are Ritwik's movements as a student in England in the narrative present and those he performed as a schoolboy in Calcutta in the retrospectively evoked, trauma-ridden past of his childhood. This narrative juxtaposition of his micro-level movements prior to migration with those performed subsequent to it corroborates my hypothesis that the comparative thematization of the *effects* of the protagonist's migration is more important here than the detailed rendering of the precise course of the actual transcontinental migration itself. Accordingly, his experienced vector is evoked only via the analeptic semanticization of the deictic and experiential difference between his country of origin and his destination.²⁶³

The question of how Ritwik experiences the effects of this migration is answered indirectly in the extensive, internally focalized block description (cf. Nünning 2007: 114-116) of his cognitive and affective experientiality of English rain in the narrative present, which in his eyes is vastly different from the Indian monsoon he was forced to live with in Calcutta (cf. *ALA* 36-40). In contrast to the stereotypical association of England with an annoying frequency and intensity of rain, Ritwik experiences English rain as a rather muffled variation of the annual monsoon season he is used to from Calcutta:

Even the rain, so typical and so patly conforming to a stereotype of England the non-English assiduously propagate, begins to irritate him with its in-between status. It is neither the obliterating deluge of the Calcutta monsoon, nor the obliging short bursts of a life-giving natural force after an arid summer. [...] But nothing had prepared him for this. It is variation, all right, but muffled. For most of the time, it is not the actual physical thing, the element of water, which he experiences, but the intent to rain, a sort of pervasive threat in the dead gunmetal skies. He doesn't understand how it is possible, this excess of wetness without downpour. (*ALA* 36)

By juxtaposing them, narrative discourse foregrounds the stark contrast between Ritwik's experiential semanticization of English rain (which, for the first time in

²⁶³ In fact, the mode of travel Ritwik used in order to get from India to Britain is mentioned in passing once, at the very beginning of the novel's second part: "When he flew out of Delhi [...]" (*ALA* 189). Because this specification of his mode of travel appears within the framework of an analepsis rather late in the course of its contemporary plot, however, its effect on the retrospective semanticization of this journey is minimal, all the more so because the reader can easily infer it from their extratextual cultural world knowledge of the historical context in which Ritwik is acting.

his life, makes him aware of “the infinite nuances of drizzle” [ALA 36]) and his memories of the tropical deluge of the monsoon in Calcutta (cf. ALA 37-40):

As for the rain with which he had grown up, it was less rain than some primal frustration vented on little mortals. From June to September, everyone who lived under the vengeful path of the monsoons understood what rainfall must have been like in prehistoric times. The relentless sheets of water were unleashed unforgivingly. There was zero visibility in this all-erasing elemental fury – you couldn’t see beyond the edge of your helpless umbrella – but there was also the euphoria of end and destruction to it. (ALA 37)

Whereas the central peculiarities of English rain constitute a metaphor for the features traditionally ascribed to the English themselves, such as restraint, detachment and unobtrusiveness (cf. ALA 36-37), the isotopy of infernal living conditions (caused by the prehistoric brutality with which the monsoon season impacts humans in India) that governs Ritwik’s memories of the Calcutta monsoon (cf. ALA 37-40) functions as a metaphor for his horrid childhood under the regime of a frustrated and tyrannical mother. Internally focalized characterizations of Ritwik’s hometown during the monsoon season as “[...] a nightmare of ditches and trenches, an eviscerated hell” (ALA 39) confirm this impression and, what is more, evoke associations with classical literary representations of hell by means of explicit intertextual allusion: “Those trenches were what made Calcutta a place that had leaped out of the pages of Dante and been transposed east” (ALA 39). Through this intertextual reference, narrative discourse establishes a fleeting transcultural memory space in which the narrativized description (cf. Mosher 1991: 426-427; Ronen 1997: 278–279) of present-day Calcutta is blended imaginatively with a classic of Western literature.

Despite its comparatively harmless nature, however, the experience of English rain does not have a consoling effect on Ritwik. On the contrary, the protagonist succumbs to the paranoid thought that “this rain, in a different land, [...] can read him” (ALA 40). Evidently wary of being looked through, Ritwik experiences the English rain as a subtle threat to his personal integrity. This idiosyncratic semanticization is indicative of the characteristic personal insecurity the protagonist has suffered from since his childhood, which, accordingly, is much more a result of his mother’s loveless and violent parenting than of his current situation as a newly arrived migrant in a foreign country. Nevertheless, the latter likewise contributes to his uneasiness, because Ritwik suffers from the cold and feels like a complete stranger due to his initial inability to understand spoken British English. All in all, the protagonist thus experiences his everyday life in Oxford largely as a burden: “The days are loads, bearing him down” (ALA 44; cf. *ibid.*).

These negative aspects notwithstanding, Ritwik's postcolonial migration to England enhances his individual socioeconomic freedom of action considerably: having been granted a scholarship to do his MA in English literature at Oxford University, he is able to enjoy a modest degree of financial independence there. Regarding his personal motivationality, this prospect of autonomous socioeconomic agency was precisely what triggered Ritwik's decision to migrate in the first place. This predominance of intrinsic motivation correlates with a rather high degree of momentum: intent on escaping from his miserable life in his family's flat in Grange Road, Calcutta, which had been marked by poverty, severe physical abuse on the part of his mother, a strict upbringing and constant quarrelling among his relatives, Ritwik made up his mind to leave India for England in order to start a new life there (cf. *ALA* 189). The following passage reveals his ardent desire to transform his own subjectivity for the better in his new place of residence:

He owns these [Body Shop] products. They are bought with his scholarship money and they belong to him. They will protect his face from the legion knives of the February wind, keep his armpits fragrant, free his tangled locks of dandruff. He can have a new body in England, even be a new person. Maybe. (*ALA* 45)

The items of personal hygiene referred to implicitly, i.e. through the internally focalized description of their purpose, symbolize the humble prosperity Ritwik has attained. The protagonist's dream of personal freedom is thus directly linked to the concrete realization of at least a modest degree of socioeconomic independence. Ritwik's newly-gained 'real-world' agency rests not on post-structuralist deconstructions of master discourses in the academic realm of cultural theory, but on the substantial improvement of his socioeconomic positionality through concrete action: his successful application for a scholarship. His example hence narratively configures my postulate that, without such concrete steps of socioeconomic self-empowerment, the project of enhancing one's (individual or collective) agency remains futile. At the same time, however, it also shows that asserting one's own agency is a necessary but insufficient condition for personal happiness. In Ritwik's case, the desire to alter his subjectivity by transforming both his corporeality and his attendant identity configuration points to this insufficiency. On the whole, the protagonist's individual semanticizations of the effects of his migration to England are fundamentally ambiguous: a leap into unprecedented freedom and confrontation with new challenges, on the one hand, and the disenchanting experience of solitude and implicit marginalization as a cultural outsider, on the other.

In terms of narrative saliency, Ritwik's postcolonial migration from India to England occupies a prime position because it triggers the novel's plot. As we have

seen, this migratory movement is an escape from the clutches of his idle relatives in Calcutta in Ritwik's eyes. By migrating west with the intention to stay there on a permanent basis, he leaps ahead into freedom from his family's domineering grip and from the economic hardship of poverty and destitution he was forced to live with for the first 22 years of his life. Initially, the affective semanticization of this migration on the part of the protagonist takes the shape of a genuine liberation from the stifling – economic and emotional – dependence on his family. In the further course of the novel, it is increasingly the disillusioning aspects of Ritwik's life in England, such as loneliness and social exclusion as an illegal migrant, that are foregrounded by narrative discourse. Accordingly, the major biographical event of his transnational migration to the UK definitely leaves conflicting affective impressions on the constitution of the protagonist's individual subjectivity and attendant identity configuration.

As far as the insight into the eminent significance of the travelling character's *affective* semanticization of its *effects* for the overall meaning potential of his migration is concerned, Ritwik's example is a case in point. Although the journey itself is never thematized explicitly, it nevertheless occupies a pivotal role in this novel's plot structure due to the crucial affective importance projected upon it by the protagonist. In this case, the narrative saliency of the journey thus cannot be gauged by recourse to Genette's seminal parameters for the narrative representation of temporality (order, duration and frequency; cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 33-160). Instead, it is indispensable to take a closer look at the *affective* semantics projected upon it by the protagonist in order to arrive at justified conclusions on this central question (cf. Section 4.3.1 of this dissertation).

As regards the narrative strategies deployed in the representation of Ritwik's agency, the prime techniques are internally focalized, selective and distributed description (cf. Nünning 2007: 114-116), representation of consciousness / mental mobility and scenic presentation of the heterogeneous aspects of the protagonist's personality or, rather, of the different resources, impediments and manifestations of his agency. These theoretically separable narrative techniques do, however, appear mingled with one another much more often than on their own. In particular, the last technique – scenic presentation – is frequently coupled with analeptic mental movements across time and space, as in the scene where Ritwik's hallucinatory visual perception of his mother sitting in an armchair in his student-dormitory room triggers haunting memories of his physical abuse, which, in turn, are rendered via scenic presentation featuring an implicit and purely mental – or, in Bal's terminology (cf. 2009

[1985]: 85-88), subjective – analepsis (cf. *ALA* 46-48; see also Section 6.2 of this dissertation). Whereas these horrid childhood memories constitute the single most important factor responsible for Ritwik's strong *inhibitions* in dealing with other human beings in the present, his creative *imagination* proves to be the most prominent resource and manifestation of his autonomous personal agency – alongside his thirst for adventure. The latter manifests itself in his nocturnal homosexual activities with strangers; the former, by contrast, takes shape in his re-writing of Tagore's *Ghare Baire / The Home and the World* from the perspective of Miss Gilby, an originally marginalized character. Creative writing thus becomes Ritwik's way of asserting his individual mental agency in a foreign environment marked by loneliness and disillusionment.

The intertwining of 'real' and 'imagined' movements that turns out to be so characteristic a quality of Ritwik's attempts to cope with his increasingly desolate situation in the narrative present does not start with this act of re-writing Tagore's classic, though. Rather, the extensive, internally focalized representation of his mental mobility in recurrent analepses suggests that it has its origins in the survival tactic he learned back in Grange Road, Calcutta, where the activity of reading functioned as escapism from the bleak reality of his childhood. Mental mobility – in the form of browsing encyclopaedias, such as the Collins Concise Encyclopaedia (Ritwik's most precious possession as a child) or reading history books (cf. *ALA* 113-117) – used to be crucial to Ritwik's survival in a household dominated by his brutal, frustrated and physically abusive tyrant of a mother, Bidisha Ghosh.²⁶⁴ Its high importance for the protagonist in both past and present circumstances points up, once again, the multiple entanglements linking his personal and the colonial past with his current situation in early 1990s multicultural Britain.

Compared to Ritwik's postcolonial migration, which, as we have seen, is represented in the elusive mode, Miss Maud Gilby's colonial migration is enacted in the

²⁶⁴ Bidisha Ghosh's principle of childrearing – symbolized in the tree metaphor replete with imperialist baggage – is in line with what her children are taught at school (cf. *ALA* 146) and universally approved of by their neighbours. The organic metaphor of the growing tree for a child resonates with imperialist connotations in a twofold sense. First, it evokes the analogous use of the tree as a metaphor for the allegedly organic unity of the British Empire; and second, it links this metaphor with another notorious one: that of the Empire as a family in which the 'mother country' Britain occupies the parental role, while the colonies are relegated to the part of under-age children (cf. Nünning 1996: 91-120). The complex metaphor resulting from the blending of these two imperialist metaphors, however, is deconstructed in *A Life Apart*, as the Ghosh family, which symbolizes the Empire *en miniature*, turns out to be a loveless and dysfunctional one, and, what is more, the overemphasis on discipline and submission in his upbringing contributes indirectly to Ritwik's tragic death.

ellipsoidal mode of narrative representation, because narrative discourse thematizes her arrival in India retrospectively, thus following the pattern of 'ellipsis plus completing analepsis' (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 48-54, 106-109, and Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation). Rendered by means of an internally focalized, analeptic account, the complicated and hazardous procedure of going ashore in Madras in autumn 1891 prefigures Miss Gilby's subsequent experience of the Indian subcontinent in that it instills in her both a sense of freedom and an awareness of the incommensurability of India and England, thus turning her arrival in India into a virtual *rite de passage* (van Gennep 2005 [1909]):

And then there had been the landing, her first touching of Indian soil, or rather, water, the choppy, turbulent waves of the Bay of Bengal which, in a crucial and inexplicable way, had done something to her, what, she cannot name or even put a finger on, but it had given her a sense of freedom, of dissidence even. [...] Miss Gilby, with the intuitive wisdom of women, realized then, while being borne aloft in a shell of a boat with fearful English ladies, that all her English manners and notions and ideas would have to be thrown out into the heart of the Bay of Bengal because this country was like no other, because it was not like anything she had ever encountered or even dreamed of, regardless of all the stories that circulated in the Ladies' Club of Colchester and the parties in High Season; it was a country where she was going to have to learn all over again. So she set about doing exactly that. (ALA 28-29)

As far as Miss Gilby's cognitive and affective experientiality of her arrival in Madras is concerned, it is noteworthy that her general preparedness to immerse herself in the incommensurable culture of her destination sets her off from the other English women from the very beginning, because their attitude towards India and the Indians is marked by a peculiar mixture of downright fear and distanced, haughty arrogance. Miss Gilby's openness towards intercultural encounters and, above all, her willingness to let herself be altered by them distinguishes her from her fellow compatriots, who experience India primarily as a dangerous and menacing cultural space. This preparedness for acculturation on the part of the protagonist prefigures her consistent behaviour towards her Indian contemporaries throughout the further course of the novel. What is more, this behavioural attitude constitutes a narrative configuration of the recognition that intercultural contact situations are never a one-way street; that is, they always transform both parties involved, requiring each of them to adapt to and absorb elements from the other culture. By enacting Miss Gilby's awareness of this fundamental fact via psycho-narration, narrative discourse foregrounds this unique quality of hers from the start.

In addition, the internally focalized narration of the adventurous procedure of disembarking from the P&O ship off the Madras coastline from the point of view of the

internal focalizer Miss Gilby fulfills a second function: it prefigures the nature of life for Europeans in India by giving the English women a foretaste of what is expecting them in this vast and 'incomprehensible' country. In this process of stereotypical semanticization of the cultural space 'India' from a European colonialist perspective, the flimsy, swaying dinghies in which the English passengers are rowed to the Madras shore by Indians function as a metaphor for the hazardous, insecure nature of life in India for Europeans:

Madras didn't have a natural harbour so incoming ships just stopped a few miles from the shore, dinghies were let down and the passengers ferried across to the sand. [...] The waves were unruly and high and the flimsy boats swayed with such abandon that it struck fear into the hearts of these ladies who had never ventured beyond the calm of the Norfolk Broads or the mostly well-behaved Thames. To be rowed by a group of night-black natives, who grinned away, not a word of English between them, not a care for the awesome tossing of the bark, would have turned the bravest of souls queasy with terror. (ALA 29)

In contrast to the vast majority of other English women in India, Miss Gilby boldly asserts her independent agency in the strictly hierarchized and compartmentalized society of the British Raj from the moment of her arrival. Originally called upon by her brother to manage his household, Maud Gilby, a self-confident, courageous, liberal and tolerant Englishwoman whose behaviour is guided by humanist and egalitarian ideals, soon starts engaging in initiatives of her own, for instance by contributing to Violet Cameron's project of educating Indian girls and women, and later by working as governess and tutor for the wives of Indian rulers like the Nawab of Motibagh and Nikhilesh Chowdhury. As the unmarried elder sister of James Gilby, the District Collector of Madras, she enjoys an extremely privileged social status that enables her to demonstrate her independent freedom of action vis-à-vis the rigid code of conduct in British India, for example by talking to the Indian guests and their wives at Raj parties. Miss Gilby's persistently performed transgressions of the societal, cultural and ethical boundaries within the dichotomous (the English versus the 'natives'), static and strictly hierarchical society of the Raj earn her a reputation as a dangerous, unwomanly, traitorous transgressor (cf. ALA 30). The ossified societal structures of British India punish any attempt to occupy an interstitial positionality with social exclusion and denigrating contempt. Her deliberate transgressions of this sacred societal norm turn Miss Gilby into a liminal go-between (cf. Section 6.3 of this dissertation):

Like every other Raj party, James's party was one where nobody mingled; after all, parties were thrown to show who stood where, immovable, the possibility of mobility a dangerous mirage. Stuck, stuck, stuck, Miss Gilby, defiant and different, had always thought. In her eight years in India, she had attracted a lot of attention and opprobrium – she had been called

various things: 'dangerous', 'unwomanly', 'unladylike', 'monstrous', 'unruly', 'unpatriotic', 'traitorous', 'unnatural'. (ALA 30)

In this passage, Miss Gilby's interpositionality is enacted via a combination of internally focalized description of the highly conventionalized behaviour of the guests at a Raj party and psycho-narration. The latter of these techniques highlights the protagonist's awareness of her contemporaries' devotion to preserving the bounds between the different ethnic and social strata of British India. At the same time, the narrative technique of psycho-narration also serves to articulate Miss Gilby's opposition to the predominant mind-set in Raj society, which views social mobility not as an individual's chance to improve her living conditions through work, but as a dangerous threat to the extant power structures of social stratification. As the following quotation shows, Miss Gilby's transgressive behaviour is part of her larger transcultural project of immersion in Indian culture. By performing an attitude of openness towards intercultural contacts and acculturation, she resists her compatriots' inclination to reproduce 'little England' in the vast expanse of the Indian subcontinent, thereby calling into question the rigid dichotomization of cultural spaces and their indigenous inhabitants upon which the Manichean worldview of imperialist discourse rests:

If it bothered her slightly in the beginning, it didn't now. She had refused to play their game, she had refused to live in a little England of these little people's making in the heart of such a big, baffling, incomprehensible country. It didn't come as a surprise that she was punished for breaking the rules, especially that central rule of the Raj – you didn't treat the natives as equals. Of course, you were friendly with them, you worked with them (well, you had to), you invited them to certain parties, although not all, but you most certainly didn't treat them as equals, not after 1857, not after Cawnpore. The natives inhabited a different world from their masters and governors and the space in between was, should be, unbridgeable. Rule set in stone, cast in iron. There was no deflection from that. If you swayed from it, you had to pay. (ALA 30)

Again, it is precisely Miss Gilby's consistent attempts to bridge the allegedly unbridgeable gap between 'natives' and colonizers that account for her liminal interpositionality in-between the Indians and the British. While initially, extrinsic motivation had been predominant in her decision to come to India (her prime motive originated in a sense of duty toward her brother, who had called upon her to manage his household after his wife, Henrietta Gilby, had suffered a severe sunstroke), Miss Maud Gilby soon develops an intrinsic interest in India, its people and culture. In terms of agency, the overall effect of the colonial migration upon the protagonist accordingly consists in the brave assertion of her intellectual independence and practical freedom of action against the highly prejudiced narrow-mindedness that her fellow expatriates display vis-à-vis this "big, baffling, incomprehensible country" (ALA 30). It is this devotion to immersion in its culture that adorns Miss Gilby with subtle traces of utopian

transculturalism in the first place (cf. Section 6.3 of this dissertation). However, her role in the fictional configuration of 'early twentieth-century British India' nevertheless also betrays a certain degree of ambivalence inasmuch as she can only afford this high degree of individual freedom of action on account of her highly privileged socioeconomic and cultural positionality as the elder sister of a high-ranking Raj official.

With regard to agency, I therefore contend that the two protagonists' inverse vectorialities are manifest in their role distribution as well: Miss Gilby teaches English language, literature and culture in early twentieth-century British India, whereas Ritwik comes to late-twentieth-century England to continue his studies in English literature there. The resulting role distribution – 'metropolitan' teacher and 'colonial' student – symbolizes the continuation of imperialist patterns of domination in post-colonial times. This contrapuntal allocation of disparate degrees of agency to the protagonist of the primary narrative and his fictive creation in the secondary narrative therefore narratively configures the extratextual phenomenon of neo-imperialism at the textual micro-level in the fashion of a *mise en abyme* that deliberately calls into question the ontological boundary between text and context through its referentiality to extratextual cultural reality.

In the following, I accordingly want to retrace the narrative representation of the spatial and temporal dimensions of Ritwik's and Miss Gilby's migrations jointly by focusing on their intertwining in the configuration of macro-level narratologies in both the contemporary and historical storyworlds. Particular emphasis shall be laid upon the parallels between these narratologies and their extratextual cultural counterparts. Therewith, the complex interactions between these textually constructed agentive space-time configurations and corresponding chronotopes in – historical and contemporary – extratextual cultural reality will occupy centre-stage.

As regards the spatial dimension of the two protagonists' transcontinental migrations, they are characterized, first and foremost, by inverse directionalities. Whereas Ritwik migrates from Calcutta, India, to Oxford, England (and later to London), his fictive character, Miss Maud Gilby, travels in the opposite direction, i.e. from Portsmouth, England, to Madras, India (and from there to Calcutta and Nawabgunj, Bengal). Accordingly, the outward experienced vector performed by Ritwik in the textual actual world is paralleled contrapuntally by the imagined return vector performed by Miss Gilby in the textual possible world of his creative mind. As we have

seen, narrative discourse represents these directionally inverse experienced vectors²⁶⁵ by means of two different subtypes of Genettean ellipsis: In Ritwik's case, it takes the form of elision: his experienced vector is omitted completely, and his experience of a transnational migration can only be inferred from the analeptic, comparative juxtaposition of his former spatial and experiential deixis – Calcutta monsoon – and his current deixis – English rain in Oxford. In Miss Gilby's case, by contrast, the narrator deploys the ellipsoidal mode of narrative representation, that is, narrative discourse thematizes at least her arrival in Madras via a completing analepsis.

The widespread omission of the actual course of the respective journeys from narrative discourse in *A Life Apart* can be interpreted in two different ways: in the novel's contemporary storyworld, the elision of Ritwik's airplane flight from India to England is an indicator of the high degree of standardization prevalent in contemporary modes of travel, while the ellipsoidal representation of Miss Gilby's trip from England to India and her subsequent journey from Calcutta to Nawabgunj can be read as a decidedly postcolonial negation of the colonial travelogue's claim to truthfulness and tellability in its representational referentiality to extratextual cultural phenomena. With this abrogation of the travelogue's epistemological potential, Mukherjee's novel rejects the spectre of ideological certainties implied in the colonialist realism of the travelogue by silencing the protagonists' act of travelling in favour of anticipatory and retrospective narrative thematizations of attendant expectations and preparations or effects and consequences, respectively (cf. Chapter 4.4.2 of this dissertation for my general hypotheses on the positioning of the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels vis-à-vis its counterpart in travelogues).

Rather than direct, explicit narrative enactments of the journeys themselves, *A Life Apart* opts for indirect, implicit modes of representing them, for instance through their contextualized, spatio-temporal embedding in the macro-level narratologies underlying the two storyworlds' topographical surface configurations. In the contemporary storyworld, this narratology is a late postcolonial one. Set in the early 1990s, the contemporary narratology is marked, on the one hand, by the political independence of the former colonies, but also, on the other, by the continuation of (neo)imperialist mind-sets as well as colonialist structures of domination and

²⁶⁵ The variable characterization of the vector performed by Miss Gilby as either imagined (from the fictive author Ritwik's point of view) or experienced (from her own experiential point of view) shows that the classification of narrative vectors according to my triadic typology (cf. Sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 of this dissertation) always depends on the analytical perspective adopted by the reader. Therewith, it also epitomizes the insight into the ontological nature of this typology as a mere heuristic tool allowing for overlapping areas in the conceptual reach of the three types (intended, experienced and imagined vectors).

exploitation in the global economy. The resultant persistence of power asymmetries and economic inequalities between First and Third World countries in the post-colonial era is starkly reminiscent of the dichotomized hierarchization of colonial power and colonies into 'centre' and 'peripheries' propagated by classical imperialist discourse (cf. Section 3.4 for my conceptualization of colonial and postcolonial topologies).

Moreover, it is likewise manifest in the cynical hypocrisy of Western immigration policy towards so-called 'illegal' migrants from the Third World: as Ritwik's tragic fate demonstrates, such migrants have to live with the constant fear of detection and the concomitant threat of immediate expulsion by Western state authorities despite the fact that they are indispensable as a source of cheap labour to Western national economies. All in all, the contemporary narratopology of Mukherjee's novel thus does not betray even the slightest trace of a gradual transformation of the still dichotomous postcolonial constellation (affluent, powerful West versus destitute, powerless non-West) into a more complex multipolar topology that, with the benefit of hindsight, can be argued to be the most incisive macro-structural change in the geopolitical landscape of the post-Cold War era. This silencing of the imminent emergence of a multipolar geopolitical topology (primarily due to the resurgence of Asia to economic power in the decades to come) in extratextual cultural reality by narrative discourse further underlines the deep pessimism conveyed by *A Life Apart* as to the question of whether such a profound transformation actually is capable of effecting any change for the better, let alone of producing a glorious future age of transculturalism.

This novel repeatedly enacts the diachronic persistence of neo-imperialist mindsets and economic practices in its contemporary narratopology via an intermingling of character dialogue and representation of the protagonist's consciousness. As a paradigmatic example, the following passage instantiates this interweaving of different narrative strategies of representation in the exposition of the persistence of colonialist hetero-images in British minds. Here, this obstinate presence becomes manifest in Robert's (a fellow student of Ritwik's at Oxford) highly stereotypical view of India as an exotic, wild, mystical and spiritual cultural space, which betrays the degree to which his mental geotopology of the world is still largely marked by colonialism's exoticist stereotypes:

Ritwik pursued this one. 'So why do you love India?' 'It's so exotic, isn't it? And wild, do you know what I mean? And all that mysticism and stuff, it's spiritual, like, isn't it?' Ritwik flashed his smile-of-finality. He wanted to say, 'Yes, you are right. We have naked fakirs, white elephants and striped tigers on the streets of Delhi', but held back the words. (*ALA* 41; italics in original)

Since Robert has never been to India himself, his mental hetero-image of this country is the product of one-sidedly sensationalist and exoticist representations in Western media and literature, as his concatenation of stereotypical adjectives such as “exotic” and “wild” testifies. Again, it is characteristic of Ritwik’s shy reservation towards his British fellow students that, although a witty and ironic retort pops up in his mind immediately, he does not dare utter it for fear of rejection. Therefore, it is largely his need to belong that prevents Ritwik from openly questioning stereotypical colonialist hetero-images still endorsed by the British. In short, his internal friction precludes the possibility of transforming these stereotypes effectively. As Ritwik has to admit to himself, the insidious nature of these stereotypes resides precisely in their partial correspondence with extratextual cultural reality in his home country. As the following quotation shows, his own view of India is not clear of such stereotypical semanticizations either:

He knows where Declan’s coming from: how can anyone square a Dr Johnson reader with images of loincloth-clad, emaciated farmers standing next to equally cadaverous cows? Play ‘The Association Game’ with a white man, say ‘India’, and pat will come the word ‘Poverty’; it’s a coupling branded in the western mind, and who can say it’s wrong? It’s etched in his mind too. (ALA 101)

Despite this ambivalence of Ritwik’s own insider perspective on India, it is nevertheless equally important to highlight the insidious combination of underlying racist and colonialist presuppositions by which Western students’ prejudiced view of this country is apparently marked. This entire complex eventually culminates in the implicit insinuation that Ritwik has only made it to Oxford University because his father is a rich Third World bigwig:

Sarah, sharp as ever, clothes this in other words, ‘So how do you feel about being a post-colonial subject still studying the imperialists’ literature?’ ‘Well ...’ he shrugs and hedges the question. ‘It’s not quite like that, is it? Or not always.’ The unasked question is *Did you go to an elite expensive school to come this far?* He can almost see the unuttered assumptions buzz and collide like bluebottles against window panes: *rich kid father must be well-connected or influential you know what they say about rich third-world people when they are wealthy they are wealthier than the extremely rich in the first-world privileged boy to have been bought an education which paved his way here.*

But it’s not quite like that, not at all. (ALA 101-102; italics in original)

In contrast to Declan’s previous, straightforwardly racist comment that “‘It’s a strange thought, isn’t it, thousands of Indians poring over Shakespeare and Keats” (ALA 101), Sarah’s insinuation is more sophisticated, as it might be interpreted in a way markedly different from Ritwik’s internal reaction. Due to Ritwik’s role as sole internal focalizer, the question of whether she actually meant her question the way he interprets it cannot

be resolved. What is clear, however, is that, if meant that way, this question constitutes an extremely unfair implicit accusation of the protagonist, for Ritwik's father was anything but a wealthy Third World bigwig. On the contrary, his father's situation constituted a *mise en abyme* of the disempowering "Third World Debt principle" (ALA105), as Ritwik's comparison shows:

So to atone for the shaming move here [into the flat of his wife's family] his father took upon himself the more respectable and empowering role of head of family: head of family who earned money on which nine other people lived. It was only much later that Ritwik unravelled the killing illogic of someone trying to undo his own weaker position by accepting to be hobbled with leaching burdens: it was the Third World Debt principle. It was submerged blackmail, pure and simple. His father was sixty-one when all this was set in motion. (ALA 104-105)

Having transgressed a societal taboo by moving into his in-laws' home with his family, Ritwik's father is tacitly forced to take on the role of sole earner for the extended family by them (cf. ALA 103-104). In order to characterize the devastating effects of this downward social movement on his father, narrative discourse deploys the metaphor of a horse whose legs are "hobbled with leaching burdens" (ALA 105), which underlines his father's condemnation to social immobility, i.e. to being trapped in a vicious circle of poverty, stagnation and a frustrating daily struggle for survival. In this respect, his father's personal situation on the textual micro-level mirrors the socioeconomic deadlock of Third World countries on the extratextual macro-level of geopolitical power constellations. By indulging in such reflections, Ritwik shows a decidedly postcolonial awareness of the dead-end situation in which many a former colony still finds itself today, several decades after formal independence. Moreover, these unuttered thoughts, which are enacted narratively via the protagonist's analeptic mental movement back in time and space to the unhappy days of his childhood, constitute a stark counterpoint to the grossly misguided insinuation that it was primarily his affluent, influential and corrupt bigwig of a father who paved Ritwik's way to Oxford University. Hence, this extended analepsis serves as a corrective to the reader. By debunking the implicit assumption that any Third World student coming to an elite Western university must be the son of such a dubious power broker as an extremely unfair counterfactual accusation, this analepsis furthermore highlights the degree to which Western attitudes are still permeated by neo-imperialist stereotypes. What is more, exposing the counterfactuality of this insinuation also questions the epistemological premises upon which the stereotypical ascription of negative features (such as rampant nepotism and corruption) to postcolonial individuals and societies rests.

As far as the embedding of Miss Gilby's transcontinental migration into its spatio-temporal context is concerned, one parallel between the narratopology of the

historical storyworld and its contemporary counterpart is obvious: the socioeconomic and political power asymmetry between Britain and India, the two of which stand – as narratological hubs – metonymically for the entirety of (former) Western colonial powers and (formerly) colonized countries, respectively. The crucial difference in their respective topological configurations resides in the fact that Miss Gilby travels to India in the heyday of European imperialism (autumn 1891 is named explicitly), whereas Ritwik migrates in the reverse direction in the late postcolonial era (early 1990s), that is, more than four decades after India attained political independence from Britain. Despite the persistence of (neo)imperialist structures of economic exploitation and domination in the postcolonial age, the hierarchically dichotomized semanticization of heterogeneous cultural spaces – the omnipotent and superior ‘mother country’ England and the powerless and inferior colonies at the peripheries – does of course take a much cruder and unashamed shape in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century imperialist discourse than in late twentieth-century discourses of multi- and transculturalism. Accordingly, the colonial topology of the Raj as delineated in the historical storyworld’s narratology is marked by this dichotomized hierarchization of Britain and India into metropolitan centre and marginalized periphery to a much higher degree than the postcolonial narratology of the contemporary storyworld. Rather than being directly accessible through explicit characterizations of Britain, however, this historical constellation must be inferred from derogatory comments on the Indians made by Raj representatives (for instance by James Gilby in a letter to his sister Maud) and from the justified critique of British imperialist arrogance and exploitation voiced by Indians (by Nikhilesh Chowdhury in a dialogue with Miss Gilby, for example, or by the authors of the articles on the partition of Bengal; cf. Section 6.4 of this dissertation).

All in all, it is thus justified to conclude that both the historical and the contemporary narratologies of *A Life Apart* exhibit a high degree of convergence with the dominant extratextual cultural topologies of the respective era in which they are set. In tandem with the elliptical representation of the inversely entangled ontological vectorialities of the two protagonists’ migrations themselves, this high degree of realistic precision in the narrative enactment of the underlying narratologies confirms the impression of the ineffectiveness of these journeys for the macro-level configurations of these narratologies. While they do affect the individual migrant’s experientiality of their spatial and sociocultural environment on the textual micro-level, these migrations do not effect any profound transformation of the sociopolitical, economic and cultural structuration of space that governs the underlying narratology on the macro-level. This obstinate presence of such sociopolitical power structures

that, eventually, prove to be insurmountable for individual characters structurally corroborates, once again, the predominance of deeply engrained pessimism in this novel's general outlook on the transformative potential of their movements in storyworlds marked, above all, by the imbalanced and unjust asymmetrical distribution of power. Coupled with the widespread silencing of the act of moving itself, this emphasis on the diachronic persistence of large-scale topological power asymmetries is largely responsible for the silencing of utopian transculturalism in *A Life Apart*.

Concerning the historically accumulated sedimentation of previous movements in the novel's two entangled narratologies, it is justified to conclude that the elliptical narrative representation of the two major migrations creates a peculiar ambivalence in this regard. On the one hand, their thematization – however elliptical it may be – metonymically evokes historical examples of journeys along roughly the same routes (cf. Ette 2005: 11-12 and Ette 2012: 29-32). Whereas in the case of Miss Gilby's colonial migration, these include the exploratory, commercial and military voyages undertaken by European colonizers since Vasco da Gama's discovery of the sea route to India in 1497/1498, Ritwik's postcolonial migration to multicultural Britain in the early 1990s evokes the several waves of large-scale migration from the Indian subcontinent to Britain after the Second World War. At the same time, however, the silencing of the actual course of the protagonists' journeys denies these contrapuntally parallel migrations the capacity to function as 'proper' narrative reconfigurations of their historical predecessors. Again, these historical relations are not activated textually; hence, their meaning potential depends entirely on the reader's ability to draw these connections from his extratextual cultural world knowledge. The resultant ambivalence (metonymical evocation of historical precedents in tandem with silencing of motion itself) does have two decisive repercussions on the narrative semanticization and functionalization of the protagonists' directionally inverse migrations. First, it embeds these migrations into their wider historical and sociocultural contexts while retaining the clear focus on the individual's affective semanticization of their experiential effects. In short, emotion is foregrounded by silencing motion. Second, this minimalistic mode of representing journeys narratively constitutes a powerful postcolonial counterpoint to the frequently exaggerated dramatization of the actual course of the journey itself rampant in the classical colonial travelogue. By alternately focusing on two transgressive protagonists – one Indian, one English – Mukherjee's novel likewise undermines the starkly lopsided role distribution of characters in the colonial travelogue: heroic, male European adventurer as prime agent versus passive, savage 'natives' as static background to the imperial hero's grand exploits.

Subsequent to this analysis of the historical dimension of the two protagonists' migrations, I will now focus briefly on their respective acts of border-crossing. As we have seen in Section 6.3, Miss Gilby's unique role in the dichotomous topology of the Raj consists in her ability to cross the invisible border separating the two worlds into which colonial India is divided: that of the Indians ('natives') and that of the English ('masters'). To put it in Lotman's terminology (cf. Lotman 1977 [1971]: 217-241; see also Section 4.2.2 of this dissertation), there is a generally unbridgeable gap between these two semantic fields separated by an impermeable boundary. What is more, the protagonist Miss Gilby distinguishes herself by performing the transgressive act of crossing this boundary again and again, which triggers the historical plot of Mukherjee's novel and turns Miss Gilby into an interpositional go-between. By virtue of her outsider status in both the indigenous Indian and the imperialist British camps, she is capable of providing a double perspective on both.

The same is true of Ritwik, although with one important qualification. Granted, with both protagonists, it is their repeated acts of border-crossing / transgression that accounts for their interpositionality. Ritwik's experiential reality of political borders, however, is markedly different from Miss Gilby's. Whereas the latter can move across them relatively easily due to her highly privileged social status, Ritwik, who sinks to the status of an illegal migrant in the novel's second part, is stuck in the UK because he can neither leave the country when he pleases nor reveal his legal status to the British authorities for fear of deportation. In his eyes, the political border of the UK thus does not constitute a mere dividing line, but an insurmountable barrier. The fact that he does not even wish to return to India at all because his idle relatives there would only suck his lifeblood out of him only aggravates the resulting quandary.

The retrospective affective semanticization of Ritwik's elided crossing of the political border in between India and the UK thus turns out to be fundamentally ambivalent. While he initially experiences it as a leap into freedom due to the modest financial independence guaranteed by his scholarship, the disenchanting effects of displacement, such as cultural marginalization and loneliness, soon become dominant in his individual affective semanticization of this momentous transcontinental migration. As soon as his visa expires, his personal situation becomes utterly desolate and hopeless; everyday life turns into a struggle for survival.

Irrespective of this, Ritwik's postcolonial migration does of course fulfil an important structural function inasmuch as it triggers the contemporary plot in the

novel's textual actual world. As the colonial migration of his fictive character Miss Gilby serves the same purpose in the textual possible world of his imagination, there is a remarkable (albeit in other respects contrapuntal) parallelism in the textual functionalization of their directionally inverse movements. To put it in Lotman's terminology, the respective protagonists' act of crossing a salient, culturally semanticized border separating two topologically non-intersecting semantic fields – England and India – kicks off the plot in both the historical storyworld of Ritwik's literary creation and the contemporary storyworld within which he himself acts.

In terms of mental mobility, there is thus a twofold, directionally inverse spatio-temporal transgression (which requires the reader to perform attendant spatio-temporal deictic shifts; cf. Herman 2002: 270-274) that, in turn, parallels the two protagonists' actual migrations in their respective storyworlds: The first, retrospective transgression involves Ritwik breaking through the barrier between present and past by reconstructing early twentieth-century Bengal from his post-colonial vantage point in contemporary London. The implicit metalepsis in the second part, by contrast, whereby a minor character from the historical storyworld (early twentieth-century British India) reveals herself to be the mother-in-law of a minor character in the contemporary storyworld (late-twentieth-century London), introduces a certain anticipatory element inasmuch as the past suddenly breaks into the future present. Accordingly, it is in this textually activated, metaleptic mental movement on the part of the reader that the entangled ontological vectorialities of the protagonists and the intertwining of the agentive-space-time configurations they act in culminate. The particular emphasis *A Life Apart* lays on the complex interweaving of real-and-imagined movements, which is retained throughout the novel, thus testifies, once again, to its postcolonial questioning of the epistemological premises and representational conventions of the colonial travelogue with its one-sided narrative foregrounding of the imperial explorer's heroic actions in the textual actual world. By silencing the act of moving itself, Mukherjee's novel rejects both such Eurocentric celebrations of the male imperial hero and the lopsidedly optimistic vision of a glorious future of utopian transculturalism allegedly dawning on the horizon of history. As the entangled ontological vectorialities of the two protagonists' migrations demonstrate, both the unjustified glorification of the colonial past and the postmodern belief in the possibility of turning the whole world into a 'transcultural utopia come true' suffer from the same myopic constriction of one's perspective to a Western point of view. Therefore, both of these stances continue the imperialist practice of silencing the Other and thus fall short of giving due credit to the

ontological complexities of the large-scale intertwining of highly heterogeneous cultures and societies in both colonial past and post-colonial present.

Against such Eurocentric myopia, *A Life Apart* sets its fictional configuration of entangled ontological vectorialities in the narrative representation of its protagonists' biographically momentous and, above all, contrapuntally parallel migrations. As we have seen, their narrative configurations occupy contrasting poles with regard to all three constitutive dimensions of human motion, hence my designations 'inverse vectorialities' and 'contrapuntal parallelism'. Regarding agency, it is the two protagonists' disparate socioeconomic and cultural positionalities that determine the respective degree of freedom of action they have at their disposal. Accordingly, Miss Gilby's high degree of independent agency is a direct result of the prominent social status she enjoys in the society of British India, whereas Ritwik's low level of personal freedom of action constitutes a product of his subaltern status as an illegal migrant in the novel's second part. Concerning spatiality, their migrations distinguish themselves by their inverse directionalities, which mirror the contrapuntal agentive role distribution among the protagonists (Miss Gilby works as a teacher in India, whereas Ritwik comes to Britain as a student). Regarding temporality, the historical contexts they act in can likewise be conceived of as opposite poles – the colonial past of early twentieth-century British India is juxtaposed with the post-colonial present of contemporary Britain. To conclude, it is, however, indispensable to point out that the narrative enactment of motion in *A Life Apart* by no means stops at the simple juxtaposition of these two storyworlds but, instead, commits itself to foregrounding, above all, their multi-layered spatio-temporal and causal interpenetration through the narrative enactment of real-and-imagined, inversely entangled ontological vectorialities that result in a movement pattern of contrapuntal parallelism.

6.6 Summary and Conclusion

Having analysed both the narrative configuration of the three constitutive dimensions of human motion taken separately (Sections 6.2 to 6.4) and their ontological vectoriality, that is, their combinatorial interplay in the narrative enactment of the two protagonists' transnational migrations (Section 6.5) in *A Life Apart*, I will now provide a joint summary and conclusion of my contextualized examination of Mukherjee's debut novel.

Regarding the narrative representation of these three dimensions, my analysis has yielded the insight that it is fundamentally ambivalent inasmuch as the protagonists' agencies, spatialities and temporalities distinguish themselves by a mutual *contrapuntal parallelism*. Regarding the agentic dimension, Ritwik and Miss Gilby are endowed with disparate degrees of freedom of action in their respective storyworlds, yet both also occupy the liminal interpositionality characteristic of intercultural go-betweens in their sociocultural environments. As regards the spatial dimension, the fictional configuration of the cultural spaces they act in is marked, on the one hand, by stark socioeconomic and political power asymmetries between Britain and India and, on the other, by their disillusioning convergence in terms of the utter negation of transcultural utopianism (through the overt presence of racist and communal violence). Concerning the temporal dimension, the contrapuntal parallelism resides in the fact that, despite the historical distance of almost a hundred years that saw the dissolution of the former British Empire in the process of decolonization after the Second World War, the postcolonial context of the late twentieth century uncannily resembles the colonial context of the beginning of that century in its geotopolitical configuration, which is marked, first and foremost, by the continuation of imperialist patterns of economic exploitation as well as political and cultural domination. As we have seen, the diachronic intertwining of these dimensions is effected through the narrative enactment of the inversely entangled ontological vectorialities performed by the two protagonists. Furthermore, the large-scale omission of the actual performance of these salient migrations in favour of a detailed narrative thematization of their short- and long-term effects upon the protagonists in terms of agency, experientiality and identity configuration is tantamount to effacing the progressivist master narrative of a dawning age of global transculturalism: silencing motion is synonymous with silencing *utopian* transculturality. A case in point here is the total absence of sustainable transcultural third spaces from the narrative configuration of spatiality in this novel.

All in all, I thus conclude that *A Life Apart* can be classified as a *dystopian* transcultural Asian British novel (cf. my four guiding hypotheses in Section 3.2 of this dissertation) for four reasons: First, it narratively enacts the *effects* of two directionally inverse transnational migrations in the Indo-British context on the protagonists' individual experientiality and agency. Second, using the examples of late-twentieth-century multicultural London and early twentieth-century Bengal, it narratively represents the complex sociocultural renegotiation, (re)appropriation and, above all, resemanticization processes revolving around the political struggle over such dystopian spaces of transculturalism. Third, it undermines essentialist and monolithic notions of

collective identity by focusing on the narrative representation of colonial and postcolonial go-betweens' struggle for social change (Miss Gilby) and a better life (Ritwik), respectively. By highlighting the mutual entanglements of Western and non-Western configurations of modernity (and post-modernity) with regard to all three dimensions of human motion via entangled vectorialities, *A Life Apart* finally configures a profound questioning of Western modernity's claim to universality in the medium of fictional narrative. In conclusion, Mukherjee's debut novel thus constitutes a decidedly *postcolonial* counter-narrative to lopsidedly optimistic postmodern discourses of contemporary transculturalism as the alleged apex of historical teleology.

7 Widening Horizons: Pendular Vectorialities and the Emergence of a Transcultural Narratopology in *The Pleasure Seekers* (2010)

7.1 Introduction

“East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.” (Kipling 1934a [1889]: 231):²⁶⁶ The plot of Tishani Doshi’s debut novel *The Pleasure Seekers* (2010), which recounts the story of an Indo-Welsh family over three generations, reads like a vigorous, decidedly optimistic contestation of Kipling’s pessimistic essentialist dictum (cf. Chattopadhyay and Shrivastava 2012: 120).²⁶⁷ Instead of reiterating the stereotypical postulate of the alleged incommensurability and resultant incompatibility of Eastern and Western cultures, *The Pleasure Seekers*²⁶⁸ widens the horizons of both its protagonists and its readers by outlining the contours of present-day transcultural intertwinements of heterogeneous lifeworlds, using the Indo-Welsh case of the Patel-Jones clan as a paradigmatic example.

Triggered by young Babo Patel’s headstrong resolve to marry Siân Jones, an attractive Welsh secretary he has met in London, against his conservative parents’ will, who have already promised him to Falguni Shah, the daughter of their friends, this novel’s plot centres on interrelated issues of individual identity configurations, multiple cultural affiliations and the significant alteration of individuals’ perception and experience of their spatial surroundings, all of which are the direct consequences of the subjective experience of transnational migration, from the very beginning. Spanning the years from 1968 to 2001, it begins with 21-year-old Babo Patel’s departure from Madras for London and ends in his younger daughter Bean’s “roots trip” (Antz 2014) from the British capital to the Indian village of Ganga Bazaar, the place where her

²⁶⁶ This famous quotation is from Kipling’s “The Ballad of East and West” (1934a [1889]: 231-235). While, considered in isolation, this quotation abounds with essentialist pessimism vis-à-vis the possibility of intercultural communication and comprehension, it is noteworthy that the ballad as an entirety recounts an intercultural encounter that, according to the isolated dictum, is beyond all probability (cf. Kipling 1934a [1889]: 231-235; for Kipling’s complex relationship with ‘the East’, especially the domain of Buddhism, see also Scott 2012: 36-60).

²⁶⁷ The protagonist Babo’s cousin Nat resorts to this very dictum in his equally pessimistic evaluation of the future prospects of Babo and Siân’s love: “It will fizzle like a faulty firecracker. They are from different worlds. East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet” (*TPS* 40; cf. also Chattopadhyay and Shrivastava 2012: 120).

²⁶⁸ The title of this novel will be abbreviated to *TPS* in all subsequent text notes.

great-grandmother Ba lives, more than 30 years later. Between these two directionally inverse migrations, *The Pleasure Seekers* unfolds a whole network of myriad transnational movements that, on the macro-structural plane, follow the geotopological pattern of Ette's pendulum (cf. Ette 2003: 43; see also Section 3.4 of this dissertation). As we shall see, the sheer variety of such pendular movements and the prime mode of travel used – contemporary passenger aircraft – both contribute decisively to the emergence of a transcultural narratopology in this novel's storyworld.

All in all, *The Pleasure Seekers* thus enacts transculturalism not as a utopian *vision*, but as a conglomerate of actually lived *realities* marked by the ever increasing degree of macro-level interconnections among highly heterogeneous micro-level lifeworlds under the pervasive impact of contemporary globalization.²⁶⁹ This novel's fictional configuration of contemporary transculturalism emerges as a result of the narrative enactment of a transnational network of pendular vectorialities. With this concept, I intend to capture the particular variant of the combinatorial interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality that the narrative enactment of transnational motion in *The Pleasure Seekers* configures. The particular mode employed in the narrative representation of these pendular vectorialities – elliptical narrative enactment – is itself rooted in the epoch-specific contextual constellation of spatiality, agency and temporality marked by “time-space compression” (Harvey 1990 [1989]: vii; 265), a relatively high degree of individual freedom of action and post-Second World War-globalization as epitomized by contemporary air travel, the prevalent mode of travel in *The Pleasure Seekers*. Accordingly, the narrative configurations of the salient parameters – spatiality, agency and temporality – in this novel display conspicuous parallels with these phenomena that have proven to be so dominant in its extratextual cultural context.

These pendular ontological vectorialities, in turn, engender a transcultural narratopology marked by a multipolar, semi-rhizomatic macro-structure (cf. Section 7.2 of this dissertation). In the process, these pendular vectorialities bring about micro-level transcultural third spaces (cf. Section 7.3) and transcultural subjectivities (cf. Section 7.4) as well. Doshi's novel therefore constitutes a refreshingly optimistic narrative counter-project to dystopias of contemporary transculturalism, because it foregrounds primarily the *constructive potential* inherent in cross-cultural fusion without, however,

²⁶⁹ Beck (cf. 2014: 107) perceives the same tendency towards enacting transculturality as the lived everyday reality of the characters (rather than as visionary utopianism) in Monica Ali's debut novel *Brick Lane* (2003). In the context of her conceptualization of the transcultural paradigm, Helff (cf. 2009: 81) identifies “increasingly connected lifeworlds” (ibid.) as one of the characteristics of transculturality under the conditions of contemporary globalization.

lapsing into the terrain of decontextualized transcultural utopianism pure and simple. The latter extreme is avoided primarily because this novel enacts 'successful transculturalism' exclusively on the micro-level of the family.

Before embarking upon a contextualized analysis of selected aspects of this novel, I will focus briefly on the formal structure and the structure of narrative transmission in *The Pleasure Seekers*. Regarding the former, this novel consists of three parts, each of which corresponds to a specific time-span in the narrated world and to one particular setting (or, in the case of the third part, to two conjoined settings). Set at "Sylvan Lodge" (TPS 1), home of Babo's parents, the first part recounts the period from his departure for London via the difficult early days of his marriage to Siân to their eventual move to a house of their own (1968-1974). The second part, by contrast, narrates the childhood and adolescence of their two daughters – Mayuri and Beena Elizabeth (called Bean) – in this home (called "The House of Orange and Black Gates" [TPS 121]) up until Mayuri's wedding (1974-1995). Finally, the third part – entitled "Lewisham to Ganga Bazaar" (TPS 233) – unfolds Bean's search for love in London and her eventual "roots trip" (Antz 2014) to Ganga Bazaar, home village of her Indian ancestors (1996-2001).

Regarding the structure of narrative transmission²⁷⁰ in *The Pleasure Seekers*, it has to be noted that, since the events in the storyworld are mediated by a narrating instance that is not directly involved in the action as a character, the novel exhibits a heterodiegetic (and extradiegetic) narrator. In addition, this narrator is a covert one (cf. Chatman 1978: 197-198), because the reader is given no information about his or her background, and the narrating instance thus remains an anonymous voice in this novel. Due to the fact that all focalizers are situated on the level of characters, *The Pleasure Seekers* exhibits internal focalization. By and large, three major internal focalizers can be identified: Babo, Siân and Bean, the three protagonists of the story. Additionally, there are various other internal focalizers from the Patel-Jones clan in the course of the story: Prem Kumar Patel, Trishala, Chotu, Bryn and Nerys Jones. Thus, the novel is characterized by variable focalization, in some passages even by multiple focalization (cf., for instance, the narrative representation of the Republic Day earthquake in 2001)²⁷¹ in the final three chapters [29-31]).

²⁷⁰ For a general communication model for narrative texts, cf. Neumann and Nünning (2008: 26-28).

²⁷¹ The narrative enactment of this devastating natural disaster in *The Pleasure Seekers* represents an extended reality reference to the factual event of the Republic Day earthquake in Gujarat, India, on 26 January 2001. Other reality references include the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1984 (cf. TPS 181), the third Indo-Pakistani War and the proclamation

In the following sections, three different interrelated aspects of *The Pleasure Seekers* shall be explored in accordance with my overall research interest: the narrative intertwining of motion and transculturalism through the transnational movement pattern of the pendular network (7.2), the narrative semanticization of selected settings as transcultural third spaces (7.3) and the emergence of transcultural subjectivities and attendant identity configurations from the narrative enactment of ambivalent multiple cultural affiliations (7.4).

7.2 Interweaving Motion and Transculturalism: The Pendular Network as a Transnational Movement Pattern

In this section, I will retrace how *The Pleasure Seekers* interweaves motion and transculturalism through the narrative enactment of a complex network of transnational migratory movements whose pendular²⁷² ontological vectorialities, in turn, engender the transcultural narratopology characteristic of this novel's storyworld. These pendular vectorialities, I argue, are marked by a number of interrelated factors that, taken together, characterize the transnational movement pattern of the pendular network. First, *The Pleasure Seekers* enacts a great variety of transnational movements, ranging from weekend trips and package tours of Europe to temporary/permanent migrations and "roots trips" (Antz 2014). Second, this high degree of diversification regarding the purpose of transnational travel is complemented by the periodic recurrence of certain pertinent types, such as, most importantly, the transgenerational recurrence of the experience of (temporary) transnational migration. Third, the relative ease and comfort with which these transnational movements are performed by the protagonists correlates directly with the preponderance of postmodern air travel in this novel's fictional configuration of global motion and mobility. This prevalent mode of travel, I contend, is paradigmatic for the narrative enactment of motion in *The Pleasure Seekers* for two reasons. First, it narratively configures a radical metamorphosis of the subjective experience of temporality and spatiality, because there is virtually no landscape to be contemplated, just as there is no indication of the passing of time other

of Bangladesh in 1971 (cf. *TPS* 88). All in all, however, such reality references remain few and far between, and, with the exception of the final earthquake, generally do not exert any shaping influence on the action unfolding in the storyworld.

²⁷² For a general overview of the characteristics of the pendulum as a movement pattern, cf. Ette (2003: 43); see also Section 3.4 of this dissertation.

than abstract clock-time (cf. MacArthur 2012: 269; Calvino 1983: 253 and Ette 2003: 27-28). Second, the high degree of standardization in air travel and its prominent role in time-space compression (due to its high speed and global reach in tandem with the (almost) total absence of physical friction palpable to the individual traveller) is the prime factor accounting for the elliptical narrative enactment of the protagonists' major journeys in this (and other) contemporary Asian British novels.

Before delving into the comparative analysis of the three transnational migrations that shape the movement pattern of the pendular network in *The Pleasure Seekers*, I therefore want to briefly examine one extraordinary thematization of air travel in this novel, the narrative enactment of "Chotu's First and Only Flight" (chapter title) at the beginning of Chapter 21:

Chotu was 13,000 feet in the air, looking down at the world. He'd been in a state of philosophical pondering – a state he often found himself in when he was up in the sky. [...] Because *look* – just look at the world below! The entire superstructure of a city reduced to a mere toyscape. Little toy cars moving about on little toy roads – noiselessly, aromalessly; little toy trees and little toy people. A city with a thousand years of history [Delhi] reduced to a view from a window. All its gates and gardens and towers, its monuments and markets, its politics, its ugliness, its many irregularities reduced to a fine palimpsest of design. *This* was the undeniable miracle of flight: not that it allowed you to travel great distances in small amounts of time, not the actual physics of getting 200 tonnes of metal to stay up in the air. No. It was the miracle of perspective. The fact that down there could be anywhere. Down there, where things were happening, where people were marrying and fighting and working and sleeping and defecating and cooking and crying and dying – down there where all those things that made up life were happening – could be anywhere in the world. And from where Chotu was sitting, it was a world without demarcations, a world perfectly capable of saving itself. (*TPS* 213-214; italics in original)

There are two regards in which this narrative enactment of the subjective experience of flying constitutes an exception to the rule of mostly elusive representations of postmodern air travel in *The Pleasure Seekers*. First, it is a relatively lengthy summary of Chotu's reflections on the experience of travelling in a modern jet plane consisting of free indirect discourse²⁷³ bracketed by psycho-narration.²⁷⁴ Therefore, it qualifies as an instance of ellipsoidal narration, for the journey itself is not omitted completely, but instead summed up via the narrative representation of the traveller-focalizer's consciousness while being on the move. Since the description of the city below is attributed to a moving character (or, more precisely, to a static internal

²⁷³ For a seminal examination of free indirect discourse, cf. Fludernik (1993: 72-359); see also Freißmann (2011: 45-66); Neumann and Nünning (2008: 113-121) and Chapter 4.4.2 of this dissertation.

²⁷⁴ For a sophisticated overview of the narrative technique "psycho-narration", cf. Cohn (1978: 21-57).

focalizer sitting in a flying vessel), it clearly qualifies as narrativized description (cf. Ronen 1997: 278-279; Mosher 1991: 426-427; see also Section 4.3.2 of this dissertation). Second, there is a landscape to be looked at in this passage, even if only because the airplane Chotu is sitting in is about to land at Delhi airport.

The most important aspect of this passage, however, is the contrast between the physical passivity regarding spatial mobility the traveller-focalizer is routinely condemned to as a passenger on a regular airplane and the highly active realm of his mental mobility manifest in his philosophical contemplation of the city below.²⁷⁵ Regarding the latter sphere, Chotu is experiencing semi-“panoptic” (Foucault 1977 [1975]: 200)²⁷⁶ feelings of pseudo-omnipotence vis-à-vis the toy-like objects in his “field of vision” (Zoran 1984: 324; cf. *ibid.* 323-327) down below from the elevated vantage point he currently finds himself in. Caused by the bird’s eye view he can enjoy from his airplane window, this possibility of engaging with the ‘toyscape of a city’ below in a mode of detached abstraction enables the traveller-focalizer to reflect upon the exchangeability of the cityscape he is watching at present. In Chotu’s eyes, this interchangeability of the concrete contents of one’s field of vision constitutes the “miracle of perspective”, which, in turn, constitutes the hallmark of this mode of travel. By elevating the pseudo-panoptic bird’s eye perspective from an airplane window to the status of “the undeniable miracle of flight”, Chotu disregards the physical aspects of air travel (extremely high velocity in tandem with the apparently frictionless overcoming of gravity) in favour of the subjective *experiential* aspects of being up in the air. In postmodern air travel, the *objective* perspectival distancing of the things in one’s field of vision turns into the emblem of *subjective* feelings of pseudo-omnipotent superiority.

In addition, the last sentence of the above-quoted passage suggests that, viewed from high above, the world appears as a pseudo-utopian space devoid of menacing borders and resultant petty quarrels, in short, “a world perfectly capable of saving itself” (*TPS* 214). Again, it is the traveller-focalizer’s perspectival distance from the ‘toy world’ below that enables him to momentarily envision a utopian alternative to its *actual* social and political configuration for this conflict-ridden and -riven world into which he is about to return. The relatively elaborate narrative enactment of Chotu’s subjective experience of flying fills the spatio-temporal vacuum that Calvino (cf. Calvino

²⁷⁵ This contrast between physical passivity and mental activity can be classified as a recurrent pattern of the narrative enactment of motion and mobility in contemporary Asian British novels due to the fact that we have already come across it – in varying narrative configurations – in our analysis of *The Impressionist* (cf. Chapter 5 of this dissertation) and *A Life Apart* (cf. Chapter 6).

²⁷⁶ Due to the incisive perspectival restrictions of the airplane window, this field of vision is, of course, unable to match the Foucauldian conceptualization of “Bentham’s *Panopticon*” (Foucault 1977 [1975]: 200; cf. *ibid.* 195-228).

1983: 253) considers the prime constitutive feature of postmodern air travel with concrete reflections on the experiential consequences of enjoying a seemingly all-powerful bird's eye perspective while being suspended high up in the air. Therewith, it provides an example of *non-elusive* representation of postmodern air travel rarely found in contemporary Asian British novels.

Having analysed this pertinent example briefly, I now turn to the comparative scrutiny of the three major transnational migrations enacted in *The Pleasure Seekers*, which form the cornerstones of this novel's macro-structural movement pattern, the pendular network. All three transnational migrations are narratively represented as exhibiting the pendular vectorialities that constitute the bedrock upon which this pendular network and the resultant semi-rhizomatic, transcultural narratopology rest. As we shall see, the first two of these – Babo's temporary and Siân's permanent migration – lend themselves particularly well to a comparative juxtaposition, while the third one – their daughter Bean's temporary migration – will be considered separately later. To begin with, I will compare the narrative representation of the respective departure and arrival scenes pertaining to these first two transnational migratory movements. Subsequently, my comparative analysis will focus on the ways in which the narrative enactment of these transcontinental migrations and their experiential consequences contributes decisively to the generation of a transcultural narratopology at the novel's structural macro-level. Overall, I thus intend to retrace the *roots* of the protagonists' transcultural lifeworlds by focusing on the transnational *routes* from which they emerge (cf. Clifford 1997: 251).

The narrative enactment of transnational motion in *The Pleasure Seekers* sets out with the 1968 departure of 21-year-old graduate Dharmesh Patel, called Babo, from his hometown Madras for London,²⁷⁷ where he is supposed to continue his studies in chemistry at the City & Guild Borough Polytechnic and work for Joseph Friedman and Sons, a company his father, an upper middle-class Indian entrepreneur, has been cooperating with for quite a while (cf. *TPS* 5). Although it is not stated explicitly by narrative discourse, the reader can infer from the protagonist's overall personal situation and from his current mood that his motivation for embarking upon this transnational migration consists of a peculiar mix of extrinsic and intrinsic factors. On the one hand, his father wants him to go there in order to further his scientific education as well as to gain professional experience; on the other, Babo himself seems to be

²⁷⁷ Due to his departure in 1968, Babo is part of the second wave of post-Second World War migration from South Asia to Britain (cf. Section 3.3.1 of this dissertation).

fascinated by this unique opportunity to travel to faraway England, a country he only knows from media representations.

Therefore, Babo experiences the impending flight to London as a tremendous change in his life; hence, all the events prior to this caesura are “entering the annals of *Last Times*” (TPS 13; italics in original) for him:

Months and years from now he'd think about his sister like this on the terrace, looking at him wistfully with tears running down her cheeks, asking when he would come back to be married, and what if she were married before that? He would remember the magenta bougainvillea cascading out of the terracotta flowerpots, the air mostly still and quiet, telling her briskly that nothing in the world would happen until he returned. He remembered believing it, too, while they stood there, sister and brother, their feet on the red-brick terrace – Meenal, whose temporarily waif-like frame would disappear soon after her much anticipated marriage, and Babo in his crisp white kurta pyjama, his fingernails cut and filed, his hair glistening with the coconut oil that Trishala had lavishly anointed while listing the temptations he must resist while he was away: meat, alcohol, tobacco and most importantly, women. (TPS 13)

In this internally focalized paragraph, narrative discourse thematizes the complex issue of agency via a proleptic anticipation of the effects this migration will have on Babo's individual subjectivity. More precisely, the uniqueness that these incidents will occupy in Babo's future memories is accentuated prospectively. The anticipatory vector implied in this proleptic mental movement thus instantiates the Augustinian recognition of the “presence of the future in the present through expectation” that Ricoeur (cf. 1984 [1983]: 11) turns into one of the cornerstones of his threefold mimesis (cf. *ibid.* 52-87). Instead of focusing on the traveller-focalizer's agency and experience of temporality separately, narrative discourse enacts these constituents of human motion jointly here, i.e. by foregrounding their interface: Babo prospectively imagines the future effects of his imminent migration to England on his personal experientiality and subjectivity (two of the principal constituents of human agency; cf. Section 2.2 of this dissertation) by recourse to the proleptic anticipation of the role everything he is experiencing right now – shortly before and during the day of his departure – will one day play in his retrospective memories of this special day. Hence, the reader is confronted here with an intricate *intersection* of two directionally inverse mental movements, one marked by the *anticipatory* vector of his *proleptic* speculations in the present, the other by the *retrospective* vector of his *analeptic* memories of the present day in the future. In Genettean terms (cf. 1980 [1972]: 33-85), this constitutes an analepsis contained in a prolepsis, i.e. an analepsis-in-prolepsis (cf. *ibid.* 83). In other words, Babo attempts to prospectively imagine what the retrospective vector of his future memories of that day might look like long after the performative completion of the experienced vector of his

imminent, biographically momentous transnational migration to England. This peculiar narrative representation of 'future remembrance in present expectation' highlights the necessity to distinguish between *purely* mental anachronies, whose ontological existence is restricted to an internal focalizer's consciousness (as in this instance), which Bal calls "subjective anachron[ies]" (Bal 2009 [1985]: 85; cf. *ibid.* 85-88), and "objective" (*ibid.* 85; cf. *ibid.* 85-88) ones, because in the narrative present, Babo is of course unable to know whether things will actually turn out as he expects them to (see also Section 4.4.2 of this dissertation).

The agency-temporality interface I have just elucidated is expanded, in fact, to integrate the spatial dimension as well, because it is intertwined with the narrative representation of the traveller-focalizer's experience of space while being driven to the Madras Meenambakkam Airport on the morning of 20 August 1968. The predominant mood reigning over Babo's subjective perception of his hometown directly prior to his departure for London is a revealing indicator of the refreshing optimism underlying much of the representation of space in *The Pleasure Seekers*:

With that settled, Babo leaned back in his seat, thinking things were exactly as they should be. As they drove through the tree-lined avenues of Madras, Babo noticed how the flower-sellers were already out, stringing jasmine and marigold for the housewives who would come by after their chores to offer morning prayers at the temple. The coffee and tea makers in the little shanty stands like Balaji Snacks and Hot Point were busy too, as were the newspaper sellers and the early morning walkers. *Madras was alive, singing and dancing like the oil on the surface of the low-lying puddles, quivering with delicate rainbows.* Babo saw a young girl riding on the back of her father's bicycle. She wore a bright pink dress with silver anklets around her bare feet, and to Babo, she looked like a princess being guided by a troubadour through the deep forests of morning.

He watched her as he watched everything, knowing it would be a long time before he saw any of it again. But after half an hour of mustering up such an intense look of concentration on his face, Babo felt himself assailed by a great and sudden need for sleep. (TPS 8; italics mine)

In this passage, Babo perceives Madras as a bustling, colourful and lively city characterized by a harmonious interplay of the different professional groups and layers of society. The comparison of the city in motion to "the oil on the surface of the low-lying puddles" (TPS 8) intensifies the impression of a vibrant place abounding with energy, vitality and optimism. In addition, the description of Madras as a city that is dancing and singing evokes the image of a dance company moving according to a fixed choreography. This, in turn, intensifies the impression of almost picturesque harmony reigning over the city of Madras. At the same time, however, the high degree of optimism implicit in this characterization of Madras from Babo's perspective immediately provokes relentless critique from a postcolonial point of view, because it

simply ignores aspects that are not compatible with the alleged atmosphere of harmony in this city, such as the omnipresence of poverty on the streets. This starkly euphemistic narrative representation of this cityscape thus abstains from thematising the fact that in 1968, India is still unanimously assigned the condescending label 'poor developing/Third World country' by highly industrialized Western First World countries like Britain precisely on the grounds of this extremely high percentage of people living on less than the minimum subsistence level. The most likely explanation for the absence of this disconcerting fact from Babo's experience of his hometown can be found in two interrelated factors: first, his elevated socioeconomic positionality as the oldest son of a relatively wealthy middle-class entrepreneur; and second, his being accustomed to this omnipresence of destitution, which is of course due to the fact that he has been exposed to it for all his life.

The macro-structural historical situation in which his home country India finds itself in the late 1960s thus goes unmentioned, whereas narrative discourse treats the traveller-focalizer's subjective experience of space and time in the opening of the novel. Accordingly, the interface of agency, spatiality and temporality enacted in this opening scene constitutes a paradigmatic narrative realization of my conceptualization of ontological vectoriality as the combinatorial interplay of these three dimensions in the concrete configuration of individual movements. At the same time, this basic constellation – a relatively high degree of individual agency in conjunction with a predominantly optimistic experiential semanticization of space and widespread relegation of concrete extratextual events/situations to the mere background, independent of which the action in the fictional storyworld unfolds – decisively prefigures the narrative configuration of these three parameters of ontological vectoriality in the remainder of this novel.

In terms of narratological vectoriality (cf. Section 4.4 of this dissertation), the narrative enactment of Babo's transcontinental journey from Madras to London also prefigures the representation of subsequent transnational movements with regard to the narrative techniques deployed. The overall mode of representation can unequivocally be classified as elliptical, or, more precisely, ellipsoidal, because it consists of the extensive enactment of his departure plus an analepsis recounting his arrival, but omits the precise course of the journey itself. This elision of the intercontinental flight itself is most likely an adaptation of the narrative technique to the uniform monotony that typically characterizes long flights in contemporary aircraft, which, in turn, is due to the high degree of standardization in postmodern air travel and

the passenger's condemnation to passivity (or diversion, respectively) while on the plane.

The same overall narrative mode – ellipsoidal representation – is employed by the narrator in the enactment of Siân's momentous transnational migration from her home village Nercwys in Wales to Bombay (and eventually to Madras) in India. At the textual micro-level, the narrative techniques deployed include free indirect discourse, scenic presentation and summary. As the course of the flight itself is summed up in one sentence, it qualifies as a very quick summary that, according to Genette (cf. 1980 [1972]: 106-107), constitutes one possible variant of an explicit ellipsis. One further significant parallel with the narrative enactment of Babo's migration is the particular focus laid upon both Siân's departure from Britain and her arrival in Bombay.

Regarding the farewell from her family, it is obvious that Siân's personal experience of this moment is marked by ambivalent emotions. On the one hand, it was her individual decision to migrate to India in order to get married to Babo there. Consequently, she exhibits, at least in principle, a high degree of momentum, i.e. intrinsic commitment to the performance of the intended vector of her transcontinental migratory movement. On the other hand, however, now that the moment of departure and farewell has arrived, she is troubled by severe doubts concerning the rightness of her decision to leave behind her family and familiar surroundings in order to plunge into a completely different cultural sphere unknown to her, thousands of miles away from home:

Siân was travelling the breadth of the world, hoping for the circle to close. Should she cry now, after so much? Should she walk to the edge of the earth and agree to fall? What childishness was this? What stupidity? To leave everything behind just to see the sun rise the other way around. Just to see a man who will strip you bare. (*TPS* 74)

In this paragraph, the narrative configuration of Siân's experientiality functions by dint of the representation of human consciousness, which, in turn, evokes the "actantial frame" (Fludernik 1996: 12; cf. *ibid.* 12-52) 'venturing a new start in a foreign country'. The internally focalized enactment of Siân's fundamental doubts is realized narratively by a combination of psycho-narration and free indirect discourse. While the first sentence clearly consists of psycho-narration because the narrator sums up the character's mental processes in his own language, the remainder of this quotation can be classified as free indirect discourse for the following reasons. First, it fulfils the purely formal criteria as it lacks an introductory verb of thinking, and, what is more, it is rendered in the third person singular and in past tense. Second, it creates the illusion of gaining immediate access to a character's mental processes, for instance by using

questions to signal the internal focalizer's human subjectivity. Third, the protagonist's thoughts and feelings are generally represented in her own language (cf. Neumann and Nünning 2008: 116-117). On the whole, both narrative techniques (free indirect discourse in particular) serve the purpose of conveying a vivid impression of Siân's current state of mind marked by profound insecurity, which arises from her conflicting emotions concerning her imminent migration: fear versus hope, anxious apprehensions versus hopeful expectations.

The first sentence of this passage condenses the protagonist's hope for personal fulfilment in this particular moment into a spatial metaphor: "Siân was travelling the breadth of the world, hoping for the circle to close" (TPS 74). This metaphorical semanticization of her actually *linear* movement (from Nercwys, Wales to Bombay, India) as a *circular*²⁷⁸ one (finally meeting her beloved future husband again and getting married to him) narratively foregrounds the high hopes she entwines emotionally with her imminent transcontinental migration. Tellingly, narrative discourse enacts the opposite pole of Siân's current psychic conflict by means of a second spatial metaphor in which the interrogative evocation of the medieval belief that the earth is a flat disc serves the purpose of highlighting the transgressive²⁷⁹ audacity involved in the spatial act of crossing the border between two highly heterogeneous cultural spheres: "Should she walk to the edge of the earth and agree to fall?" (TPS 74). As the following quotation shows, the isotopy of spatial metaphors clearly dominates the narrative representation of the traveller-focalizer's consciousness throughout the entire departure scene:

Standing on the platform at Chester Station, the connections were already beginning to slip away. The centre of Siân's life was being dragged from her and scattered. Nerys was holding her, weeping silently, as if the sorrow inside her was so great she could only hold on to it for so long before finally letting it go like a life-sized breath of air. (TPS 74)

While the first sentence starts with an introductory narratorial phrase giving contextual information on the traveller-focalizer's current spatial deixis, its second part follows up with psycho-narration, a technique that continues to be deployed throughout the remainder of this passage. The beginning loss of connectivity with her home and her family – that is, the incipient dissolution of Siân's rootedness in Nercwys, Wales – and its transformation into a mobile configuration of subjectivity thematized in this

²⁷⁸ Cf. Ette (2003: 39-43) for a sophisticated conceptualization of the circle as a movement pattern, and Ette (2003: 43-45) for a corresponding explication of the line as a movement pattern.

²⁷⁹ Partly following Lotman's (cf. 1977 [1971]: 233 and 240-241) argumentation, I am using the adjective 'transgressive' here to designate more the protagonist's (almost) unique quality of being able to cross spatial, political and cultural borders at all, and less to evoke any connotation of *ethical* transgressiveness.

second part of the first sentence culminates in the following sentence, once again with a spatial metaphor: “The centre of Siân’s life was being dragged from her and scattered” (*TPS* 74). The *roots* of her subjectivity undergo a metamorphosis into the *routes* of her imminent transcontinental migration. The profound feelings of doubt and insecurity the protagonist experiences vis-à-vis this momentous event in her biography are underlined here by the use of the passive voice, which creates the impression of her being at the mercy of some kind of superordinate force. The fact that she feels as if she were being moved foregrounds Siân’s psychic conflict once again: although she has made the decision to migrate to India on her own, she is now scared of the potential consequences of this courageous leap into the unknown. The abundance of spatial metaphors in the narrative enactment of Siân’s departure is supplemented by the narratorial provision of “georeferential” (Dennerlein 2009: 79; cf. *ibid.* 79-81 and 209) information concerning the exact route of her transcontinental migration by mentioning the respective toponyms: While “Chester station” and “Euston” clearly point to her travelling by train, “Heathrow” naturally indicates that the bulk of this transcontinental journey is conducted by airplane. “Bombay”, located on the eastern coast of “the Arabian Sea”, finally concretizes her (temporary) destination (cf. *TPS* 74-76).

In terms of narratological vectoriality, it is worth pointing out that, while Siân’s departure and arrival are enacted narratively in considerable detail, the course of the flight itself is summarized in one trivial sentence that, merely stating its duration, does not bother to provide any further information whatsoever on the experiential dimension of this momentous journey for the protagonist: “All the eleven hours to Bombay, the Indian businessman sitting beside Siân put his pillow up against the window and slept soundly” (*TPS* 74). Accordingly, it is only when the plane is about to land at Bombay airport that narrative discourse returns to a higher degree of elaboration again, namely in the brief scenic representation of Siân’s casual dialogue with this man. On the whole, the narratological vectoriality of the ellipsoidal representation of the protagonist’s transcontinental migratory movement – realized by narrative discourse through a combination of scenic presentation (departure), Genettean explicit ellipsis (flight itself) and scenic presentation (arrival) – directly correlates with the degree of narrative saliency that can legitimately be attributed to these individual stages of the journey. While the traveller-focalizer’s experience of her farewell from her family and of her reunion with her beloved future husband both occupy paramount importance from her subjective point of view, the precise course of the flight itself and the occurrences during this trip are evidently so trivial and negligible that they simply lack even the

faintest trace of tellability. This omission of the flight itself constitutes a telling narrative configuration of what Ingold has labelled “networks of transport” (Ingold 2011b: 151; cf. *ibid.* 149-153), because it corresponds directly to the absence of the traveller-focalizer’s physical agency while on the plane and the resultant atmosphere of stereotypical monotony that are so characteristic of highly standardized postmodern air travel (cf. *ibid.*). In short, the narratological vectoriality of Siân’s transnational migration follows the pattern of affective experiential intensity characteristic of its ontological vectoriality.

Subsequent to this analysis of the respective departure scenes, I will now subject the narrative enactments of Babo’s and Siân’s arrival in their respective destinations to comparative scrutiny. As we shall see, they are marked, above all, by an *experiential parallelism* inasmuch as Siân’s first impressions of Bombay mirror Babo’s initial experience of London. In Siân’s case, her spontaneous emotions upon laying eyes on India’s largest metropolis for the very first time in her life amount to nothing less than a shock-like state of profound dismay, for she is horrified at the sight of extreme destitution and abundant wealth existing side by side there:

Siân and Babo were moving closer together. They were nearly there; ready to meet in a cluster of seven islands on the edge of the Arabian Sea. Bombay – queen of all India’s cities: a city of cages and slums, film stars and vagrants. A city Siân would want to forget about as soon as she landed in it because it wasn’t the India of her imagination. She’d imagined tree-lined avenues and mint-green houses. Lizards and peacocks. Not this. Not this. (*TPS* 75-76)

In addition to her being shocked by the brutal reality of the daily struggle for survival in the “queen of all India’s cities”, Siân’s experience of disillusionment in this paragraph is also due to her sudden recognition of the stark discrepancy between the romantic picture of India she cherished in her imagination prior to actually going there and the contradictory social reality in Bombay she is confronted with now. The textual semanticization of Bombay as a city of antitheses, i.e. of stark contrasts between the different strata of society (film stars versus homeless people) reveals the absolute inadequacy of Siân’s image of India before her arrival there, which, as the last sentences of the above-quoted passage indicate, was – in all probability – dominated by idyllic picture-book scenes reminiscent of imperialist glorifications of British India by authors like Rudyard Kipling.

In other words, what the reader is confronted with here is a fundamental clash between imagination and experience inasmuch as Siân’s anticipatory vector of her imagined journey to India (prior to actually going there) proves to be erroneous as to

this country's spatial and sociocultural configuration. In its textual function as a synecdoche condensing India's extreme socioeconomic contrasts in its largest metropolis, the Bombay Siân faces in the textual actual world²⁸⁰ betrays no resemblance whatsoever to the romantic idyll she had imagined India to be. Accordingly, her disenchantment upon arrival there results from the blatant incongruity of her prospective *imagined* vector in the textual possible world with her retrospective *experienced* vector in the textual actual world. In short, *spatial* mobility yields results essentially different from those of *mental* mobility: the cognitive co-presence of Siân's highly romanticized and speculative hetero-image of India and her shocking first impressions of Bombay (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107) results in the thwarting of the former by the latter.

In Babo's case, his parallel experience of disillusionment after his first few weeks in London is likewise due to the evident incompatibility of media representations of London with the blunt actual reality there, for the part of London he is living in bears no resemblance whatsoever to his mental image of the British capital prior to his arrival there, which has been inspired mostly by English movies:

How could he begin to describe his new life to her [Falguni Shah, his intended wife], or to anyone in his family, for that matter? It was all so utterly different from what he had expected; nothing at all like the English movies he used to cut classes for and watch with college friends in Madras. There were no Alec Guinneses or Humphrey Bogarts walking around in London. No Gina Lollobrigidas. At least none that he could see in the London City Council hostel in Wandsworth where his cousin Nat had dumped him. (TPS 17)

The profound experience of disillusionment Babo undergoes during the initial phase of his stay in London is captured vividly in this passage, which combines, once again, free indirect discourse and psycho-narration: The London he had dreamt of is that of the movie celebrities (i.e. Hampstead), whereas the London he is living in now consists of a shabby hostel in Wandsworth, where mostly elderly people are accommodated. Babo's disillusioning experience of London narratively configures the dangers involved in the exclusive reliance on fictional media representations for one's subjective semanticization of particular "real-and-imagined places" (Soja 1996). Due to this fundamental flaw in his mental image of the British capital, Babo's high expectations of a life in London are initially crushed by the bleak reality of having to live as a poor immigrant in a shabby third-class hostel in Wandsworth (cf. TPS 19).

²⁸⁰ For the differentiation of "textual actual world" and "textual possible worlds", cf. Ryan (1985: 719-720 and 1991: vii); see also Herman (2002: 263-299) as well as Section 4.3.2, footnote 167 on p. 220, of this dissertation.

In both cases, the fundamental cognitive constellation underlying these parallel experiences of profound disillusionment on the part of the two protagonists lends itself particularly well to further elucidation by recourse to my transfer of Ricoeur's threefold mimesis (cf. Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52-87) to the experience of space (cf. Section 2.1 of my dissertation). The first component – prefiguration – manifests itself in the fact that their experience of London and Bombay, respectively, is *prefigured* by media representations they have been exposed to prior to actually going there. Upon arrival in their destinations, they realize that the *actual spatial configuration* of these real-and-imagined places differs significantly from their *fictional* enactment in the media. This, in turn, leads them to *refigure* their mental image of these real-and-imagined places according to their subjective experience of them in the textual actual world.

In Babo's case, this hermeneutic feedback loop takes an additional turn. Not only is the *prefiguration* of his individual experience of London by media representations (the English movies he used to watch in Madras) thwarted by the 'real' spatial *configuration* of the British capital in the textual actual world, but, in addition, Babo's experience of London triggers, in turn, a substantial *refiguration* of his cognitive perception and affective semanticization of his hometown Madras upon his return there:²⁸¹

Madras looked overgrown, like an adult man insisting on wearing small-boy shorts. After his months in London, it seemed dirtier, shabbier. There were new billboards and glossy storefront windows, but the flowers on the roundabout were dying and the trees were gasping for air. The traffic was moving of its own accord without paying heed to the coloured signals or the khaki-clad policemen waving their arms frantically at the intersections. And the people! There were people everywhere, slipping in and out of their lives for everyone to see. Babo, watching them as if for the first time, saw how far he'd travelled, how it was no longer possible to be one of them. (TPS 43-44; italics mine)

Compared to London, Madras now seems to be dirtier and shabbier in Babo's eyes. After his stay in the British capital, Babo's perception of his hometown has undergone a drastic change: he no longer perceives it as a harmonious interplay of the elements that constitute a city, but as a polluted and chaotic place. The simile comparing Madras to "an adult man insisting on wearing small-boy shorts" (TPS 43) neatly captures the fact that Babo perceives his hometown as an overcrowded city that is literally bursting at the seams. This difference in the protagonist's individual

²⁸¹ Babo is lured back home by a telegram saying that his mother, Trishala, is seriously ill, which is a lie. The true reason that his parents summon him back to India is that Lila, Nat's wife, has informed them about his love affair with Siân Jones, which, in the eyes of his conservative parents, is a disgrace to his entire family, because he has been promised to Falguni Shah (cf. TPS 31-51).

semanticization of his hometown subsequent to his stay in London highlights the inescapable subjectivity of the experiential constitution and semanticization of space in general (cf. Beck 2014: 119-120). The imaginative co-presence of the cultural spaces Madras and London in Babo's mind is responsible for his re-evaluation of the spatial configuration of his hometown. Due to the "double consciousness" (Gilroy 1993) caused by his temporary migration to London, Babo feels unable to identify unequivocally with his fellow countrymen now. The resultant feeling of displacement is indicative of his peculiar in-between positionality in terms of spatiality, society and culture.

Such experiences of "double consciousness" (Gilroy 1993) triggered by the imaginative co-presence of at least two different cultural spaces in the respective protagonist's mind, I contend, are a direct result of the pendular vectorialities characteristic of all three major transnational migrations (as well as of further journeys, transnational and otherwise, undertaken in the course of the novel). Having examined the ellipsoidal narrative enactment of the first two major migrations, I now turn to a detailed elucidation of what exactly I mean by 'pendular vectorialities' in order to analyse the crucial role they play in the narrative evocation of this novel's macro-structural narratopology afterwards. I will then explicate the concrete, motion-generated textual manifestations of transculturalism that shape this narratopology before finally analysing the third major transnational migration enacted in *The Pleasure Seekers*.

In my conceptualization, the concept of 'pendular vectorialities' is meant to capture the text-specific ontological vectoriality – that is, the combinatorial interplay of paradigmatic narrative configurations of agency, spatiality and temporality – in *The Pleasure Seekers*. As for the agentive dimension, it is justified to argue that most protagonists are granted a rather high degree of individual freedom of action throughout the novel. This can be seen, most prominently, in its narrative enactment of a variety of transnational movements *undertaken for different purposes*, ranging from leisure trips, such as Bean and Javier's weekend trips from London to Barcelona or Chotu's package tour of Europe (covering 21 destinations in 21 days),²⁸² via temporary or permanent migrations (temporary in the case of Babo and, later, his daughter Bean; permanent in Siân's case) to roots trips, such as Bean's final journey from London to

²⁸² Instead of going to Europe to study there, Chotu grudgingly assents to his father's idea of embarking on a holiday trip to this continent in 1983. As he would have preferred to take up his studies in England (like his older brother Babo) to spending three weeks with satisfied old couples on a boring tourist programme, this journey does not constitute a vigorous assertion of Chotu's autonomous agency, but, quite to the contrary, marks his life-long submission to his stubborn father's will (cf. *TPS* 174-176).

Ganga Bazaar. The fact that in most of these cases, the protagonists' individual motivation for going on their respective journeys is clearly of an intrinsic nature corroborates the classification of their individual degree of agency as high.

As to the spatial dimension, it is evident that the pendular nature of my 'pendular vectorialities' derives from the repetition of similar movements to and fro between two geographical locations, which, on account of their following the same routes, make Ette's pendulum (cf. 2003: 43) the prime macro-structural movement pattern of this Asian British novel. To name but the most significant examples, Babo migrates from Madras to London in 1968, returns to his hometown the following year and, from 1971 onwards, visits his relatives in Nercwys, Wales periodically every few years. His wife Siân, for her part, migrates from Britain to India in December 1969 on a permanent basis. The definitiveness of her changing places can be concluded from the fact that, from then on, she only ever comes back to Britain for regular visits to her relatives in Wales and, once, on the sad occasion of her father's funeral. For her daughter Bean, by contrast, these periodic visits to their Welsh relatives constitute her sole acquaintance with the British Isles until she migrates there herself as a young adult in 1996, thereby treading the very same path her father Babo travelled upon about 30 years earlier.

Obviously, there is a direct correlation between this pendular pattern and the principal feature of political borders in *The Pleasure Seekers* inasmuch as the latter's bidirectional permeability, that is, the protagonists' ability to cross them at will, constitutes one crucial factor enabling this pendular movement pattern to emerge.²⁸³ The same verdict holds true for cultural boundaries in this novel, albeit with certain qualifications (such as Trishala and Prem Kumar's initially stubborn opposition to Babo's interracial marriage to Siân and the likewise sceptical attitude of her parents, Nerys and Bryn Jones). In other words, the protagonists' high degree of individual freedom of action is due as much to the *absence* of tangible spatial *friction* as it is to their personal strength of will. This large-scale *defrictionalization* of space, that is, the elimination of concrete external friction in the spatial dimension through postmodern air travel, facilitates the emergence of the pendular network as a macro-structural

²⁸³ Conversely, one could also argue that the bidirectional permeability of political borders (and cultural boundaries) is a direct result of the protagonists' multiple acts of border-crossing in the wake of their transnational migrations. In any case, this multiplication of border-crossings heightens the degree of complexity pertaining to this novel's narratopology. As a consequence, it narratively configures the necessity of refining Lotman's original basic structuralist model, which associates the ability to cross political, cultural, semantic and topological borders exclusively with one single, all-important protagonist (cf. Lotman 1977 [1971]: 233, 239-241; see also Sections 4.2.2 and 4.4.3 of this dissertation).

movement pattern and the generation of a corollary, semi-rhizomatic transcultural narratopology. At the same time, it is at the heart of the current, postmodern phase of “time-space compression” (Harvey 1990 [1989]: vii; 265) and therefore also constitutes one of the defining features of our contemporary context in which, at least in theory, free global mobility is available to anybody.

Alongside the aspect of historical contextualization, the temporal dimension of motion includes the subjective aspect of the individual traveller-focalizer’s experience of temporality while on the move (cf. Sections 2.3 and 4.2.3 of this dissertation). In this regard, air travel, which, at least from a Western perspective, is often considered the paradigmatic mode of travel in our contemporary context – the simultaneously postcolonial, postmodern and transcultural late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries – is marked by time-space compression and a strange spatio-temporal decontextualization of the experience of travelling. While both of these aspects are due to the rapidity of flying in a modern aircraft, the latter can of course additionally be attributed to the extremely high altitude at which contemporary airplanes traverse oceans and continents. As we have seen, time-space compression pertinent to postmodern air travel is routinely enacted narratively via the *elliptical* representation of airplane trips in contemporary Asian British novels. Thus, the moving closer together of distant geographical locations in extratextual cultural reality implied by time-space compression and Ingold’s “networks of transport” (Ingold 2011b: 151; cf. *ibid.* 149-153) finds its textual equivalent in the establishment of more or less direct connections between different settings by narrative discourse. In addition, the periodic, transgenerational recurrence of transnational migrations (Bean embarks upon a temporary transcontinental migration along the same route about 30 years after her father Babo’s initial migration) and the periodic repetition of the Patel family’s holiday trips to their relatives in Nercwys, Wales (that is, their so-called “Sometimes Summers” [title of Chapter 14] taking place every three years and recounted in iterative narration; cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 113-117), both account – temporality-wise – for the narrative generation of this novel’s macro-structural movement pattern – the pendular network – and the resultant emergence of a transcultural narratopology.

In terms of the diachronic evolution of narratologies, I argue that *The Pleasure Seekers* narratively configures a gradual transition from predominantly *postcolonial* topologies to emerging *transcultural* ones. A brief glance at the development of geotopological macro-structures in extratextual cultural reality within the time-span covered by the novel’s plot may help clarify what exactly I am referring to

here. In 1968, the year Babo leaves for England for the very first time, India has enjoyed political independence from Britain for about 20 years; its national economy, however, continues to be troubled, among other factors,²⁸⁴ by the legacy of colonialism and, what is more, by the persistent impact of neo-colonial structures of economic exploitation and domination controlled by Western countries.

In 2001, by contrast, the year his daughter Bean finally returns from Britain to India, the geotopological landscape is about to undergo far-reaching macro-structural transformations. Ten years after the liberalization of its national economy, India's rise from an utterly destitute Third World country to an aspiring emerging country is already well under way (cf. Zakaria 2009 [2008]: 161-198; Wolpert 2009: 211-215; Pilny 2006: 38-41). With the benefit of hindsight, it even seems justified to argue that this gradual shift from a predominantly postcolonial to an emerging transcultural topology constitutes the most important metamorphosis of the world's geotopological macro-structure in the early twenty-first century. Framing the narratopology of *The Pleasure Seekers*, the narrative enactment of Babo's (1968) and Siân's (1969) postcolonial migrations, on the one hand, and their daughter Bean's (1996) transcultural migration, on the other, narratively configures this extratextual shift.

Whereas the *postcolonial* topology used to exhibit a dichotomous, bipolar macro-structure (affluent First World countries and destitute Third World countries) embedded in a three-tiered global world order (Western capitalist First World, Eastern Communist Second World and the Global South, condescendingly referred to as the Third World; cf. Thieme 2003: 259) in the era of the Cold War, the emergent *transcultural* topology of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries is essentially characterized by multipolarity and a semi-rhizomatic structure (cf. Section 3.4 of this dissertation). The overall *mobilization* of the extratextual geotopological macro-structure implicit in this post-Cold War transformation is reflected in *The Pleasure Seekers* by the integration of one further setting into its storyworld: Barcelona, Spain, the destination of Bean's weekend trips with her lover Javier. The bipolar postcolonial narratopology (India and/versus Britain) has been transformed into a multipolar transcultural one (India and/versus Britain and/versus Spain).

²⁸⁴ Apart from the legacy of colonialism, one of the most important impediments to economic prosperity in post-Independence India was the prevalence of state interventionism and regulation in Nehru's mixed economy, which, in effect, turned it into a planned economy. In contrast to the Prime Minister's benevolent intentions, however, this socialist economic policy promoted inefficiency, bureaucracy and corruption instead of improving the living conditions of the poorest among his fellow countrymen (cf. Kulke and Rothermund 2010: 245-247; Pilny 2006: 30-31).

In the following, I therefore want to examine the narrative configuration of this emergent transcultural narratology by scrutinizing the narrative enactment of Bean's temporary transnational migration in 1996. Spatially, this migratory movement follows the path of her father Babo's first outward journey back in 1968 – from Madras, India to London, England. While the *topographical* route of their experienced vectors is thus identical, the underlying geopolitical and *geotopological* macro-constellation of the extratextual cultural context in which the storyworld is embedded has undergone dramatic changes in the meantime. As we have seen, the formerly three-layered geopolitical subdivision of the world has irrevocably been changed by the collapse of the Soviet Union and its satellite states, by the resultant breakdown of the bipolar confrontation that was characteristic of the Cold War era, by the rapid intensification of globalization processes and by the incipient rise of former Third World countries such as China and India to new significance in global economy. All of these macro-structural developments contribute substantially to the emergence of an essentially multipolar geotopology in the 1990s. While the relationship between the *spatial* routes travelled by Bean and Babo is marked by *parallelism*, the *historical* context in which they perform their migrations has thus been transformed fundamentally by these developments. Within the narratology of this novel's storyworld, this metamorphosis is hinted at through the integration of one further setting, Barcelona, the Spanish metropolis Bean visits (from London) with her lover Javier.

The resulting co-presence of multiple, heterogeneous hubs in this imaginative spatial macro-structure, I argue, is one constitutive feature of transcultural narratologies. Because of the absence of any substantial thematization of the fundamental metamorphosis of the geopolitical and geotopological macro-constellation I have just delineated from narrative discourse, it is entirely up to the reader to infer these contextual developments by drawing on her extratextual cultural world knowledge. The relegation of this as yet unfinished but tremendous shift in global power tectonics to the textual background of this novel may be interpreted as one indicator of the implicit presence of a utopian streak of transculturalism in *The Pleasure Seekers*. By focusing on the micro-level dimension of the intertwining of different cultures instead of macro-level geopolitical and economic issues in its narrative enactment of a three-generation family story, this contemporary Asian British novel consistently foregrounds the productive and innovative *potential* inherent in cross-cultural fusion; hence, it tends much more towards the *utopian* pole of transculturalism than to its dystopian counterpart.

Accordingly, there are – in addition to multipolarity – further constitutive properties of this novel’s transcultural narratopology. Among these, the single most important is the narrative interweaving of heterogeneous cultures through the pendular vectorialities analysed above. On the textual level, this innovative fusion of Indian and British cultures manifests itself in various regards: first, through the formation of transcultural third spaces (cf. Section 7.3 of this dissertation); second, in the procreation of transcultural subjects (such as, most prominently, Mayuri and Bean, Babo and Siân’s Indo-Welsh daughters, but also the Indo-Welsh-Spanish child Bean gives birth to at the end of the novel;²⁸⁵ cf. Section 7.4 of this dissertation); third, in the generation of new, hybrid cultural elements out of pre-existent cultural signifiers, such as the merging of Christian holidays (Christmas) and Jain customs (wedding ceremonies) into a transcultural religious practice (deliberately hopping to and fro between Christian and Jain traditions); fourth, in the narrative representation of intercultural translation processes conducted successfully, i.e. in a mutually acceptable way; and fifth, in the (almost complete) absence of racism from the narrative enactment of intercultural contact situations in this novel.²⁸⁶ All in all, the overall agentive space-time configuration prevalent in this novel’s macro-structural narratopology thus constitutes a narrative enactment of optimistic transculturalism in a contemporary context. Therefore, with *The Pleasure Seekers*, contemporary Asian British fiction does indeed qualify as a chronotope of utopian transculturality (see also Section 8.2 of this dissertation).

Having focused on a number of salient qualities that make this novel’s narratopology a transcultural one, I now want to take a closer look at the narrative generation of its complexity. This high degree of complexity, I argue, results from the multiplication of the imaginative co-presence of different cultural spaces in the protagonists’ minds. As we have seen with Babo, his temporary migration to London causes him to revise not only his mental topology of the British capital, but also his subjective view of his hometown upon his return. In addition to this ‘classical’ case of imaginative spatio-temporal co-presence of two different cultural spaces, Babo’s mental topology of the storyworld exhibits further examples of such a constellation, such as Madras and/versus Ganga Bazaar, India and Madras and/versus Nercwys,

²⁸⁵ The birth of Bean’s child at the end of the novel (of mixed Welsh, Indian and Spanish origin) hints at the increasing degree of complexity pertaining to the multiple ethnic affiliations of such transcultural subjects (see also Section 7.4 of this dissertation).

²⁸⁶ In fact, there are only two direct, explicit thematizations of this issue in the entire novel. The first one consists in the warning of racist insults such as “darkie” his relatives address to Babo prior to his departure for England (cf. *TPS* 25). The second thematization occurs when Siân communicates to Babo that she definitely does not want her children to grow up in Britain for fear of the racism they would probably be exposed to at school there (cf. *TPS* 95).

Wales. The other two protagonists who perform temporary or permanent migrations in the course of this novel, Babo's wife Siân and their younger daughter Bean, likewise develop a mental topology of the storyworld marked by multiple experiences of imaginative spatio-temporal co-presence of heterogeneous cultural spaces. In Siân's case, this constellation occurs with her home village Nercwys, Wales, and/versus London, with the British capital and/versus the Indian metropolis Bombay (see my analysis of her arrival there above), with London and/versus her new place of residence Madras and, finally, with the latter city and/versus Nercwys. Born in Madras, their daughter Bean undergoes such an experience for the very first time in her life during her family's regular holiday trips to Nercwys;²⁸⁷ in her case, further instances include the contrast between Madras and London, between the latter city and the Lake District and, finally, between London and Ganga Bazaar.

On the textual macro-level, it is thus the myriad pendular transregional, transnational and transcontinental journeys undertaken by the protagonists that account for this multiplication of their experiences of imaginative spatio-temporal co-presence, which, in turn, heighten the complexity of the underlying deep-structure of the novel's narratopology considerably. This multiplication of such cognitive short-circuiting of most heterogeneous cultural settings triggers the dissolution of binary concepts of spatial structuration (cf. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107), such as the colonialist opposition of 'centre and periphery' or Lotman's structuralist subdivision of story space into two discrete topological fields (cf. Lotman 1977 [1971]: 229-230), and their gradual substitution by more complex, multipolar transcultural narratologies.

In addition, this high degree of narratological complexity also has a historical dimension, which I will explicate in the following through recourse to a productive combination of Ette's concept of "vectorization" (2005: 11; cf. *ibid.* 11-12; 2012: 29-32) and Ricoeur's threefold mimesis (cf. 1984 [1983]: 52-87). In essence, I contend that the *configuration* of transnational movements in *The Pleasure Seekers* is *prefigured* by these anterior journeys along the same/similar routes; this narrative *configuration*, in turn, contributes to the *refiguration* of mental geotologies in the reader's mind and may therefore reverberate on extratextual cultural reality as well. The prefiguration of the protagonists' major transnational migrations by the historical sedimentation of anterior movements captured by Ette's concept of vectorization takes the shape of

²⁸⁷ Actually, Bean becomes acutely aware of the ubiquitous poverty in Madras only after their return from Nercwys in the summer of 1981 (cf. *TPS* 147-149). Hence, as with her father Babo in 1969, it is the experience of relative wealth in a Western setting that causes Bean to *refigure* her subjective perception of her hometown Madras (as a result of the cognitive co-presence of these two different cultural spaces in her mind).

voyages along the same or similar routes undertaken by colonial merchants, conquerors, administrators, missionaries and others from Britain to India in Siân's case. As far as Babo is concerned, his migration in the inverse direction is prefigured by colonial and, above all, several waves of *post*-colonial migration from South Asia to Britain after the Second World War (cf. Sections 3.2 and 3.3.1 of this dissertation). The narrative enactment of these protagonists' transnational and transcontinental migrations in *The Pleasure Seekers*, in turn, contributes to the emergence of transcultural geotologies in the reader's mind by road-testing their viability in the fictional medium of literature. Thereby, it may also have repercussions on the extratextual cultural context in which the reader lives and acts, which is exactly what Ricoeur's concept of refiguration aims at.

Having focused at length on the *spatial* and *historical* dimensions of the three protagonists' transnational migrations, I now turn to the *agentive* dimension of Bean's temporary migration to London before concluding this section with her subsequent "roots trip" (Antz 2014) from the British capital back to Ganga Bazaar, the home village of her great-grandmother Ba. Agency-wise, Bean's migration to London is semanticized as an escape from her lack of prospects in Madras, which has turned into a "city of absences" (*TPS* 238) for her. Instead of waiting any longer, she decides to take the risk of trying to get along on her own in London: "Instead of waiting for something to happen, Bean had decided it was time to seek it out; to go off on her own adventure [...], on a quest to conquer the city of London" (*TPS* 238). While from her personal viewpoint, this decision to try her luck in the British capital thus constitutes a necessary step away from parental care and a first leap into independence on the part of a young adult, its precise formulation simultaneously suggests, from a postcolonial point of view, an inversion of the imperialist gaze and desire for conquest: here, it is a postcolonial subject coming to the centre of the former Empire in order to take possession of it. This recourse to one of the now classical strategies of postcolonial literary representation – inversion – testifies to the revisionary impulse that is still present, at least in traces, in *The Pleasure Seekers*.

In terms of narratological vectoriality, it is characteristic of the ellipsoidal narrative enactment of this transnational migration that, while Bean's reasons for going to London are thematized extensively (cf. *TPS* 238), the precise course of her flight from Madras to London is omitted completely. The experiential consequences of this act of border-crossing for the individual traveller-focalizer, however, are represented in detail again. Therewith, the overall narrative enactment of Bean's migration follows the

same pattern found in the representation of her parents' transnational migrations. This identity of the discursive strategy of representation is paralleled on the story level by the identity of the routes the experienced vectors of Babo's and Bean's migrations take. By following her father's track some 30 years later, Bean triggers a process of mutual resemanticization of these two journeys. Structurally, Bean's transnational migration thus constitutes a repetition of Babo's migratory movement at the outset of the novel. It is, however, a repetition with a difference, since, in contrast to her father, Bean eventually fails to find the love of her life in London.

After the sudden end of her love affair with the married Spanish architect Javier, Bean, who has just discovered that she is pregnant, makes up her mind to embark upon a "roots trip" (Antz 2014) to Ganga Bazaar, the village in which her great-grandmother Ba lives. Once again, the flight from London to Bombay is elided completely; what is represented in some detail, however, is her train journey from Bombay via Ahmedabad and Anjar to Ganga Bazaar. Significantly, the subjective *experiential* quality of the impressions the landscapes passing by leave on the traveller-focalizer's consciousness take precedence over the precise retracing of the train's exact route in the following quotation:

What Bean saw now was an endlessness that went on and on: cotton and groundnut fields, unruly grasslands, temples, mosques, minarets, tombs. It was a landscape that belonged to no-one – no king, no one moment in history. Bean stayed enraptured in this spell until they stopped, and the overpowering stench of urine and rush of hawkers invaded, but the minute they were moving, it was hers again – this entire swaying, intoxicating country, pulling away as they rushed forward. (TPS 281)

On the whole, Bean experiences the train journey to Anjar as a revelation of the endless variety and beauty of her home country. In contrast to London, which is described as a "hissing urban desert" (TPS 281), India offers her myriad impressions that, despite their heterogeneity, have one common feature: the ravishing beauty of India's various landscapes. Again, the imaginative co-presence of two different settings is enacted narratively by means of their contrastive semanticization. Whereas London is captured by a single phrase foregrounding its alleged loveless inhospitability, India is described here as a huge country abundant with plenty of antitheses, but also with magical beauty. Bean's realization that these wonderful landscapes belong to no-one, not even to a specific period of time, can be interpreted as a hint to their atemporality, their eternal beauty. Naturally, this view is questionable, because landscapes definitely are subject to historical change. Nonetheless, from Bean's subjective point of view, the affective experience of these Indian landscapes is marked by the insight into their transhistorical and transcultural character. The almost surreal quality Bean's affective

experience of her environment is marked by culminates in the internally focalized narrative statement that, upon her arrival in Ganga Bazaar, she feels “like she was entering a mirage” (TPS 284), with the elderly women there seeming to young Bean “like they existed from before time began” (TPS 284). The spatio-temporal distancing of this village from the brutal and menacing reality of the world outside implicit in this subjective semanticization accentuates the fact that Bean affectively experiences Ganga Bazaar as a place of safety, secluded from the chaos of the modern world.

With her final return to Ganga Bazaar in 2001, Bean thus complies with the spiritual advice her great-grandmother Ba gave to her parents at their wedding roughly 30 years ago: “[J]ourney like the fish and the birds – because it is only those who agree to their own return who can participate in the divinity of the world” (TPS 81; italics in original). Bean’s act of completing precisely the circular movement pattern prefigured in Ba’s prescient piece of advice testifies to her “homing desire” (Brah 2002 [1996]: 192-193, 197), i.e. to her strong yearning for a stable and unequivocal affective relationship with this particular place in the world. It is this desire that sets Bean off from quintessentially postmodern subjects celebrating their rootlessness discursively: unlike the latter, she is *not* content with the perpetuation of being restlessly on the move both physically and mentally that is so characteristic of transdifferential identification processes, but instead longs for a stable spatial, sociocultural and, above all, affective grounding in one clearly defined homestead. Her eventual “roots trip” (Antz 2014) thus narratively configures her attempt to transform the myriad transregional, transnational and transcontinental *routes* of the protagonists’ movements throughout the novel into *roots* again.

In principle, this endeavour on the part of a transcultural subject calls into question the glib association of contemporary air travel with frequently highly stylized configurations of postmodern nomadism and rootlessness. No less than someone who has never ventured beyond the limits of her village, the traveller-focalizer Bean feels a strong homing desire, despite, or rather because of her transcultural subjectivity and attendant identity configuration (cf. Section 7.4 of this dissertation; see also Sections 3.3.1 and 3.4). In contrast to the former, however, the protagonist Bean is continually struggling for an affective grounding of her hitherto mobile subjectivity in a single place called ‘home’. Due to the devastating earthquake in the region of Anjar (in which Ganga Bazaar is situated) on Republic Day (26 January) 2001, the ending of *The Pleasure Seekers* leaves the central question of whether Bean succeeds in this attempt

at clear spatial and sociocultural “self-positioning” (Döring 2002: 1) in abeyance. The retransformation of *routes* into *roots* remains unfinished.

While the final earthquake in this novel may at first glance seem like a ‘catastrophe ex machina’, it turns out to be the culmination of the novel’s profound engagement with the central theme of death and destruction – as opposed to procreation and birth, one of its other thematic foci. Accordingly, it functions as a metaphor for human mortality, for the transitoriness and precariousness of human existence on earth as well as the simultaneous omnipresence of death in life.²⁸⁸ At the same time, the narrative enactment of this earthquake also configures a severe rupture in this novel’s transcultural narratopology by destroying, or at least disrupting, the prevalence of its optimistically utopian facets. Therewith, particularly to adherents of teleological progressivism, this natural catastrophe functions as a brutal reminder of the inevitably fragile materiality and inescapable finitude of human life on earth and thus also of the corollary, constantly threatened fragility of human visions of transcultural utopianism. To conclude, the fact that this novel closes with a happy ending on the micro-level (both Bean and Ba have survived the horrible earthquake) contained in the narrative enactment of a cataclysmic disaster on the macro-level therefore problematizes the feasibility of transcultural utopianism on the latter plane, thereby configuring a realistic narrative counterpoint to – and tentative deconstruction of – discursive celebrations of the alleged advent of a glorious era of universal transculturalism in the ivory tower of contemporary cultural theory.

7.3 Havens of Harmony: Third Spaces as Loci of Transculturalism

Subsequent to the examination of the contribution made by transnational migratory movements to the emergence of transculturalism in *The Pleasure Seekers*, this section will focus on the narrative enactment of third spaces as exemplary spatializations of transculturalism (cf. Sections 3.1 and 3.3.3 of this dissertation). In essence, I argue that *The Pleasure Seekers* enacts selected settings as transcultural third spaces marked by autonomy, independence, freedom of action and processes of transculturation in order

²⁸⁸ Cf. the similar semanticization and functionalization of earthquakes in Salman Rushdie’s *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (Rushdie 2000 [1999]); see also Section 3.4 of this dissertation.

to underpin one of its central thematic concerns: to demonstrate the practical feasibility of transculturalism on the micro-level of individual families in the medium of narrative fiction. Instead of grappling with the dystopian persistence of macro-structural geopolitical and socioeconomic power asymmetries in the contemporary geotopological landscape, this novel opts for the narrative configuration of such micro-level third spaces as optimistic exemplary counter-models to the exclusive concentration on the dystopian facets of contemporary globalization processes prevalent in *A Life Apart*.

Therewith, *The Pleasure Seekers* follows Upstone's representational strategy of "reducing the scales" (2009: 113), that is, it momentarily leaves aside macro-level issues of global injustice caused by the repercussions of (neo)colonialism in order to focus on the successful realization of utopian transculturalism in the nuclear space of the familial home. While from a purely *formal* point of view, this novel thus complies with this strategy of literary representation, both the semanticization and *functionalization* of its transcultural third spaces differ significantly from those prevalent in the postcolonial fiction analysed by Upstone (cf. 2009). Whereas Upstone interprets the "reversal of spatial scales (and representations)" in postcolonial novels as "a magical-realist mode of representation" (2009: 145) deployed in order to "allow domestic space to transcend the colonial model" (*ibid.*),²⁸⁹ I argue that, in "transcultural novel[s]" (Helff 2009: 75) like *The Pleasure Seekers*, the same strategy is not functionalized to the postcolonial end of deconstructing colonialist models of space, but to open up a vista of transcultural utopianism by demonstrating its practicability on the micro-level of the nuclear family in the fictional medium of contemporary Asian British novels. Instead of taking recourse in *magical* realism, this novel widens its readers' horizons by narratively enacting the transcultural vision of peaceful, happy and mutually beneficial living together across national, cultural and religious borders in a *realistic* mode. Consequently, *The Pleasure Seekers* represents a fictional corroboration of Helff's warning against the *exclusive* association of transculturalism with the *utopian* domain (cf. 2009: 80-81).

²⁸⁹ As the following quotation shows, this representational strategy directly correlates with the anti-idealist propensity towards complex configurations of confusion and chaos, fluidity and instability that Upstone identifies as a major characteristic of postcolonial fiction: "In their reversals and inversions – their replacement of depoliticised order with politicised chaos, the inversion of large and small scales so that the home itself ultimately becomes the public of a smaller structure – postcolonial authors engage with a magical-realist mode of representation that allows domestic space to transcend the colonial model. Through motifs of movement and fluidity, layering and invasion, flowing and leaking, a new vision of the home emerges. Its architecture refuses to succumb to norms and ideals. Its layers and complexity – the very nature of its confusion – make it a space of important protection: outside the linear narrative of history and all that represents in colonial and patriarchal terms, and instead within magical space" (Upstone 2009: 145–146).

In terms of cognitive narratology, the transcultural third spaces in *The Pleasure Seekers* represent figures that narrative discourse sets off from the ground of other settings in this novel's storyworld (cf. Herman 2002: 274-277; Chatman 1978: 138-145, particularly 138-139) by means of their constitutive features (see Sections 3.1 and 3.3.3 of this dissertation for a list of these properties). Taking a closer look at the narrative enactment of three selected micro-level spaces, I thus intend to assess their potential of being conceptualized as transcultural third spaces by juxtaposing them with related, but qualitatively different, settings.

To begin with, my analysis shall focus on the house Babo's grandmother Ba lives in, which functions as a thirdspatial refuge for the members of the Patel family. In terms of narrative representation, this familial sanctuary is subject to an exoticist semanticization, which contrasts starkly with the realist representation of the other major settings Madras, Bombay, London and Nercwys. Situated in the village of Ganga Bazaar in Gujarat, India, Ba's house is described as "a child's paradise" (TPS 56-57) from Babo's point of view:

In the house of Prem Kumar's birth in Ganga Bazaar, Anjar, the doors were always open. It was a house without furniture, without clocks, where instead of chairs, wooden swings hung from the ceiling, and instead of tables, meals were eaten cross-legged under the shade of the jamun tree on the veranda. In the evenings, when visitors came to see Ba, jute mats were spread on the black stone floors in the room of swings to accommodate them all, and at night, after they left, Ba would lay her cotton mattress down either inside or out, depending on the time of year. Red garoli lizards lived and died on the walls of this house, chewing plaster, plop plopping softly, while peacocks howled on the tin roof above. It was a child's paradise [...]. (TPS 56-57)

In the eyes of Western readers, there are two factors accounting for the exotic atmosphere conveyed by this narrativized description (cf. Mosher 1991: 426-427 and Ronen 1997: 274-286). First, the simple act of naming Indian animal species (garoli lizards, peacocks) and flora (the jamun tree) evokes stereotypical images of the paradisiacal beauty of tropical landscapes in the subcontinent. Second, the detailed description of the spatial configuration of Ba's house in conjunction with the iterative narration (cf. Genette 1980: 113-160) of her everyday practices (the absence of chairs, tables, beds and clocks, which correlates with her quotidian habit of eating and sleeping on the floor) likewise adds to the exotic aura this place exudes for a Western audience.

It is, however, highly significant that the uncommon interior configuration of Ba's home and her equally extraordinary everyday practices (again, judged from a Western perspective) are by no means semanticized as tokens of poverty or lack of manners by

narrative discourse, but instead presented as indicators of the magical aura this place is endowed with in Babo's eyes. As the following, internally focalized semanticization of the entire village of Ganga Bazaar suggests, he considers atemporality one of the defining features of this micro-level cultural space: "To Babo the village of Ganga Bazaar in Anjar had always been a magical place where time ceased to have any meaning" (*TPS* 52).

This utopian quality of stillness in time, of being an unalterable Rock of Ages in the perpetual turmoil of the ever-changing, chaotic world outside is precisely what makes Babo (and, decades later, his younger daughter Bean) escape to this village in times of existential crisis, such as, most importantly, during the conflict caused by his steadfast opposition to the marriage with Falguni Shah his parents have arranged for him (cf. *TPS* 52-68). Accordingly, Babo spends his mornings in Ganga Bazaar at Zam Zam Lodge (the only hotel in the village) writing letters to his beloved Siân in faraway London. For her part, Siân expresses her jealousy of Babo in her love letters to him, because he is "cocooned in some magical place" (*TPS* 64), while she is in London, where, in 1969, everybody is talking about the wars in Vietnam and the Middle East (cf. *TPS* 64-68). Thus, Siân contrasts her (purely imaginative) idealization of Ganga Bazaar as an exotic safe haven with the brutal reality of world politics in London. This, in turn, intensifies the utopian dimension of the narrative representation of Ganga Bazaar.

All in all, this village in general and Ba's house in particular thus function as serene havens of harmony that are indeed endowed with thirdspatial qualities inasmuch as they provide Babo and Bean with an atmosphere of security, stability, tolerance, understanding and seclusion from the chaos of the modern world. Serving as a pivotal place of refuge in times of existential crisis, Ba's house in Ganga Bazaar therefore qualifies as an idealistic third space of traditional Indian wisdom (cf. *TPS* 57-63). This categorization is justified despite the fact that it does not fulfil my first criterion for transcultural third spaces, because it does not emerge as a result of transnational migration, but rather functions as the prime locus of archaic rootedness epitomized by Ba's strong affective relationship to her home place. My second criterion proves to be equally problematic because – despite the temporary presence of a transcultural subject like Bean – the narrative enactment of Ba's house and Ganga Bazaar abstains from foregrounding any significant processes of transculturation. All the same, criteria three and four do apply to this setting, even if only to the extent that it potentially enables Babo and Bean to redefine their individual "identity configuration" (Welsch 2009: 9) by giving them space and time to rethink their self-understanding and place in

the world from the vantage point of a harmonious safe haven seemingly existing outside the pressures of the hectic modern world. To conclude, it is thus indispensable to draw attention to the fact that the exoticist narrative enactment of this setting does dynamize my straightforward definition of transcultural third spaces by problematizing two of its basic premises.

Within the storyworld of *The Pleasure Seekers*, the second setting that exhibits certain qualities of a transcultural third space is a place called “The Garden of Redemption” (TPS 88), which functions as a kind of temporary refuge from the oppressive atmosphere at Sylvan Lodge²⁹⁰ for Babo’s wife Siân in the early days of their marriage (cf. TPS 83-88). Only upon her discovery of this place in 1971 does she find a ‘real’ sanctuary within the city limits of Madras (cf. TPS 88-89). Narrative discourse semanticizes this garden as a place marked by a certain spiritual aura, to which both its name, which can legitimately be interpreted as an allusion to paradise in the Christian religion, and the weekly sermons delivered by a preacher called Manna contribute substantially. The presence of transcultural elements in this place intensifies when Siân makes friends with Ms Douglas, an old woman living in a blue-gabled house near the garden (cf. TPS 90-93). Ms Douglas, who is the granddaughter of a young missionary from England who fell in love with a singer from Calcutta, shares the feeling of displacement with Siân: “‘It’s a difficult thing,’ sighed Ms Douglas, when the story was finished, ‘To grow up with the idea that home is a place you’ve never been to. But we were raised in a way to believe that England was always the better place, the place to return to’” (TPS 91). Whereas its geographical location is clearly Indian, the cultural location of the Garden of Redemption is thus enriched by a transcultural element due to the presence of two foreign characters, one of whom is English by birth (Siân), whereas the other is of mixed Anglo-Indian descent.

While a certain degree of transculturality can thus legitimately be ascribed to the narrative configuration of this paradise *en miniature*, it lacks the innovative cultural signifiers that allegedly emerge from such transcultural encounters. Therefore, my second criterion cannot be said to apply unequivocally to this setting. The first criterion, by contrast, is realized narratively here because it is, above all, Siân’s transnational migration that accounts for the transcultural touch of the Garden of Redemption. In the same vein, it is justified to argue that it is narratively enacted as enhancing Siân’s agency (fourth criterion) through its function as a temporary third space of freedom and

²⁹⁰ The title of the eighth chapter of *The Pleasure Seekers* – “All I want is a Room Somewhere” (TPS 83; cf. *ibid.* 83-93) highlights Siân’s passionate longing for a place of their own during this difficult period.

autonomy, thereby enabling her to escape from her role as the docile and obedient daughter-in-law at Sylvan Lodge in regular intervals. Therewith, the Garden of Redemption gives Siân the opportunity to return at least temporarily to her true self-understanding as an independent, strong-willed and self-reliant modern Western woman (third criterion). Again, the narrative configuration of this third space thus does not comply neatly with all of the four criteria I stipulated as constitutive features of transcultural third spaces in Sections 3.1 and 3.3.3 of this dissertation. To sum up, the narrative enactment of these first two third spaces therefore dynamizes my ideal-typical model by revealing alternative possibilities of configuring such spatial entities, thus also problematizing the rigidity implicit in any straightforward definition by demonstrating the permeability of its conceptual boundaries. Literature's narrative (re)configurations of theoretical definitions always introduce an element of aesthetic difference, thereby vigorously asserting its own intrinsic value vis-à-vis theoretical models.

To complete the picture, I will finally examine the narrative configuration of "The House of Orange and Black Gates" (*TPS* 121; cf. *ibid.* 121-232),²⁹¹ which, as we shall see, functions as the paradigmatic transcultural third space in *The Pleasure Seekers*. Having lived at his parents' home, called Sylvan Lodge, for the two years stipulated in the intergenerational agreement,²⁹² Babo, Siân and their baby daughter Mayuri move into a house of their own, equipped with orange and black gates, situated at Number 20 Rutland Lane, Madras, in the summer of 1972 (cf. *TPS* 107). For the young couple, this first home of their own is a place of freedom, emancipation, independence and autonomy. After the constant supervision to which they were subject at Sylvan Lodge, Babo and Siân enjoy their (almost) absolute freedom to the full. In the following, I argue that the young couple's first abode of their own qualifies as a transcultural third space because it is narratively configured as an interstitial spatial configuration purposefully located between pre-existent, conventionally dichotomized notions of homeland and diaspora, one's own and foreign cultures, religions and lifestyles.²⁹³ In order to corroborate this hypothesis, I now turn to a detailed examination of the extent to which this setting realizes the four criteria I identified as constitutive properties of transcultural third spaces in Sections 3.1 and 3.3.3 of this dissertation.

²⁹¹ The name of Babo and Siân's first home of their own functions simultaneously as the title of this novel's second part, which covers the years from 1974 to 1995 (cf. *TPS* 121; 121-232).

²⁹² Babo's conservative parents, Trishala and Prem Kumar Patel, have given their consent to their son's marriage to Siân Jones only on the condition that they live at Sylvan Lodge for the first two years after their wedding (cf. *TPS* 55-56).

²⁹³ In the same vein, Chattopadhyay and Shrivastava describe Babo and Siân's first abode of their own as "a diasporic home [built] out of their unhomely experience which dismantles the binaries of home and abroad, the self and other" (Chattopadhyay and Shrivastava 2012: 119).

Evidently, the first criterion does apply unequivocally, for the transcultural third space “House of Orange and Black Gates” comes into being as a result of the protagonists’ transnational migratory movements analysed in the preceding section. The same holds true for the second criterion, because the young family’s first abode of their own is marked by a blending of two different cultural influences out of which a third, truly transcultural element arises. More precisely, it is Babo and Siân’s joint acts of procreation that stand synecdochically for the process of transculturation itself inasmuch as their two daughters – Mayuri and Beena (called Bean) – qualify as transcultural subjects (cf. Section 7.4 of this dissertation) due to their mixed Indo-Welsh parentage. It is therefore no coincidence that *The Pleasure Seekers* locates the productive potential of cross-cultural fusion in the biological act of procreation (cf. *TPS* 109), for this echoes Ortiz’s original formulation of his path-breaking concept of transculturation: “In the end, [...] the result of every union of cultures is similar to that of the reproductive process between individuals: the offspring always has something of both parents but is always different from each of them” (Ortiz 2003 [1940]: 103).

In addition, further transcultural practices enacted in *The Pleasure Seekers* include the combination of Christian holidays (most prominently, Christmas; cf. *TPS* 202) and Jain rituals (as epitomized by the respective wedding and naming ceremonies; cf. *TPS* 79-81, 116-119) as well as Siân’s passionate commitment to various charity initiatives in Madras. In particular, the latter contributes substantially to the *utopian* transculturalism characteristic of this third space, for the fact that Siân puts her Christian ideal of altruistic charity into action in a predominantly Hindu environment turns this transcultural practice into a strong indicator of her firm belief that the world can indeed be changed through joint concrete action on the part of committed individuals:

This was also the time Siân threw herself into a blitz of charity work. Through the many social and charitable arms of the OWC [Overseas Women’s Club of Madras], Siân found a way to deal with the overwhelming guilt she had carried around ever since she’d arrived in Bombay and seen those families sleeping on the pavements. She knitted blankets for the sick and taught English to slum children. She held the wrinkled hands of men and women abandoned by their families, and made embroidered table mats with the Little Sisters of the Poor. Siân loved them all, visited them in mental institutions and cancer wards, wept when she heard stories of how they were chained to their beds at night, felt delirious shivers of joy when orphaned children came scampering out to greet her, crying, ‘Aunty Aunty’. (*TPS* 110-111)

This iteratively narrated passage hints at the complex interrelatedness of transculturation and the individual protagonist’s affective experience of space. Regarding the former aspect, Siân had to undergo precisely the tripartite process

postulated by Ortiz (cf. 2003 [1940]: 102-103) as constitutive of transculturation. In her case, the *deculturation* consisted in abandoning central elements of her self-understanding as an independent, self-reliant Western woman when she moved into her in-laws' home with her husband Babo. All the social, cultural and religious customs, dos and don'ts of Indian culture, as well as the myriad duties a decent Indian wife is expected to perform, represented the cornerstones of her complex *acculturation* process to daily life at Sylvan Lodge. Now that Siân has regained a relatively high degree of individual freedom of action, she sets about realizing her own vision of *neoculturation* by practising her Christian ideal of compassionate charity in a Hindu-majority environment.

This is where the impact of her individual affective experience of space comes in, because it is her strong feelings of deep guilt at the sight of so much destitution on the streets of Indian cities like Bombay and Madras that motivates Siân to devote her sparetime to helping the poorest people there. To apply, once again, Ricoeur's threefold mimesis (cf. Ricoeur 1984: 52-87) to the character-focalizer's experience of space, Siân's realization that the actual socioeconomic and spatial *configuration* of Indian cities is nothing like her hetero-image of India *prefigured* by literary and media representations causes her not only to change her mental image of the subcontinent, but also to engage in charity work with the goal of improving those destitute street-dwellers' lot. Hence, the third component of Ricoeur's threefold mimesis – *refiguration* – is manifest here in Siân's courageous attempt to effect concrete improvements for those people in their daily lives through collective humanitarian commitment in the textual actual world. In terms of cognitive narratology, the protagonist Siân thus stands out from the ground of inactive eye-witnesses to these abominable living conditions as a shining figure of transcultural humanitarianism (cf. Chatman 1978: 138-145, particularly 138-139).

Finally, the narrative configuration of the House of Orange and Black Gates likewise complies with criteria three and four of my conceptualization of transcultural third spaces because their first abode of their own enables the young couple to both redefine their individual identity configuration and expand their overall freedom of action. No longer subject to the constant critical supervision of Babo's parents, they are now a relatively independent, self-reliant and happy family of their own. Concomitantly, this house thus signifies a considerable expansion of the young couple's economic and sociocultural freedom of action (compared to life at Sylvan Lodge); here, they can do

as they please at last, for in their first home of their own, they are the ones who define the rules of living together:

Babo and Siân discovered rhythms of living in this house which had been entirely impossible at Sylvan Lodge: days spent cocooned in the comfort of an air-conditioned room with Ella Fitzgerald moaning softly in the background, a paperback mystery novel or a dated *Good Homes* magazine in hand; the new baby, so small and pink and impossibly fragile, lying between them on their king-sized Kashmiri bed. (TPS 108)

Expressed in this internally focalized, iteratively narrated passage, the special significance that this expansion of their agency occupies in the protagonists' minds can be appreciated properly only if compared to the oppressive atmosphere that reigned at Sylvan Lodge during the first two years of their marriage (1970-1972). Marked by a complete lack of privacy and constant critical supervision on the part of Babo's parents, this atmosphere serves as the foil against which the liberating uniqueness of the young couple's transcultural third space "House of Orange and Black Gates" takes its characteristic shape. To give a concrete example of this foil, the following section shall briefly examine the role real-and-imagined movements play in Babo and Siân's joint survival tactic during their early days at Sylvan Lodge.

Due to the new environment she has to get used to, the first few months there prove to be very difficult for Siân in particular. She has to get accustomed to having no real privacy, to the duties of a decent Indian wife and to the constant critical supervision by the members of the Patel clan. Her only opportunities to escape from this wearisome constellation are the myriad excursions she goes on with Babo in his Flying Fiat, which are prefigured by the young couple's joint nocturnal mental mobility:

Only when Babo came home from work did something change in Siân. He continued to be the only space that didn't need filling. Babo and Siân, holding hands in the darkness of night, disappeared to a different place – to a city with no name, a city where they knew no one and no one knew them. Where they understood their lives and each other. It was a place where Siân could hold him and he became the same Babo she'd held months ago, when they were alone and unattached to their families, when they were listening to the trains screech by her blue-walled Finchley Road flat [in London]. And when Siân needed this feeling again, she'd curl into the walnut shell of her husband's body and say, 'Oh love, can't we go somewhere? Just the two of us for a while?'

And then they'd be off, escaping in their orange Flying Fiat. To hill stations and tiger sanctuaries, to the palaces of dead queens. Whenever Babo managed to disentangle himself from work, they'd be up, up and away like blistering bandits. Here they were on a houseboat in Kashmir, standing atop a desolate Rajasthani fort, tearing into chicken sizzlers in a lakeside shack in Ooty. Here they were in the coves of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, deserted and spectacularly blue. Babo raising himself against her: sha-bing sha-bang. (TPS 87)

Rendered, for the most part, in internally focalized iterative narration, this passage represents mental mobility in the textual possible world of the protagonists' imagination as a correlate, or rather a prefiguration of their subsequent spatial mobility in the textual actual world. Therefore, it exemplifies the central recognition of the real-and-imagined nature of any movement inasmuch as it narratively enacts the crucial transformation of the intended vectors of their common 'nocturnal day-dreaming' into the experienced vectors of their actual journeys in the novel's storyworld. To put it in Fludernik's terminology (cf. Fludernik 1996: 12-52), the "actantial frame" (Fludernik 1996: 12) 'making the escapist dream of getting away from the monotonous daily routine come true' is realized narratively by means of psycho-narration (cf. Cohn 1978: 21-57) here, with Siân functioning as the prime human experiencer. This role can be assigned to her on account of the fact that "the quasi-mimetic evocation of 'real-life experience'" (Fludernik 1996: 12) is largely restricted to this protagonist, her mental processes and spatio-temporal environment. The narrative technique of psycho-narration is employed by narrative discourse here due to the relatively high degree of compression and narrator participation, as well as the use of third person singular pronouns and past tense in the bulk of this passage (cf. Cohn 1978: 21-57).

On the whole, this rather detached mode of narrative representation contrasts with the central contentual point this passage reveals: the fact that in this case, it is *mental* mobility that triggers *spatial* motion in the textual actual world. Driven by their strong yearning for personal freedom, autonomy and independence, the young couple discover India on their own. The two-stage process at work here – nocturnal contemplation in the protagonists' 'day-dreaming' followed by the realization of this dream in the textual actual world – narratively foregrounds the inextricable intertwining of freedom and mobility. In contrast to this necessarily *escapist* practice of getting away from the quotidian monotony of daily life at Sylvan Lodge, the following quotation suggests, the narrative configuration of the young family's first home of their own enables them to live their ideal of free and autonomous mobility uninhibited by other people's narrow-minded views:

Babo, Siân, Mayuri, Bean: always seeking, trying to claim the beautiful things of the world as their own. They swing on the gates and open them when they should remain closed, slip out and slip back in, thinking no one has seen and nothing has been taken amiss. (*TPS* 123)

This iteratively narrated short passage nicely exemplifies the prevalence of the protagonists' autonomous, independent and volitional individual agency throughout the novel. This, in turn, points to the predominance of this dimension in the *agentive* space-time configurations that make up its storyworld. This preponderance of agency – in its

function as the fulcrum of free global mobility – constitutes one crucial indicator of the narrative evocation of utopian transculturalism in contemporary novels. Among other factors, the protagonists' high degree of individual agency can be inferred from the bidirectional permeability of political borders in this novel's storyworld. In stark contrast to their role in the contemporary plot of *A Life Apart*, political borders are no longer configured as life-threatening, insurmountable barriers in *The Pleasure Seekers*, but tacitly relegated to the background of its agentive space-time configurations. In this process, their general, taken-for-granted permeability reduces their tellability to zero. On the textual macro-level, it is thus the protagonists' transnational migratory movements that set the political and cultural demarcations between different settings in motion. At the same time, geopolitical power asymmetries likewise hover in the mere backdrop against which the novel's action unfolds. All in all, it is hence justified to argue that both the bidirectional permeability of borders and the relegation of geopolitical power asymmetries to the background shape the strong presence of utopian transculturalism in this novel decisively. Additionally, further factors promoting the emergence of transcultural third spaces as loci of transculturalism include, for instance, the relative ease and smoothness of cross-cultural translation processes conducted in the course of the novel.

By and large, the narrative enactment of micro-level third spaces as the quintessential spatializations of utopian transculturalism in *The Pleasure Seekers* highlights the crucial difference between my conceptualization of transcultural third spaces and Appadurai's concept of "global ethnoscapes" (Appadurai 1996: 33 and 48; cf. *ibid.* 33-43 and 48-65; see also Section 3.3.3 of this dissertation). Although transnational cultural connections are of prominent relevance in this transcultural novel, they are not configured as global ethnoscapes, because the focus is not so much on the transnational identificatory ties that hold together diaspora communities all across the globe as on the productive potential inherent in the successful realization of cross-cultural fusion on the familial plane. It is, however, precisely this pronounced focus on micro-level transcultural third spaces in the overall narrative representation of space in *The Pleasure Seekers* that provokes relentless critique from a postcolonial point of view inasmuch as it implies a blatant neglect of macro-level issues of global injustice caused by socioeconomic and geopolitical power asymmetries. Regarding the narrative representation of space, this discursive act of silencing, I contend, manifests itself in a twofold strategy. In addition to the *defrictionalization* of space through 'smooth' global mobility analysed in Section 7.2, this strategy distinguishes itself by a

*dememorialization*²⁹⁴ of this dimension, both of which might be interpreted as boiling down to a highly controversial *deproblematization* of space²⁹⁵ in this “transcultural novel” (Helff 2009: 75). With the second element – dememorialization – I intend to capture not so much an outright loss of historical memory of the conflict-ridden colonial past (and its reverberations on the post-colonial present) as an intentional substitution of the extensive thematizations of such issues of cultural memory and historical trauma prevalent in many a postcolonial novel with a decidedly optimistic narrative vision of what transcultural forms of living together may look like in the present and the future. In short, in contrast to *A Life Apart*, *The Pleasure Seekers* foregrounds the *constructive* potential for building a better future inherent in contemporary transcultural constellations instead of reiterating the *destructive* presence of the past in the present (cf. Section 6.2 of this dissertation).

This widespread discursive silencing of the long shadow of historical traumata and of vital present-day geopolitical issues in the ‘transcultural vision come true’ configured narratively in this novel amounts to a strong bias in favour of transcultural utopianism to the detriment of contextualization with regard to extratextual cultural realities. Nevertheless, I hold that one should not throw out the transcultural baby with the utopian bathwater because – in their function as metonymies of a larger transcultural project – the third spaces enacted in *The Pleasure Seekers* may indeed contribute to the refigurative transformation of these extratextual cultural realities in our contemporary world. In conclusion, it is thus legitimate to argue that, by narratively enacting *concrete* transcultural third spaces in the textual *actual* world, *The Pleasure Seekers* tests their viability in the medium of fiction and thereby vigorously contests the widespread assumption that they necessarily *must* be a mere matter of Bhabhaian metaphoricity (cf. Bhabha 1994b: 28-56).

²⁹⁴ Cf. Aleida Assmann’s (2013: 116) usage of the concept of memorialization (“Memorialisierung”).

²⁹⁵ As the recurrent thematization of the widespread poverty surrounding the protagonists in Madras and Bombay (cf. *TPS* 75-76; 110-111; 147-148) shows, this deproblematization of the spatial dimension remains incomplete. Therefore, this conceptual designation is not meant to deny the presence of such problematic aspects in the narrative configuration of this novel’s storyworld, but rather to highlight the fact that these aspects do not inhibit the protagonists in their freedom of action, hence the dominance of agency in the agentive space-time configurations this storyworld is made up of.

7.4 “One Foot In the Other Foot Out”:²⁹⁶ Transcultural Subjectivities²⁹⁷ and the Need to Belong

While the two preceding sections scrutinized the narrative interweaving of transnational motion and transculturalism through pendular vectorialities (7.2) and the narrative configuration of third spaces as exemplary spatializations of transculturality (7.3), this one will focus on the narrative enactment of the protagonists’ transcultural subjectivities as one major outcome of their global freedom of movement. More precisely, I contend that *The Pleasure Seekers* enacts the conflicting co-presence of postmodern rootlessness and unbelonging on the one hand and “homing desire” (Brah 2002 [1996]: 192-193, 197), or, put simply, the individual’s affective need to belong somewhere, on the other via the narrative configuration of the mobile protagonists’ interstitial positionalities and their resultant transcultural subjectivities. In essence, the oscillations between these two poles mirror the pendular movement pattern that enabled the emergence of these transcultural subjectivities in the first place.

In terms of agency, subjectivity and attendant “identity configurations” (Welsch 2009: 9), *The Pleasure Seekers* thus calls into question both essentialized monolithic national, cultural, ethnic and religious identities and their post-structuralist counterpart, i.e. perpetually fluid and transdifferential identity configurations,²⁹⁸ by focusing on *transcultural* identity configurations instead. As stated in Section 3.3.1 of this dissertation, Welsch’s concept of “transcultural identity configurations” (Welsch 2009: 9; cf. *ibid.* 8-9) differs crucially from Bhabha’s post-structuralist vision of hybrid identities as being perpetually on the move (cf. Bhabha 1994c: 69-73) in that it does not preclude an individual’s yearning to anchor herself in a particular place categorically. This delimitation is indispensable in order to enable the concept of transcultural identity configurations to account for the fact that the productive fusion of South Asian and British cultural influences often occurs in tandem with the transcultural subject’s desire to belong to the recipient culture (be it Britain or India). While the

²⁹⁶ This is the title of Chapter 23, the first chapter of the third and final part of *The Pleasure Seekers*.

²⁹⁷ In their introduction to the collected volume *Transcultural Localisms: Responding to Ethnicity in a Globalized World* (Kalogeras et al. 2006), the editors speak of “transcultural subjectivity” (Kalogeras et al. 2006a: ix) with regard to one of the subsequent contributions, Elke Sturm Trigonakis’s “Global Playing in Poetry: The Texts of Juan Felipe Herrera and Jose A. Oliver as a New *Weltliteratur*” (Sturm Trigonakis 2006: 27-46). I have adopted this concept for the analytical elucidation of the hybridized interstitial subjectivities in *The Pleasure Seekers*.

²⁹⁸ For an examination of the interplay of identity and “self-positioning” (Döring 2002: 1) in this novel, cf. also Chattopadhyay and Shrivastava’s joint article “Transitional Identities and the Unhomed Space in Monica Ali’s *Brick Lane* and Tishani Doshi’s *The Pleasure Seekers*” (Chattopadhyay and Shrivastava 2012: 113-125).

protagonists' transnational migrations enacted in *The Pleasure Seekers* do effect a profound and far-reaching *mobilization* of their individual subjectivities (cf. Ferguson 1993: 158 and Beck 2014: 57; see also Section 2.2 of this dissertation) and identity configurations, this is by no means synonymous with perpetual postmodern nomadism and its attendant, frequently highly stylized postulate of categorical rootlessness.

What such postmodern conceptualizations of subjectivity do nevertheless have in common with the narrative configurations of transcultural subjectivity in this novel is the predominance of the *agentive* dimension in their respective enactments of global mobility. In terms of my concept of ontological vectoriality, which forms the pivot of the trialectics of motion developed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, this prevalence of agency over the dimensions of spatiality and temporality reverberates on the transcultural subjects' individual affective experience of these other two dimensions.

As far as the spatial dimension is concerned, this agentivization,²⁹⁹ i.e. the predominant (self-)empowerment of the narratively constituted transcultural subjects in *The Pleasure Seekers*, correlates directly with the defrictionalization³⁰⁰ of space in its storyworld (cf. Sections 7.2 and 7.3 of this dissertation) in a relationship of reciprocal conditionality. On the one hand, it is justified to say that the protagonists' agentivization has its roots in this large-scale defrictionalization of the spatial dimension. On the other, however, it is equally legitimate to claim that, conversely, it is the expansion of their agency and freedom of movement that accounts for this macro-level defrictionalization of spatiality as epitomized by postmodern air travel. Given my overall research interest – the elucidation of characters' movements within the storyworld by recourse to the trialectics of motion developed in Chapter 2 – I will focus primarily on the latter line of thought, because one of my central hypotheses is that agents' movements across space over time co-create the spaces traversed.

What is more, this agentivization, i.e. the expansion of the protagonists' individual agency, also correlates with the converse movement of “reducing the [spatial] scales” (Upstone 2009: 113) in which the utopian vision of transculturality can be realized tentatively in the fictional medium of literature. It is through this

²⁹⁹ By using the term 'agentivization,' I do not wish to insinuate that these transcultural subjects perform exclusively the role of agents. On the contrary, they do of course perform other roles as well, such as, most importantly, that of experiencers (cf. Herman 2002: 157-158; see also Section 4.2.1 of this dissertation).

³⁰⁰ Defrictionalization is not the same thing as “deterritorialization” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987 [1980]: 172) in contemporary globalization theory (cf. Scheuerman 2014: n. pag.) because, in contrast to the latter, it does not imply the complete irrelevance of the spatial dimension but merely a significant diminution of its frictionality.

agentivization of the main characters that *The Pleasure Seekers* renegotiates 'traditional' colonial and postcolonial concepts of space via the narrative configuration of transcultural third spaces (cf. Section 7.3 of this dissertation) in its fictional storyworld. All in all, subjection, that is, the active utilization and transformation of one's immediate spatial environment through movement, thus triumphs over subjectedness (cf. Beck 2014: 39; see also Section 2.2 of this dissertation) in *The Pleasure Seekers*, for Babo and Siân succeed in creating their own transcultural third space, the House of Orange and Black Gates (cf. Section 7.3 of this dissertation). Accordingly, all protagonists (with the exception of Chotu, Babo's younger brother) do qualify as agents inasmuch as they are represented as self-determined individuals who take their lives into their own hands by actively striving for the realization of their individual vision of a happy life.

At the same time, I argue, it is – among other factors – this agentivization, the comparatively high degree of self-determined agency granted to the three transcultural protagonists Babo, Siân and Bean, that is responsible for their affective experiences of displacement as well as their resultant essentially mobile transcultural subjectivities³⁰¹ and attendant identity configurations. Freedom of movement thus engenders insecurity as to the individual character's "self-positioning" (Döring 2002: 1) and self-understanding in the fictional storyworld, thereby rendering the culturally prefigured constructibility of identity configurations transparent. The short interior monologue quoted in the following configures precisely this fundamental attitude of self-questioning and "self-doubting" (Helff 2009: 82) that, according to Helff (cf. *ibid.*), is characteristic of transcultural characters in paradigmatic fashion:³⁰²

And my life? Bean wanted to ask. Where's my life in all of this? Is this my real life or is it just a prelude to something before I return ... Return to where? Why do I always feel like I'm visiting wherever I go? Why? Why? Because the sky's so high. Is this how you felt when you first came to India, Mama? Is it possible you still feel this way? One foot in, the other foot out. (TPS 248; italics in original)

Contemplating her life while standing at her grandparents' grave in Nercwys, Bean succumbs to the urge for self-reflection in the context of 'traditional rootedness

³⁰¹ Given my overall research interest, the combination of Ferguson's concept of "mobile subjectivity" (1993: 158; cf. Beck 2014: 57; see also Section 2.2 of this dissertation) with transculturalism stands to reason, particularly in a novel that foregrounds the multiple intertwining of its protagonists' transnational mobility with the emergence of utopian transculturalism.

³⁰² See also Chattopadhyay and Shrivastava's final evaluation of Bean's "diasporic subjectivity" (Chattopadhyay and Shrivastava 2012: 123; cf. *ibid.*) as "constantly moving between the binaries of home and abroad" (*ibid.*): "Both Chanu [in *Brick Lane*] and Bean are identities that will forever be in the making without reaching any degree of stability in the intermediary positions that they oscillate between" (*ibid.*).

versus postmodern rootlessness' as alternative options for one's individual self-positioning and self-understanding. Captured in the metaphorical image of a person standing on a threshold, with "one foot in, the other foot out", Bean's feelings of displacement are characterized as a state of liminality between rootedness and rootlessness by narrative discourse. While on the affective plane, she is desperately longing for an unambiguous and stable attachment to a place called 'home', Bean is cognitively aware of her own inability to build such a relationship. Both aspects, I argue, are a result of not only her individual psychic disposition, but also her intricate identity configuration as a transcultural subject who has regularly travelled on pendular routes between Britain and India from childhood onwards. In short, these myriad *routes* prevent her from taking *roots* in one particular place (cf. Clifford 1997: 251).

In contrast to quintessentially postmodern celebrations of rootlessness à la Salman Rushdie (cf., for instance, his novel *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]) briefly analysed in Section 3.4 of this dissertation), the transcultural subject Bean proves to be less enthusiastic than anxious and insecure about this constellation. Rather than being swept off her feet by this lure of living her life as a rootless, nomadic and therefore allegedly free global wanderer, she is represented as being profoundly troubled by this prospect throughout the novel. In her eyes, global freedom of movement comes at a price, for she regards it as synonymous with incessant restlessness, insecurity, instability and disconcerting experiences of displacement and unbelonging. Rather than representing the postmodern apex of historical teleology, perpetual global mobility is fundamentally problematized here through a consistent, internally focalized foregrounding of these downsides paradigmatically condensed in Bean's most pressing question: "Why do I always feel like I'm visiting wherever I go?" (TPS 248).

The explicit hint at the periodic transgenerational recurrence of this unsettling experience of displacement (Bean wonders whether her mother Siân felt the same way when she first migrated to India; cf. the above-quoted passage) highlights the fact that Bean is by no means the only character undergoing such phases of profound self-reflection as a result of transnational mobility. On the contrary, each of the transcultural subjects in *The Pleasure Seekers* – Babo, Siân and Bean – has similar experiences at different stages of the plot. Accordingly, Babo's deliberations on the necessity of this transgenerational recurrence of experiences of displacement prior to Bean's departure for London foreground their intertwining with the pendular movement pattern he and his wife Siân have performed repeatedly in the course of the novel:

How they [Babo and Siân] had upped and left one country, fallen in love in another country, and then up and marched right back to the place they started from. Perhaps it's inevitable, Babo thought, that our children suffer a similar displacement; that in order to understand the pattern of their lives here, they must go elsewhere. (TPS 236)

On the whole, all three of the transcultural subjects in this novel – Babo, Siân and Bean – can be classified as “self-doubting characters” (cf. Helff 2009: 82), because they keep questioning the rightness of their crucial decisions (cf., for instance, my analysis of the narrative representation of Siân's state of mind directly prior to her transcontinental migration to India in Section 7.2 of this dissertation) from their individual biographical point of view throughout the novel. Significantly, this recurrent attitude of self-doubt also points to the limits of autonomous individual agency inasmuch as these transcultural characters do not fall prey to the simplistic illusion of being endowed with absolute authority over their personal future. Instead, they accept the insecurity of whether the momentous landmark decisions of one's life will turn out to be the right ones as a basic fact of human existence, while nevertheless asserting their personal agency by actively striving to make the most of their individual abilities and preferences.

In terms of cognitive narratology, it is hence legitimate to claim that narrative discourse sets off these three main characters from their minor contemporaries in a classical “figure versus ground” relationship (cf. Herman 2002: 274-277; Chatman 1978: 138-145, particularly 138-139). This narrative process of foregrounding is accomplished not so much by the enactment of their travelling across national, cultural and religious borders, but by the frequency, duration and, above all, *experiential intensity* of their transnational journeys. Whereas virtually all characters in *The Pleasure Seekers* are involved in experiences of transnational border-crossing and the emergence of attendant identity configurations (cf. Helff 2009: 83), be it directly, i.e. as agents crossing political and cultural borders themselves, or indirectly, i.e. as characters implicated in the evolution of transcultural family bonds due to their relatives' deliberate (temporary or permanent) emigration to another country, the transcultural subjects Babo, Siân and Bean stand out from the crowd of minor characters for several reasons.

First, they are the only characters who perform transnational *migrations* in the course of the novel, permanent in Siân's case and temporary in the case of Babo and their younger daughter Bean (cf. Section 7.2 of this dissertation). As we have just seen, they are consequently also the only ones who experience displacement and the resulting phases of profound self-doubt and affective insecurity. In addition to these

story-level criteria, they are set off on the level of narrative discourse by means of their function as prime internal focalizers throughout the novel. It is this combination of the frequency and duration (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 86-160) of their transnational movements with the self-reflective attitude they take towards issues of displacement and (un)belonging that accounts for the characteristic, jointly cognitive and affective experiential intensity of transnational motion and mobility by means of which these three protagonists are turned into transcultural subjects. While all three of them – Babo, Siân and Bean – do qualify as *transcultural* characters, Bean is the one who comes closest to a *transdifferential* identity configuration without, however, conforming to it entirely. First and foremost, her “homing desire” (Brah 2002 [1996]: 192-193, 197), i.e. her desire for rootedness, for establishing a stable relationship with one particular place, constitutes the crucial frictional factor that stands in the way of her unambiguous classification as a quintessentially postmodern subject distinguished by a perpetually shifting *transdifferential* identity configuration.³⁰³ As the prime motivator for her eventual “roots trip” (Antz 2014)³⁰⁴ to Ganga Bazaar, this homing desire and her deeply rooted, fundamental psychic conflict between her cognitive and discursive deconstruction of traditional notions of ‘home’ and her affective yearning for precisely such an archaic emotional attachment to a geographically locatable ‘home’ define the contours of Bean’s transcultural subjectivity and identity configuration. In the following, my analysis shall therefore concentrate on Bean’s multi-faceted “struggle with transculturality” (Helff 2009: 83; cf. *ibid.* 82-83) as the paradigmatic example of such a pronouncedly transcultural subjectivity in *The Pleasure Seekers*.

This complex struggle is manifest, most importantly, in the narrative enactment of Bean’s fundamentally ambivalent attitude towards the question of whether to identify with either mobility or stability (cf. Beck 2014: 57-59) in her individual “self-positioning” (Döring 2002: 1)³⁰⁵ and self-understanding. As we shall see, this ambivalence shows itself in her vacillation between these two extremes: whereas her initial decision to migrate to London is clearly motivated by her yearning for independence, self-determined autonomy and freedom of movement, her eventual “roots trip” (Antz 2014) testifies to the eventual predominance of her strong need for grounding in one

³⁰³ For a typical example of such a *transdifferential* identity configuration, cf. the protagonist Vina Apsara in Salman Rushdie’s *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]) as analysed in Section 3.4 of this dissertation.

³⁰⁴ It has to be noted, however, that Bean’s final remigration to Ganga Bazaar does not wholly comply with Antz’s definition of roots trips (cf. Antz 2014: 13-14) in each and every respect, because, for instance, the place of ancestral origin Bean has chosen as her destination is well known to her.

³⁰⁵ Individual characters’ jointly spatial and sociocultural positionalities are the result of the complex interplay of active self-positioning and passive ascription of certain positions by others (cf. Adelson 1993: 64 and Döring 2002: 1; see also Chapter 2.2 of this dissertation).

particular geographical location. To begin with, I will accordingly take a closer look at the internally focalized representation of her motives for embarking upon a transnational migration to the British capital:

Because nothing filled her any more. Nothing at all. Not her family, not her life, not this city of Madras, which had become, in recent years, a city of absences. Bean couldn't say herself what her reasons for leaving were. [...] Instead of waiting for something to happen, Bean had decided it was time to seek it out; to go off on her own adventure [...], on a quest to conquer the city of London. All Bean really knew of London were bits and pieces patched together from childhood memories [...]. What Bean was really hoping when she left Madras in that August of 1996, was to find love: the kind of love Babo and Siân had found in London. (*TPS* 238)

This paragraph narratively configures Bean's intrinsic motives for going to London via a mixture of free indirect discourse and psycho-narration. As she has made up her mind to migrate to the British capital entirely on her own, this decision represents a vigorous assertion of her independent agency, which, in turn, accounts for the high degree of momentum she exhibits in performing this transcontinental migratory movement. This self-empowerment through intrinsic commitment to transnational motion is at the heart of the emergence of transcultural subjectivities.

On a continuum of human needs stretching between the dichotomous poles of mobility and stability, Bean thus clearly sides with the former prior to her departure for London. At this point of the narrative, her yearning for freedom of movement is stronger than her need for stable grounding in one particular place. Accordingly, one might assume that her identity configuration verges on the transdifferential variant, which rests precisely upon the individual's perpetual devotion to mobility and rootlessness. As the last sentence of the above-quoted passage reveals, however, mobility is by no means an end in itself for Bean; rather, the ultimate purpose of her transnational migration lies in bringing her quest for love to a successful conclusion by finding a partner in London. This, however, points to the fact that her individual need for grounding is at least as strong as her longing for freedom of movement. Again, the conflictual co-presence of these two poles – mobility and stability – in Bean's struggle for an unequivocal identity configuration is precisely what turns her individual subjectivity into a transcultural one.

In addition, the narrative enactment of her transcultural subjectivity is further marked by a destabilization and mobilization of traditional, essentialist conceptualizations of 'home' triggered by the unsettling experience of displacement:

As though home were something so solid and fixed into the ground there could be no denying it. As though you could just say the word and know exactly what it meant. Bean knew how it would be when she finally walked

into that Madras city air smelling of dust and tobacco, rosewater and jasmine. Everything would be familiar again: that old woman selling coconuts with the broken voice, that man with the hernia sitting at the corner of their street, those children playing in the gutter with sticks. *Home again, home again, jiggety-jig.*

But a part of Bean was still standing outside looking in, saying. *There's no such thing as home. Once you've forsaken it and stepped out of the circle, you can't ever re-enter and claim anything as yours.* How could you? When you've portioned off yourself in such a way? It was always going to be like this: when you walked down the cobbled streets of one city, your mind was always going to be in the folds of another. Hadn't Bean tried? Hadn't she gone away to recover parts of herself, and failed? (TPS 277-278; italics in original)

Accomplished by means of free indirect discourse interspersed with elements of psycho-narration, the narrative enactment of Bean's transcultural subjectivity reveals notions of 'home' to be discursive constructions rather than fixed cultural entities. This insight into the interwoven discursivity and constructivity of this spatial category is responsible for the deconstruction of archaic, essentialist and universalist concepts of 'home' as the geographical place in which each and every individual subject is inevitably and ineluctably rooted from birth to death. This paragraph thus constitutes a paradigmatic instance of one of this novel's central thematic concerns in that it narratively foregrounds the fact that any essentialist definition of home is doomed to fail in the face of transcultural constellations in today's world. In turn, the ensuing necessity to *renegotiate* such traditional notions of home and identity points to the all-embracing process of globalization as the prime defining feature of contemporary lifeworlds all around the globe in the twenty-first century (cf. Helff 2009: 83). In this respect, Bean thus functions as a paradigmatic 'model' character precisely because she keeps reflecting on the dialectics between the impossibility of fixed cultural affiliations in the age of contemporary globalization and the human need for a sense of 'true' belonging throughout the novel (cf., for instance, TPS 248, 277-278).

In addition, the narrative destabilization of essentialist conceptualizations of 'home' is effected in this passage by means of a familiar cognitive pattern, i.e. the short-circuiting of two distant cultural spaces in one place through the power of human imagination (cf. Hallet 2009: 89 and 102-107): "It was always going to be like this: when you walked down the cobbled streets of one city, your mind was always going to be in the folds of another" (TPS 278). In a way, this imaginative co-presence of two spaces in one place might even be interpreted as reflecting the conflictual co-presence of the need for grounding and the yearning for freedom of movement in the "fictional minds" (Palmer 2004) of transcultural subjects like Bean.

As we have seen in Section 7.2 of this dissertation, Bean attempts to resolve this fundamental conflict by her eventual “roots trip” (Antz 2014) to Ganga Bazaar, home village of her father’s ancestors. Despite certain indicators pointing to a success of these efforts, this protagonist’s final act of returning to her roots remains incomplete, because the narrative ends with the protagonists’ (Bean, Ignatius and Ba) fortunate survival of the Republic Day earthquake (26 January 2001), in the turmoil of which the question of Bean’s spatial and cultural affiliations is pushed into the background and thus remains unresolved.³⁰⁶

By deliberately leaving this central question in abeyance, *The Pleasure Seekers* problematizes both the essentialist idea of individual subjectivities and attendant identity configurations as immutable, once-and-for-all fixed entities and their desirability as ends in and of themselves. This calling into question of such essentialist premises through the narrative foregrounding of the mobility and resultant instability of these categories constitutes one of the defining features of transcultural subjectivities. At the same time, however, it is indispensable to remember that the narrative configuration of transcultural subjectivities does not side unambiguously with mobility; instead, their peculiarity resides precisely in the fact that, on a continuum between mobility (corresponding to transdifferential subjectivities and attendant identity configurations) and stability (corresponding to essentialist subjectivities marked by a fixed grounding in one’s homestead), transcultural subjectivities are purposefully located somewhere between these dichotomous poles.

To conclude, I will thus sum up the constitutive properties of the narratively configured transcultural subjectivities in *The Pleasure Seekers* as enacted paradigmatically in the character of Bean. To begin with, they result from experiences of transnational motion epitomized by the paradigmatic mode of travel in the contemporary age, the airplane, which, unlike any other vehicle, symbolizes seemingly unlimited global mobility. Simultaneously, I assert, it is precisely the effortlessness of air travel, the (almost) complete absence of physical friction, that promotes feelings of insecurity, estrangement and displacement in the traveller-focalizer’s consciousness. Nonetheless, the global freedom of movement embodied by the airplane also signifies an agentivization (i.e. a substantial expansion of their agency) of the individual subject. This, in turn, renders the emerging agentive space-time configurations characteristic of transcultural narratologies particularly mobile, fluid, shifting and ever-changing.

³⁰⁶ Additionally, the final event of this natural disaster drastically foregrounds the fundamental subjectedness of individual and collective human agents under the whims of nature, thereby severely problematizing the concept of autonomous human agency.

However, this far-reaching agentivization of the individual subject goes hand in hand with the predominance of unstable and insecure self-positionings as well as with corollary feelings of displacement and alienation, both from one's place of origin or current geographical location and from one's own self. As a result, the characteristic experientiality of transcultural subjects is marked, above all, by its interstitial nature: always cognitively oscillating between place of origin and destination and affectively riven between the tantalizing lures of unalterable grounding and perpetual freedom of movement, transcultural subjectivities do distinguish themselves by succumbing to neither of these illusions exclusively. In true Sojaian fashion, they refuse to conform to the rigid binarism of the either/or dichotomy, opting – in a process of “thirding-as-Othering” (Soja 1996: 60) – for the radically open “both/and also” (Soja 1996: 60) instead (cf. *ibid.*).

7.5 Summary and Conclusion

Having scrutinized the emergence of a transcultural narratopology through the narrative interweaving of transnational motion and mobility with transculturalism (Section 7.2), the formation of third spaces as exemplary spatializations of transculturality (Section 7.3) and the joint processes of interstitial self-positioning and self-understanding characteristic of transcultural subjectivities and attendant identity configurations (Section 7.4), I will now sum up the central results of my contextualized analysis of *The Pleasure Seekers* by assessing the extent to which this novel conforms to my four criteria for the classification of Asian British novels as a transcultural mode of writing (cf. Section 3.2 of this dissertation).

On the whole, I assert that *The Pleasure Seekers* can be characterized as an Asian British novel abounding with transcultural optimism (that sometimes verges on the realm of transcultural utopianism) for four reasons. First, its narrative enactment of transnational motion and mobility centres on subjects endowed with a comparatively high degree of individual agency. In contrast to *A Life Apart* (cf. Chapter 6 of this dissertation), *The Pleasure Seekers* (almost exclusively) features characters who travel out of free will; accordingly, one would search in vain for destitute asylum-seekers or refugees among its protagonists. However, this large-scale agentivization of transcultural subjects via the elliptical narrative enactment of their various

transregional, transnational and transcontinental journeys is consistently contrasted with the fragile precariousness of 'autonomous' human agency by foregrounding frictional factors and their contingent occurrence as epitomized by the death and destruction wrought by the final earthquake. This conspicuous ambivalence in the narrative enactment of the agentive dimension represents one of the "strong ambivalences" (Helff 2009: 81) that, according to Helff (cf. *ibid.*), are constitutive markers of transculturality. This is one of the reasons that *The Pleasure Seekers* is not liable to promote decontextualized visions of *utopian* transculturalism, but instead presents a realistic, soberly balanced and yet reasonably optimistic narrative enactment of the sometimes contradictory facets of contemporary transculturalism, which, in turn, represents one outstanding property of lived realities in the age of globalization.

Moreover, the multiplication of narratively enacted transnational movements (migratory and otherwise) following Ette's macro-structural movement pattern of the pendulum (cf. Ette 2003: 43) does have complex ramifications on the overall narrative configuration of motion and mobility in this novel. This is why I introduced the concept of pendular vectorialities in order to capture the specific ontological vectoriality, that is, the combinatorial interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality in *The Pleasure Seekers*. Marked – in addition to the pendular shuttling to and fro between the major hubs Madras, London, Ganga Bazaar (India) and Nercwys (Wales) – by the large-scale defrictionalization of space through air travel, by the agentivization of the transcultural protagonists Babo, Siân and Bean and by the phenomenon of time-space compression governing the individual traveller-focalizer's experience of temporality while on the move, these pendular vectorialities engender cognitive patterns of perception such as the imaginative co-presence of multiple geographically distant and culturally heterogeneous spaces in the individual traveller-focalizer's mind. In terms of the novel's narratological macro-structure, this multiplication of pendular transnational movements and the attendant plurality of cognitively co-present cultural spaces are at the heart of the high degree of complexity pertaining to its macro-level narratology, which, as we have seen in Section 7.2, narratively configures a gradual transition from a predominantly postcolonial to an emerging transcultural topology.

Judged from the perspective of the text-context relationship, this textual narratological transformation from a bipolar postcolonial topology (revolving around the centre-periphery dichotomy) into a multipolar, semi-rhizomatic transcultural one exhibits intriguing parallels with the gradual metamorphosis of the world's geopolitical

and geotopological macro-structure in the period covered by the novel's story time (1968-2001), a crucial transformation triggered by the end of the Cold War and the rise of former Third World countries like China and India to new power in the global economy and politics. At the same time, we have seen in Sections 7.2 and 7.3 that these macro-level narratological shifts form the mere background against which the three-generation family saga of the Patel-Jones clan unfolds. By means of this consistent foregrounding of the micro-level dimension of the individual extended family, *The Pleasure Seekers* acts out transcultural constellations exemplarily in the medium of fiction. While this fictional enactment thus widens the reader's horizons by cracking open the rigid either/or binarism of conventional monocultural affiliations on the micro-plane, it simultaneously calls into question the feasibility of transcultural utopianism on the geopolitical macro-plane precisely by restricting the narrative representation of transcultural phenomena to the micro-level of family connections.

Second, *The Pleasure Seekers* accordingly enacts the semanticization of selected settings as transcultural third spaces in the utopian variant on this micro-level alone. In their role as spatio-temporal *mises en abyme* of a more encompassing project of transculturalism, these transcultural third spaces fulfil a Janus-faced double function: demonstrating the feasibility of transcultural utopianism in highly individualized micro-level lifeworlds, they also highlight the impracticability of such visionary approaches to inter- and cross-cultural co-existence on the global macro-level. Again, the resultant ambivalence points to this novel's intricate "struggle with transculturality" (Helff 2009: 83; cf. *ibid.* 82-83).

Third, this novel deconstructs both essentialist notions of monolithic national, ethnic, cultural and religious identities and their diametrical opposite, i.e. post-structuralist conceptualizations of highly hybridized, perpetually fluid "transitional identities" (Chattopadhyay and Shrivastava 2012: 113). By enacting the conflicting co-presence of the allegedly basic human need for spatial and sociocultural grounding and the desire for freedom of movement in the paradigmatic protagonist Bean, *The Pleasure Seekers* narratively configures transcultural subjectivities and identity configurations. Once again, it is – among other factors – their fundamental ambivalence that accounts for their transcultural character (cf. Helff 2009: 81).

Fourth, the prevalence of transcultural optimism in the narrative configuration of this novel's storyworld also manifests itself in the absence of any profound problematization of the legacy of British imperialism in the present-day geopolitical and

geotopological macro-configurations of the world. The conspicuous lack of any sustained thematization of postcolonial issues such as racism or neo-imperialist practices of economic exploitation is responsible for this unconventional and controversial tendency to deproblematize the intercultural relations between former colonizers and formerly colonized ethnicities in *The Pleasure Seekers*. In contrast to *A Life Apart*, this novel thus does not comply with my fourth criterion for the classification of Asian British novels as a transcultural mode of writing, because it does not engage in any profound discursive deconstruction of Western modernity's questionable claim to being a universal role model for the rest of the world.

To conclude, *The Pleasure Seekers* thus opens up the arena of cross-cultural encounters to the productive possibilities (and real-world limitations) of transculturalism in the contemporary age of globalization by presenting it in a soberly realistic, yet simultaneously optimistic mode. It is precisely the pervasive presence of this fundamental attitude of optimism that accounts for this novel's propensity to envision transculturalism not only as a matter-of-fact property of everyday life in today's world, but also, and more importantly, as a promising pathway towards a sustainably peaceful co-existence of highly heterogeneous cultural formations in the future. All in all, this persistent optimism presents the realization of transcultural utopianism not as a matter of teleological *necessity* in the future course of human history, but as an *ideal* that is worth being striven for on the individual micro-plane, even if it may ultimately turn out to be unattainable on the macro-plane of geopolitical and geotopological realities.

8 Conclusion and Outlook

Subsequent to the three primary text analyses conducted in Chapters 5 to 7, this final chapter will sum up the central results of this study and provide an outlook on possible further fields of application for the theoretical and methodological framework developed. Accordingly, Chapter 8 is divided into three parts. The first section will wrap up the theoretical model of a trialectics of motion and the contextualized methodological framework of a cultural narratology of motion built upon it. The second section will then summarize the central results of the context-oriented analyses of the narrative enactment of space and motion in the three selected primary texts by reflecting upon the question of whether contemporary Asian British novels can be conceived of as a chronotope of utopian transculturality. To complete the picture, the final section will provide concluding reflections on the perspectives and limitations of the transferability of the theoretical and methodological framework developed in the course of this study to other contemporary and historical geographical, social, cultural and literary contexts.

8.1 Wrap-up of the Theoretical and Methodological Framework

This study set itself the goal of developing a methodological framework designed to tackle the question of how the experience of space and motion is narrated in contemporary Asian British novels. To the end of coming to terms with the narratological, experiential, cognitive and contextual dimensions of this complex research question, the resultant analytical problem was dissected into two interrelated constituent desiderata: first, the theoretical desideratum of developing a heuristic theoretical model that accounts for the multidimensionality of human motion in both extratextual cultural reality and textual fictional representation; and second, the methodological desideratum of developing a cultural narratology of motion, that is, a context-oriented narratological semantics for the narrative representation of the experience of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels. In addition, three further, attendant desiderata were identified: first, a specifically *narratological* examination of the interlocking of spatial and mental mobility in the narrative enactment of human motion in contemporary Asian British novels; second, the analytical

elucidation of the theoretical relationship between the narrative enactment of transnational migratory movements and the narrative evocation of transculturality; and third, a contextualized narratological examination of the diverse text-internal synchronic configurations and diachronic evolution of narratologies in contemporary Asian British novels in relation to both their extratextual cultural counterparts – that is, macro-structural geotologies in the ‘real’ world – and the narrative enactment of human motion in these novels.

In order to find one’s bearings in these complex issues, four fundamental hypotheses were formulated in the introductory chapter. First and foremost, this study has been grounded in the theoretical presupposition that, in both extratextual cultural and textual fictional contexts, the complex phenomenon of human motion can be analysed productively through the lens of a trialectics of motion, that is, by scrutinizing the combinatorial interplay of its three constitutive dimensions: spatiality, agency and temporality. Second, it has acknowledged the necessity of integrating specifically narratological dimensions of the narrative representation of “real-and-imagined” (Soja 1996: 11) movements into its overall methodological framework (cf. Nünning 2008a: 19-26, particularly 21). Third, it rests upon the assumption that the emergence of transculturality in contemporary Asian British novels lends itself particularly well to an examination by means of the same analytical grid – the complex interplay of spatiality, agency and temporality – because its narrative evocation tends to occur in conjunction with the narrative representation of transnational migratory movements. In a similar vein, it has argued – therein following Ette (cf. 2005: 23; 2012: 29; see also Hallet and Neumann 2009a: 20-24) – that narratologies – defined as narratively evoked topological macro-configurations of fictional storyworlds – come into being as a result of the narrative enactment of agents’ real-and-imagined movements across the storyworld.

Proceeding from its prime theoretical assumption, the theory chapter of this study has correlated three thematic complexes from the contemporary study of culture – spatiality, agency and temporality (cf. Sections 2.1 to 2.3) – in an innovative problem-oriented heuristic designed to analyse the intricate multidimensionality of human motion in a coherent explanatory framework called trialectics of motion (cf. Section 2.4). To this end, central recognitions from the transdisciplinary spatial turn and postmodern cultural geography (cf. Lefebvre 1991 [1974]; Soja 1996), mobility studies (cf. Urry 2007) and postcolonial studies (cf., for instance, Upstone 2009) have been combined with Ette’s “foundations for a poetics of motion” (2012: 26; cf. *ibid.* 26-40;

Ette 2005: 18-22), Ricoeur's "threefold mimesis" (1984 [1983]: 52; cf. *ibid.* 52-87), Bakhtin's "chronotope" (1981a [1973]: 84; cf. *ibid.* 84-258) and Beck's innovative study on the intertwining of space and subjectivity (2014). This way, the theory chapter has accomplished pioneering work for the emergence of a "vectorial turn" (Ette 2005: 19) by conceptualizing this turn as an agentive-spatio-temporal one that brings together these three formative dimensions in the analytical elucidation of human motion. In order to capture this trialectical interplay in extratextual 'real'-world and textual fictional configurations of individual movements, the pivotal concept of ontological vectoriality has been defined as the conjuncture, i.e. the combinatorial interplay, of the three formative dimensions of human motion – spatiality, agency and temporality – in the shaping of individual movements.

Building on the concept of ontological vectoriality, the theory chapter has operationalized the concrete functioning of the trialectics of motion into three mutually complementary and interacting dialectics that are at work simultaneously in the emergence of human motion: the spatiality – agency dialectic, the spatiality – temporality dialectic and the agency – temporality dialectic. Regarding the first one, it has explicated that, on the one hand, spatial conditions enable, hinder or prevent agents from moving in their role as prime source of external friction. On the other hand, individual and collective human agency are capable of effecting transformations of their spatial environment through co-operation, for instance in order to facilitate human motion across space. Concerning the second dialectic, my theory chapter has undertaken a motion-oriented dynamization of Bakhtin's chronotope through the integration of the agentive dimension, thereby redefining Bakhtinian chronotopes as agentive space-time configurations. Therewith, this classical conceptualization of the spatiality – temporality dialectic has been enabled to reflect the full complexity of the trialectical interlocking of space, time and agency in the emergence of human motion. Regarding the third dialectic, the theory chapter has explicated that there is an analogous interrelationship between agency on the one hand and the two principal manifestations of temporality in the realm of human motion – the historical context and the traveller's subjective time-experience while on the move – on the other. Path-breaking agentive movements (such as Columbus's first voyage to the Caribbean) can indeed change the course of history, while at the same time, the historical context within which individuals act can enhance, restrict or destroy their self-determined agency. In similar fashion, the degree of freedom of action an individual traveller has at his disposal reverberates directly on her subjective time-experience during a journey, while conversely, the traveller's subjective time-experience while on the move can have

a negative or positive effect on her agency after completion of the trip (cf. the synthesis of my trialectics of motion in Section 2.4 of this dissertation).

Drawing on Hallet and Neumann (cf. 2009a: 22-23; see also Nünning 2009: 42; Frank 2009: 65; Hallet 2009: 109; Lange 2014: 168), the theory chapter has moreover been concerned with transferring Ricoeur's threefold mimesis (cf. 1984 [1983]: 52-87) to the interweaving of space and narrative by delineating the basic lines along which such a conceptual transfer could be conducted. In addition, Fludernik's cognitive concept of "experientiality" (1996: 12; cf. *ibid.* 12-52) has been reconceptualized via a more pronounced focus on the affective side of real-world experience. Finally, the theory chapter has developed a basic motion-oriented typology of frictions (defined as the entirety of external and internal factors accountable for restrictions of mobility) and correlated different contemporary modes of travel with various gradations of external friction.

The contextualization chapter of this study has then combined a brief introduction to the historical and sociocultural context of contemporary Asian British novels with an elaborate overview of the wide scope of applicability of the trialectics of motion developed in the theory chapter. The latter objective has been met by exemplifying its transferability to thematic complexes related to, but not identical with, human motion and mobility, such as cross-cultural contact situations, transnational migration and the interdependent construction of political borders and collective cultural identities.

Regarding the issue of cross-cultural contact situations, the first part of the contextualization chapter (3.1) has argued that the paradigm of transculturality (as well as other concepts intended to capture inter- and transcultural constellations) lends itself to an examination via the same three interacting parameters that constitute the heuristic trialectics of motion, because the emergence of such cross-cultural constellations is usually causally connected to transnational migratory movements. What is more, Section 3.1 has operationalized the concept of transculturality into a catalogue of definitional criteria, among which the translational capacities the individual agents involved have at their disposal and the emergence of transcultural third spaces figure prominently alongside the central fulcrum of transculturality: the concept of connectivity. This pivotal quality, in turn, can be analysed productively by focusing on the extratextual cultural or textual fictional configurations of the spatiality-agency-temporality complex in the individual case. In addition to a reconceptualization of

transculturality along the lines of the trialectics of motion, Section 3.1 has also proposed a wide spectrum of transculturality stretching between the poles of dystopian and utopian transculturality in order to accommodate disparate historical and contemporary configurations of transcultural 'realities' in both actuality and fiction.

In terms of the historical and sociocultural contextualization of the primary texts to be scrutinized in depth, the second section (3.2) has conjoined a brief introduction to the context in which contemporary Asian British novels are written with a plea for an inclusive definition of this label and the formulation of four guiding hypotheses regarding the extent to which these novels can be conceived of as a transcultural mode of writing. To conclude, it has highlighted the fact that the suitability of contemporary Asian British novels as a research object extends to all three constitutive dimensions of human motion. Following up on that, Section 3.3.1 has shown that the phenomenon of transnational migration can be examined productively through the lens of the trialectics of motion as well, underpinning this postulate with the concrete example of the first wave of South Asian migration to Britain in the wake of the Partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947. In addition, it has specified the conceptual differentiation between "transcultural identity configurations" (Welsch 2009: 9; cf. *ibid.* 8-9) and their transdifferential counterpart by linking the latter with the perpetual mobility (i.e. the Bhabhaian [cf. 1994c: 69-73] concept of identity as a free-floating signifier; cf. Löscher [2005: 22-45] concept of "transdifference"). Following Welsch (cf. 2009: 9), the former, by contrast, has deliberately been placed somewhere between the dichotomous poles of mobility and stability, as it combines the experience of transnational migration with the yearning for stable grounding in a particular home place. The following section (3.3.2) has widened the scope of applicability of the trialectics of motion to the border-identity nexus, that is, to the interdependent formation of political borders and the collective identities of the cultural groups involved.

The penultimate section (3.3.3) has been concerned with a further specification and delimitation of the concept of transcultural third spaces, above all by pointing to commonalities with and differences from adjacent concepts such as Pratt's "contact zone" (1992: 1), Appadurai's "global ethnoscape" (1996: 33), Bhabha's post-structuralist metaphor of "third space" (Bhabha 1994b: 56) and Soja's fundamental epistemological reconceptualization of it as "Thirdspace" (1996). The central thrust of my conceptualization of transcultural third spaces lies in its pronounced emphasis on a certain degree of socioeconomic self-empowerment as a prerequisite for the successful emancipation of formerly marginalized sociocultural groups in emergent thirdspatial

constellations. Subsequent to an introductory overview of cultural topography and topology as complementary perspectives on the structuration of the spatiality of human existence, the final part of the contextualization chapter (3.4) has correlated three prototypical cultural topologies – the colonial, the postcolonial and the transcultural – with attendant movement patterns in order to show how the interrelatedness of the former with the latter takes the shape of a mutual interdependence inasmuch as, on the one hand, cultural topologies either enable or restrict movement, while, on the other, definite movement patterns contribute decisively to the emergence of certain cultural topologies. In order to exemplify the central contentions of Section 3.4, the emergence of culturally prefigured narratologies from experiences of transnational migration and attendant macro-structural movement patterns in Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]) has been examined briefly.

While Chapters 2 and 3 were concerned with the theoretical elaboration and cultural contextualization of a heuristic model of movement *practice* – the trialectics of motion, the methodology chapter (4) has dealt with the pivotal research question of how to describe narrative *representations* of movement from the vantage point of context-oriented narratology in an analytical framework called cultural narratology of motion. To this end, Section 4.2 has sketched prolegomena for such a cultural narratology of motion by examining – from a narratological perspective – the role(s) that the three constitutive dimensions of human motion – agency, spatiality and temporality – play in the narrative enactment of this phenomenon. Drawing on both classical structuralist narratology and postclassical branches of narratology, the methodology chapter has combined the precise analytical tools of the former with the meticulous contextualism of the latter in a problem-oriented methodological framework for the analysis of the narrative enactment of motion in contemporary Asian British novels. This context-sensitive narratological framework is based upon a twofold definition of vectoriality: in addition to *ontological* vectoriality – defined as the conjuncture, that is, the combinatorial interplay, of spatiality, agency and temporality in concrete configurations of movement in Chapter 2, the methodology chapter has introduced the complementary concept of *narratological* vectoriality, defined as the conjuncture of Nünning's three dimensions of literary representation – the paradigmatic axis of selection, the syntagmatic axis of combination and the discursive axis of perspectivization (cf. Nünning 2008a: 19-26, particularly 21) – in the narrative enactment of individual movements (cf. *ibid.*). By means of a consistent focus on the complex interactions of ontological and narratological vectoriality, Chapter 4 has thus been able to elucidate the intricate phenomenon of narrative *representations* of

movement, that is, to lift the veil that routinely obscures the processual interplay of the various dimensions to be found at the heart of this phenomenon. In a nutshell, the relationship between ontological and narratological vectoriality has been described as follows: narratological vectoriality generates the illusion of ontological vectoriality, that is, of a character moving across space over time, in the reader's mind by means of narrative techniques of representation, for example minimalistic ones.

Centred on these complementary concepts of ontological and narratological vectoriality, the cultural narratology of motion elaborated in the fourth chapter accordingly combines cognitive narratological approaches with contextualist and experiential ones. By correlating, on the one hand, cognitive narratology and narrative techniques of representing motion with the affective semanticization and narrative saliency of individual movements on the other, this cultural narratology of motion integrates essentially different approaches towards the narrative representation of movement within one analytical framework. By treating them as two sides of the same coin, it moreover highlights the fundamental ontological interrelatedness of these highly heterogeneous but equally legitimate epistemological perspectives on the narrative representation of motion in the contemporary novel (cf. Section 4.3).

Based on an in-depth reflection of the implications of transferring the concept of the vector from mathematics to the study of motion in contemporary literature and culture (cf. Section 4.4.1), the methodology chapter has moreover provided a tripartite typology of vectors to be found in the narrative enactment of real-and-imagined movements in contemporary Asian British novels. By distinguishing intended from experienced and imagined vectors, it has become possible to capture the intricate interplay of spatial and mental mobility in narrative representations of real-and-imagined movements terminologically. What is more, the heuristic correlation of this triadic typology of vectors with the Genettean concepts of analepsis and prolepsis (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 33-85) has opened up the arena for productive combinations of my cultural narratology of motion with established analytical categories from classical (and postclassical) narratological approaches. In this process, it has proved necessary to reconceptualize these Genettean anachronies – from a genuinely cognitive-narratological perspective – as mental movements backward or forward in time and space on the part of the reader. Finally, the heuristic, reconceptualizing subdivision of the Genettean ellipsis (cf. Genette 1980 [1972]: 86-112, particularly 93-95 and 106-109) into elisive and ellipsoidal modes of representing journeys narratively has enabled the cultural narratology of motion to provide precise descriptive categories for the

minimalistic strategies of narrative representation that have proved to be so prevalent in contemporary Asian British novels. With this differentiation, the cultural narratology of motion has undertaken a tentative correlation of the prime mode of travel in these novels – contemporary air travel – with the narrative strategies deployed to represent it (cf. Section 4.4.2).

In addition, my methodological considerations also included a causal contextualization of this predominance of minimalism in the narrative representation of motion by formulating three explanatory hypotheses. First, I have interpreted this preference for minimalistic modes of representation as a postcolonial strategy of silencing precisely that which used to be foregrounded in the colonial travelogue, that is, the journey itself. Second, the traditional conventionalization of the travelogue has decreased the tellability of the act of travelling itself considerably. Third, the characteristic experiential quality of contemporary air travel – the decontextualized tedium of non-friction (arising, among other things, from the high degree of standardization in this mode of travel and from the extremely high altitude at which modern passenger airplanes fly) – has virtually reduced its tellability to zero (cf. Section 4.4.2).

To conclude, the methodology chapter has also introduced the concept of narratopology³⁰⁷ in order to grasp the intersection of cognitive and contextualist narratology on the one hand with cultural topology on the other in the phenomenon of agentive space-time configurations arising from the narrative representation of human motion in the contemporary novel. Differentiating between eight narrative strategies of evoking such narratologies in contemporary Asian British novels, Section 4.4.3 has correlated these narratologies with the trialectics of motion elaborated in Chapter 2 by describing these agentive space-time configurations as the result of a network of different movements (such as transnational migrations) and movement patterns enacted narratively. All in all, this doctoral dissertation has thus elaborated an innovative integrated theoretical, contextualist and methodological framework for the narratological analysis of the narrative enactment of real-and-imagined human motion across space in contemporary Asian British novels by developing a cultural narratology of motion grounded in a trialectics of motion.

³⁰⁷ According to Section 4.4.3, the term narratopology actually denotes two different things: an interdisciplinary field concerned with the analysis of narratively enacted storyworld topologies on the one hand and these narratively evoked topologies themselves on the other.

8.2 Contemporary Asian British Novels as a Chronotope of Utopian Transculturality?

Do contemporary Asian British novels unequivocally qualify as a chronotope of utopian transculturality? Judging from the three exemplary primary text analyses conducted in the course of this study, the answer must clearly be no. The purpose of the analysis chapters was not to elaborate a fully fledged typology of different narrative enactments of transculturality, but rather to conduct exemplary motion-oriented examinations of three primary texts that represent certain configurational poles on the wide spectrum between dystopian and utopian transculturalism. In accordance with this general orientation, even the minimal corpus of three novels has been able to show that contemporary Asian British novels can by no means be accused of one-sidedly celebrating the alleged advent of utopian transculturalism in the age of contemporary globalization unanimously. Instead, they grapple with the legacy of colonialism and its persistent impact on the shaping of cross-cultural encounters in contemporary contexts in various, essentially different ways.

In order to accommodate these heterogeneous literary approaches to issues of transnational motion and mobility as well as the resultant inter- and transcultural entanglements in one definitional framework, four guiding hypotheses concerning the possibility of conceptualizing contemporary Asian British novels as a transcultural mode of writing have been formulated in Section 3.2. Overall, these guiding hypotheses have proved to be a useful classificatory tool with regard to the three selected novels, for they have permitted a comprehensive characterization of these essentially heterogeneous literary texts as transcultural novels without losing sight of their distinctive individuality and therefore of the corpus-internal variability regarding the degree to which they conform to the label 'transcultural novel' in either its utopian or dystopian variant. Consequently, the selected Asian British novels foreground the interrelationship between transnational motion and mobility on the one hand and the emergence of utopian/dystopian transculturality on the other in different historical contexts and varying intensities. This is why, in the following, the central results of the preceding primary text analyses shall be wrapped up in a comparative juxtaposition of these three novels' narrative configurations of the trialectics of motion, their different macro-structural movement patterns, their attendant narratologies and, finally, the correlation of these parameters with the narrative evocation of transculturality.

To begin with, the narrative configuration of the spatiality-agency-temporality complex in *The Impressionist* (Kunzru 2002) distinguishes itself by a jointly postmodern and postcolonial deconstructionist thrust vis-à-vis Western preconceptions of the three constitutive dimensions of human motion. In terms of spatiality, this general epistemological orientation manifests itself both in the postcolonial deconstruction of colonial concepts of ordering space and in the (likewise postcolonial) narrative remapping of the imperialist topology of the British Empire from the margins. The latter aspect is manifest, for instance, in the tentative appropriation and ironic resemanticization of the imperial capital London from the protagonist's perspective. This two-pronged approach to the postcolonial revision of a quintessentially colonialist spatial order (epitomized by the stereotypical dichotomy of 'centre' and 'periphery') is enacted paradigmatically in the macro-structural movement pattern of the incomplete triangle. Temporality-wise, this goes hand in hand with the postcolonialist deconstruction of the linear teleology inherent in Western modernity's progressivist concept of history. Consequently, *The Impressionist* vigorously contests Western modernity's presumptuous claim to being the apex of historical teleology and therefore the quintessential role model for other regions of the world.

As for human agency and its resources, their narrative configuration in this novel boils down to a postmodernist deconstruction of the traditional Western notion of human subjectivity as a stable, essentializable category. The fact that the hybrid protagonist manages to survive only because of his remarkable capacity for shape shifting testifies to the fluid and unstable, non-essentialist nature of his idiosyncratic identity configuration. In addition, it is highly significant that this deconstruction is accomplished primarily by asserting the crucial role played by contingency in human agency through the consistent foregrounding of the protagonist Pran's ability to take advantage of sudden changes in external circumstances spontaneously. On an epistemological meta-level, this emphasis on contingency thus dynamizes my trialectics of motion, because it problematizes the concept of self-determined agency by highlighting the influence of random occurrences, chance encounters and other purely contingent incidents on human decision-making. On the whole, the text-specific historical configuration of the trialectics of motion thus correlates directly with the total absence of utopian transculturality from *The Impressionist*.

A Life Apart (Mukherjee 2011 [2008]) shares the deconstructionist thrust vis-à-vis the concept of autonomous human agency with *The Impressionist*, albeit in another context and therefore with a different weighting. While in *The Impressionist*,

contingency is the frictional factor that problematizes context-independent human agency, in *A Life Apart*, this role is played by a violent and conflict-ridden past that demonstrates its own, cruelly disruptive agency both on the protagonist Ritwik's individual biographical micro-level and on the macro-level of geopolitical and geotopological power constellations. In this novel, the temporal dimension of human motion is consequently made dominant by means of a consistent foregrounding of the persistent repercussions that a violent colonial past exerts upon an equally disillusioning postcolonial present.

The special quality of this narrative configuration of the trialectics of motion lies in the fact that these disruptive reverberations reach beyond these entangled temporalities to the spatial and agentic dimensions as well: historical and contemporary cultural spaces like London and Bengal are marked, above all, by their historicity and their nature as contested spaces. At the same time, the destructive effects of colonial history on the protagonist Ritwik's tragic fate in the present severely problematize the concept of autonomous human agency. Overall, this novel thus configures the persistent power asymmetries between England and India by narratively enacting the contrapuntal parallelism of the two protagonists' inversely entangled ontological vectorialities. These entangled vectorialities go hand in hand with a narrative remapping of colonial and postcolonial topologies that calls into question the dichotomization of the poles 'centre' and 'periphery' by highlighting their mutual intertwining across geographical and historical distance. As the resulting contrapuntal parallelism is marked by a pronounced focus on the transtemporal repercussions of colonialism in the present (manifest, for instance, in the persistence of colonial power asymmetries in postcolonial times), it gives rise to an utterly dystopian configuration of transculturality.

In contrast to both *The Impressionist* and *A Life Apart*, *The Pleasure Seekers* (Doshi 2010) does not engage in a fully-fledged deconstruction of autonomous human agency. Instead, this novel's narrative configuration of the trialectics of motion foregrounds the *agentivization* of transcultural subjects through freedom of movement in the contemporary age of globalization. However, this agentivization of the protagonists through global mobility proves to be fundamentally ambivalent inasmuch as it produces not only freedom of choice, but also feelings of displacement, insecurity and unbelonging. This fundamental ambivalence of being riven between the pleasures of freedom of movement and the desire for a stable sense of belonging is at the heart of what – following Welsch (cf. 2009: 8-9; see also Welsch 2000 [1999]: n. pag.) – this

study has described as transcultural identity configurations. What is more, the paradigmatic mode of travel in *The Pleasure Seekers* – postmodern air travel – functions as the fulcrum around which the entire configuration of the three constitutive dimensions of human motion revolves. In addition to the large-scale expansion of individual agency, it is marked by the defrictionalization of space and by postmodern time-space compression. In turn, the protagonists' actualization of their individual freedom of movement in the pendular ontological vectorialities of their various transnational journeys generates a multipolar, semi-rhizomatic transcultural narratopology marked by a likewise pendular macro-structural network of connections between different hubs scattered across the Indian subcontinent and Europe. Alongside the narrative enactment of transcultural third spaces, this multipolar transcultural narratopology, which is reflected, for instance, in the multiple imaginative co-presence of these various hubs in the protagonists' minds, constitutes one indicator of the emergence of utopian transculturality in *The Pleasure Seekers*.

Overall, the following picture thus obtains: *The Impressionist* and *A Life Apart* share a postcolonial vantage point on questions of cross-cultural intertwining, albeit with essentially different weightings. Whereas the former novel foregrounds the deconstruction of Western imperialist concepts of space, history and human subjectivity in the era of late colonialism, the latter stresses the persistent repercussions of a conflict-ridden colonial past on an equally disenchanting postcolonial present. On a meta-level, these two novels therefore employ inverse approaches: *The Impressionist* deconstructs the colonial past from the vantage point of the postmodern and postcolonial present, whereas *A Life Apart* insists on the destructive effects of this colonial past on the postcolonial present, leaving aside the latter's postmodern facets. Each in its own way, the two novels thus enact a profound topological, ontological and epistemological rupture between colonial 'realities' and imperialist rhetoric (in the case of *The Impressionist*) or between (post)colonial 'realities' and the (frequently neo-imperialist) rhetoric of progress (in *A Life Apart*).

As we have seen, *The Impressionist* and *A Life Apart* do furthermore share the narrative deconstruction of autonomous human agency as a common feature. *The Pleasure Seekers*, by contrast, occupies a diametrical counter-position in that it foregrounds precisely the expansion of the agentive dimension through global mobility. In a nutshell, the essential difference between the former two novels on the one hand and the latter on the other thus lies in their specific attitude towards (motion and) mobility. Whereas the former two configure mobility either as an inescapable

prerequisite for survival (Pran Nath's fate in *The Impressionist*) or as an impossibility (Ritwik's situation as an illegal migrant in the second part of *A Life Apart*), the latter distinguishes itself precisely by granting its protagonists the prerogative of self-determined freedom of movement. As a corollary to this distribution of freedom of movement among the protagonists of these three novels, it is thus no coincidence that *The Pleasure Seekers* is the only one that allows for the generation of utopian transcultural third spaces. Accordingly, the crucial difference between *The Impressionist* and *A Life Apart* on the one hand and *The Pleasure Seekers* on the other can be captured summarily in the binary contrast between postcolonial problematizations and transcultural celebration of global mobility as freedom of movement.³⁰⁸

All in all, it is thus justified to conclude that this study has shown how productively the narrative enactment of space and human motion in contemporary Asian British novels can be analysed by means of a consistent focus on the interrelations between the three constitutive dimensions of human motion: spatiality, agency and temporality. At the same time, the in-depth examination of three exemplary primary texts has yielded the insight that these novels dynamize both the trialectics of motion and the cultural narratology of motion built upon it by pinpointing their limits of applicability, most prominently with regard to the category of autonomous human agency. As far as the trialectics of motion is concerned, these limits are for the most part rooted in the minimalistic mode of representation deployed in the narrative enactment of the majority of journeys in these three novels. This representational minimalism finds its equivalent in the absence of maps from most contemporary Asian British novels (one notable exception is *The Glass Palace* [2000] by Amitav Ghosh). The widespread reluctance to use maps as an informational medium testifies to both a decided problematization of the epistemological potential claimed by colonialist cartography and a vigorous assertion of literature's capacity to evoke mental maps of the storyworld in the reader's mind without resorting to the actual device of visualizing its topography in the novel itself.

Concerning the central research question of how the experience of space and motion is enacted narratively in contemporary Asian British novels, the following conclusions can be drawn from the three exemplary primary text analyses. First, there

³⁰⁸ It is this crucial difference that accounts for the varying length of the three analysis chapters of this dissertation: due to its almost ideal-typical compliance with my contextualized theoretical and methodological model, *The Pleasure Seekers* could be dealt with in much more straightforward fashion than *The Impressionist* and *A Life Apart*.

is a conspicuous preference for minimalistic modes of enacting the experiential event of individual characters' movement across space narratively in these (and other) Asian British novels. All in all, this characteristic preference for the narrative techniques of elusive or ellipsoidal representation results from two contextual factors: Regarding Asian British novels set in a contemporary context, the large-scale elimination of the tellability of the course of a journey itself is, first of all, due to the pervasive standardization of modes of travel in the contemporary age. Second, the postcolonial abrogation of the detailed rendering of journeys in contemporary Asian British novels constitutes a deliberate counterpoint to both the colonial travelogue and postmodern celebrations of global freedom of movement as the ubiquitous hallmark of contemporary transculturalism.

As a consequence of this widespread representational minimalism, the reader is obliged to search for the pertinent bits and pieces of information enabling him or her to embed a particular journey in the overall narrative enactment of motion in the respective novel elsewhere. This is where the narrative representation of characters' experience of space comes in, for both their anticipatory expectations of an imminent transnational migration to a foreign country and their retrospective evaluation of this cultural space in comparison to their country of origin yield important insights into their individual, jointly affective and cognitive experience of these heterogeneous cultural spaces and of movement between them. In this context, these characters' mental mobility is often assigned the crucial task of providing precisely these anticipatory and retrospective semanticizations of their real-and-imagined migratory movement(s) in between the cultural spaces India and Britain.

The triad of intended, experienced and imagined narrative vectors introduced in this study has enabled me to describe the complex interplay of these ontological dimensions – intention, experience and imagination – in the narrative enactment of real-and-imagined movements in contemporary Asian British novels in a precise and differentiated narratological manner. Due to the frequently minimalistic mode of narratively enacting journeys in these novels, the phenomenon of traveller-focalizers' prospective, retrospective and purely imaginary mental mobility plays a crucial part in this process, because the particular, case-specific qualities of experienced vectors must frequently be inferred from the cognitive and affective differences between such prospective, retrospective or imaginary semanticizations of the journey in question. In essence, their mental mobility thus fulfils three major functions in this context: it serves a preparatory purpose (narratively realized by means of an intended vector), a

reflective purpose (in the guise of a retrospective imagined vector) or a compensatory purpose (commonly realized via a purely imagined vector). While these typological differentiations regarding narrative vectors render the precise narratological description of these three essential components (intention, experience and imagination) of narratively enacted journeys possible, it is necessary to keep in mind that, because of the real-and-imagined character of these movements, these typological differentiations do not constitute mutually exclusive categorizations, but necessarily allow for various kinds of hybridizations among these three ontological domains – intention, experience and imagination – and the corresponding types of narrative vectors.

In addition, the fact that subjective semanticizations of transnational migration prior to or after the fact, which, as we have seen, are narratively represented via traveller-focalizers' mental mobility, are frequently much more salient than the detailed rendering of the experienced vector of the journey itself also engenders the necessity to consider both the *intratextual* embedding of the narrative enactment of the real-and-imagined experience of spatial movement in its deep-structural spatio-temporal context in terms of what this study has termed narratologies and its inescapable embeddedness in *extratextual* cultural topologies of the historical or contemporary era in which the respective novel is set.

All in all, this study yielded the result that contemporary Asian British novels do not qualify as an *unambiguous* chronotope of *utopian* transculturality. As the three exemplary primary-text analyses have shown, they rather represent the wide spectrum of transculturalism in different weightings, ranging from utterly dystopian configurations (as in *A Life Apart*) to decidedly optimistic ones (as in *The Pleasure Seekers*). As well, they focus on different historical phases of globalization, ranging from late colonialism (*The Impressionist*) to the late twentieth century (*The Pleasure Seekers*) and their mutual interrelatedness (*A Life Apart*). In addition to that, this investigation has shown that the textual phenomenon of transculturalism reaches beyond the spectrum ranging from dystopia to utopia, because transcultural configurations can likewise be evoked via the embedding of narrative representations of movement in a web of intertextual relations, for instance by citing late-imperial classics like Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1994 [1902]) with a difference in *The Impressionist*, or by having the Indian protagonist rewrite Tagore's *The Home and the World* (2005 [1916]) from the perspective of a marginalized English character in *A Life Apart*. This strategy of generating metaphorical third spaces of transculturality through intertextuality testifies to the existence of transcultural configurations beyond the spectrum ranging from

dystopia to utopia. As a genuine movement of representation, it furthermore exemplifies the diachronic variability – that is, the historicity – of narrative strategies of representing movement in fiction. In conclusion, it is thus legitimate to argue that the three novels analysed in this study neither subscribe unanimously to the representational conventions of traditional nineteenth-century realism nor imitate Rushdie's magical-realist flamboyance. Instead, they opt for a middle path that distinguishes itself through text-specific combinations of realist techniques with occasional postmodern elements, such as the implicit metalepsis disrupting the mimetic illusion in *A Life Apart*.

To conclude, the final part of this section shall provide a brief outlook on two further Asian British novels suitable for a contextualized analysis of the narrative enactment of motion and mobility via the theoretical and methodological framework developed in this study. Sharing the overall deconstructionist thrust with his 2002 debut *The Impressionist* (cf. Upstone 2010: 144-163), Hari Kunzru's second novel – *Transmission* (2005 [2004]) – narratively enacts the tremendously disruptive global effects of a computer virus on the smooth operation of global mobility systems in 'real' space and cyberspace. This time, the novel's deconstructionist verve is thus directed not against the imperialist rhetoric of the bygone days of the British Empire, but against the lopsidedly celebratory and progressivist rhetoric of many contemporary globalization discourses and corollary visions of a dawning age of universal transculturalism. More importantly, by expanding the scope of motion and mobility to include the issue of virtual connectivity (and its pitfalls), this novel opens up a field of application for my cultural narratology of motion that none of the three novels analysed in depth in the course of this study has broached. This is why in the following, some tentative lines along which a motion-oriented examination of *Transmission* could be conducted shall be delineated briefly.

Via multiperspectival narration, *Transmission* weaves together the stories of its three protagonists Arjun Mehta, Leela Zahir and Guy Swift. Having lost his job with a fictitious American computer-security systems company, Arjun Mehta, aged 23, an Indian computer programmer and spare-time hacker, creates an ingeniously malicious computer virus in a desperate attempt to prove his extraordinary capabilities to his ex-employer. Twenty-one-year-old Leela Zahir, an irresistible but unhappy Bollywood actress, serves Arjun Mehta, one of her secret adorers, as a peculiar kind of figurehead in that he makes his virus spread a famous scene from one of her big box-office successes onto each and every computer screen affected all around the globe. Finally,

the miniature kaleidoscope of twenty-first-century globalization is completed by Guy Swift, a 33-year-old English wanna-be-genius in marketing, whose elliptically represented pendular journeys criss-crossing the globe turn him into the novel's epitome of a twenty-first-century business executive. An analysis of the narrative enactment of motion and mobility in *Transmission* thus requires careful attention to the ways in which the three protagonists' highly disparate degrees of agency reverberate on their individual experience of space and time as well as to the modes in which their resulting, highly heterogeneous (and yet interlocked) ontological vectorialities are juxtaposed via multiperspectival narration.

Of particular interest to a motion-oriented examination of this novel would also be the narrative interweaving of the three protagonists' spatial movements with the virus's virtual mobility because it is the latter that, in its role as globalized large-scale friction (cf., for instance, *Transmission* 234), severely disrupts the former. Dealing with the latest phase of contemporary globalization in a satirical mode, Kunzru's novel essentially foregrounds the Janus-faced role of the Internet as the medium of global connectivity on the one hand and the "transmission vector" (*Transmission* 109) for computer viruses aimed at disrupting or even destroying precisely this ubiquitous global connectivity on the other. Therewith, the narrative enactment of the worldwide repercussions caused by Arjun's virus highlights the inescapably precarious fragility of global mobility systems in both actuality and virtual cyberspace. In addition, the qualitative similarities between Arjun's computer virus and HIV (both mutate at will, and therefore unpredictably) merit close attention. All in all, its tremendously disruptive agency should be scrutinized in conjunction with its chameleon-like mutability and its destructive effects on the smooth operation of myriad technological infrastructure systems, ranging from electricity supply to global systems of mobility epitomized by international air travel. Furthermore, it would be intriguing to see how the novel's narrative configuration of the macro- and micro-structural interlocking of these systems all across the globe interacts with other characteristic features of contemporary globalization, such as the latest stage of time-space compression or the global surveillance of quotidian flows in human and virtual mobility. In conclusion, this novel constitutes a further worthwhile object of analysis for my cultural narratology of motion because it narratively enacts innovative configurations of the trialectics of motion attuned to urgent issues characteristic of the latest phase of contemporary globalization.

Narrated in the rare mode of second-person narration, Mohsin Hamid's *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) shares *Transmission's* satirical take on issues of contemporary globalization, albeit with a different contentual focus. Whereas Kunzru's novel deconstructs the myth of frictionless global communication and mobility, Hamid's novel ridicules the stereotypical structure, style and diction of present-day self-help books for aspiring young entrepreneurs. By combining a subtle exposure of their fallacies and ethical biases with an exemplary rags-to-riches story situated in an unspecified Asian country, it narratively deconstructs the myth of success through hard work without crooked measures. Thereby, it severely calls into question one-sidedly celebratory accounts of Asia's steep economic rise in the last decades. As the protagonist may be interpreted as a *mise en abyme* embodiment of this rise, a motion-oriented analysis of this novel should scrutinize the parallel step-by-step expansion of the anonymous protagonist's spatial mobility in tandem with his upward social mobility. In addition, the novel's critical stance on partial celebrations of the vigorously self-assertive agency of single-minded go-getters – narratively actualized through the deployment of a distanced and reserved mode of representation in regard to its aspiring but dubious protagonist – merits meticulous scrutiny precisely because it harbours considerable deconstructive potential vis-à-vis the largely positive semanticization of the concept of human agency that has been prevalent throughout this study.

Both novels also accentuate their deeply sceptical attitude towards overly positive discourses on twenty-first-century globalization by denying their protagonists a happy ending. Having risen from mere underling to corporate tycoon in the bottled-water industry, the anonymous protagonist of Hamid's novel ends up being tricked out of the bulk of his fortune by one of his executives and confidants. *Transmission* leaves the fate of two of its three protagonists open to speculation,³⁰⁹ thereby likewise underlining its essentially dystopian approach to issues of transculturation in the context of early twenty-first-century globalization. Therefore, it is legitimate to claim that both novels corroborate my conclusion that contemporary Asian British fiction does not qualify as an unambiguous chronotope of utopian transculturality.

³⁰⁹ Both Arjun Mehta and Leela Zahir end up vanishing off the face of the earth. Guy Swift, by contrast, eventually reappears in Britain after suffering a horrid odyssey caused by the European immigration authorities' virus-induced error of mistaking his identity for that of a destitute asylum-seeker from Albania.

8.3 Transferability of the Cultural Narratology of Motion to Other Literary Contexts: Perspectives and Limitations

Subsequent to the concluding summary of my theoretical and methodological framework (Section 8.1) and of the three exemplary primary text analyses conducted in the course of this study (Section 8.2), the final section of this conclusion will examine the possibilities and limitations of transferring the cultural narratology of motion to other literary contexts. In this process, I will also pinpoint further important research desiderata that need to be addressed by future studies on the narrative enactment of motion and mobility in different historical, geographical and sociocultural contexts.

To begin with, it is important to remember that the subject-matter of this study distinguishes itself by its fundamental relevance across man-made cultural, political and religious divisions inasmuch as its object of analysis – transnational motion (and its literary representations) – itself is a transcultural phenomenon: due to its border-crossing and therefore spatially transgressive nature, transnational motion generates cross-cultural contact situations and processes of transculturation. In addition, my preference for the conceptual metaphor of the vector over more contextualized terms for motion, such as the path or the route, has proved to be both justified and expedient throughout this study, for the decisive advantage of the vector lies precisely in its high degree of abstraction, which, in turn, constitutes the prime factor accounting for its fundamental transferability to other literary and sociohistorical contexts. Accordingly, it is likewise due to its high degree of abstraction that the vector has proved to be the conceptual metaphor with the highest aptitude for representing the trajectories travelled upon by agents in the storyworld of contemporary Asian British novels, where the contemporary passenger airplane constitutes the prime mode of travel used. In this particular mode, the abstract and mathematically constructed character of the vector corresponds to the abstractness of one's spatio-temporal surroundings in air travel.

In accordance with this central recognition, this study has developed a twofold conceptualization of vectoriality, one ontological, the other narratological (cf. Section 8.1). Throughout this study, the concept of ontological vectoriality has been foregrounded explicitly in its pivotal role as the central fulcrum of the trialectics of motion. Even if not always mentioned explicitly, its complement – narratological vectoriality – has influenced the three primary text analyses implicitly; that is, it has consistently hovered in the background whenever salient questions concerning the selection, combination and perspectivization of settings and movements were

addressed. As the category of human agency functions as the crucial fulcrum of ontological vectoriality – and therefore of both the trialectics of motion and the cultural narratology of motion based upon it – it is legitimate to conclude that this theoretical and methodological framework distinguishes itself by its transferability to all migratory contexts in which the migrants in question display at least a minimum of self-determined agency. By contrast, historical and contemporary contexts that deny them this capacity – such as slavery, indentured labour, contemporary human trafficking or other forms of forced migration – require a fundamentally different approach to literary enactments of transnational motion.

In order to corroborate the bold assertion of the fundamental transferability to other literary contexts of the trialectics of motion and the cultural narratology of motion built upon it, this study shall conclude with a tentative analytical foray into two novels from two other, essentially heterogeneous geographical, social, cultural and literary contexts: V. S. Naipaul's *The Enigma of Arrival* (2002 [1987]) and Emine Sevgi Özdamar's *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn* (1998). Regarding the former, three observations shall suffice to delineate the basic lines along which an application of this study's theoretical and methodological framework to this Caribbean English novel could be conducted. First of all, it is clearly the strong-willed and ambitious protagonist's self-determined agency that incites him to escape from the allegedly petty provinciality of his home country Trinidad by applying for a scholarship to study English literature at Oxford University and embark upon a literary career afterwards. Accordingly, the narrative representation of the narrator-protagonist's agency ought to be scrutinized in conjunction with his experience of time and space.

Second, the autodiegetic narrator's macro-structural topological movement pattern in Naipaul's *The Enigma of Arrival* (2002 [1987])³¹⁰ represents yet another narrative configuration of an incomplete triangle inasmuch as his biographically momentous transnational migration in 1950 leads him from Trinidad to New York City by airplane, and from there to Southampton, England, by ship. Since, despite multifarious travels all around the globe, he never returns to Trinidad or India, the home country of his ancestors, on a permanent basis, this strongly autobiographical movement pattern definitely constitutes a fundamentally incomplete triangle. However, the most intriguing particularity of the narrative enactment of transnational migration in this novel resides in the fact that the autodiegetic narrator and traveller-focalizer's own movement pattern overlaps with a larger, transgenerational movement pattern that

³¹⁰ *The Enigma of Arrival* (Naipaul 2002 [1987]) shall henceforth be abbreviated as *EoA* in text notes.

likewise forms an incomplete triangle: his ancestors migrated from India to Trinidad as indentured labourers, and the narrator himself moved from Trinidad to England in order to establish himself as a writer there (cf. *EoA* 55, 99, 113, 120, 130). It is thus precisely the complex narrative configuration of this overlapping of topologically identical but historically separate movement patterns that deserves special attention. Also, the vastly heterogeneous agentive conditions under which the corresponding migratory movements are carried out – forced migration in the context of indentured labour versus voluntary migration in an emergent postcolonial context – are of particular interest. Third, this novel is marked by a contrastive intertwining of the detailed locality of the autodiegetic narrator’s current spatial surroundings in the English countryside and the “trans-locality” (Langenohl 2014: 57) of his various journeys all around the globe. Therefore, the narrative representation of space in *The Enigma of Arrival* merits equally close attention because this contrastive constellation triggers the autodiegetic narrator’s complex reflections on the interlocking of the historicity of space and the spatiality of history.

Concerning Emine Sevgi Özdamar’s Turkish German migration novel *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn* (1998),³¹¹ it is, first of all, necessary to state that its narrative configuration of agency resembles that of *The Enigma of Arrival* in that it likewise features a strong-willed and independent narrator-protagonist, whose self-determined agency manifests itself in her autonomous and voluntary decision to migrate to Berlin against her parents’ will at the outset of the novel. Therefore, it lends itself equally well to a contextualized examination of the narrative enactment of motion and mobility via the trialectics of motion developed in this study and the cultural narratology of motion built upon it. Most importantly, this is so because her repeatedly performed movements between the European and Asian parts of Istanbul (on the novel’s micro-level) and between Berlin and Istanbul (on the textual macro-level) can legitimately be conceived of as pendular vectorialities, that is, as agentive spatio-temporal configurations of movement on disparate structural levels, all of which follow Ette’s movement pattern of the pendulum (cf. Ette 2003: 43 and 2005: 23-24, 181-203).³¹² In addition to her high degree of individual mobility, the young Turkish

³¹¹ *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn* (Özdamar 1998) shall henceforth be abbreviated as *DBvGH* in text notes.

³¹² In the sixth chapter of his monograph *ZwischenWeltenSchreiben – Literaturen ohne festen Wohnsitz* (2005), Ette provides a detailed analysis of the young female protagonist’s commuting between the European and Asian parts of her hometown as well as between Istanbul and Berlin (cf. Ette 2005: 181-203). Moreover, he consistently interweaves this with an examination of “translingual [practices of] writing” (Ette 2005: 203) and the emergence of transculturality in Özdamar’s *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn*. While he does take into account multifarious aspects relating to the protagonist’s individual agency, Ette does not explicitly mention this

protagonist's agency also manifests itself in her remarkable ability to overcome all types of external friction with a characteristic mixture of sheer luck, quick wit and good acting skills. The latter aspect of her self-determined agency, however, ends up being problematized by the circumstances of her eventual return to Berlin, because the socialist protagonist is urged to return to Berlin by her mother at the end of the novel due to the continued political persecution of left-wing groups and intellectuals in Turkey.

It is this politically motivated, systematic large-scale persecution of dissenting groups by the state authorities that, in its role as extrinsic motivator for the protagonist's eventual remigration to Berlin, draws attention to the extremely high significance of the contextual dimension for the overall meaning potential of this novel. This is why the narrative interweaving of the protagonist's major migratory and minor micro-level movements with the turbulent political and sociocultural developments in Germany and Turkey in the decade from ca. 1965 to 1975 is of particular interest to a contextualized examination of the narrative enactment of motion in this novel. As a corollary, this high degree of saliency allotted to the extratextual historical and cultural context in which the action on the story level is embedded points to the limitations of the transferability of my analytical framework to other literary contexts. Consequently, a comparative analysis of the narrative representation of the various causes, events, reactions to and aftermaths of the late 1960s student uprisings in Germany and Turkey constitutes one central prerequisite for a contextualist examination of the narrative enactment of motion and mobility in this novel.

In addition to the agentive dimension, the other two dimensions of my trialectics of motion likewise prove to be applicable to Özdamar's *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn*. In terms of spatiality, the interlocking of movement patterns and the emergence of transculturality merits close attention. Regarding the former, it is evident that the autodiegetic narrator's daily micro-level commuting between the European and the Asian parts of Istanbul (cf. *DBvGH* 206, 221-222) represents a *mise en abyme* of her macro-level pendular migrations between Berlin and Istanbul (cf. *DBvGH* 11, 106, 175, 329-330). Therefore, this doubly pendular movement pattern³¹³ is at the roots of the emergence of transculturation processes in this novel (cf. Ette 2005: 23-24 and 181-

crucial concept a single time throughout his entire analysis. What is more, his examination lacks a thorough contextualization of Özdamar's novel with regard to the turbulent extratextual cultural context of the late 1960s student protests in both Turkey and Germany that frame its storyworld and action so conspicuously.

³¹³ This pendular movement pattern is complemented by two further major journeys, one to Paris (cf. *DBvGH* 124-150), the other to Cappadocia (in eastern Anatolia, central Turkey; cf. *DBvGH* 266-291).

203) and, what is more, responsible for the generation of a bipolar macro-structural narratopology. As both resemblances and differences between Berlin and Istanbul are thematized throughout the novel, the narrative configuration of this topology is primarily marked by a well-balanced juxtaposition of these two cultural spaces.

Regarding the narrative representation of space, the resultant imaginative co-presence of Berlin (which functions as a synecdoche for Germany and, by extension, Europe) and Istanbul (functioning as a synecdoche for Turkey and, by extension, Asia) in the protagonist's mind is enacted recurrently throughout the novel, frequently via comparisons of the heterogeneous sociocultural habits, customs, conventions and traditions or the disparate living standards of the population (cf., for instance, *DBvGH* 193, 215, 250). Finally, the temporal dimension comes in whenever the interlocking of space and time in the protagonist's experience of her surroundings is thematized. Most importantly, her experience of space and time is significantly influenced by her pendular movement pattern across city boroughs, countries and continents in that, for instance, she perceives the pace of daily life in Istanbul as considerably slower than in Berlin after her stay in the German metropolis (cf. *DBvGH* 106). Hence, her subjective perception of cultural temporalities in her home country has been altered significantly by her experience of the temporary migration to Berlin. Irrespective of the actual existence of this alleged difference, this phenomenon is explicable by recourse to Ricoeur's threefold mimesis (cf. Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52-87). While the protagonist's subjective experience of the passing of time has hitherto been culturally prefigured by the ordinary pace of quotidian life in her hometown Istanbul, she experiences the configuration of this pace in Berlin as much faster. Consequently, the refiguration of her individual perception of her hometown consists in the fact that she cannot help but detect a certain degree of slowness in her fellow countrymen's everyday proceedings after her return. In conclusion, it is thus legitimate to assert that – as this brief analytical foray into the narrative representation of motion in an exemplary primary text has shown – the theoretical and methodological framework developed in this study can indeed be transferred productively to the field of Turkish German migration literature.

In the context of such a transfer of the trialectics of motion and the cultural narratology of motion based on it to literary texts from other geographical, historical and cultural contexts, there are further desiderata concerning the narrative enactment of motion and mobility, some of which shall at least be pinpointed conclusively here. Because this study has focused on the *synchronic* examination of motion, mobility and movement patterns in *contemporary* Asian British novels from ca. 2000 onwards, an

analogous examination of Asian British fiction before the new millennium, for instance seminal texts like Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (2008 [1981]) and *The Satanic Verses* (2006 [1988]), constitutes a first urgent desideratum. Regarding movement patterns, it is interesting that in both novels, there are protagonists (Saleem Sinai and Saladin Chamcha, respectively) who eventually return to their hometown Bombay. This is why – on a highly abstract level – their macro-structural topological movement pattern turns out to be a circular one. Hence, it would be intriguing to conduct a thorough analysis of the various macro- and micro-structural movement patterns occurring throughout these novels in order to illuminate how they (re)negotiate the dialectic of rootedness and rootlessness, one of the quintessential thematic concerns that all of Rushdie's novels grapple with in one way or another. Most importantly, such a study would have to tackle the question of how the tentative topological resolution of this conflict via a final return home relates to the post-structuralist deconstruction of traditional notions of home, rootedness and belonging that permeates all of Rushdie's major works so pervasively.

Second, a further, methodological desideratum consists in the systematic correlation of the experiential qualities of different modes of travel with the specific narrative techniques deployed to represent the journeys in question and with the attendant macro-structural movement patterns accountable for the emergence of specific narratologies. While this study has accomplished a heuristic approximation to such a conceptual interlocking with regard to the prime mode of travel used by relatively affluent agents for transnational migration in contemporary contexts – postmodern air travel – a comprehensive study of these interrelations would have to expand its scope to other contemporary and historical modes of travel, such as walking, riding a horse, driving a car or travelling by train, ship or stagecoach.

Third, further research is necessary on the *diachronic* evolution of movement patterns and narratologies in the history of Asian British fiction, Indian English literature, Asian American fiction and travel writing. In this context, empirical studies of the *quantitative* distribution of macro-structural movement patterns in Asian British fiction, Asian American fiction, Caribbean English fiction as well as other kinds of migration literature and travel writing from different epochs would be of particular interest. Finally, a systematic correlation of the results of these different studies with the emergence of transculturality in individual examples from these text corpora, that is, a comparison of the various textual strategies deployed for the evocation of transculturality across different geographical, historical, cultural and literary contexts,

promises valuable innovative insights for the writing of “transcultural literary history” (Lindberg-Wada 2006). As even this brief list hints at, the question of how literary texts from different epochs reproduce, modify, affirm, subvert or deconstruct extratextual cultural topologies in the configurational medium of narrative fiction remains a particularly intriguing one. While this study has shown how productively the complex interrelations among transnational migration, movement patterns, resulting topologies and the emergence of transculturality can be analysed via a consistent focus on the narrative configurations of the combinatorial interplay of the three constitutive dimensions of human motion – spatiality, agency and temporality, this brief enumeration of further desiderata to be tackled in the future highlights the persistent relevance of space and motion to the study of literature and culture in the age of contemporary globalization.

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10 Appendix: Summary in German

10.1 Einleitung

Im 21. Jahrhundert kommt Bewegung und Mobilität im Allgemeinen sowie transnationaler Migration im Besonderen eine außerordentlich hohe gesellschaftliche, politische, ökonomische und vor allem auch kulturelle Relevanz zu, deren Auswirkungen rund um den Globus spürbar sind (vgl. Castles, de Haas und Miller 2014: 1-20; Urry 2007: 3-16; Ette 2005: 9-26; Ette 2012: 1-49). Diese schlägt sich auch in der Gegenwartsliteratur nieder, wo Migrationsprozesse exemplarisch dargestellt und damit verknüpfte Fragen wie z.B. die der individuellen Identitätsbildung von Migranten ausgehandelt werden (vgl. Ette 2005: 9-26; 2012: 1-49). Umso erstaunlicher ist es, dass die Narratologie – sowohl in ihrer klassischen Phase als auch in ihren mannigfaltigen postklassischen Zweigen – den Themenkomplex der narrativen Darstellung von Bewegung durch den Raum bisher nicht systematisch behandelt hat.

Ausgehend von dieser Feststellung wurden in der Einleitung drei Dinge geleistet: Erstens wurde die zentrale Forschungsfrage dieser Dissertation formuliert: Wie wird das Erleben von Raum und Bewegung in gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels* narrativ inszeniert? Diese Frage lässt sich in vier Komponenten operationalisieren: Welche narrativen Darstellungstechniken kommen hierbei zum Einsatz? Wie erleben die Figuren ihre Bewegung durch den Raum affektiv und kognitiv? Wie wird der Leser überhaupt dazu gebracht, sich aufgrund der bloßen Präsenz von Wörtern im literarischen Text eine sich durch den Raum bewegend Figur vorzustellen (vgl. Grabes 1978: 405-422)? In welche räumlichen und historischen (bzw. gegenwärtigen) Kontexte ist die narrative Inszenierung von Figurenbewegungen im Allgemeinen und ihrer transnationalen Migrationsbewegungen im Besonderen in gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels* eingebettet und wie werden diese im jeweiligen literarischen Text dargestellt? Diese vier Dimensionen meiner Forschungsfrage machen eine multiperspektivische Vorgehensweise bei ihrer Beantwortung erforderlich.

Aufgrund ihrer thematischen Fokussierung auf transnationale Migrationsbewegungen zwischen heterogenen Kulturräumen, das spezifische Raumerleben von Migranten und deren imaginerter *mental mobility* sowie ihrem

foregrounding von fiktionalen Storyworld³¹⁴-Topologien in Wechselbeziehung zu extratextuellen kulturellen Topologien eignen sich gegenwärtige *Asian British novels* in besonderer Weise als Primärtextkorpus für die gewählte Forschungsfrage. Entsprechend wurden für die drei Analysekapitel literarische Texte aus diesem Bereich ausgewählt, die diese Kriterien in besonders einschlägiger Weise erfüllen, im 21. Jahrhundert veröffentlicht wurden und allesamt von jüngeren, in den 1960er und 70er Jahren geborenen Autoren verfasst wurden (vgl. Kapitel 1.1 dieser Dissertation).

Zweitens wurde in Kapitel 1.2 ein kurzer Überblick über für mein Erkenntnisinteresse relevante Forschungsansätze gegeben, zu denen insbesondere die folgenden zählen: die postmoderne Kulturgeographie und der Spatial Turn (vgl. Lefebvre 1991 [1974]; Soja 1989 und 1996), Forschungsansätze zu Bewegung und Mobilität in der Literaturwissenschaft (vgl. Ette 2003; 2005 und 2012 sowie Hallet und Neumann 2009) sowie das aufkommende Feld der Mobility Studies in den Geisteswissenschaften im Allgemeinen (vgl. z.B. Greenblatt et al. 2010; Murray und Upstone 2014), ferner klassisch strukturalistische und postklassische Zweige der Narratologie (vgl. z.B. Genette 1980 [1972]; Herman 2002) und Studien zum literarischen Kontext von gegenwärtiger *Asian British fiction* (vgl. z.B. Sommer 2001; Upstone 2010). Abschließend wurden zwei Kerndesiderate und drei weitere Desiderate identifiziert: erstens die Ausarbeitung eines heuristischen theoretischen kulturwissenschaftlichen Modells, das der Multidimensionalität menschlicher Bewegung Rechnung trägt; zweitens die Entwicklung einer kulturellen Narratologie der Bewegung, d. h. eines kontextorientierten narratologischen Beschreibungsvokabulars für die narrative Inszenierung des Erlebnisses bzw. der Erfahrung menschlicher Bewegung in gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels*; drittens eine spezifisch narratologische Untersuchung des komplexen Wechselspiels von räumlicher Bewegung und *mental mobility* in diesem Zusammenhang; viertens eine Analyse der Beziehung zwischen der narrativen Inszenierung von transnationalen Migrationsbewegungen und der narrativen Evokation von Transkulturalität sowie fünftens eine kontextualisierte Untersuchung der Herausbildung fiktionaler Storyworld-Topologien in ihrer Wechselbeziehung mit extratextuellen kulturellen Topologien.

In Kapitel 1.3 wurden dann in einem dritten Schritt die zentralen Hypothesen und Ziele dieser Dissertation dargelegt, aus denen sich die Gliederung dieser Arbeit ergibt. Erstens fußt diese Studie auf der Hypothese, dass das komplexe Phänomen menschlicher Bewegung – sowohl in extratextuellen kulturellen als auch in textuellen

³¹⁴ Zum Konzept der Storyworld vgl. Herman (2008 [2005]: 569-570).

fiktionalen Kontexten – aus kulturwissenschaftlicher Perspektive besonders produktiv analysiert werden kann, wenn die Untersuchung sich auf das kombinatorische Zusammenspiel der drei Dimensionen, die ich als konstitutiv für das Zustandekommen von Bewegung betrachte, konzentriert: Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit. Das erste Ziel dieser Dissertation besteht folglich in der Ausarbeitung einer solchen theoretischen Heuristik, die ich – in Analogie zu Sojas „trialectics of being“ (Soja 1996: 71; vgl. ebd. 70-73) – als trialectics of motion bezeichne. Da in der literarischen Praxis der narrativen Inszenierung von Bewegung genuin narratologische Dimensionen – so vor allem die der „[...] Selektion, [...] Kombination [...] und Perspektivierung [...]“ (Nünning 2008a: 21) von Bewegungen im literarischen Text (vgl. Nünning 2008a: 19-26) hinzukommen, muss ein auf dieser Trialektik der Bewegung aufbauendes narratologisches Beschreibungsvokabular diesen ebenfalls Rechnung tragen. Dementsprechend stellt die Entwicklung einer solchen kulturellen Narratologie der Bewegung das methodologische Hauptziel meiner Dissertation dar.

Ausgehend von der Hypothese, dass auch die Evokation von Transkulturalität in gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels* sich fruchtbar über das Raster der angestrebten Trialektik der Bewegung analysieren lässt, besteht ein drittes Ziel meiner Arbeit in der kontextualisierten Untersuchung dieses Aspektes – mit besonderem Fokus auf seiner Verwobenheit mit der narrativen Inszenierung transnationaler Migrationsbewegungen. Ette (vgl. 2005: 23; 2012: 29; siehe auch Hallet und Neumann 2009a: 20-24) folgend, gehe ich darüber hinaus von der Annahme aus, dass Storyworld-Topologien als Ergebnis der narrativen Inszenierung von Figurenbewegungen durch den fiktionalen Raum zustandekommen. Das vierte Ziel dieser Arbeit besteht folglich in der kontextorientierten Analyse der Herausbildung solcher textuell evozierter Topologien in gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels* – mit besonderem Schwerpunkt auf ihrer Wechselbeziehung zu extratextuellen kulturellen Topologien. Zu guter Letzt strebe ich fünftens eine Untersuchung des komplexen Wechselspiels von physischer Figurenbewegung durch den fiktionalen Raum der Storyworld und deren lediglich imaginerter *mental mobility* in den drei ausgewählten Romanen an, die mittels der zu entwickelnden kulturellen Narratologie der Bewegung erfolgen soll.

10.2 Theoriekapitel

Das Theoriekapitel dieser Dissertation hat eine Trialektik der Bewegung entwickelt, also ein innovatives heuristisches Modell, das der Multidimensionalität von menschlicher Bewegung sowohl in der extratextuellen kulturellen Praxis als auch in der literarischen Repräsentation Rechnung trägt. Zunächst wurden hierfür die jeweiligen Beiträge, die eine kontextualisierte Untersuchung der drei konstitutiven Dimensionen menschlicher Bewegung – Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit – zu diesem Projekt leisten kann, expliziert. Von zentraler Bedeutung ist hierbei das in dieser Studie neu eingeführte Konzept der ontologischen Vektorialität, das ich als das kombinatorische Zusammenspiel von Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit in der extratextuellen kulturellen oder narrativen Konfiguration einer konkreten individuellen Bewegung definiere. Auf der sinnlich wahrnehmbaren extratextuellen kulturellen Ebene gestaltet sich ontologische Vektorialität als ein Zusammenfallen dieser drei Dimensionen in der Konfiguration der betreffenden Bewegung, d. h. die Komplexität des diese Bewegung erst ermöglichenden multifaktoriellen Prozesses entzieht sich der unmittelbaren Anschauung: Da wir lediglich eine sich durch Raum und Zeit bewegende Person wahrnehmen, nicht jedoch die komplexe Vielfalt an interagierenden Faktoren, die es dieser Person ermöglichen und sie dazu motivieren, sich zu bewegen, ist ein heuristisches Modell – wie die hier vorgeschlagene Trialektik der Bewegung – vonnöten, um das komplexe und diffizile kombinatorische Zusammenspiel der Bewegung ermöglichenden Faktoren – allen voran Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit – zu entwirren und damit der kulturwissenschaftlichen Analyse zugänglich zu machen.

In Kapitel 2.1 wurde zunächst die Rolle von Räumlichkeit im Zustandekommen von Bewegung näher beleuchtet. Dabei wurde – Hallet und Neumann (vgl. 2009a: 20-21) folgend – davon ausgegangen, dass Raum und Bewegung einander wechselseitig konstituieren. Genauer gesagt spielt Raum selbst für Bewegung eine zweischneidige Rolle, und zwar insofern als die durch räumliche Gegebenheiten bedingte Friktion Bewegung zugleich ermöglicht und behindert (vgl. Cresswell 2014: 113). So stellt der Raum auf der einen Seite die physikalischen Rahmenbedingungen für menschliche Bewegung, auf der anderen Seite sind diese jedoch gleichzeitig eine wichtige Quelle dessen, was ich als externe Friktion bezeichne, also der teilweisen oder vollständigen Obstruktion von Bewegung durch alle Arten von Hindernissen wie Gebirgsketten, Schluchten, Flüsse, Seen oder Meere. Im Allgemeinen ist das

Verhältnis von Raum und Bewegung durch Reziprozität gekennzeichnet, und zwar dergestalt, dass einerseits Räume Bewegungen durch sie präfigurieren und formen, während andererseits Bewegungen durch den Raum diesen, vom Erlebnisstandpunkt des Individuums aus gesehen, erst hervorbringen und verändern (vgl. Hallet und Neumann 2009a: 20-21). In Analogie zu Becks Unterscheidung zwischen „subjektiver Raumkonstitution und räumlicher Subjektkonstitution“ (Beck 2014: 40) konzeptualisiere ich in dieser Studie das Wechselverhältnis von Raum und Bewegung daher als dialektisches Zusammenspiel zwischen räumlicher Bewegungskonstitution und bewegungsgebundener Raumkonstitution. Diese Konzeptualisierung hat den Vorteil, dass sie mit einer der fundamentalen Forderungen der postmodernen Kulturgeographie bzw. des Spatial Turn – der nach einem relationalen Verständnis von Raum – kompatibel ist, da sie die zentrale Rolle von menschlicher Bewegung als Konnektor zwischen verschiedenen Orten, die zusammengenommen den Raum bilden, explizit in den Vordergrund rückt (vgl. Dünne 2015: 44, 49). Wie Hallet und Neumann (vgl. 2009a: 14) zu Recht hervorheben, kommt damit „der Bewegung im Raum eine konstitutive Funktion für die soziale Produktion von Raum zu [...]: Erst durch die Bewegung werden verschiedene, auch imaginierte Räume zueinander in bedeutungsstiftende Relationen gesetzt, also Unterschiede, Ähnlichkeiten und Ungleichzeitigkeiten zwischen ihnen nachvollziehbar gemacht“ (Hallet und Neumann 2009a: 14). Mit anderen Worten: Es sind menschliche Handlungsträger, die durch ihre Bewegungen im Raum diese semiotischen Beziehungen zwischen heterogenen Kulturräumen, die zusammengenommen die räumliche Dimension menschlicher Existenz ausmachen, erzeugen.

Des Weiteren wurde in Kapitel 2.1 die grundlegende Einsicht in die Wechselbeziehung von Raum und menschlicher Agency kombiniert mit einem tentativen Transfer von Ricoeurs Modell der „dreifache[n] Mimesis“ (Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52; vgl. ebd. 52-87) von der Zeit auf den Raum. An Hallet und Neumann (vgl. 2009a: 22-23) anknüpfend wurde zunächst festgestellt, dass die Vorstellung eines Lesers von den in einem Roman dargestellten Räumen unweigerlich von seinem extratextuellen kulturellen Wissen über Räume und räumliche Strukturen präfiguriert ist (vgl. Ricoeur 1984: 54-64). Die narrative Konfiguration z.B. eines Zimmers oder Hauses im literarischen Text wird dann im Kopf des Lesers dergestalt verwirklicht, dass seine Vorstellung davon sich aus dem Zusammenwirken seines Vorwissens und den vom Text gegebenen Informationen speist (vgl. Ricoeur 1984: 64-70). Diese Vorstellung kann dann Auswirkungen auf die reale räumliche Umgebung des Lesers zeitigen, so z.B. wenn er sich entschließt, sein Haus wie ein Märchenschloss, von dem

er gerade gelesen hat, umzugestalten. Letzterer Aspekt wird von Ricoeur als Refiguration der realen Umwelt des Rezipienten durch den Akt des Lesens bezeichnet (vgl. Ricoeur 1984: 70-71). In der Refiguration scheint auch die Agency des Lesers am deutlichsten auf.

Schließlich hat Kapitel 2.1 auch Sojas Konzept der „real-and-imagined places“ (Soja 1996) tentativ auf menschliche Bewegung übertragen. Entscheidend war hierbei die Einsicht, dass reale und imaginierte Bewegungen nicht nur wechselseitig einander auslösen können, sondern, dass sie in *real-and-imagined movements* immer schon untrennbar ineinander verflochten sind, weil die Durchführung einer realen räumlichen Bewegung immer die kognitive Präfiguration derselben durch die betreffende Person erfordert (vgl. Ingold 2011b: 152). Schließlich hat Kapitel 2.1 aus der Perspektive des erlebenden Individuums eine Typologie verschiedener Formen von Friktion entworfen, die in der Zusammenfassung von Kapitel 2.4 näher erläutert wird.

Kapitel 2.2 widmete sich der Rolle von Agency – allgemein definiert als die Fähigkeit, selbständig Entscheidungen zu treffen und diese umzusetzen (vgl. Beck 2014: 33) – für menschliches Handeln im Allgemeinen und für menschliche Bewegung im Besonderen. Zunächst einmal wurde festgestellt, dass Agency eine entscheidende Rolle für intentionale menschliche Bewegung zukommt, da sie gewissermaßen als Auslöser für die Durchführung solcher Bewegungen fungiert. Im Folgenden wurden drei zentrale Aspekte näher beleuchtet: erstens die Ressourcen, aus denen sich Agency im Kontext von Bewegung maßgeblich speist; zweitens die Grenzen der Anwendbarkeit dieses Konzeptes auf menschliche Bewegung sowie drittens mögliche Anwendungen der Kategorie Agency auf literarische Darstellungen von Bewegung.

Was den ersten Aspekt betrifft, so wurden vier zentrale Ressourcen menschlicher Agency expliziert: die menschliche Subjektivität, die Körperlichkeit des Menschen als konkrete Entität im Raum, menschliche Motivationalität und Fluderniks Kategorie der „experientiality“ (Fludernik 1996: 12; vgl. ebd. 12-52), die hier jedoch nicht im allgemeinen Sinne von Erlebnishaftigkeit verwendet wird, sondern das konkrete Raum- und Zeiterleben des Reisenden meint. Bezüglich der beiden ersten Ressourcen wurde im Wesentlichen auf zentrale Erkenntnisse von Becks innovativer Studie *Raum und Subjektivität in Londonromanen der Gegenwart* (2014) zurückgegriffen, so vor allem die Einsicht in den janusköpfigen Charakter menschlicher Agency als das Resultat der „Dialektik moderner Subjektivität zwischen ‚Unterwerfung‘ und ‚Unterworfenheit‘ unter gesellschaftliche Strukturen“ (Beck 2014: 39), also ihre

Prägung durch das dynamische (und oft konfliktäre) Wechselspiel von willentlicher aktiver Handlung von seiten des Individuums und dessen passiver, unfreiwilliger Konditionierung durch supraindividuelle gesellschaftliche Werte, Normen, Institutionen und Strukturen. Im Kontext menschlicher Bewegung bezeichnet Unterwerfung die aktive Transformation der eigenen räumlichen Umgebung durch Bewegung, wohingegen Unterworfenheit den Blick auf Restriktionen individueller Mobilität durch räumlich konkretisierte sozioökonomische, kulturelle und religiöse Strukturen lenkt. Anders gesagt, konkrete Ausprägungen von Räumlichkeit und Zeitlichkeit (letztere in ihrer Manifestation als historischer Kontext) beeinflussen die dem Individuum zur Verfügung stehende Agency direkt. Was die Kategorie der körperlichen Einbettung des Menschen in seine raumzeitliche Umgebung anbelangt, so gilt Becks Erkenntnis, dass der menschliche Körper den unentrinnbaren und irreduziblen Ausgangspunkt jeglicher menschlicher Erfahrung der eigenen physischen und sozialen Umwelt darstellt (vgl. Beck 2014: 41-43), im Kontext menschlicher Bewegung durch Raum und Zeit natürlich umso mehr.

Hinsichtlich der Kategorie Motivationalität greift meine Studie auf die alltagsweltliche psychologische Unterscheidung zwischen extrinsischer und intrinsischer Motivation zurück, um verschiedene Konstellationen von externen und internen Faktoren beim Zustandekommen von Entscheidungen für oder gegen beispielsweise eine transnationale Migration zu beschreiben. Auf die physikalische Definition des Moments (*momentum*) als Bewegungskraft aufbauend, habe ich diese Kategorie als den Grad intrinsischer Motivation eines Individuums für die Durchführung einer bestimmten (Reise- oder Migrations)Bewegung rekonzeptualisiert. Schließlich wurde Fluderniks Konzept der *experientiality*, das diese vor allem über Parameter aus der kognitiven Narratologie definiert als „the quasi-mimetic evocation of ‘real-life experience‘“ (Fludernik 1996: 12; vgl. ebd. 12-52), durch einen stärkeren Fokus auf die affektiv-emotionale Komponente lebensweltlicher Erfahrung an die Erfordernisse im Kontext menschlicher Bewegung und ihrer literarischen Darstellung angepasst.

Schließlich wurde die Problematik der Kategorie Agency in historischen und gegenwärtigen Kontexten von erzwungener Bewegung aufgezeigt sowie am Beispiel von Bachtins „Chronotopos“ (Bachtin 1981a [1973]: 84; vgl. ebd. 84-258) ihre Anwendbarkeit auf literarische Darstellungen von menschlicher Bewegung erprobt, mit dem Ergebnis, dass die Erweiterung dieses Konzeptes um den Parameter Agency dringend geboten ist, um es ihm zu ermöglichen, die angestrebte Trialektik der Bewegung in ihrer vollen Komplexität widerzuspiegeln. Um die verschiedenen

graduellen Abstufungen der Wirksamkeit von Agency in der kulturellen Wirklichkeit sowie in der narrativen Konfiguration menschlicher Bewegung adäquat erfassen zu können, wurde ferner ein Kontinuum von Agency vorgeschlagen, das sich zwischen den (idealtypischen) Polen totaler Passivität bzw. Fremdbestimmtheit und totaler Selbstbestimmtheit erstreckt.

Die Untersuchung der Rolle von Zeitlichkeit im Kontext menschlicher Bewegung in Kapitel 2.3 fußte auf der Annahme, dass hier zwei ineinander verwobene, aber dennoch nicht identische Aspekte unterschieden werden müssen: der historische Kontext, in dem eine (Reise- oder Migrations)Bewegung stattfindet, im Gegensatz zum individuellen Zeiterleben des Reisenden oder Migranten während der Bewegung. Beide Faktoren können sich gleichermaßen positiv oder negativ auf die Agency des Reisenden auswirken, umgekehrt aber auch von ihr beeinflusst werden. Zur Erfassung der Wechselbeziehung zwischen historischem Kontext, in den die narrative Inszenierung von Bewegungen unweigerlich eingebunden ist, den sie aber auch mit transformieren kann, wurde wiederum auf Ricoeurs Modell der „dreifache[n] Mimesis“ (vgl. Ricoeur 1984: 52-87) zurückgegriffen (vgl. Nünning 2008a: 14). Hierbei wurde die Eignung von Ricoeurs Modell nicht nur für die Erfassung der ontologischen Vektorialität einzelner Bewegungen bzw. ihrer literarischen Inszenierung, sondern gerade auch für die Prägung von „real-und-imaginierten“ (Soja 1996: 11) Kulturräumen durch eine breite Vielfalt solcher ontologischer Vektorialitäten in den Vordergrund gestellt. Kurz gesagt ist die gegenwärtige Konfiguration eines bestimmten Kulturraumes stets durch die historische Dimension vergangener „real-und-imaginierten“ (Soja 1996: 11) Bewegungen durch denselben präfiguriert, während gleichzeitig seine gegenwärtige Konfiguration menschlichen Handlungsträgern als Anlass dienen kann, ihn entweder als Vorbild für andere Kulturräume zu nehmen oder ihn nach dem Vorbild eines anderen Raumes umzugestalten, d. h. zu refigurieren (vgl. Ricoeur 1984: 52-87; Ette 2005: 23).

Bezüglich des individuellen Zeiterlebens eines Menschen oder einer literarischen Figur wurde anhand eines Beispiels – des Phänomens der „time-space compression“ (Harvey 1990 [1989]: vii; 265) im Zusammenhang mit Reisen in Passagierflugzeugen im gegenwärtigen Kontext – gezeigt, dass sich *mind-time* (eben im Sinne individueller psychischer Zeiterfahrung) auch im Falle von Reiseerlebnissen bzw. –erfahrungen nie auf die objektiv messbare *clock-time* reduzieren lässt, da erstere durch ein komplexes Wechselspiel von teils bruchstückhaften, unvermittelt aufflammenden Erinnerungen und hoffnungsfrohen oder bangen Erwartungen an die

Zukunft bzw. ebenso subjektiv gefärbte Antizipationen derselben, die gleichberechtigt neben die sinnliche Wahrnehmung der aktuellen Umgebung treten, geprägt wird (vgl. Middeke 2002a: 3-4, 10). Daher ist es unumgänglich, die komplexen Interaktionen von *mind-time* und *clock-time* im Rahmen einer Untersuchung von Zeitlichkeit als Dimension menschlicher Bewegung genau zu erfassen.

In Kapitel 2.4 wurden schließlich die in den drei vorangehenden Kapiteln gewonnenen Erkenntnisse zu einer Trialektik der Bewegung synthetisiert, und zwar dergestalt, dass das komplexe trialektische Zusammenspiel der drei Dimensionen Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit – analog zu Sojas „trialectics of being“ (Soja 1996: 71; vgl. ebd. 70-73) – in drei Dialektiken operationalisiert wurde: erstens die von Raum und Agency (*spatiality-agency dialectic*), zweitens die von Raum und Zeit (*spatiality-temporality dialectic*) und drittens die von Agency und Zeit (*agency-temporality dialectic*).

Was die erste Dialektik anbelangt, so wurde in dieser Arbeit von der These ausgegangen, dass auf der einen Seite die räumliche Umgebung, in der ein Individuum lebt und handelt, dessen Agency entscheidend prägt, und sei es auch nur als Ursache von physikalischer Friktion. Der Einsicht in die zentrale Rolle von Friktion – definiert als jede Art von Widerstand gegen die Ausführung einer bestimmten Bewegung – entsprechend habe ich im Theoriekapitel eine Typologie verschiedener Formen von Friktion entwickelt, die bewusst die Erlebnis- und Erfahrungsperspektive der individuellen Person bzw. literarischen Figur zum Ausgangspunkt nimmt. Zunächst einmal wurde demgemäß zwischen externer (d. h. physischer) und interner (d. h. psychischer) Friktion differenziert. Externe Friktion kann dann weiter unterteilt werden in natürliche (z.B. Gebirgskette) und von Menschen gemachte Typen von Friktion (z.B. bewachte Staatsgrenze). Letztere können durch die Unterscheidung von konkreter Friktion (Grenzpolizei, Wachpersonal in einem Hochsicherheitsareal) und eher abstrakten gesetzlichen, gesellschaftlichen, kulturellen oder religiösen Formen von Friktion weiter spezifiziert werden. Hierbei ist jedoch zu beachten, dass abstrakte Friktion meist durch die konkrete Präsenz z.B. von Wächtern rund um ein religiöses Heiligtum geltend gemacht bzw. durchgesetzt wird.

Auf der anderen Seite verfügen Menschen über die Möglichkeit, durch Bündelung ihrer Agency in kollektiven Unternehmungen ihre räumliche Umgebung zu bestimmten Zwecken entscheidend zu verändern, z.B. durch die Errichtung spektakulärer Bauten oder die infrastrukturelle Erschließung unzugänglicher Gebiete

mittels einer transkontinentalen Eisenbahnlinie. Deshalb wurde in dieser Studie das Wechselspiel von Raum und Agency durch die Unterscheidung der komplementären Prozesse von raumgebundener Bewegungskonstitution (spatial formation of movement) und bewegungsgebundener Raumkonstitution (movement-bound formation of space) zu erfassen gesucht.

Was die Dialektik von Raum und Zeit betrifft, so hat diese Dissertation die klassische Konzeptualisierung dieser Interdependenz – Bachtins Konzept des „Chronotopos“ (1981a [1973]: 84; vgl. ebd. 84-258) durch die Integration der Dimension Agency dynamisiert und damit anschlussfähig für die Untersuchung von Bewegung gemacht. Diese Rekonzeptualisierung hin zu agentiven Raum-Zeit-Konfigurationen (agentive space-time configurations) erwies sich als unumgänglicher Schritt, um Bachtins Konzept in die Lage zu versetzen, das komplexe Zusammenspiel der drei konstitutiven Dimensionen im Zustandekommen von extratextuellen kulturellen und narrativen Konfigurationen von Bewegung angemessen widerzuspiegeln.

Im Hinblick auf die Dialektik von Agency und Zeit ist zunächst zu beachten, dass die zeitliche Dimension im Kontext von Bewegung in zwei Komponenten operationalisiert wurde – historischer Kontext einer Bewegung im Gegensatz zum individuellen Zeiterleben einer realen Person oder einer literarischen Figur während der betreffenden (Reise)Bewegung. Beide Komponenten interagieren in komplexer Weise mit der Agency, die diesem Individuum zur Verfügung steht. So können bestimmte historische Kontexte die individuelle Agency der sich bewegenden Person entweder einschränken oder deren Bewegungsfreiheit bzw. Mobilität bewusst fördern, während umgekehrt die Durchsetzung individueller oder kollektiver Agency in Gestalt bahnbrechender Entdeckungsreisen wiederum den Lauf der Geschichte in völlig neue Bahnen lenken kann. Analog dazu haben bestimmte, die Agency eines Menschen entscheidend mitprägende Faktoren – wie z.B. psychische Erkrankungen oder körperliche Beeinträchtigungen auf der einen, im Gegensatz zu einer großen individuellen Durchsetzungskraft auf der anderen Seite – Auswirkungen auf das individuelle Zeiterleben der betroffenen Person. Umgekehrt kann ein bestimmtes Zeiterleben – beispielsweise während einer Erholungsreise – die Agency eines Menschen positiv beeinflussen, indem es ihm oder ihr erlaubt, sowohl körperlich als auch mental neue Kraft zu schöpfen.

Des Weiteren wurden die komplexen Interaktionen zwischen dem Phänomen Bewegung und jeder seiner drei konstitutiven Dimensionen in Analogie zu den gerade

erläuterten drei Dialektiken, die das Fundament meiner Trialektik der Bewegung bilden, beschrieben. So kann z.B. eine bestimmte individuelle Konfiguration von Agency die Durchführung einer bestimmten Reise erst ermöglichen (z.B. die finanziellen Ressourcen, die es einem wohlhabenden Menschen erlauben, eine Luxus-Weltreise zu machen) oder verhindern (z.B. eine Auswanderung aus der DDR in Zeiten des Kalten Krieges). Umgekehrt kann die erfolgreiche Durchführung einer transnationalen Migration die Agency des Migranten entscheidend erweitern, indem sie ihm beispielsweise neue berufliche Perspektiven eröffnet. Aufgrund ihrer strukturellen Analogie ist zu beachten, dass die theoretisch trennbaren Bestandteile meiner Trialektik der Bewegung – zum einen das trialektische Zusammenspiel von Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit, das Bewegung erst möglich macht, und zum anderen die komplexen Interaktionen zwischen dem resultierenden Phänomen Bewegung und seinen drei konstitutiven Dimensionen – in der Praxis einander überlappen und in vielfältiger Weise miteinander interagieren.

An Hallet und Neumann (vgl. 2009a: 22-23) anknüpfend, hat das Theoriekapitel dieser Dissertation darüber hinaus zu einer Fruchtbarmachung von Ricoeurs „dreifacher Mimesis“ (Ricoeur 1984 [1983]: 52; vgl. ebd. 52-87) für die Wechselbeziehung von menschlichem Raumerleben in der Realität und der narrativen Repräsentation von Raum beigetragen, indem es Ricoeurs dreistufigen Prozess tentativ von der Zeit auf den Raum übertragen hat. Auf Nünning (vgl. 2008a: 14) aufbauend, habe ich Ricoeurs Modell überdies tentativ auf das kombinatorische Zusammenspiel der drei Dimensionen Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit im Zustandekommen von Bewegung transferiert, und zwar mit Hilfe meines Konzeptes der ontologischen Vektorialität. Im Wesentlichen habe ich dabei argumentiert, dass die ontologischen Vektorialitäten verschiedener sich kreuzender, gleichzeitig realer und imaginerter (vgl. Soja 1996: 11) Bewegungen für die Dynamizität Bachtinscher Chronotopoi (und mithin auch für die dialektische Wechselbeziehung von Räumlichkeit und Geschichte) verantwortlich zeichnen, und zwar dergestalt, dass z.B. in literarischen Texten die räumlichen Bewegungen von Figuren im Zusammenwirken mit ihrer *mental mobility* die agentiven Raum-Zeit-Konfigurationen, in denen sie handeln, erst hervorbringen. Durch die Einbettung einer Erweiterung von Bachtins Chronotopoi zu solchen agentiven Raum-Zeit-Konfigurationen in Ricoeurs prozessuales Modell wurde es meinem heuristischen Modell darüber hinaus möglich, der Tatsache Rechnung zu tragen, dass die wechselseitige, dreistufige Beziehung zwischen narrativer Inszenierung und extratextueller kultureller Realität sich auf den gesamten

Komplex agentiver Zeiträume, die für Bewegung und und ihre narrative Repräsentation relevant sind, erstreckt.

Alles in allem hat das Theoriekapitel dieser Dissertation ein heuristisches kulturwissenschaftliches Modell entwickelt, das das Zustandekommen von menschlicher Bewegung als Ergebnis des komplexen Zusammenwirkens von Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit in einer Trialektik der Bewegung systematisch erfasst. Das trialektische Zusammenspiel dieser drei Dimensionen in extratextuellen kulturellen und narrativen Konfigurationen von Bewegung habe ich als ontologische Vektorialität definiert. Abschließend ist es jedoch wichtig zu betonen, dass nach Soja (vgl. Soja 1996: 70-82, insbesondere 82) ein Modell nur dann als Trialektik zählt, wenn es gegenüber Modifikationen und Revisionen kategorisch offen bleibt. Entsprechend sei zu guter Letzt darauf hingewiesen, dass es durchaus weitere relevante Faktoren für das Zustandekommen von Bewegung – wie z.B. die Kontingenz zufälliger Begegnungen und anderer Ereignisse während einer Reise – gibt, die im ausgearbeiteten Modell nicht berücksichtigt wurden.

10.3 Kontextualisierungskapitel

Das dritte Kapitel meiner Dissertation befasste sich mit der Kontextualisierung meines Forschungsprojektes in zweierlei Hinsicht: Zum einen wurde die in Kapitel 2 entwickelte Trialektik der Bewegung im Hinblick auf Themenkomplexe, die direkt mit Bewegung zusammenhängen, aber dennoch nicht identisch mit ihr sind, wie z.B. inter- und transkulturelle Kontaktsituationen, kontextualisiert, zum anderen wurde eine kurze Einführung in den historischen, soziokulturellen und literarischen Kontext gegenwärtiger *Asian British novels* gegeben.

In Kapitel 3.1 wurde zunächst am Beispiel der Transkulturalität gezeigt, wie interkulturelle Kontaktsituationen beschreibende Konzepte aus der Kulturtheorie durch einen prononcierten Fokus auf die Trialektik der Bewegung rekonzeptualisiert bzw. konkretisiert werden können. Hierfür habe ich zunächst das für die Entstehung von Transkulturalität zentrale Konzept der Konnektivität definiert als das Resultat des Funktionierens der Trialektik der Bewegung über kulturelle Grenzen hinweg. Folglich kommen Konnektivität und mithin auch Transkulturalität letztendlich durch bestimmte

Konstellationen der drei für Bewegung konstitutiven Parameter – Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit – zustande. Darüber hinaus hängt die Intensität von Konnektivität und Transkulturalität entscheidend von der Fähigkeit der beteiligten Akteure, ihre Anliegen in ein für alle involvierten Gruppen akzeptables Idiom zu übersetzen, ab, so z.B. im Falle interkultureller Übersetzung zwischen Migranten und indigener Bevölkerung des Ziellandes im Kontext von transnationaler Migration (vgl. Bachmann-Medick 2012: 34). Ferner hängt die Entstehung von Transkulturalität unmittelbar mit der Herausbildung transkultureller dritter Räume zusammen, die in ihrer utopischen Ausprägung vor allem durch folgende Merkmale gekennzeichnet sind: erstens sind sie für gewöhnlich das Produkt transnationaler Bewegungen, meist von Migrationen (vgl. Helff 2009: 83); zweitens weisen sie eine Verschmelzung von Elementen aus zwei unterschiedlichen Kulturen, aus der ein drittes, neues und daher genuin transkulturelles Element entsteht, auf (vgl. Ortiz 2003 [1940]: 102-103); drittens erlauben sie es den betroffenen Migranten, ihre individuelle Identität neu zu definieren (vgl. Helff 2009: 83), und viertens geht ihre Entstehung mit einer beträchtlichen Ausweitung der individuellen oder kollektiven ökonomischen, politischen und soziokulturellen Agency dieser Migranten einher. Mit dieser Rekonzeptualisierung habe ich das Konzept der transkulturellen dritten Räume in konkrete sozioökonomische Realitäten eingebettet, anstatt es – wie Homi Bhabha dies tut – von vornherein auf den Geltungsbereich einer Metapher für Hybridität zu beschränken (vgl. Bhabha 1994b: 37, 53-56).

Alles in allem läuft meine Rekonzeptualisierung von Transkulturalität mittels des eben erläuterten Kriterienkatalogs auf die Erkenntnis hinaus, dass dieses Konzept zur Erfassung verschiedener kombinatorischer Konfigurationen von Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit im Spannungsfeld des oft konfliktreichen Zusammenlebens verschiedener Kulturen angewandt werden kann. Um die volle Bandbreite dieser Konfigurationen erfassen zu können, gehe ich daher von einem breiten Spektrum heterogener Ausprägungen von Transkulturalität aus, das sich zwischen den Polen der utopischen und der dystopischen Variante von Transkulturalität erstreckt. Während die utopische Variante für die allmähliche Auflösung kultureller Grenzen durch die zunehmende Intensität der Verflechtung heterogener Kulturen eintritt bzw. diese bereits konstatiert (vgl. z.B. Sommer 2001; Welsch 2009: 3-36), konzentrieren sich dystopische Konzeptualisierungen von Transkulturalität auf die konflikt- und spannungsreiche, meist von eklatanten Machtasymmetrien im Kontext von Kolonialismus und Postkolonialismus geprägte Begegnung bzw. Auseinandersetzung zwischen höchst unterschiedlichen Kulturen (vgl. Pratt 1992; Ortiz 2003 [1940]). Helff (vgl. 2009) und Ette (vgl. 2005; 2012) folgend, soll das von mir vorgeschlagene

Spektrum hochgradig heterogener Konfigurationen von Transkulturalität eine ausgewogene Konzeptualisierung derselben darstellen, die das spannungsreiche Wechselspiel zwischen diesen beiden Extremen (Utopie versus Dystopie) erfasst, anstatt eines der beiden als die einzig wahre Transkulturalität zu postulieren. Damit wird auch dem Vorwurf des Elitismus, der oft im Zusammenhang mit Transkulturalität erhoben wird, der Wind aus den Segeln genommen. Zu guter Letzt ist zu betonen, dass utopische Transkulturalität meist mit einem hohen Grad an individueller Agency einhergeht, wohingegen im Fall der dystopischen Variante die Handlungsfreiheit der betroffenen Individuen oft stark eingeschränkt ist.

Kapitel 3.2 verfolgte eine doppelte Zielsetzung: zum einen eine konzise Einführung in den historischen und soziokulturellen Kontext gegenwärtiger *Asian British novels*, und zum anderen die Aufstellung von vier Hypothesen zur Frage, inwiefern diese als *transcultural mode of writing* konzeptualisiert werden können. Was das erste Ziel betrifft, so wurden vier kontextuelle Aspekte von *contemporary Asian British fiction* thematisiert: Im Anschluss an einführende Bemerkungen zur Geschichte derselben habe ich zunächst – darin Campbell-Hall (vgl. 2007: 5) folgend – meine Präferenz für den Begriff *Asian British fiction* (im Gegensatz zu *British Asian fiction*) begründet. Wie Campbell-Hall (vgl. 2007: 5) zu recht hervorhebt, zeichnet sich ersterer z.B. durch ein wesentlich geringeres Maß an *colonial baggage* aus, da er keine direkten Assoziationen mit geographischen Termini aus der Epoche des Imperialismus (wie z.B. British India) hervorruft. In einem nächsten Schritt wurde dann die fundamentale Heterogenität der unter der Bezeichnung *Asian British* subsumierten Gegenwartsauf Autoren in den Vordergrund gerückt, und zwar im Verbund mit einem Plädoyer für eine inklusive, also möglichst weit gefasste Konzeptualisierung dieses Begriffs. Schließlich wurde auf die Gefahren hingewiesen, die eine zu enge Verknüpfung von *Asian British writing* mit bestimmten thematischen Schwerpunkten und formalen Darstellungsverfahren mit sich bringt.

Was das zweite Ziel von Kapitel 3.2 angeht, so wurden die folgenden vier Thesen zur Möglichkeit, gegenwärtige *Asian British novels* als *transcultural mode of writing* zu fassen, aufgestellt: Erstens ist eine solche Konzeptualisierung berechtigt, weil diese Romane ein weites Spektrum transnationaler Migrationsbewegungen narrativ in vielfältiger Weise inszenieren (vgl. Helff 2009: 83). Zweitens inszenieren gegenwärtige *Asian British novels* die Neuaushandlung, (Neu)Aneignung und Resemantisierung von *contested spaces* auf globaler, nationaler, regionaler und lokaler Ebene – oft am Beispiel von London – ebenfalls in vielfältiger Weise (vgl. Helff 2009:

83). Drittens stellen diese Romane sowohl traditionell essentialistisch-monolithische nationale, kulturelle, ethnische und religiöse Identitäten als auch deren poststrukturalistisches Gegenstück, also ständig im Fluss befindliche „transitional identities“ (Chattopadhyay and Shrivastava 2012: 113; cf. *ibid.* 113-125; Helff 2009: 83 and Upstone 2010: 7-9) infrage. Anstatt sich entweder dem einen oder dem anderen Extrem zu verschreiben, eröffnen sie auf narrativer Ebene ein weites Panorama möglicher „Identitätskonfigurationen“ (Welsch 2009: 9), das sich zwischen diesen beiden Polen erstreckt. Viertens stellen sie den Anspruch der westlichen Moderne, als paradigmatisches *role model* für die nicht-westliche Welt zu gelten, infrage, indem sie sowohl die Verflechtung und Koexistenz der westlichen Moderne mit alternativen, nicht-westlichen Konfigurationen von Moderne im Sinne von “entangled [...] modernities” (Randeria 2002; cf. *ibid.* 284-311, Welz 2009: 37-57 and West-Pavlov 2013: 158-174) narrativ inszenieren als auch die Verstrickung der westlichen Moderne in die Geschichte des Kolonialismus und Imperialismus und deren Auswirkungen auf die postkoloniale Gegenwart aufzeigen. Abschließend wurde darauf hingewiesen, dass gegenwärtige *Asian British novels* aufgrund all dieser Merkmale ein fruchtbares Forschungsfeld für die Erprobung der in Kapitel 2 entwickelten Trialektik der Bewegung darstellen, da alle drei Dimensionen derselben in der narrativen Inszenierung transnationaler Migrationsbewegungen und ihrer Folgen (wie z.B. Transkulturalität) in diesen Romanen eine wichtige Rolle spielen.

Kapitel 3.3 setzte sich mit Implikationen und Konsequenzen von räumlicher Bewegung in dreierlei Hinsicht auseinander. In Kapitel 3.3.1 wurde zunächst gezeigt, dass sich transnationale Migration – als einer der bedeutendsten, wenn nicht sogar der wichtigste Bewegungstyp im 20. und 21. Jahrhundert – ebenfalls produktiv über die Trialektik der Bewegung analysieren lässt, denn der Auslöser für die Entscheidung menschlicher Handlungsträger (Agency), ihre Heimat zu verlassen und in ein fremdes Land zu emigrieren (Raum), liegt meist in den konkreten Gegebenheiten eines bestimmten historischen Kontextes (Zeit). So entschlossen sich beispielsweise viele Bewohner des indischen Subkontinents als Folge von dessen Teilung in die Staaten Pakistan und Indien (1947) aufgrund der politischen und wirtschaftlichen Unsicherheit in ihrer Heimat und der von der britischen Regierung damals gebotenen Anreize, in den 1950er Jahren in das Vereinigte Königreich auszuwandern. Darüber hinaus wurde in Kapitel 3.3.1 eine Unterscheidung eingeführt zwischen „transkulturellen Identitätskonfigurationen“ (Welsch 2009: 9; vgl. *ebd.* 8-9 und Welsch 2000 [1999]: n. pag.), die zwar aus der Verschmelzung unterschiedlicher Kulturen entstanden sind, deren Träger sich jedoch häufig trotzdem mit dem Kulturraum, in dem sie gegenwärtig leben,

identifizieren (vgl. Welsch 2009: 8-9), und – Löschs Konzept der „Transdifferenz“ (2005: 24; vgl. ebd. 22-45, vor allem 24, 32, 34) aufgreifend – transdifferenziellen Identitätskonfigurationen, die aus postmodernem geographischem und intellektuellem Nomadismus resultieren und auf Bhabhas Vorstellung von Identität als *free-floating signifier* (vgl. Bhabha 1994c: 69-73) abzielen, weil sie eine stabile geographisch-lebensweltliche Verankerung des Individuums strikt ablehnen.

In Kapitel 3.3.2 wurde daraufhin die herausragende Bedeutung von Grenzziehungen und Grenzüberschreitungen sowie damit verflochtener Prozesse der kollektiven Identitätsbildung für den allgemeinen Themenkomplex der menschlichen Bewegung näher untersucht. Im Zuge dessen wurde insbesondere herausgestellt, dass sowohl die Ziehung von Grenzen als auch deren Überschreitung wiederum auf bestimmten, historisch-kontextuell spezifizierten Konstellationen von Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit und von deren Interaktionen beruhen.

In Kapitel 3.3.3 wurde zunächst ein problemorientierter Überblick gegeben über ausgewählte kulturtheoretische Konzepte, die als verräumlichte Resultate von transnationaler Migration entstehende Zwischenräume beschreiben, so vor allem Pratts Konzept der „contact zone“ (Pratt 1992: 1), Bhabhas „third spaces“ (Bhabha 1994b: 56), Sojas epistemologische Rekonzeptualisierung derselben als „Thirdspace“ (1996) sowie Appadurais Konzept der „global ethnoscapes“ (1996: 33). In einem zweiten Schritt habe ich dann meine in Kapitel 3.1 skizzierte Konzeptualisierung von transcultural third spaces genauer konturiert, indem ich Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede zu den eben genannten Konzepten erläuterte. Von Pratts *contact zone* unterscheidet sich meine Konzeptualisierung von transcultural third spaces dadurch, dass sie die prinzipielle Möglichkeit der Entstehung utopischer dritter Räume der Transkulturalität zulässt. Während meine Konzeptualisierung Bhabha und Soja insofern folgt, als sie ebenfalls dritte Räume als idealen Ausgangspunkt für das Aufbrechen dichotomer Denkstrukturen sowie für die Entstehung revolutionärer sozialer Bewegungen ansieht (vgl. z.B. Soja 1996: 60-62), geht sie über deren jeweilige Konzepte doch insoweit hinaus, als sie das Erreichen eines bestimmten Grades an sozioökonomischer Unabhängigkeit durch gemeinsame Selbstermächtigung von seiten z.B. diskriminierter Migrantengruppen als unabdingbare Voraussetzung für konkrete Verbesserungen ihrer Lebensbedingungen besonders hervorhebt. Mit Appadurais *global ethnoscapes* hat meine Konzeptualisierung von transcultural third spaces schließlich den Fokus auf global verstreute, aber eben auch global vernetzte diasporische Gemeinschaften gemein, wobei ich ein stärkeres Augenmerk lege auf die

Entstehung neuer, genuin transkultureller Elemente und Praktiken in solchen Kontexten, während Appadurai eher die globale Konnektivität zwischen Diaspora und Ursprungsland bzw. der diasporischen Gemeinschaften untereinander durch Identifikation mit präexistenten kulturellen Ritualen und Praktiken des Ursprungslandes betont.

Kapitel 3.4 meiner Dissertation setzte sich schließlich mit der Entstehung von Bewegungsmustern und kulturellen Topologien im Kontext der narrativen Inszenierung von transnationaler Migration in gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels* auseinander. Hierfür wurde zunächst ein einführender Überblick über die komplementären Untersuchungsperspektiven von kultureller Topographie (vgl. Böhme 2005a) und Topologie (vgl. Günzel 2007a) gegeben. Aufgrund seines primären Interesses an tiefenstrukturellen Konstanten zwischen auf den ersten Blick verschiedenen topographischen Oberflächenkonfigurationen (vgl. Günzel 2007a: 21) erwies sich insbesondere der topologische Ansatz als fruchtbar für mein Forschungsvorhaben. An Ette (vgl. 2005: 23; 2012: 29; siehe auch Hallet und Neumann 2009a: 20-24) anknüpfend wurde des Weiteren davon ausgegangen, dass bestimmte Bewegungsmuster bestimmte topologische Raumstrukturen erzeugen. Entsprechend wurden drei prototypische kulturelle Topologien und dazugehörige Bewegungsmuster skizziert: koloniale, postkoloniale und transkulturelle Topologien. Für koloniale Topologien sind insbesondere zwei von Ette eingeführte Bewegungsmuster typisch: der Kreis und der Stern (vgl. Ette 2003: 39-43, 45-47). Während der Kreis die Zirkularität nicht nur der klassischen Forschungsexpedition (vgl. Ette 2003: 39-43), sondern auch diejenige ökonomischer Austauschprozesse im Rahmen kolonialistischer Strukturen bezeichnet, verweist der Stern durch seine Betonung der sternförmigen Ausweitung von Wissen und Macht von einem politischen Zentrum aus auf die für den Kolonialismus typische Konzentration politischer und ökonomischer Macht im ‚Mutterland‘ (vgl. Ette 2003: 45-47). Somit tragen beide Bewegungsmuster direkt zur Entstehung kolonialer Topologien mit ihrer charakteristischen Dichotomisierung und Hierarchisierung von Zentrum und Peripherie bei (vgl. Neumann 2009: 125-128; Gymnich 1996: 149-166; Upstone 2009: 1-24).

Postkoloniale Topologien zeichnen sich hingegen dadurch aus, dass die vormals kolonisierten Länder inzwischen ihre politische Unabhängigkeit vom ehemaligen Mutterland erkämpft haben. Ein genauerer Blick auf tatsächliche ökonomische Machtkonstellationen verrät jedoch oftmals, dass sich am wirtschaftlichen Abhängigkeitsverhältnis zwischen ehemaliger Kolonialmacht und vormaliger Kolonie

wenig bis gar nichts geändert hat. So stellt der Fortbestand kolonialistischer Ausbeutungsstrukturen über die Phase der formalen Dekolonisierung hinaus ein zentrales Merkmal postkolonialer Topologien dar (vgl. Upstone 2009: 1-24). Entsprechend bildet die postkoloniale Migration von der Peripherie ins ehemalige Zentrum ein charakteristisches Bewegungsmuster solcher Topologien (vgl. Neumann 2009: 128).

Im Gegensatz zu kolonialen und postkolonialen Topologien zeichnen sich transkulturelle Topologien vor allem durch ihre Entstehung als Ergebnis hochkomplexer und ineinander verflochtener Netzwerke von Pendelbewegungen (vgl. Ette 2003: 43) aus. Überdies sind sie gekennzeichnet durch die wachsende Relevanz von Transmigration, durch Multipolarität sowie durch eine teilweise rhizomatische (vgl. Deleuze und Guattari 1977 [1976]) topologische Makrostruktur, die sich gerade aus den zuerst genannten Pendelbewegungen zwischen verschiedenen geographischen Hubs (Drehkreuzen) ergibt. Schließlich hängt die Entstehung transkultureller Topologien auch von der Möglichkeit der Herausbildung (potentiell utopischer) transkultureller dritter Räume (vgl. Neumann 2009: 129-135) sowie von der Präsenz transkultureller bzw. transdifferentieller Identitätskonfigurationen ab.

Im Anschluss daran wurde mittels einer Analyse von Bewegungsmustern und daraus entstehenden Topologien in Salman Rushdies Roman *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000 [1999]) gezeigt, dass die einzelnen Ausprägungen der zuvor entworfenen Typologie kultureller Topologien sich in der konkreten Praxis narrativer Inszenierung durchaus überschneiden können bzw. die narrativ inszenierten Topologien im Verlauf des Textes auch grundlegende Transformationen erfahren können.

10.4 Methodenkapitel

Das Methodenkapitel meiner Dissertation hat in drei Schritten ein sowohl kognitives als auch kontextorientiertes narratologisches Analyseinstrumentarium für die Untersuchung der narrativen Inszenierung menschlicher Bewegung durch den Raum in gegenwärtigen Asian British novels – kurz: eine kulturelle Narratologie der Bewegung – entwickelt. Kapitel 4.2 hat zu diesem Zweck in einem ersten Schritt Prolegomena für

eine solche kulturelle Narratologie der Bewegung skizziert, und zwar durch die Untersuchung des jeweiligen Beitrags, den eine narratologische Analyse jeder der drei in Kapitel 2 als konstitutiv für menschliche Bewegung explizierten Dimensionen – Agency (Kapitel 4.2.1), Räumlichkeit (Kap. 4.2.2) und Zeitlichkeit (Kap. 4.2.3) – zur Entwicklung einer kulturellen Narratologie der Bewegung leisten kann.

Was die erste dieser Dimensionen betrifft, so erwies sich eine Differenzierung von Agency auf der Ebene der erzählerischen Vermittlung von Agency auf der Ebene der fiktionalen Storyworld gemäß der textspezifischen Verteilung der textuellen Funktionen von Erzähl- und Fokalisierungsinstanz aus narratologischer Sicht als unbedingt angezeigt. Was Agency in der fiktionalen Storyworld anbelangt, so habe ich sie rekonzeptualisiert als das bewusste Absetzen oder *foregrounding* der Protagonisten vom Hintergrund der Storyworld im Hinblick auf die vier in Kapitel 2 explizierten Ressourcen lebensweltlicher Agency im Kontext menschlicher Bewegung – Subjektivität, Motivationalität, Körperlichkeit und *experientiality* – durch den narrativen Diskurs. Hinsichtlich der Dimension der Räumlichkeit habe ich in Kapitel 4.2.2 ihre zweiseitige Rolle näher beleuchtet – narrativ inszenierter Raum einerseits als primäre Quelle externer Friktion für die sich bewegenden Figuren und mithin als prägender Faktor ihrer physischen Mobilität (räumliche Bewegungskonstitution), und Raum andererseits als Produkt eben dieser Figurenbewegungen (bewegungsgebundene Raumkonstitution). Letztere Perspektive erwies sich vor allem deshalb als besonders fruchtbar für mein Erkenntnisinteresse, weil die individuelle *experientiality*, also die Erlebnisperspektive der Fokalisierungsinstanz auf ihre Bewegung durch den fiktionalen Raum aus Lesersicht den wichtigsten und oftmals einzigen Zugang zur raum-zeitlichen Konfiguration der jeweiligen Storyworld bildet. Bezüglich der dritten Dimension – Zeitlichkeit – wurde ihre janusköpfige Rolle als historischer Kontext und individuelles Zeiterleben der sich durch die Storyworld bewegenden Figur folgendermaßen narratologisch näher beleuchtet: Zunächst wurde der Zusammenhang zwischen dem historischen Kontext, in dem die Handlung eines Romans spielt, den darin verfügbaren Fortbewegungsmitteln und den vorzugsweise für die Inszenierung menschlicher Bewegung angewandten narrativen Strategien expliziert. Außerdem wurde unter Rückgriff auf Genettes klassisches Analyseinstrumentarium für die narratologische Untersuchung der Zeitdarstellung im Roman (vgl. Genette 1980 [1972]: 33-160) das individuelle Zeiterleben der jeweiligen Fokalisierungsinstanz während einer Reise in seinen wesentlichen, in gegenwärtigen Asian British novels dominanten Charakteristika beschrieben.

In einem zweiten Schritt hat Kapitel 4.3 dann unter Rückgriff auf die für Fluderniks Konzept der *experientiality* zentrale Kategorie des *embodiment* (vgl. Fludernik 1996: 12-13, 30) sowohl die affektive Semantisierung ihrer Bewegungen durch den fiktionalen Raum durch die jeweiligen Figuren bzw. Fokalisierungsinstanzen als einen Hauptindikator der narrativen *saliency*, also der Relevanz dieser Bewegungen für die Entwicklung des Plot, analysiert (vgl. Kap. 4.3.1), als auch das kognitive Rekonstruieren solcher Figurenbewegungen im Bewusstsein des Lesers in Abhängigkeit von den jeweils im Rahmen der Bewegungsinszenierung zum Einsatz kommenden narrativen Darstellungstechniken narratologisch untersucht (Kap. 4.3.2).

In Kapitel 4.4 wurden die vorangegangenen Überlegungen dann in einem dritten Schritt in die Ausarbeitung einer narratologischen Semantik für Bewegung – also des Kernstücks der angestrebten kulturellen Narratologie der Bewegung – integriert. Hierfür habe ich zunächst die in Kapitel 2 eingeführte Definition der ontologischen Vektorialität – also der Konzeptualisierung von menschlicher Bewegung als das Produkt des kombinatorischen Zusammenspiels der drei konstitutiven Dimensionen Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit in extratextuellen kulturellen und textuellen fiktionalen Konfigurationen – durch eine spezifisch narratologische Definition von Vektorialität ergänzt: Meiner Ansicht nach ergibt sich narratologische Vektorialität aus dem kombinatorischen Zusammenspiel der drei von Nünning als entscheidend für narrative Inszenierungen von Bewegung angesehenen Dimensionen literarischer Darstellung, d.h. der paradigmatischen Achse der Selektion, der syntagmatischen Achse der Kombination und der diskursiven Achse der Perspektivierung in textuellen Konfigurationen von Bewegung (vgl. Nünning 2008a: 19-26, insbesondere 21).

Kapitel 4.4.1 beschäftigte sich daraufhin mit der grundlegenden Frage der Implikationen des Konzepttransfers des mathematischen Vektorkonzeptes in die Narratologie, eine Frage, die von Ette (vgl. z.B. Ette 2005; 2012) ausgeblendet wird und daher systematischer Reflexion bedarf. Zunächst einmal habe ich grundsätzlich festgestellt, dass es die intrinsische Multidimensionalität des Vektors ist, die ihn für die Rolle als konzeptuelle Metapher für Bewegung in der Narratologie und darüber hinaus prädestiniert. Wie meine einander ergänzenden Definitionen von ontologischer und narratologischer Vektorialität zeigen, eignet sich das Vektorkonzept gerade deshalb zur Erfassung des komplexen kulturellen und textuellen Phänomens menschlicher Bewegung, weil es ein topologisches Konstrukt ist, mittels dessen das Zusammenfallen sowohl der drei ontologischen als auch der drei narratologischen Dimensionen von

Bewegung in der narrativen Inszenierung konkreter Bewegungen dargestellt werden kann.

Darüber hinaus habe ich vier weitere zentrale Merkmale des mathematischen Vektorkonzeptes – Direktionalität, Quantifizierbarkeit, Kombinierbarkeit und doppelte Referentialität (also seine Fähigkeit, sowohl statische Positionen im Raum als auch dynamische Bewegung durch denselben darzustellen; vgl. Hummel 1965: 14-18) – als geeignet für den konzeptuellen Transfer zur analytischen Beschreibung der narrativen Inszenierung von Bewegung in der Narratologie befunden. Darauf aufbauend habe ich einen narrativen Vektor definiert als ein kognitives Konstrukt, das die multidimensional konfigurierte Direktionalität der Bewegung eines Handlungsträgers durch die Storyworld darstellt. Anders formuliert handelt es sich beim narrativen Vektor um ein *mental model* der Route des jeweiligen Handlungsträgers bei dieser Bewegung, das sich im Kopf des Lesers auf der Grundlage der im Text gegebenen relevanten Informationen bildet.

Daran anschließend habe ich im Folgenden eine Typologie narrativer Vektoren entwickelt: Mein Konzept des *intended vector* bezeichnet, auf dem zentralen Merkmal menschlicher Agency – der idealerweise möglichst weitgehenden Entscheidungs- und Handlungsfreiheit des Individuums – aufbauend, den antizipatorischen Prozess der Entscheidungsfindung, Planung und Vorbereitung einer Reise. Das Konzept des *experienced vector* bezieht sich hingegen in erster Linie auf die retrospektive Schilderung einer Reise, die der betreffende Handlungsträger schon absolviert hat. Das Konzept des *imagined vector* bezeichnet sowohl rein imaginäre Traumreisen als auch das entweder antizipatorische oder retrospektive imaginative Durchleben zukünftiger oder vergangener Reisen im Bewusstsein des jeweiligen Handlungsträgers.

Darauf aufbauend hat Kapitel 4.4.2 in fünf Schritten ein narratologisches Beschreibungsvokabular für die Analyse der narrativen Inszenierung von real-und-imaginierten Bewegungen entwickelt: Zuerst habe ich das Verhältnis zwischen ontologischer und narratologischer Vektorialität im literarischen Text folgendermaßen gefasst: Das kombinatorische Zusammenspiel der drei Dimensionen narrativer Inszenierung (narratologische Vektorialität) erzeugt im Kopf des Lesers die Illusion ontologischer Vektorialität, d.h. die Vorstellung einer sich durch Raum und Zeit bewegenden Figur. Als die textuell evozierte Direktionalität der Bewegung einer Figur stellt der narrative Vektor somit eine bewegungsspezifische Konfiguration der drei

Dimensionen narrativer Inszenierung dar. Somit sind diesbezüglich drei Fragen jeweils fallspezifisch zu beantworten: Welche Stadien dieser Bewegung werden für die narrative Inszenierung ausgewählt (vgl. Ettes Konzept der „Vektorizität“ [Ette 2012: 216, 240, 268])? Welche narrativen Darstellungstechniken kommen im Rahmen der narrativen Inszenierung dieser Bewegung auf der syntagmatischen und diskursiven Achse zum Einsatz? Aus wessen Perspektive wird die Bewegung dargestellt (vgl. Nünning 2008a: 19-26; siehe auch Nünning 2009: 39-44)?

In einem zweiten Schritt habe ich dann meine Typologie narrativer Vektoren mit dem Genette'schen Konzept narrativer Anachronien kombiniert. Diese Operation rechtfertigt sich dadurch, dass gewisse kognitive Analogien bestehen zwischen intended, experienced und imagined vectors auf der einen und Genettes etablierten narratologischen Konzepten Analepse und Prolepse (vgl. Genette 1980 [1972]: 35-85) auf der anderen Seite. Für den intended vector, der einer Prolepse insofern kognitiv ähnelt, als er ein antizipatorisches Durchspielen der beabsichtigten Reise impliziert, ergeben sich dabei nach Genettes Modell folgende mögliche narrative Realisierungen: erstens chronologische Narration, zweitens eine mentale Prolepse und drittens eine Verschachtelung von Prolepse in einer Analepse (vgl. Genette 1980 [1972]: 79-83), also die Einbettung der narrativen Darstellung der Reisevorbereitungen in eine retrospektive Schilderung der betreffenden Reise. Da Genettes Konzept der Prolepse sich jedoch ausschließlich auf die Vorwegnahme von Ereignissen, die definitiv im Verlauf der Handlung eintreten werden, bezieht (vgl. Genette 1980 [1972]: 35-85), erwies sich die Erweiterung dieses Konzeptes hin zu einer mentalen Prolepse, also einer lediglich im Bewusstsein der betreffenden Figur existenten Antizipation im speziellen Fall der Reiseplanung als notwendig (vgl. auch Bals Konzept der „subjektiven“ Prolepse [Bal 2009 [1985]: 85; vgl. ebd. 85-88).

Während ein intended vector als mentale Vorwärtsbewegung in Raum und Zeit folglich nur in der „textual possible world“ (Ryan 1991: vii) dieses Figurenbewusstseins existiert, bezieht sich der experienced vector auf die „textual actual world“ (Ryan 1991: vii) des jeweiligen Romans, da er tatsächlich von Figuren erlebte Reisen bezeichnet. Als mentale Rückwärtsbewegung in Raum und Zeit von seiten der Figur und letztendlich des Lesers wird ein experienced vector typischerweise mittels einer Genette'schen Analepse dargestellt, da das Erzählen einer erlebten Reise die retrospektive mentale (Re)Konfiguration derselben durch die Fokalisierungsinstanz voraussetzt. So werden experienced vectors in gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels* z.B. häufig durch die Kombination Ellipse und Analepse narrativ inszeniert. Doch auch im

Fälle von *experienced vectors* stehen alternative Möglichkeiten zur Verfügung, so in erster Linie wiederum chronologische Narration und die Verschachtelung Genette'scher Anachronien, diesmal in Form der Einbettung einer Analepse in eine Prolepse (vgl. Genette 1980 [1972]: 79-83), d.h. der Thematisierung einer absolvierten Reise in die Erzählung von deren Vorbereitung.

Imagined vectors wiederum sind, da sie die gesamte Bandbreite von *mental mobility* abdecken, Teil der „textual possible world“ (Ryan 1991: vii) des Bewusstseins der jeweiligen Fokalisierungsinstanz. Sie können antizipatorisch, retrospektiv oder rein imaginär sein und dementsprechend entweder durch chronologische Narration, durch mentale Prolepsen oder Analepsen oder aber durch ineinander verschachtelte Kombinationen Genette'scher Anachronien narrativ inszeniert werden. Wie im Verlauf der Explikation der Kombination meiner Typologie narrativer Vektoren mit Genettes Anachronien deutlich geworden ist, erfordert eine solche Operation eine teilweise Modifikation der letzteren narratologischen Analysekatogorien dergestalt, dass im Falle von *intended* und *imagined vectors* deren Geltungsbereich auf rein mentale, nur in der Vorstellung der jeweiligen Fokalisierungsinstanz existente Prolepsen bzw. Analepsen ausgeweitet werden muss. Überdies hat diese Zusammenführung gezeigt, dass trotz der kognitiven Ähnlichkeiten kein *eins-zu-eins form-to-function mapping* zwischen Genettes Anachronien und meinen drei Typen narrativer Vektoren möglich ist. Außerdem ist darauf hinzuweisen, dass die terminologische Unterscheidung zwischen diesen drei Typen narrativer Vektoren nicht als einander wechselseitig ausschließende Kategorisierung verstanden werden darf: Aufgrund der unausweichlich hybriden Natur von *real-und-imaginierten* Bewegungen liegt der Zweck dieser Differenzierung vielmehr darin zu ermitteln, welche der drei von diesen Typen verkörperten Funktionen – Intentionalität (→ *intended vector*), *experientiality* (→ *experienced vector*) oder Imagination (→ *imagined vector*) in einer gegebenen textuellen Konfiguration von Bewegung dominant gesetzt wird. Meine Typologie dient also als heuristisches Analyseinstrumentarium zur Beschreibung unterschiedlicher Stadien der narrativen Inszenierung einer Reise sowie der von den drei Typen narrativer Vektoren dabei erfüllten primären Funktionen.

In einem dritten Schritt wurden minimalistische Modi der narrativen Inszenierung von Reisen als besonders einschlägiges, weil sehr häufiges Beispiel eines signifikanten Darstellungsverfahrens in gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels* identifiziert, mittels einer simplifizierenden Rekonzeptualisierung von Genettes Kategorie der Ellipse (vgl. Genette 1980 [1972]: 106-109) narratologisch beschrieben

und schließlich literarisch kontextualisiert. Das Attribut minimalistisch bezieht sich in diesem Zusammenhang auf die Genette'sche Kategorie der Dauer (vgl. Genette 1980 [1972]: 86-112), denn das charakteristische Merkmal dieser Modi liegt in der extremen Reduzierung der Textlänge, die der Darstellung einer bestimmten Reise- oder Migrationsbewegung zugeteilt wird. Im Falle von *experienced vectors* kommt die Genette'sche Ellipse häufig in Kombination mit einer (späteren) Analepse zum Einsatz, insbesondere bei der Inszenierung von per Flugzeug durchgeführten transnationalen Migrationen.

Entsprechend habe ich eine bewegungsorientierte Vereinfachung von Genettes komplexer Typologie unterschiedlicher Ellipsen (vgl. Genette 1980 [1972]: 106-109) vorgenommen, die lediglich zwischen zwei prototypischen Formen der elliptischen Darstellung differenziert, für die ich im Englischen die Bezeichnungen *elusive mode* bzw. *ellipsoidal mode* gewählt habe. Ersterer bezeichnet – wie Genette (vgl. 1980 [1972]: 51, 106) an das linguistische Konzept der *Elision* anknüpfend – das vollständige Auslassen des Verlaufs einer Reise ohne antizipatorische Hinweise oder einen retrospektiven Bericht im narrativen Diskurs. Letzterer umfasst hingegen die ganze Bandbreite von der bloßen Erwähnung eines Verbs des Abfahrens, Reisens oder Ankommens bis hin zu einer kurzen Zusammenfassung des Reiseverlaufs (Je länger diese ausfällt, umso unwahrscheinlicher ist es, dass der Darstellungsmodus noch als minimalistisch gelten kann).

Was die historisch-literarische und soziokulturelle Kontextualisierung dieser minimalistischen Darstellungsmodi in gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels* betrifft, so habe ich drei Hypothesen aufgestellt: Erstens erscheint es gerechtfertigt, die weitverbreitete Dominanz dieses Minimalismus in *Asian British novels* als postkoloniale Strategie des *silencing* zu interpretieren, die darauf abzielt, genau das in den Hintergrund treten zu lassen, was im *colonial travelogue* gemeinhin im Vordergrund stand: die Schilderung der Reise selbst. Zweitens hat gerade die traditionelle Konventionalisierung des Reisens und des *travelogue* (vgl. Nünning 2008a: 22) über die Jahrhunderte hinweg substantiell zur inhaltlichen Abwertung des performativen Aktes des Reisens in der Gegenwartsliteratur beigetragen. Drittens ist es darüber hinaus der äußerst hohe Standardisierungsgrad moderner Fortbewegungsmittel, der die *tellability* des Reisens an sich entscheidend untergräbt, bis hin zu ihrer fast vollständigen Elimination im Falle des Fliegens in modernen Passagierflugzeugen. Abschließend sei zumindest darauf hingewiesen, dass diese Feststellung für die

andere Seite gegenwärtiger globaler Mobilität – Flucht, Vertreibung und andere Formen erzwungener Migration – natürlich nicht zutrifft.

In einem vierten Schritt wurden dann die Funktionen, die *mental mobility* im Kontext der narrativen Inszenierung von real-und-imaginierten Bewegungen erfüllen kann, näher beleuchtet. Hierfür wurde zunächst zwischen einer weiter und einer enger gefassten Definition von *mental mobility* unterschieden: Während erstere jegliche Art geistiger Aktivität umfasst (also z.B. Gedanken, Wünsche, Hoffnungen, Erinnerungen etc.), bezieht sich letztere ausschließlich auf imaginierte Bewegungen und Reisen an sich, d. h. Traum- und Fantasiereisen, die nicht unbedingt einen Bezug zur realen Umgebung einer Figur in der „textual actual world“ (Ryan 1991: vii) aufweisen. Erstens kann *mental mobility* eine vorbereitende Funktion im Hinblick auf tatsächliche Figurenbewegungen in der *textual actual world* zukommen. Wie bereits deutlich geworden ist, erfüllen im Allgemeinen intended vectors diese textuelle Funktion, die folglich die prospektive mentale Komponente von real-und-imaginierten Bewegungen bilden. Zweitens erfüllt *mental mobility* häufig eine Reflexionsfunktion im Verhältnis zu ihrem physischen, räumlichen Gegenstück in der *textual actual world*. Diese Funktion wird von retrospektiven imagined vectors erfüllt, die somit die retrospektive mentale Komponente real-und-imaginierten Bewegungen darstellen. Drittens dient *mental mobility* häufig einem kompensatorischen Zweck, indem sie für die individuelle Figur einen Mangel an physischer Mobilität in der *textual actual world* wettmachen soll. Typischerweise führt die unmittelbare Erfahrung von Gefangenschaft dazu, dass sich die Fokalisierungsinstanz derartiger, von rein imaginierten Vektoren konfigurierter *mental mobility* hingibt. Im Kontext der minimalistischen Inszenierung real-und-imaginierten Bewegungen ist es oft gerade die durch narrative Techniken wie *psycho-narration* (Cohn 1978: 21-57), *free indirect discourse* (vgl. z.B. Fludernik 1993: 72-359) oder innerer Monolog dargestellte *mental mobility* der jeweiligen Figur, die die individuelle und kulturelle Semantisierung liefert, die notwendig ist, um z.B. deren transnationale Migration in ihre übergreifenden sozialen, historischen, kulturellen und geopolitischen Kontexte einzubetten.

In einem fünften Schritt wurde schließlich darauf eingegangen, dass neben der Bewegungsdarstellung selbst auch das, was ich als movements of representation bezeichne, also diachrone Veränderungen in den Präferenzen für bestimmte narrative Darstellungstechniken in Bezug auf real-und-imaginierte Bewegungen sowie das Phänomen der Intertextualität, eine nicht zu unterschätzende Rolle in gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels* spielt. Insbesondere intertextuelle Referenzen bzw. das

postkoloniale *rewriting* von Klassikern der Kolonialliteratur betten den betreffenden Roman in übergreifende, transkulturelle Modelle kultureller Mobilität ein. Der entscheidende Punkt dabei ist, dass die im Zuge dessen entstehenden transkulturellen Intertextualitäten nicht nur Auswirkungen auf die narrative Inszenierung von Raum und Bewegung in der jeweiligen *Asian British novel* haben, sondern auch die Art und Weise, in der wir den kolonialen Klassiker in Zukunft lesen, beeinflusst (vgl. Döring 2002: 1-19, 203-209).

In Kapitel 4.4.3 wurde schließlich die Schnittstelle zwischen Text und Kontext am Beispiel der Evokation von narrativ inszenierten Topologien in gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels* untersucht. Zu diesem Zweck habe ich zunächst das Konzept der Narratologie eingeführt, das sich meiner Definition zufolge auf zwei eng miteinander verknüpfte, aber theoretisch dennoch unterscheidbare Ebenen beziehen kann: Auf der theoretischen Ebene bildet die Narratologie ein interdisziplinäres Forschungsfeld, das sich mit der Untersuchung des narrativen Entstehungsprozesses, den verschiedenen narrativen Konfigurationen, der diachronen Variabilität oder Evolution (sowohl innerhalb eines einzelnen narrativen Textes als auch über die Epochen der Literatur- und Kulturgeschichte hinweg), der Referentialität auf extratextuelle kulturelle Phänomene und schließlich der narratologischen *saliency* von narrativ inszenierten Storyworld-Topologien, also ihrer Signifikanz für die Entwicklung und Struktur des jeweiligen Plots, befasst. Auf der konkreten textuellen Ebene bezeichnet der Neologismus Narratologie die vom narrativen Diskurs des jeweiligen Romans evozierte Storyworld-Topologie selbst, die mit Hilfe der in der theoretischen Definition erläuterten Kriterien beschrieben werden kann. Der Terminus Narratologie bezeichnet also entweder das topologische Produkt der narrativen Inszenierung von Raum und Bewegung oder das mit dessen systematischer Analyse beschäftigte interdisziplinäre Forschungsfeld.

Im Folgenden bin ich dann auf die Frage eingegangen, wie der Leser überhaupt dazu motiviert wird, Narratologien – also relativ abstrakte topologische Tiefenstrukturen auf die konkrete topographische Oberflächenkonfiguration der Storyworld zu projizieren. Im Zuge dessen wurden insgesamt acht narrative Strategien identifiziert, von denen eine hier beispielhaft genannt werden soll: die Evokation von Narratologien mittels der expliziten „narrativized description“ (Mosher 1991: 426-427; vgl. auch Ronen 1997: 274-286) der von der Figur für ihre Reise gewählten Route durch die Aufzählung der geographischen Referenzpunkte, die sie auf ihrem Weg passiert. Im Rahmen der narrativen Inszenierung von Raum und Bewegung in

gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels* kommt diese narrative Strategie häufig in Verbindung mit der postkolonialen Strategie des *remapping* der imperialistischen Kartographie (vgl. Neumann 2009: 129-131) vom Standpunkt eines Repräsentanten ehemals kolonisierter und marginalisierter Ethnien zum Einsatz. Diese Konstellation prägt die narrative Konfiguration, Perspektivierung und Semantisierung der Narratologie des betreffenden Romans nachhaltig. Wenn z.B. ein indischer Protagonist die geopolitische Topologie des Imperialismus im Verlauf seiner transnationalen Migration von Indien nach England neu bzw. umzeichnet, dann hat die bloße Nennung von Toponymen wie London oder England in Kombination mit ihrer gleichzeitigen Resemantisierung einen subversiven Effekt auf die tief im Bewusstsein der ehemaligen Kolonialherren eingegrabene, stereotype kulturelle Semantisierung dieser Orte (vgl. Neumann 2009: 128-135).

Schließlich widmete sich Kapitel 4.4.3 noch der Frage, wie die Beziehung zwischen der Evokation von Narratologien in gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels* und der von mir in Kapitel 2 entworfenen Trialektik der Bewegung konzeptualisiert werden kann. Prinzipiell gestaltet sich diese wie folgt: Genau wie jede einzelne Figurenbewegung durch die Storyworld aus ihrer qua narratologischer Vektorialität konstituierten ontologischen Vektorialität entsteht, stellen Narratologien das Resultat eines Netzwerkes solcher Bewegungen (bzw. Bewegungsmuster) dar, von denen jede wiederum dem mittels identifizierbarer narrativer Strategien inszenierten Zusammenspiel von Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit entspringt. Letztendlich sind Narratologien also agentive Raum-Zeit-Makrostrukturen (agentive spatio-temporal macro-structures), weil sie aus einer textspezifischen Verbindung der mittels ihrer jeweiligen narratologischen Vektorialitäten generierten ontologischen Vektorialitäten einer Vielzahl von individuellen Figurenbewegungen entstehen.

Mittels der Trialektik der Bewegung gefasst lassen sich transnationale Migrationen im Kontext der Entstehung von Narratologien also wie folgt beschreiben: Was die Dimension der Agency betrifft, so ist erstens der Zweck, zweitens das Moment (engl. momentum, d.h. der Grad an intrinsischer Motivation für eine bestimmte Migration) sowie drittens die äußeren Bedingungen der jeweiligen Migration und viertens die allgemeine räumliche Mobilität der Figur in der Storyworld relevant. Was die räumliche Dimension anbelangt, so ist vor allem die Direktionalität, also die Richtung der Migrationsbewegung von Bedeutung. So macht es im Zuge der individuellen und kulturellen Semantisierung des experienced vector einer Migration einen gewichtigen Unterschied, ob diese von einer ehemaligen Kolonie in das frühere

Zentrum oder in umgekehrter Richtung erfolgt. Die zeitliche Dimension kommt sowohl bei der Frage nach dem historischen Kontext einer Migration als auch bei der nach dem individuellen Zeit- und Raumerleben während der betreffenden Reise ins Spiel. Abschließend ist zu betonen, dass alle diese unmittelbar die ontologische Vektorialität transnationaler Migrationen prägenden Faktoren die textspezifische Konfiguration von Narratologien im jeweiligen Roman nachhaltig beeinflussen.

10.5 Primärtextanalyse von *The Impressionist* (Kunzru 2002)

In Kapitel 5 meiner Dissertation wurde die narrative Inszenierung von Raum und Bewegung in Hari Kunzrus Debütroman *The Impressionist* (2002) mittels des in den Kapiteln 2 bis 4 entwickelten theoretisch-methodologischen Untersuchungsinstrumentariums einer kontext-orientierten narratologischen Primärtextanalyse unterzogen. Hierfür wurde zunächst einmal die folgende These aufgestellt: In *The Impressionist* erfahren aus der westlichen Moderne stammende Vorstellungen von allen drei konstitutiven Dimensionen der menschlichen Bewegung – Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit – sowie das Phänomen der Bewegung selbst eine gleichermaßen postkoloniale wie postmoderne Dekonstruktion. Zu diesem Zweck wird die anscheinende Linearität des schrittweisen Aufstiegs des hybriden anglo-indischen Protagonisten Pran Nath Razdan zum Status eines ‚wahren‘ Engländers in der Epoche des British Empire im frühen 20. Jahrhundert durch andere Bewegungen und Bewegungsmuster unterminiert, mit dem Ziel, genau dieser Vorstellung von teleologischem Fortschritt hin zu einem vorbestimmten Zielpunkt den Boden unter den Füßen zu entziehen.

Was die Dimension der Agency betrifft, so wurde in Kapitel 5.2 gezeigt, wie die verschiedenen „Identitätskonfigurationen“ (Welsch 2009: 9), die der Protagonist im Laufe des Plot performativ inszeniert, mit unterschiedlichen Graden an individueller Handlungsfreiheit sowie mit seinen pikaresken Reisen durch den indischen Subkontinent bzw. später England und Afrika zusammenhängen. Jede dieser Reisen übt nämlich insofern einen subversiven Effekt auf die jeweils aktuelle Identitätskonfiguration aus, als sie eine Transformation eben dieser initiiert. Konkret heißt das, dass der Protagonist im Kontext jeder dieser Reisen gezwungen ist, sich selbst durch die *performance* einer neuen Identitätskonfiguration neu zu erfinden,

inklusive der dafür erforderlichen Veränderungen in Namen, Aussehen, Kleidung und Verhalten (vgl. Nyman 2009: 93-97). Als hybrides Subjekt, das es sich gewissermaßen zur Lebensaufgabe macht, die englischen Kolonialherren so perfekt wie nur irgend möglich zu imitieren, erinnert Pran Nath Razdan stark an den antiken griechischen Helden Odysseus, da er wie dieser ein unglaubliches Geschick besitzt, plötzliche Veränderungen der äußeren Umstände für seine eigenen Ziele – und sei es nur das nackte Überleben – zu nutzen. Im Verbund mit seinen ausgedehnten Reisen, die ihn von Indien über England schließlich auch nach Afrika führen, ist es vor allem diese herausragende Gabe, die diese Figur so fruchtbar für mein primäres Erkenntnisinteresse einer kontextorientierten Untersuchung der individuellen Erlebnis- und Erfahrungsperspektive auf menschliche Bewegung macht.

Dementsprechend habe ich in Kapitel 5.2 die Ursachen, narrativen Konfigurationen und Auswirkungen der diversen Identitätstransformationen (vgl. Nyman 2009: 93), die der Protagonist im Laufe der Handlung durchläuft, im Zusammenhang mit seinen Bewegungen durch verschiedene Kulturräume des British Empire untersucht. Auf diese Weise wurde gezeigt, dass sich in der Entwicklung der Figur des Protagonisten Pran Nath Razdan verschiedene Prozesse der Konstruktion und Dekonstruktion eines hybriden Chamäleons verdichten, immer mit dem Ziel, statische und vereinfachende westliche Identitätskonzepte aus einer gleichzeitig postkolonialen und postmodernen Perspektive zu problematisieren. So wird der offiziell als Sohn eines angesehenen Hindus aus einer hohen Kaste geborene Protagonist nach dem Tod seines vermeintlichen Vaters (in Wahrheit ist er der uneheliche Sohn eines Engländers) all seiner Privilegien beraubt und landet zunächst als rechtloser Sexsklave am dekadenten Hofe des Nawab von Fatehpur. Somit beginnt seine Odyssee mit einem krassen sozialen Abstieg, wodurch die Vorstellung eines linearen Aufstiegs zum Status eines ‚echten‘ Engländers konterkariert wird. Erst nach seiner Flucht kann dann seine schrittweise Verwandlung in einen ‚waschechten‘ Engländer wirklich Gestalt annehmen. Die zufällige Begegnung mit einem jungen Briten, der kurz darauf den antibritischen Unruhen in Bombay zum Opfer fällt, eröffnet dem Protagonisten die einmalige Gelegenheit, sich dessen Identität zu bemächtigen und an dessen Stelle die Seereise nach England anzutreten. In der rassistischen Terminologie des imperialistischen Diskurses des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts gesprochen, bildet Prans soziale Mobilität im Verlauf des Romans also auf einer sehr abstrakten Ebene ein unvollständiges Dreieck, das mit dem Abstieg zum rechtlosen Sexsklaven beginnt und erst danach die Form eines Aufstiegs zum imperialistisch eingestellten Engländer annimmt.

Es ist jedoch bezeichnend für die postkoloniale und postmoderne Dekonstruktion statischer westlicher Identitätskonzepte, dass der Protagonist schließlich als namenloser Nomade in der Sahara endet und mithin seine Obsession des performativen Inszenierens höchst unterschiedlicher Identitätskonfigurationen aufgibt. Dieses Verlassen eines vorherbestimmten, teleologischen Weges zu einem Zielpunkt dekonstruiert nicht nur die vermeintliche Stabilität persönlicher Identitätskonstruktionen als eines wesentlichen Merkmals westlicher Subjektivitätskonzepte, sondern auch den Prozess der Selbstinszenierung des Protagonisten als hybrides Chamäleon. Damit stellt die narrative Inszenierung der Agency, Subjektivität und Identität des Protagonisten die hohle Oberflächlichkeit menschlicher Selbstinszenierung als solcher bloß und wirft die Frage auf, ob nach Abzug derselben überhaupt noch von Subjektivität gesprochen werden kann oder ob nicht vielmehr lediglich ein verstörendes Vakuum vermeintlicher Individualität bzw. Identität zurückbleibt. Obgleich die Identitätskonfigurationen des Protagonisten rein formal-strukturell gesehen aufgrund ihrer Variabilität durchaus als transdifferenziell bezeichnet werden können, erfahren sie eine vollkommen andere Semantisierung als in postmodernen Konzepten von fluiden Identitäten im Sinne einer programmatischen *rootlessness*: Für Pran ist die Fähigkeit zur Identitätstransformation nicht Ergebnis postmoderner, dem Ideal eines intellektuellen Nomadismus folgenden Epistemologie, sondern schlichte Voraussetzung für sein Überleben in heterogenen, teils hochgradig gefährlichen Kontexten.

Die Einsicht in die *rootlessness* des Protagonisten wurde in Kapitel 5.3 dann durch eine Analyse der vielfältigen *routes* (cf. Clifford 1997: 251), die er im Laufe der Handlung bereist, ergänzt. Das makrostrukturelle topologische Bewegungsmuster des Protagonisten habe ich mittels der geometrischen Figur eines *incomplete triangle* beschrieben, das sich aus den narrativ inszenierten ontologischen Vektorialitäten seiner Reisen zwischen den drei Eckpunkten bzw. Hubs Indien, England und Afrika ergibt. Aus postkolonialer Perspektive ist es besonders signifikant, dass die Unvollständigkeit dieses Dreiecks aus der fehlenden direkten Verbindung zwischen Indien und Afrika resultiert, die beiden Kolonien mithin also im Rahmen der geschilderten Reisen des Protagonisten nur über das ‚Mutterland‘ England miteinander verknüpft werden. Prans Reise (mit der gestohlenen Identität des Engländers Jonathan Bridgeman) von Bombay nach Dover kommt also eine zentrale Rolle innerhalb dieses Bewegungsmusters zu, da sie die erste Seite des *incomplete triangle* Indien – England – Afrika darstellt. Aufgrund ihrer herausragenden Bedeutung für die weitere Entwicklung des Plot und für das makrostrukturelle Bewegungsmuster des gesamten

Romans wird dem experienced vector dieser Reise auch eine vergleichsweise umfassende narrative Inszenierung zuteil, die sich aus szenischer Darstellung und Zusammenfassung im Verbund mit der Aufzählung der vom Ozeandampfer passierten geographischen Orte sowie einer parodistischen postkolonialen Resemantisierung Englands bzw. des Okzidents im Allgemeinen zusammensetzt. Das kombinatorische Zusammenspiel der drei für das Zustandekommen von Bewegung konstitutiven Dimensionen lässt sich am Beispiel der narrativen Konfiguration der ontologischen Vektorialität dieser Reise besonders schön herausstellen: Die Ausweitung seiner individuellen Agency durch den Diebstahl der Identität des toten Engländers ermöglicht es ihm, diese Reise überhaupt anzutreten. Gleichzeitig wird sein Entschluss dazu durch die äußeren historischen Umstände im Raum Bombay befeuert, da er gerade sein Zuhause in den antibritischen Unruhen verloren hat.

Die textspezifische Sequenzierung der drei als hubs der postkolonialen Narratologie des Romans fungierenden Kulturräume (Indien, England, Afrika) ist ebenfalls von Bedeutung, da sie eine Umkehrung imperialer eurozentrischer Geographien narrativ konfiguriert (vgl. Nyman 2009: 96). Durch das topologische Bewegungsmuster des *incomplete triangle*, so meine Argumentation, dekonstruiert *The Impressionist* die (auf der konkreten topographischen Ebene oft dreieckige) Zirkularität des ökonomischen Austauschs zwischen Großbritannien und seinen Kolonien im System des British Empire mit den Mitteln der narrativen Inszenierung. Die kulturelle Topologie des britischen Imperialismus, die – wie das berühmte Beispiel des transatlantischen Dreieckshandels zeigt – unter anderem insofern durch eine *triangular circularity* gekennzeichnet war, als das rein topographisch dreieckige Bewegungsmuster aufgrund seiner regel- und routinemäßigen Wiederholung eine gewisse Zirkularität aufwies, wird hier also durch die narrative Inszenierung eines *incomplete triangle* als primärem topologischen Bewegungsmuster des Protagonisten und die daraus entspringende postkoloniale Narratologie der Storyworld dieses Romans diskursiv dekonstruiert. Die narrative Konfiguration der ontologischen Vektorialitäten, aus denen dieses Bewegungsmuster entsteht, bricht also dezidiert mit der Zirkularität extratextueller kultureller Bewegungsmuster und der dadurch entstehenden dichotomen kolonialen Topologie des British Empire, die ganz im Zeichen des Gegensatzes zwischen Zentrum und Peripherie(n) stand.

Die narrative Dekonstruktion imperialer Bewegungsmuster in *The Impressionist* kulminiert schließlich im Scheitern einer anthropologischen Expedition zu einem der indigenen Stämme Westafrikas, an der der Protagonist als Assistent eines Professors

aus Oxford teilnimmt. Im Falle dieser letzten Reise des Protagonisten, die die zweite Seite des *incomplete triangle* darstellt, erfolgt diese Dekonstruktion vor allem durch die narrative Inszenierung der externen Friktion, die die Durchführung der teleologisch vorgeplanten Route der Expedition in zunehmendem Maße beeinträchtigt. Während diese Friktion zunächst nur Langeweile und natürliche Faktoren als Ursache hat, wird das Ziel der Expedition – eine empirische Erforschung der Lebensweise der Ureinwohner schließlich durch den gewaltsamen Racheakt des indigenen Stammes an den Expeditionsteilnehmern, die sie als Komplizen des expansionistischen britischen Imperialismus sehen, zunichte gemacht. Letztendlich wird deren eigene westlich-imperialistische Arroganz als Hauptursache für den gewaltsamen Tod der Anthropologen dargestellt. Wiederum ist es eine Mischung aus eigener Distanzierung von dieser Arroganz und glücklichen Umständen, die es dem Protagonisten erlauben, als einziger dieses Massaker zu überleben und fortan als Nomade durch die Sahara zu ziehen. Alles in allem ist es also die externe, von Menschen gemachte Friktion der Angehörigen einer nicht-westlichen Ethnie, die das dieser Expedition zugrundeliegende eurozentrische Bewegungsmuster durchkreuzt und damit den imperialistischen Anspruch der Kolonialherren auf universelle Dominanz infrage stellt.

Die diskursive Dekonstruktion der kolonialen Topologie des British Empire durchzieht auch die narrative Inszenierung der drei Kulturräume Indien, England und Afrika in Kunzrus Debütroman, die ich in Kapitel 5.4 anhand dreier paradigmatischer Beispiele (das Fürstentum Fatehpur in Indien, London sowie das Territorium des indigenen Stammes der Fotse in Westafrika) untersucht habe. Wie bereits deutlich geworden ist, sind es vor allem die Reisebewegungen des Protagonisten, die die Konstruktivität der kolonialen Topologie des British Empire, also seiner dichotomen Aufteilung des Globus in Zentrum versus Peripherie als primärer, eurozentrischer Raumordnung des Imperialismus durchkreuzen und damit einen Prozess der Hybridisierung der von den britischen Kolonialherren unter dem Label ‚Empire‘ subsumierten Territorien und Ethnien in Gang setzen. Während die narrative Inszenierung des Bewegungsmusters *incomplete triangle* die topologische Raumordnung des Empire noch insofern zitiert, als die fehlende direkte Verbindung zwischen den kolonisierten Kulturräumen Afrika und Indien für die Unvollständigkeit des Dreiecks verantwortlich zeichnet, so verleiht sie dieser Imitation doch dadurch eine gleichermaßen postkoloniale wie postmoderne Wendung, dass der Protagonist letztendlich den Pfad jeglicher vorgezeichneten hegemonialen Topologie verlässt, indem er sich Nomaden in der Sahara anschließt. Mit diesem Schritt gelingt es ihm, das vorgezeichnete Organisationsraster der imperialistischen Raumordnung (vgl.

Upstone 2009: 1-24) zu durchkreuzen und sich (zumindest temporär) seinem Wirkungsbereich zu entziehen. Insgesamt läuft die Raumdarstellung in Kunzrus Debütroman also auf eine postkoloniale Dekonstruktion westlich-imperialistischer Raumordnungs- und Bewegungsmuster hinaus. Diese Dekonstruktion geht jedoch (nicht zuletzt aufgrund des historischen Kontextes, in den die Handlung eingebettet ist) nicht so weit, die Entstehung utopischer Transkulturalität, z.B. durch die narrative Inszenierung transkultureller dritter Räume als Gegenpol zum Raster der kolonialistischen Raumordnung, zu erlauben. Trotz der Inszenierung mannigfaltiger interkultureller Kontakte kommt es nicht zur narrativen Konfiguration eines positiven Gegenentwurfes zum binären Raumdenken des Imperialismus.

Die narrative Inszenierung von Raum und Bewegung in *The Impressionist* ist schlussendlich also durch die dominante Präsenz von *motion* im Verbund mit der Absenz von *emotion* charakterisiert, weil der Protagonist sich als jeglicher affektiver Bindung an die von ihm durchreisten Kulturräume abhold erweist. Dieses Fehlen emotional-affektiver Semantisierung des Raumes durch den Protagonisten hängt wiederum direkt mit der Abwesenheit transkultureller dritter Räume zusammen. Während die narrative Raumdarstellung in diesem Roman die kulturelle Topologie des Empire also einem postkolonialen *remapping* von der Peripherie aus unterzieht, und zwar durch die narrative Inszenierung der das *incomplete triangle* konfigurierenden ontologischen Vektorialitäten der Reisebewegungen des hybriden Protagonisten, strebt sie eindeutig nicht danach, die theoretische Option des transkulturellen Utopismus narrativ zu verwirklichen.

Auch die in Kapitel 5.5 meiner Dissertation analysierte narrative Inszenierung von Zeitlichkeit in *The Impressionist* trägt zu dieser postkolonialen Dekonstruktion westlicher kultureller Präsuppositionen bei, indem sie das Postulat eines linearen teleologischen Fortschreitens von Zeit und Geschichte hin zum Endpunkt der westlichen Moderne durch den Verweis auf die Existenz alternativer Konzepte von Zeit und Geschichte infrage stellt und damit die Pluralität menschlicher Vorstellungen von Zeitlichkeit aufzeigt. Auf der Ebene des individuellen Zeiterlebens des Protagonisten während seiner Reisen wird die Vorstellung von Zeit als einem irreversiblen chronologischen Strahl z.B. durch die narrative Inszenierung des Erlebens von *belatedness*, also einer Diskrepanz zwischen Körper und Geist (vgl. Kirchoff 2009: 141-232; Laplanche und Pontalis 1972 [1967]: 313-317; siehe auch West-Pavlov 2013: 116-119), oder, konkret, zwischen physischer Bewegung durch den Raum und individueller *mental mobility*, dekonstruiert. So nimmt der Protagonist die sinnlichen

Eindrücke, die während der performativen Ausführung des experienced vector seiner Reise in die Gefangenschaft als Sexsklave in Fatehpur auf ihn einströmen zwar körperlich wahr, gleichzeitig führt ihn der imagined vector seiner mental mobility jedoch zurück in die Erinnerung an die sorgenfreie Kindheit und Jugend, die er bis vor kurzem genoss. Auf der Ebene des historischen Kontextes der narrativen Inszenierung von Bewegung erfolgt diese Dekonstruktion vor allem durch die Darstellung des kläglichen Scheiterns der anthropologischen Expedition nach Westafrika, deren Anspruch, durch das Sammeln empirischer Daten über einen indigenen Stamm Geschichte im Sinne der Unaufhaltsamkeit und Unumkehrbarkeit des universalen Triumphes westlich-rationalistischen Fortschritts zu schreiben, an der eigenen Überheblichkeit sowie dem dadurch hervorgerufenen Widerstand der Ureinwohner zerschellt.

Alles in allem hat meine kontextorientierte narratologische Analyse der textspezifischen narrativen Konfigurationen der drei konstitutiven Dimensionen der Trialektik der Bewegung (Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit) sowie des Produktes Bewegung selbst in *The Impressionist* zu der Erkenntnis geführt, dass die narrative Inszenierung von Raum und Bewegung in diesem Roman sowie die infolgedessen entstehende postkoloniale Narratologie ganz bewusst die dichotome topologische Dualität der imperialistischen Binäropposition ‚Zentrum versus Peripherie‘ untergraben und dekonstruieren. Letztendlich ist es diese Inkongruenz von historischer kultureller und narrativ inszenierter fiktionaler Topologie, die für den fundamentalen topologischen, ontologischen und epistemologischen Bruch zwischen kolonialer ‚Realität‘ und imperialistischer Rhetorik, der in *The Impressionist* zu beobachten ist, verantwortlich zeichnet. Wie im Laufe der Analyse überdies deutlich geworden ist, erfüllt dieser Roman zwar die in Kapitel 3.2 formulierten Kriterien für eine *transcultural Asian British novel*, tut dies jedoch ohne der Illusion der Existenz utopischer Transkulturalität im historischen Kontext, in dem seine Handlung situiert ist, anheimzufallen. Stattdessen widmet er sich vornehmlich der postkolonialen und postmodernen Dekonstruktion westlich-imperialistischer Vorstellungen von Bewegung, Raum, Zeit bzw. Geschichte und Agency bzw. Identität.

10.6 Primärtextanalyse von *A Life Apart* (Mukherjee 2008)

In Kapitel 6 meiner Dissertation habe ich die narrative Inszenierung von Raum und Bewegung in Neel Mukherjees Debütroman *A Life Apart* (2011 [2008]) mit Hilfe des in den Kapiteln 2 bis 4 entwickelten kontextualisierten narratologischen Analyseinstrumentariums untersucht. Grundlegend war dabei die These, dass die narrative Inszenierung der drei Dimensionen von Bewegung – Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit – sowie von Bewegung selbst in diesem Roman einen dystopischen Gegenpol zu utopischen Visionen einer vermeintlich anbrechenden transkulturellen Ära bildet, indem sie konsequent die Auswirkungen einer konfliktbeladenen kolonialen Vergangenheit auf eine gleichermaßen problematische postkoloniale Gegenwart in den Vordergrund rückt. Das Besondere dabei ist, dass diese Langzeiteffekte nicht nur die Dimension der Zeitlichkeit, sondern auch die anderen beiden Dimensionen von Bewegung betreffen. *A Life Apart* inszeniert die komplexen Verflechtungen von kolonialer Geschichte und postkolonialer Gegenwart durch die narrative Konfiguration von entangled vectorialities, d. h. durch das *foregrounding* der diffizilen Verzahnung von real-und-imaginierten Bewegungen in der historischen Epoche des British Raj am Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts mit denen in der Gegenwart, genauer gesagt in den frühen 1990er Jahren. Dieses Insistieren auf der unentrinnbaren Verflochtenheit von kolonialer Vergangenheit und postkolonialer Gegenwart macht *A Life Apart* zu einer *contrapuntal narrative* (vgl. Said 1993: 78, 19-20, 36, 49-50, 59-62) gegenüber einseitig optimistischen Entwürfen eines angeblich anbrechenden glorreichen Zeitalters der universalen Transkulturalität.

Auf der konkreten textuellen Ebene werden diese Verflechtungen dadurch realisiert, dass der Protagonist des Handlungsstranges in der Gegenwart, Ritwik Ghosh, sich nach seiner transnationalen Migration von Indien nach England daran macht, einen Klassiker der modernen bengalischen Literatur, Rabindranath Tagores *Ghare Baire* (1916), ins Englische übersetzt als *The Home and the World* (2005 [1919]), aus der Perspektive einer im Original marginalisierten englischen Figur, Maud Gilby, umzuschreiben. Dies stellt insofern eine strukturelle Parodie der postkolonialen Strategie des rewriting dar, als hier ein fiktiver postkolonialer Autor eine ursprünglich marginalisierte englische Figur zur wichtigsten Fokalisierungsinstanz seiner Version dieses historischen Plot erhebt. In der Terminologie meiner kulturellen Narratologie der Bewegung gesprochen, führt der imagined vector seiner sich im kreativen Schreiben verwirklichenden mental mobility Ritwik zurück in das koloniale Indien des British Raj,

wohingegen der experienced vector seiner transnationalen Migration ihn in der Gegenwart von Indien nach England geführt hat.

In Kapitel 6.2 wurde zunächst die narrative Konfiguration von „entangled [...] temporalities“ (West-Pavlov 2013: 170) in Mukherjees Debütroman analysiert. Im Zuge dessen wurde herausgestellt, dass – inhaltlich gesehen – der lange Schatten der kolonialen Vergangenheit die ernüchternd-desillusionierende Gegenwart sowohl auf der individuell-biographischen Mikro-Ebene des Protagonisten als auch auf der geopolitischen, geokulturellen und geotopologischen Makro-Ebene des Romans dominiert. Entscheidend ist dabei, dass beide Ebenen immer wieder miteinander verknüpft werden, so z.B. durch den Vergleich, den der Protagonist Ritwik zieht zwischen der hoffnungslosen sozioökonomischen Situation seines Vaters und der desolaten finanziellen Lage hochverschuldeter Länder der sogenannten Dritten Welt, die als Spätfolge des westlichen Kolonialismus sowie als Konsequenz neokolonialistischer Ausbeutungspolitik der ehemaligen Kolonialmächte in der Gegenwart dargestellt wird. Auf Ritwiks biographischer Ebene kommen als zusätzlicher Faktor noch seine traumatischen Erinnerungen an die körperlichen Misshandlungen durch seine emotional instabile, herrische Mutter hinzu, die als interne Friktion die Handlungsfähigkeit des Protagonisten selbst in der Gegenwart noch einschränken, wie die narrative Inszenierung seines subjektiven Erlebnisses von *belatedness* zeigt. Diese interne Friktion auf der Mikro-Ebene der Narratologie dieses Romans erweist sich letztendlich als *mise en abyme* der *entangled temporalities*, die diese Narratologie durch ihre externe Friktion auch auf der Makro-Ebene prägen. Auf der letzteren Ebene kommen im Zuge des foregrounding dieser *multiply entangled temporalities* fünf verschiedene narrative Strategien zum Einsatz, von denen zwei hier zumindest benannt seien: Zum einen stellt der konsequent durchgehaltene Wechsel zwischen gegenwärtiger Storyworld des Protagonisten und der historischen Storyworld seiner Geschichte um Miss Gilby bereits auf struktureller Ebene einen Bezug zwischen der Welt des British Raj am Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts und der postkolonialen Gegenwart des Protagonisten im Großbritannien der 1990er Jahre her. Zum anderen wird diese strukturelle Alternation inhaltlich dadurch untermauert, dass die Koexistenz verschiedener kultureller Zeitkonzepte in beiden Storyworlds immer wieder narrativ inszeniert wird, und zwar mit dem Ziel, die kulturelle Konstruktivität solcher Konzepte aufzuzeigen. Die narrative Verflechtung von kolonialer Vergangenheit und postkolonialer Gegenwart kulminiert aus narratologischer Sicht schließlich in der impliziten Metalepse, die sich ergibt, als eine Nebenfigur aus Ritwiks fiktivem Plot (eine Freundin Miss Gilbys) sich auf einmal als Verwandte der älteren Dame, um die er sich

im zweiten Teil des Romans kümmert, erweist. Diese kontrafaktische narrative Strategie unterstreicht nicht nur die Verwobenheit von kolonialer Vergangenheit und postkolonialer Gegenwart, sondern verweist auch auf die Spannung zwischen narrativer Struktur und Inhaltsebene in Mukherjees Roman: Während diese Metalepse der erstgenannten Ebene ein gewisses postmodernes Element verleiht, wird letztere klar von der postkolonialen Auseinandersetzung mit der Wirksamkeit des problematischen Erbes des Kolonialismus in der Gegenwart dominiert.

In Kapitel 6.3 wurde daraufhin die narrative Konfiguration der Dimension der Agency in Bezug auf den Protagonisten Ritwik und die Hauptfigur der von ihm umgeschriebenen Geschichte, Miss Gilby, untersucht. Hierbei wurde festgestellt, dass der soziokulturellen Positionalität beider Figuren insofern eine gewisse Liminalität innewohnt, als sie in ihrer jeweiligen Storyworld die Rolle eines (post)kolonialen Grenzgängers einnehmen: Miss Gilby, indem sie sich durch ihr Engagement für die Bildung indischer Frauen und Mädchen bewusst zwischen den rigiden Grenzlinien der patriarchalischen soziokulturellen und ethnischen Grundordnung der Gesellschaft des British Raj positioniert; Ritwik hingegen als marginalisiertes postkoloniales Subjekt in der (englischen) Gesellschaft der ehemaligen Kolonialherren und als Homosexueller, der seine sexuelle Neigung nur im anonymen Gelegenheitssex mit Fremden auszuleben wagt. Somit konstituieren sich die liminalen Subjektivitäten der beiden Protagonisten durch ihre textuelle Funktion als *contrapuntal go-betweens* in einem doppelten Sinne, denn ihre individuelle Positionalität ist zunächst einmal als kontrapunktisch im Said'schen Sinne zu bezeichnen, da sie Gegenpositionen zu kulturell dominanten Diskursen ihres jeweiligen historischen Kontextes Gestalt und Stimme verleihen (vgl. Said 1993: 78, 19-20, 36, 49-50, 59-62). Über diese Parallelität hinaus verhalten sich ihre soziokulturellen Positionalitäten dennoch auch kontrapunktisch zueinander, da Miss Gilby als privilegierte Angehörige der englischen Oberschicht des British Raj über einen bedeutend höheren Grad an sozioökonomischer Agency verfügt als Ritwik, der sich nach Ablauf seines Studentervisums im zweiten Teil des Romans als sogenannter ‚illegaler‘ Migrant ohne Papiere und damit ohne Bürgerrechte in London durchschlagen muss. Während Ritwik also – narratologisch gesehen – auf der rein strukturellen Ebene des Romans als fiktiver Autor von Miss Gilby's Geschichte weit mehr Agency besitzt als seine Figur, ist ihm diese in puncto sozioökonomischer Handlungsfreiheit in ihrer kulturellen Umgebung der (strukturell untergeordneten) Storyworld des historischen Handlungsstrangs überlegen. Diese Konstellation kann als pessimistischer Kommentar auf die Verteilung von Agency in der postkolonialen Gegenwart interpretiert werden: Die kulturell-

narrative Agency des Geschichtenerzählens haben postkoloniale Autoren längst für sich erobert, wohingegen die sozioökonomische Privilegierung westlicher Subjekte im Wesentlichen bestehen bleibt.

Was ihre Bemühungen um interkulturelle Übersetzung anbelangt, so haben beide Protagonisten jedoch das letztendliche Scheitern dieser Anstrengungen gemein: Während dies in Ritwiks Fall hauptsächlich mit der internen Friktion seiner Schüchternheit zu tun hat, die ihn aus Angst vor Zurückweisung daran hindert, die Prägung der verbalen Äußerungen seiner englischen Kommiliton(inn)en durch paternalistische (neo)imperialistische Stereotype bloßzulegen, scheitert Miss Gilby letztendlich an ihrem Unvermögen, ihren liberalen und wohlwollenden Humanismus von seiner Verstrickung in den paternalistischen Universalismus der imperialistischen Praxis ihrer englischen Landsleute zu lösen und damit für die Inderinnen, mit denen sie in Kontakt treten möchte, akzeptabel zu machen. Wie das Beispiel der narrativen Inszenierung eines Besuchs von Miss Gilby am Hofe eines Maharadscha zeigt, ist dieser Versuch der interkulturellen Kommunikation und Übersetzung jedoch auch aufgrund der Institution des *zenana* (Harems), in dem die Gattinnen und Hofdamen indischer Fürsten damals aufwuchsen, zum Scheitern verurteilt. Hier ist es also die (gleichzeitig konkrete und abstrakte) externe Friktion dieser patriarchalischen Institution, die interkulturelle Verständigung fast unmöglich macht.

Letztendlich erfährt das Konzept der selbstbestimmten Agency also durch die narrative Inszenierung dieser Dimension menschlicher Bewegung in beiden Fällen eine umfassende Problematisierung und Dekonstruktion, da beide Protagonisten in ihrem Bemühen, durch individuelles Handeln etwas zum Besseren zu verändern, scheitern: Ritwik fällt schließlich einer rassistisch motivierten Gewalttat zum Opfer, während Miss Gilby sich aufgrund der anhaltenden Unruhen im Zuge der Teilung Bengalens durch Vizekönig Lord Curzon (1905) gezwungen sieht, ihre Stellung als Hauslehrerin der Gattin eines lokalen *zamindar* (eine Art Gutsherr) aufzugeben.

In Kapitel 6.4 habe ich die komplexe Verflechtung der beiden Chronotopoi ‚England in den frühen 1990er Jahren‘ und ‚Bengalen am Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts‘ als das primäre Merkmal der narrativen Inszenierung von Räumlichkeit in *A Life Apart* analysiert. Das foregrounding der „intertwined histories“ (Said 1993: 1) und der räumlichen Kopräsenz (vgl. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107) dieser beiden Chronotopoi stellt zunächst die dichotome Aufteilung heterogener Kulturräume in Zentrum versus Peripherie infrage. London auf der einen Seite und der lokale Bezirk des *zamindar* von

Nawabgunj in Bengalen, für den Miss Gilby tätig ist, repräsentieren diese Chronotopoi als Synekdochen in einer klassischen *pars pro toto* Beziehung. Das Scheitern der beiden Protagonisten betrifft nicht nur ihre individuelle Agency, sondern hat darüber hinaus auch insofern einen Effekt auf die makrostrukturelle Narratologie des Romans, als diese sowohl in der historischen als auch in der gegenwärtigen Storyworld hinsichtlich der Machtasymmetrien zwischen (ehemaligen) Kolonialherren und (ehemals) Kolonisierten letztendlich unverändert bleibt. Genauer gesagt ist die imaginative räumliche Kopräsenz dieser beiden Chronotopoi in der Vorstellung des Lesers (vgl. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107), die ein Resultat der konsequenten Alternation zwischen denselben bildet, durch einen *contrapuntal parallelism* gekennzeichnet, d.h. ihre raum-zeitliche Gegenüberstellung offenbart ihre simultane Funktionalisierung als Kontrapunkte zueinander (im Hinblick auf die relative Verteilung von Macht und Wohlstand) und als parallele Schauplätze der Handlung (vor allem in Bezug auf das dystopische Vorherrschen von Gewalt in der Aushandlung der aus interkulturellen Kontaktsituationen und transkultureller Hybridisierung entstehenden Konflikte). Schlussendlich verrät die fiktionale Konfiguration dieser beiden Chronotopoi und der postkolonialen Narratologie des Romans insgesamt also keinerlei Anzeichen der Entstehung utopischer Transkulturalität. Im Gegenteil: Es stehen gerade die verhängnisvollen, sich bis in die Gegenwart erstreckenden Langzeitfolgen kolonialistischer Ausbeutung im Vordergrund, die in den kontrapunktischen, parallelen und kausalen Wechselbeziehungen zwischen den beiden Kulturräumen England und Bengalen bzw. Indien beleuchtet werden.

In Kapitel 6.5 habe ich schließlich die Erkenntnisse der Unterkapitel 6.2 bis 6.4 in der Untersuchung der narrativen Inszenierung von real-und-imaginierten Bewegungen in *A Life Apart* mittels meiner kulturellen Narratologie der Bewegung synthetisiert. Entscheidend war dabei die Einsicht, dass der in Kapitel 6.4 als Beziehungsmuster der Chronotopoi ‚Britisch-Indien im frühen 20. Jahrhundert‘ und ‚Großbritannien in den 1990er Jahren‘ identifizierte *contrapuntal parallelism* über die Raumdarstellung hinaus auch als makrostrukturelles topologisches Bewegungsmuster der ontologischen Vektorialitäten der transnationalen Migrationen von Ritwik und Miss Gilby fungiert, und zwar im Hinblick auf alle drei Dimensionen menschlicher Bewegung. So migrieren sie zwar in entgegengesetzter Richtung (Ritwik von Indien nach England, Miss Gilby in umgekehrter Richtung), topologisch gesehen aber entlang (ungefähr) paralleler Routen. Was ihre Agency betrifft, so sind es vor allem die ungleichen sozioökonomischen und kulturellen Positionalitäten der beiden Protagonisten, die für die asymmetrische Verteilung individueller Agency zwischen ihnen verantwortlich

zeichnen. Diese Machtasymmetrie in puncto Handlungsfreiheit spiegelt somit in gewissem Sinne die inverse Direktionalität ihrer transnationalen Migrationen wider. Was den Aspekt der Zeitlichkeit anbelangt, so liegen die historischen Kontexte, in denen sie handeln zwar einerseits chronologisch gesehen fast ein ganzes Jahrhundert auseinander, weisen aber dennoch erstaunlich viele Parallelen – insbesondere hinsichtlich des Fortwirkens kolonialer Strukturen in der postkolonialen Gegenwart – auf. So wird die vielschichtige raum-zeitliche und kausale Verflochtenheit dieser beiden Zeitebenen vor allem durch die narrative Inszenierung der *inversely entangled ontological vectorialities* der transnationalen Migrationen der beiden Protagonisten, die das topologische Bewegungsmuster des *contrapuntal parallelism* konfigurieren, in den Vordergrund gerückt.

Im Falle von Ritwicks postkolonialer Migration von Kalkutta nach Oxford (und später London) kommt dabei die minimalistische narrative Technik der Darstellung mittels Elision zum Einsatz. Konkret bedeutet das, dass die Flugreise selbst komplett übersprungen wird und der Leser die Tatsache, dass überhaupt eine solche Migration stattgefunden hat, aus der Veränderung in der räumlichen Deixis des Protagonisten erschließen muss. Aufgrund dieser Abwesenheit narratologischer Vektorialität ist der Leser also gezwungen, die ontologische Vektorialität dieser Migration aus verschiedenen, über den Text verteilten Informationen nach und nach zu synthetisieren. Dieser Auslassung der Reise an sich entspricht die Abwesenheit utopischer Transkulturalität in diesem Roman. Was jedoch im Detail dargestellt wird, sind die kurz- und langfristigen Auswirkungen dieser Migration auf den Protagonisten, so z.B. die temporäre Ausweitung seiner ökonomisch-finanziellen Agency durch das Stipendium, mit dem er in Oxford Englische Literatur studiert.

Im Gegensatz zu Ritwicks *experienced vector* seiner postkolonialen Migration erfolgt die narrative Inszenierung des (aus Ritwicks Sicht) *imagined vector* von Miss Gilbys kolonialer Migration im ellipsoidalen Modus, da hier wenigstens die Ankunftsszene im Hafen von Madras mittels einer Analepse ausführlich geschildert wird. Alles in allem lässt sich dennoch festhalten, dass die retrospektive emotional-affektive Semantisierung ihrer Migrationen durch die Protagonisten mittels der weitgehend minimalistischen narrativen Inszenierung der Reisen an sich im Verbund mit der detaillierten Thematisierung eben dieser Auswirkungen auf ihre Psyche und ihr subjektives Raum- und Zeiterleben in den Vordergrund gestellt wird. Die progressivistische Vision einer universell transkulturell-utopischen Zukunft wird

überdies durch die extrem minimalistische narrative Inszenierung transnationaler Migrationen in diesem Roman diskursiv dekonstruiert.

Dementsprechend wurde *A Life Apart* in Kapitel 6.6 gemäß der in Kapitel 3.2 dargelegten Kriterien aus vier Gründen als *dystopian transcultural novel* charakterisiert: Erstens inszeniert dieser Roman die Auswirkungen transnationaler Migration auf Agency und Raum- und Zeiterleben – *experientiality* – zweier höchst unterschiedlicher Protagonisten im indo-britischen Kontext narrativ. Am Beispiel des multikulturellen London im späten 20. Jahrhundert und Bengalens am Beginn desselben verhandelt er darüber hinaus komplexe Prozesse der Resemantisierung, der (Neu)Aneignung und damit der soziokulturellen Auseinandersetzung um solche dystopisch-transkulturellen *contested spaces*. Drittens stellt er durch die narrative Inszenierung des Kampfes postkolonialer Grenzgänger um gesellschaftliche Veränderung (Miss Gilby) bzw. ein besseres Leben (Ritwik) den essentialistisch-monolithischen Block tradierter kollektiver nationaler, ethnischer und kultureller Identitäten infrage. Viertens entzieht er dem Anspruch der westlichen Moderne auf Universalität durch das *foregrounding* der vielfältigen wechselseitigen Verflechtungen zwischen westlichen und nicht-westlichen Konfigurationen der Moderne hinsichtlich aller drei Dimensionen von Bewegung mittels der narrativ inszenierten *entangled vectorialities* der Migrationen der beiden Protagonisten den Boden. Schlussendlich stellt Mukherjees Debütroman mithin eine dezidiert postkoloniale *counter-narrative* zu einseitig optimistischen postmodernen Diskursen, die die in wesentlichen Zügen transkulturelle Gegenwart als Gipfel und Endpunkt der Teleologie menschlicher Geschichte feiern, dar.

10.7 Primärtextanalyse von *The Pleasure Seekers* (Doshi 2010)

In Kapitel 7 meiner Dissertation habe ich schließlich die narrative Inszenierung von Raum und Bewegung in Tishani Doshis Debütroman *The Pleasure Seekers* (2010) mit Hilfe des in den Kapiteln 2 bis 4 entwickelten theoretisch-methodologischen Analyseinstrumentariums der kulturellen Narratologie der Bewegung untersucht. Dieser Roman erzählt die Geschichte der indisch-walisischen Patel-Jones Familie über drei Generationen hinweg. Durch die konsequente Fokussierung auf transkulturelle Verflechtungen am Beispiel dieser Familie inszeniert *The Pleasure Seekers* Transkulturalität nicht als utopische (Zukunfts)Vision, sondern als konkret gelebte

Realität in der Gegenwart (vgl. Beck 2014: 107; Helff 2009: 81). Beginnend mit dem Entschluss des jungen Protagonisten Babo Patel, gegen den Willen seiner Eltern die attraktive walisische Sekretärin Siân Jones zu heiraten, stellt der Plot dieses Romans die eng miteinander zusammenhängenden Aspekte individueller „Identitätskonfigurationen“ (Welsch 2009: 9), multipler kultureller Zugehörigkeiten sowie die signifikante Veränderung der subjektiven Raumwahrnehmung und des individuellen Raumerlebens der Protagonisten als unmittelbare Konsequenzen der persönlichen Erfahrung transnationaler Migration von Beginn an in den Vordergrund. Entsprechend beginnt der Roman mit Babos beruflich bedingter temporärer Migration von Madras nach London im Jahre 1968 und endet mit dem „roots trip“ (Antz 2014) seiner Tochter Bean von der britischen Kapitale in das Heimatdorf ihrer Urgroßmutter im Jahr 2001.

Wie ich in Kapitel 7.2 zeigen konnte, entfaltet der Roman im Zeitraum zwischen diesen beiden transnationalen Migrationen ein ganzes Spektrum verschiedener Reisebewegungen auf unterschiedlichen geographischen Ebenen, von denen die drei wichtigsten transnationalen Migrationsbewegungen der Protagonisten – Babo, Siân und Bean – aufgrund ihrer herausragenden Bedeutung für das transnationale Bewegungsmuster und die daraus entstehende transkulturelle Narratologie des Romans im Detail analysiert wurden. Aus dem wiederholten Hin- und Herreisen zwischen den beiden Hubs Indien und Großbritannien (Babo migriert nach London, um dort erste Berufserfahrungen zu sammeln; seine zukünftige Gattin Siân folgt ihm daraufhin nach Indien; ihre gemeinsame Tochter Bean migriert ca. 30 Jahre nach ihrem Vater ebenfalls temporär nach London, um am Ende des Romans schließlich nach Indien zurückzukehren) entspringt eben dieses Bewegungsmuster, das ich – in Anknüpfung an Ettes Pendel (vgl. Ette 2003: 43) – als *pendular vectorialities* bezeichnet habe. Mit diesem Konzept habe ich die besondere Variante der in diesem Roman narrativ inszenierten ontologischen Vektorialitäten dieser Migrationen, also des spezifischen kombinatorischen Zusammenspiels von Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit in deren Zustandekommen, zu erfassen gesucht. Wie im Verlauf der Analyse gezeigt werden konnte, wurzelt der in diesem Zusammenhang zum Tragen kommende dominante Darstellungsmodus – elliptische narrative Inszenierung – selbst in der für die gegenwärtige Epoche charakteristischen, durch Phänomene wie „*time-space compression*“ (Harvey 1990 [1989]: vii; 265) gekennzeichneten kontextuellen Konstellation von Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit. Außerdem hängt die Dominanz dieses Darstellungsmodus direkt mit den affektiv-emotionalen Charakteristika des Reisens im primär von den Protagonisten gebrauchten Transportmittel – dem postmodernen Passagierflugzeug – zusammen: Die Monotonie

und Langeweile, die die hochgradig standardisierte Prozedur einer solchen Reise prägen, führen zu einem eklatanten Verlust der *tellability* der Flugreise an sich, die sich wiederum im minimalistischen Darstellungsmodus widerspiegelt. Entsprechend werden die Abschieds- bzw. Ankunftsszenen der jeweiligen Migrationen der Protagonisten Babo und Siân im Detail narrativ inszeniert, wohingegen die Reisen an sich höchstens in einem trivialen Satz zusammengefasst werden. Die narratologische Vektorialität dieses ellipsoidalen Modus narrativer Inszenierung von Reisebewegungen spiegelt also direkt die affektiv-emotionale Intensität der ontologischen Vektorialität bzw. der verschiedenen Phasen der Realisierung des *experienced vector* der betreffenden transnationalen Migration wider. Überdies sind die *pendular ontological vectorialities* dieser transnationalen Migrationen wiederum wesentlich an der Herausbildung einer transkulturellen Narratologie, von transkulturellen dritten Räumen sowie von transkulturellen Subjektivitäten und Identitätskonfigurationen im Verlauf dieses Romans beteiligt.

In der Terminologie meiner Trialektik der Bewegung gesprochen ergibt sich also folgendes Bild: Die *pendular ontological vectorialities* dieser transnationalen Migrationen der Protagonisten sind erstens durch eine *agentivization*, also durch einen relativ hohen Grad an persönlicher Handlungsfreiheit der individuellen Akteure in der Storyworld gekennzeichnet. Diese *agentivization* hat ihre Ursache gleichermaßen in der Willensstärke der Hauptfiguren wie in der weitgehenden Abwesenheit konkreter externer Friktion in der räumlichen Umgebung und im historischen Kontext, in dem sie handeln. Daher spreche ich in diesem Zusammenhang von einer *defrictionalization* des Raumes, die als Resultat der weitgehenden Elimination eben dieser externen Friktion durch postmodernen Flugverkehr das Aufkommen eines pendelförmigen transnationalen Bewegungsmusters und die Entstehung einer transkulturellen Narratologie begünstigt. Dieses wesentliche Merkmal unseres gegenwärtigen historischen Kontextes, das sich unter anderem im Phänomen der „time-space compression“ (Harvey 1990 [1989]: vii; 265) niederschlägt und die (westliche) Illusion der universalen Verfügbarkeit freier globaler Mobilität für alle Menschen befeuert, hat nicht zuletzt auch Auswirkungen auf das subjektive Raum- und Zeiterleben der Figuren während einer Flugreise, das aufgrund der Abwesenheit einer konkret beobachtbaren Landschaft vor allem durch eine raumzeitliche Dekontextualisierung gekennzeichnet ist (vgl. MacArthur 2012: 269; Calvino 1983: 253 und Ette 2003: 27-28).

Was die diachrone Entwicklung von Narratologien im Verlauf eines Romans betrifft, so wandelt sich die anfangs (1968) noch weitgehend postkoloniale Topologie

der Storyworld allmählich zu einer transkulturellen Narratopologie. Interessanterweise wird die im gleichen Zeitraum (1968-2001) in der extratextuellen kulturellen Realität zu beobachtende ähnliche Entwicklung im Roman selbst nicht thematisiert. So wird der allmähliche Aufstieg Indiens von einem bitterarmen Land der sogenannten Dritten Welt zu einem aufstrebenden Schwellenland nirgends erwähnt (vgl. Zakaria 2009 [2008]: 161-198; Wolpert 2009: 211-215; Pilny 2006: 38-41). Auch der Zusammenbruch der Sowjetunion und ihrer Satellitenstaaten und die nach dem Ende des Ost-West-Konfliktes erfolgende Umwandlung der geopolitischen Weltordnung in eine multipolare spielen allenfalls im Hintergrund eine Rolle. Dennoch wird die Binarität der zunächst postkolonialen Narratopologie (Indien versus Großbritannien) z.B. durch die Integration eines weiteren Schauplatzes der Handlung – Barcelona – nach und nach durch eine multipolare transkulturelle Narratopologie (Indien – Großbritannien – Spanien) abgelöst.

Zusätzlich zu ihrer Multipolarität ist diese durch weitere Merkmale gekennzeichnet, so z.B. durch die transkulturelle Verschmelzung heterogener kultureller Einflüsse infolge der *pendular ontological vectorialities* der transnationalen Migrationen der Protagonisten, wie sie paradigmatisch in den beiden Töchtern des Ehepaares Babo und Siân Patel, Mayuri und Bean, aufscheint, durch die Herausbildung von transkulturellen dritten Räumen, durch das Gelingen von interkultureller Übersetzung innerhalb der Patel-Jones Familie sowie durch das weitgehende Fehlen der Thematisierung von Rassismus und anderen, im Kontext interkultureller Kontakte virulenten problematischen Aspekten. Schlussendlich verdankt diese transkulturelle Narratopologie ihre charakteristische Komplexität darüber hinaus vor allem der durch die *pendular vectorialities* der verschiedenen transnationalen Migrationen der Protagonisten erzeugten multiplen imaginativen Kopräsenz der diversen Schauplätze des Romans im Kopf des Lesers, die entscheidend zur Auflösung binärer Raumstrukturen (wie der imperialistischen Opposition von Zentrum und Peripherie) in der makrostrukturellen Narratopologie dieses Romans beiträgt (vgl. Hallet 2009: 89, 102-107).

In Kapitel 7.3 wurden dann drei ausgewählte Schauplätze des Romans hinsichtlich ihrer narrativen Semantisierung und Funktionalisierung als *transcultural third spaces* analysiert. Einer von ihnen – das gemeinsame Haus von Babo und Siân in Madras – soll hier kurz exemplarisch beleuchtet werden, da diese erste eigene Heimstatt des jungen Paares die vier Kriterien für *transcultural third spaces*, die ich in den Kapiteln 3.1 und 3.3.3 definiert habe, in geardezu paradigmatischer Weise erfüllt.

Erstens kommt dieses Setting nämlich infolge der in Kapitel 7.2 untersuchten transnationalen Migrationen der beiden Protagonisten zustande. Zweitens wohnt ihm ein genuin transkulturelles Element inne, da aus der Verschmelzung zweier heterogener kultureller Einflüsse ein drittes, transkulturelles Element in Gestalt der beiden Töchter des Paares – Mayuri und Bean – entsteht und sich in ihm auch weitere transkulturelle Praktiken wie z.B. die Vermischung von Elementen der christlichen Religion mit solchen des Jainismus entfalten können. Drittens ermöglicht es der Umzug in dieses neue Zuhause Babo und Siân, ihre Identitätskonfiguration nach ihren eigenen Vorstellungen zu gestalten, da sie nun nicht länger unter der strengen Aufsicht seiner Eltern stehen. Folglich geht mit diesem Schritt viertens eine beträchtliche Erweiterung ihrer Agency einher, da sie selbst in ihrem neuen Heim diejenigen sind, die die Regeln des Zusammenlebens definieren. *The Pleasure Seekers* rückt also mithin das konstruktive Potential, das gegenwärtigen transkulturellen Konstellationen innewohnt, in den Vordergrund und inszeniert transkulturellen Optimismus somit narrativ am Beispiel dieser indisch-walisischen Familie. Damit widerspricht dieser Roman der verbreiteten Annahme, dass *third spaces* notwendigerweise lediglich eine Angelegenheit Bhabha'scher Metaphorizität (vgl. Bhabha 1994b: 28-56) sind.

Kapitel 7.4 widmete sich schließlich der kontextorientierten Untersuchung der Herausbildung „transkultureller Subjektivität“ (Kalogeras et al. 2006a: ix) bei den Protagonisten als weiterer Folge der in diesem Roman narrativ inszenierten transnationalen Migrationen. Um nur das eindeutigste Beispiel herauszugreifen, gestaltet sich die narrative Konstitution von Beans transkultureller Subjektivität als ständiges psychisches Aushandeln und Aushalten des in ihr waltenden Gegensatzes zwischen dem Drang nach Bewegungsfreiheit bzw. Mobilität einerseits und ihrer Sehnsucht nach einer stabilen, eindeutigen und geographisch klar lokalisierbaren Selbstverortung und einer entsprechenden Identitätskonfiguration andererseits. Diese Ambivalenz zwischen der Einsicht in die diskursive Konstruktivität traditioneller Vorstellungen von Identität und Heimat und der dennoch unverkennbar vorhandenen Sehnsucht nach einer solch klaren Selbstverortung wurzelt in ihrer subjektiven Erfahrung von transnationaler Bewegung und Mobilität. Gerade die mit Flugreisen verbundene *agentivization* im Sinne scheinbar grenzenloser Mobilität ist es jedoch, die beim transkulturellen Subjekt Bean Gefühle von Heimatlosigkeit, *displacement* und *unbelonging* hervorrufen. Die in *The Pleasure Seekers* inszenierte transkulturelle Subjektivität und Identitätskonfiguration der Protagonisten identifiziert sich also mit keinem der beiden Extreme – (totale) Mobilität versus (totale) Stabilität – eindeutig und unwiderruflich, sondern zeichnet sich gerade dadurch aus, dass sie sich einer solch

eindeutigen Positionierung verweigert: Gemäß Sojas Prinzip des “thirding-as-Othering” (Soja 1996: 60) wählt sie stattdessen die dritte Option des “both/and also” (Soja 1996: 60; vgl. ebd.).

Alles in allem lässt sich *The Pleasure Seekers* also aus vier Gründen als eine mit transkulturellem Optimismus, nicht jedoch mit dekontextualisiertem transkulturellem Utopismus gesättigte transkulturelle *Asian British novel* (gemäß der in Kapitel 3.2 dargelegten Kriterien) klassifizieren: Erstens stehen im Zuge der narrativen Inszenierung von transnationalen Migrationsbewegungen zwischen heterogenen Kulturräumen in diesem Roman Figuren im Vordergrund, die einen vergleichsweise hohen Grad an individueller Agency, also selbstbestimmter Handlungsfreiheit, im Rahmen ihrer globalen Mobilität aufweisen. Zweitens ermöglichen die *pendular ontological vectorialities* dieser Migrationen die Entstehung von *transcultural third spaces* in ihrer utopischen Variante, bezeichnenderweise jedoch ausschließlich auf der individuellen topologischen Mikro-Ebene der Familie Patel-Jones. Drittens dekonstruiert dieser Roman sowohl traditionell essentialistisch-monolithische nationale, ethnische, kulturelle und religiöse Identitäten sowie deren poststrukturalistisches Gegenstück, also hochgradig hybridisierte, ständig im Fluss befindliche “transitional identities” (Chattopadhyay and Shrivastava 2012: 113) durch das *foregrounding* der persönlichen Identitätskonflikte des transkulturellen Subjekts Bean, die sich trotz ihrer Einsicht in die diskursive Konstruiertheit traditioneller Identitätskonzepte nach eben einer solchen stabilen und eindeutigen Identität sehnt. Viertens ist gerade das weitgehende Fehlen einer intensiven Auseinandersetzung mit dem problematischen und konflikträchtigen Erbe des britischen Imperialismus in der gegenwärtigen extratextuellen geopolitischen und geotopologischen Landschaft ein weiterer starker Indikator für das Vorherrschen des transkulturellen Optimismus in *The Pleasure Seekers*. Schlussendlich zeichnet dieser Optimismus hinsichtlich der Möglichkeit friedlichen und prosperierenden Zusammenlebens der Angehörigen heterogener Kulturen auch dafür verantwortlich, dass Tishani Doshis Debütroman das Phänomen des Transkulturalismus bzw. der Transkulturalität nicht nur als konkret gelebte Realität in der Gegenwart narrativ inszeniert, sondern auch als Option für die Zukunft im Sinne einer friedlichen inter- und transkulturellen Koexistenz zumindest in Erwägung zieht. Transkultureller Utopismus wird hier also nicht als teleologische Notwendigkeit der Geschichte dargestellt, sondern erscheint als ein Ideal, für dessen Verwirklichung auf der individuellen Mikro-Ebene der Familie es sich einzutreten lohnt, auch wenn es sich auf der Makro-Ebene der geopolitischen und geotopologischen Realitäten wahrscheinlich als unrealisierbar herausstellen wird.

10.8 Schlussbetrachtungen

In Kapitel 8 habe ich die Schlussbetrachtungen meiner Dissertation dargelegt, aufgeteilt in drei Unterkapitel: In 8.1 wurde das in den Kapiteln 2 bis 4 ausgearbeitete kontextorientierte theoretisch-methodologische Analyseinstrumentarium der kulturellen Narratologie der Bewegung in seinen Grundzügen rekapituliert (Da ich dieses Analyseinstrumentarium bereits in den entsprechenden Unterkapiteln – 10.2 bis 10.4 – der deutschen Zusammenfassung meiner Dissertation behandelt habe, sei hier lediglich auf diese Unterkapitel verwiesen.). In Kapitel 8.2 habe ich die zentralen Ergebnisse der drei Primärtextanalysen anhand der Frage, ob gegenwärtige *Asian British novels* zutreffend als Chronotopos utopischer Transkulturalität beschrieben werden können, resümiert. Wie bereits in den entsprechenden Analysekapiteln deutlich geworden ist, muss diese Frage mit einem klaren Nein beantwortet werden. Anstatt die gegenwärtige Epoche der Globalisierung einseitig als Beginn eines neuen Zeitalters der universalen Durchsetzung utopischer Transkulturalität zu feiern, setzen sich diese Romane in vielfältiger Weise mit dem Erbe des Kolonialismus und seinem anhaltend prägenden Einfluss auf interkulturelle Kontaktsituationen und transkulturelle Hybridisierungen in der Gegenwart auseinander. In diesem Zusammenhang haben sich die vier in Kapitel 3.2 formulierten Hypothesen zur Frage, inwiefern gegenwärtige *Asian British novels* als transkulturelle Romane konzeptualisiert werden können, als hilfreich erwiesen, weil sie einerseits eine umfassende Charakterisierung der analysierten Romane als solche ermöglichten, andererseits aber auch genügend Spielraum ließen, um der Individualität des jeweiligen literarischen Textes gerecht zu werden und damit der korpusinternen Variabilität hinsichtlich der eher dystopischen oder utopischen Ausprägung transkultureller Konstellationen im einzelnen Roman Rechnung zu tragen.

Mittels einer kurzen Zusammenfassung der drei Primärtextanalysen im Hinblick auf die textspezifischen narrativen Konfigurationen der Trialektik der Bewegung, der verschiedenen makrostrukturellen Bewegungsmuster und der dadurch entstehenden Narratologien sowie der Korrelation dieser Parameter mit der narrativen Evokation von Transkulturalität wurde im Folgenden gezeigt, in welcher unterschiedlichen Ausprägungen die drei ausgewählten Romane die Wechselbeziehung zwischen transnationaler (Migrations)Bewegung und Mobilität auf der einen und der Entstehung von utopischer oder dystopischer Transkulturalität auf der anderen in unterschiedlichen

historischen Kontexten und verschiedenen Intensitäten narrativ inszenieren (siehe die deutsche Zusammenfassung dieser Analysekapitel in den Unterkapiteln 10.5 bis 10.7).

Alles in allem ergibt sich diesbezüglich folgendes Bild: *The Impressionist* und *A Life Apart* nehmen beide einen dezidiert postkolonialen Standpunkt in Bezug auf Fragen interkultureller Kontakte und transkultureller Hybridisierung ein, wenn auch mit unterschiedlichen Gewichtungen: Während ersterer sich vor allem der postkolonialen Dekonstruktion westlich-imperialistischer Konzepte von Raum, Zeit und Geschichte sowie menschlicher Subjektivität und Agency in der Epoche des späten Imperialismus (Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts) verschreibt, insistiert letzterer auf den sich bis in die ernüchternd-desillusionierende postkoloniale Gegenwart erstreckenden negativen Auswirkungen von Kolonialismus und Imperialismus auf inter- und transkulturelle Konstellationen. Jeder auf seine Weise inszenieren beide Romane einen tiefgreifenden topologischen, ontologischen und epistemologischen Bruch zwischen kolonialer ‚Realität‘ und imperialistischer Rhetorik (im Falle von *The Impressionist*) bzw. zwischen (post)kolonialer ‚Realität‘ und der oft neo-imperialistischen Rhetorik von Fortschritt und Entwicklung (im Fall von *A Life Apart*). Darüber hinaus problematisieren beide Romane – wiederum aus unterschiedlichen Blickwinkeln – die Kategorie individueller, selbstbestimmter Agency. Im Gegensatz dazu steht in *The Pleasure Seekers* gerade diese Konzeptualisierung von Agency im Mittelpunkt, wie sich am weitgehend selbstbestimmten Handeln der Protagonisten ablesen lässt. Insofern ist es kein Zufall, dass letzterer Roman der einzige der drei ist, in dessen Storyworld sich transkulturelle dritte Räume herausbilden. Der Gegensatz zwischen der narrativen Inszenierung von Raum und Bewegung in *The Impressionist* und *A Life Apart* auf der einen und *The Pleasure Seekers* auf der anderen Seite lässt sich also auf den Punkt bringen als der zwischen postkolonialer Problematisierung und transkulturell-optimistischem Zelebrieren von globaler Mobilität im Sinne individuell-autonomer Bewegungsfreiheit. Entsprechend reichen die narrativen Konfigurationen von Transkulturalität von totaler Dystopie in *A Life Apart* zu dezidiert optimistischen, dem Pol der Utopie schon relativ nahekommenen Konstellationen in *The Pleasure Seekers*.

Alles in allem hat diese Studie gezeigt, wie gewinnbringend und produktiv die narrative Inszenierung von Raum und Bewegung in gegenwärtigen *Asian British novels* durch eine konsistente Fokussierung auf die Wechselbeziehungen zwischen den drei konstitutiven Dimensionen von Bewegung – Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit – untersucht werden kann. Gleichwohl haben die drei detaillierten Primärtextanalysen auch gezeigt, dass die narrative Inszenierung von Bewegung in diesen drei Romanen

das Analyseraster meiner Trialektik der Bewegung und der darauf aufbauenden kulturellen Narratologie der Bewegung dadurch dynamisieren, dass sie die Grenzen von deren Anwendbarkeit aufzeigen, so vor allem im Hinblick auf die zentrale Kategorie menschlicher Agency. Was die Trialektik der Bewegung betrifft, so wurzeln die Grenzen ihrer Anwendbarkeit darüber hinaus in erster Linie in den minimalistischen Modi narrativer Inszenierung von Bewegung, die in den analysierten Primärtexten eine so große Rolle spielen.

Was lässt sich also hinsichtlich der zentralen Forschungsfrage dieser Dissertation – Wie wird das Erleben von Raum und Bewegung in gegenwärtigen Asian British novels narrativ inszeniert? – abschließend sagen? Zunächst einmal ist eine auffällige Präferenz für minimalistische (elusive oder ellipsoide) Modi in der narrativen Inszenierung des (Figuren)Erlebens von Bewegung durch den Raum zu konstatieren. Diese hat ihre Ursache wiederum in zwei kontextuellen Faktoren: Was im Kontext der Gegenwart angesiedelte *Asian British novels* anbelangt, so resultiert diese Präferenz zum einen aus der hochgradigen Standardisierung zeitgenössischer Reisemodi und der damit einhergehenden weitgehenden Eliminierung der tellability der Reise selbst. Zum anderen stellt diese Präferenz eine postkoloniale Strategie dar, die genau das in den Hintergrund treten lässt, was sowohl im *colonial travelogue* als auch in postmodernen Transkulturalitätsdiskursen im Vordergrund steht: die Reise selbst bzw. das Ideal universell verfügbarer globaler Mobilität als ‚Gütesiegel‘ und Hauptmerkmal der gegenwärtigen Epoche des Transkulturalismus.

Da der Leser sich aufgrund dieses Minimalismus gezwungen sieht, die zur Einbettung einer Reise in die Inszenierung von Bewegung im jeweiligen Roman notwendigen Informationen anderswo zu beschaffen, kommt der narrativen Raumdarstellung insofern eine wichtige Rolle zu, als das Raumerleben der betreffenden Figur vor und nach der transnationalen Migrationsbewegung vielfach entscheidende Hinweise auf die prospektive und retrospektive kognitiv-affektive Semantisierung der heterogenen Kulturräume von Herkunfts- und Zielland und der Bewegung zwischen ihnen liefert. Die zentrale Aufgabe, diese individuell-subjektiven Semantisierungen real-und-imaginerter Bewegungen zwischen Indien und Großbritannien bereitzustellen, fällt in diesem Zusammenhang häufig der *mental mobility* der jeweiligen Figur bzw. Fokalisierungsinstanz zu.

Die in dieser Studie eingeführte typologische Trias narrativer Vektoren – intended, experienced und imagined vectors – hat eine präzise und differenzierte

narratologische Beschreibung des Zusammenspiels dieser drei ontologischen Dimensionen – Intention, Erleben/Erfahrung und Imagination – in der narrativen Inszenierung von real-und-imaginierten Bewegungen in gegenwärtigen Asian British novels ermöglicht. Aufgrund des häufig minimalistischen Darstellungsmodus in diesen Romanen kommt dem Phänomen der prospektiven, retrospektiven bzw. rein imaginären mental mobility der jeweiligen Fokalisierungsinstanz in diesem Prozess eine entscheidende Rolle zu, weil die besonderen, fallspezifischen Eigenschaften des experienced vector oft aus den kognitiven und affektiven Differenzen zwischen solchen prospektiven, retrospektiven oder imaginären Semantisierungen der betreffenden Reise erschlossen werden müssen. Im Wesentlichen erfüllt die mental mobility der Fokalisierungsinstanz in diesem Kontext drei Hauptfunktionen: sie dient der Vorbereitung der Reise (preparatory function → intended vector), der nachträglichen Reflexion über deren Verlauf (reflective function → retrospective imagined vector) oder erfüllt eine kompensatorische Funktion (compensatory function → purely imagined vector). Während diese typologischen Differenzierungen narrativer Vektoren also eine präzise narratologische Beschreibung dieser drei wesentlichen Komponenten (Intention, Erleben/Erfahrung, Imagination) narrativ inszenierter Reisen ermöglichen, ist es geboten, daran zu erinnern, dass diese Differenzierungen aufgrund des real-und-imaginierten Charakters solcher Bewegungen keine einander ausschließenden Kategorisierungen darstellen, sondern notwendigerweise Raum für verschiedene Arten von Hybridisierungen zwischen diesen drei ontologischen Bereichen – Intention, Erleben/Erfahrung und Imagination – und den entsprechenden Typen narrativer Vektoren bleibt.

Darüber hinaus zeitigt die Tatsache, dass Erwartungen an und Auswirkungen von transnationaler Migration oft mehr Gewicht erhalten als die Schilderung des experienced vector der Reise selbst auch die Notwendigkeit, sowohl die intratextuelle Einbettung der narrativen Inszenierung des Erlebens von real-und-imaginierten Bewegungen in ihre tiefenstrukturellen raum-zeitlichen Kontexte im Sinne dessen, was diese Studie als Narratologien definiert hat, als auch die Einbettung der jeweiligen Romanhandlung insgesamt in extratextuelle kulturelle Topologien des historischen oder gegenwärtigen Kontextes, in dem sie spielt, in der Analyse zu berücksichtigen.

In Kapitel 8.3 habe ich schließlich Perspektiven und Grenzen der Übertragbarkeit des in dieser Dissertation entwickelten kontextualisierten theoretisch-methodologischen Analyseinstrumentariums der Trialektik der Bewegung und der darauf aufbauenden kulturellen Narratologie der Bewegung auf andere literarische

Kontexte anhand zweier kurzer Beispiele tentativ aufgezeigt. Sowohl V. S. Naipauls *The Enigma of Arrival* (2002 [1987]) als auch der Roman *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn* (1998) der türkisch-deutschen Autorin Emine Sevgi Özdamar erwiesen sich im Zuge dessen vor allem aufgrund der starken Präsenz der selbstbestimmten Agency einer autobiographisch gefärbten Erzähl- und Fokalisierungsinstanz als prinzipiell mittels dieses Instrumentariums analysierbar. Weitere diese Transferierbarkeit begünstigende Faktoren lagen in erster Linie in den aus den mannigfaltigen Bewegungen dieser Protagonist(inn)en erschließbaren makrostrukturellen Bewegungsmustern sowie den daraus entstehenden Narratologien der jeweiligen Romane. Überdies stellen beide Romane das individuelle Raum- und Zeiterleben ihrer jeweiligen Protagonist(inn)en vor, während und nach ihren Reisen bzw. Migrationsbewegungen in den Vordergrund ihres narrativen Diskurses.

Selbstverständlich erfordert eine detaillierte Analyse dieser Aspekte eine andere soziokulturelle Kontextualisierung der narrativen Raum- und Bewegungsdarstellung in diesen beiden Romanen als jene, die im Rahmen dieser Studie für den Bereich gegenwärtiger *Asian British novels* skizziert wurde. Die wesentlichen theoretischen und methodologischen Postulate und Innovationen meiner Trialektik bzw. kulturellen Narratologie der Bewegung lassen sich jedoch durchaus auf diese literarischen Texte anwenden. Alles in allem hat diese Studie also ein vielseitig einsetzbares theoretisch-methodologisches Beschreibungs- und Analysemodell für die narrative Inszenierung von real-und-imaginierten Bewegungen durch den Raum erarbeitet.

Gerade die Kategorie der Agency ist es jedoch, die die Transferierbarkeit dieses Modells auf solche historischen, soziokulturellen und literarischen Kontexte beschränkt, in denen diese überhaupt als eigenständiger Faktor in der Entstehung menschlicher Bewegung zum Tragen kommt. Damit ist auch gesagt, dass seine Anwendung auf historische Kontexte wie Sklaverei oder *indentured labour* sich aufgrund eben dieser zentralen Rolle der ‚Achillesferse‘ Agency als äußerst schwierig, um nicht zu sagen unmöglich erweist. Somit kann das entwickelte Modell selbstverständlich keinesfalls den Anspruch erheben, das Zustandekommen menschlicher Bewegung in sämtlichen Kontexten und unter allen nur denkbaren äußeren Umständen erklären bzw. repräsentieren zu können.

Abschließend wurde noch ein Ausblick auf im Kontext meiner Forschungsfrage sich ergebende Desiderate, die in dieser Dissertation nicht (mehr) behandelt werden

konnten, gegeben: Da diese Studie die narrative Inszenierung von Raum und Bewegung ausschließlich in ungefähr seit dem Jahr 2000 veröffentlichten Romanen aus dem Bereich *Asian British fiction* untersucht hat, besteht ein erstes Desideratum in einer entsprechenden kontextorientierten narratologischen Analyse dieses Aspektes in älteren *Asian British novels*, so vor allem in Salman Rushdies Romanen *Midnight's Children* (2008 [1981]) und *The Satanic Verses* (2006 [1988]). Ein zweites, methodologisches Desideratum besteht in der systematischen Korrelation der affektiv-kognitiven Eigenschaften des Erlebnisses von Bewegung in weiteren Reisemodi bzw. Fortbewegungsmitteln mit den für die Darstellung solcher Reisen angewandten narrativen Darstellungstechniken (wie sie in dieser Studie am Beispiel von Flugreisen exemplarisch geleistet wurde) und mit den im Zuge dessen sich herausbildenden makrostrukturellen Bewegungsmustern und Narratologien. Drittens ist weitere Forschung vor allem zur diachronen Evolution von solchen Bewegungsmustern und Narratologien in der narrativen Inszenierung von Raum und Bewegung in den Bereichen *Asian British fiction*, *Indian English literature*, *Asian American fiction* sowie *travel writing* über die verschiedenen literaturgeschichtlichen Epochen hinweg notwendig. Schließlich ist viertens eine systematische Korrelierung der Ergebnisse solcher Studien mit der narratologischen Analyse der Evokation von Transkulturalität in einzelnen Beispielen aus diesen Textkorpora angezeigt, da eine vergleichende Untersuchung der in heterogenen geographischen, historischen, kulturellen und literarischen Kontexten zu diesem Zweck angewandten narrativen Strategien wertvolle Erkenntnisse für eine "transcultural literary history" (Lindberg-Wada 2006) verspricht.

Wie bereits diese kurze Liste demonstriert, bleibt die Frage, wie literarische Texte aus verschiedenen Epochen extratextuelle kulturelle Topologien im Medium der narrativen Fiktion repräsentieren, modifizieren, affirmativ bestätigen oder dekonstruieren, eine äußerst spannende und lohnenswerte. Während diese Studie gezeigt hat, wie produktiv die komplexen Wechselbeziehungen zwischen transnationaler Migration, Bewegungsmustern, Topologien und der Entstehung von Transkulturalität mittels einer konsistenten Fokussierung auf die narrativen Konfigurationen des kombinatorischen Zusammenspiels der drei für Bewegung konstitutiven Dimensionen – Räumlichkeit, Agency und Zeitlichkeit – analysiert werden kann, bezeugen die hier in aller gebotenen Kürze aufgezählten Desiderate die große Relevanz der Kategorien Raum und Bewegung für die Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaften im gegenwärtigen Zeitalter der Globalisierung.

Urheberschaftserklärung zur Dissertation:

Ich erkläre: Ich habe die vorgelegte Dissertation selbständig und nur mit den Hilfen angefertigt, die ich in der Dissertation angegeben habe. Alle Textstellen, die wörtlich oder sinngemäß aus veröffentlichten oder nicht veröffentlichten Schriften entnommen sind, und alle Angaben, die auf mündlichen Auskünften beruhen, sind als solche kenntlich gemacht.

Gießen, den 14. Dezember 2015

(Alexander Franz Matschi)