Narrating Generations:
Representations of Generationality and Genealogy
in Contemporary British Asian Narratives

Inaugural-Dissertation
zur
Erlangung des Doktorgrades
der Philosophie des Fachbereichs 05
der Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen

vorgelegt von
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aus Gießen
2012

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Tag der Disputation: 21. November 2012

To my family and friends

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1. Introducing Generation Studies to Literary and Cultural Studies

1.1. Sending 'Generation' on the Journey to Contemporary British Asian Literature

The naming of generations has recently become more of a labelling or branding than a characterization of communal relationships.[1] German newspapers and magazines, quick to spot trends and fashions, report on the "Generation Bachelor" (cf. Maeck 2012), the "Generation Facebook" (cf. Matthes 2012; Leistert/Röhle 2011), and the like to describe developments in different public spheres. Ranging from communication behaviour to university education, the term 'generation' appears to offer an explanatory model for all kinds of groups or communities that are assumed to share a specific experience. In this prescientific use, 'generation' as social grouping offers potential for identification and the formation of a collective identity similar to Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1998), in which the nation is defined as "an imagined political community": "It is *imagined* because the member of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 1998: 6). Comparable to Anderson's conceptualization of a nation, a generation can bring forth a collective identity in its members although they never know their fellow generation-members.[2] Yet the quick succession in which the popular media label new generations raises questions of the longevity of the assumed imagined communities and the validity of the allegedly shared experience they presuppose.

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[1] As will become clear in the course of this introduction, this thesis understands the concept 'generation' to be comprised of the two aspects of generationality and genealogy. When using *generations* without the inverted commas, which indicate its usage as a concept, both aspects are included in the one term. Thereby too many repetitions of the phrase 'genealogy and generationality' are avoided. Furthermore, in this study 'generational' is used as adjective when referring to relations based on a generationality (cf. Reulecke 2008: 119).

[2] In this everyday usage of 'generation' as basis for a collective identity, Jürgen Straub's (1998: 100) criticism on the use of the concept 'collective identity' is apposite and underscores the critique of an overuse of 'generation': "Stereotype und normierende Konstruktionen kollektiver Identiät finden sich insbesondere dort, wo die Kollektive groß und unüberschaubar werden – anonyme Großgruppen wie 'Geschlechter', 'Klassen' oder 'Nationen' sind berüchtige Beispiele. Solche Großgruppen laufen zwangsläufig Gefahr, als '*unechte Wir-Gruppen*' zu fungieren." Questioning the validity of the collective identity that is ascribed for example to the media-generations mentioned above highlights the importance of critically challenging this use of the concept 'generation'.

A discussion in an introductory seminar course on "Genealogies and Generations in British Literature"[3] serves to illustrate how the ephemerality of the identification potential turns out to be problematic. Thus, firstly, the once popular "Generation Praktikum" (cf. Stolz 2005) or "Generation Golf" (cf. Poschard 2009) do no longer evoke recognition of the implications and characteristics ascribed to these generations. And, secondly, today's students do not necessarily identify themselves as members of the 'Generation Bachelor', even though the label is supposed to describe their life-worlds. Only after reflecting on the negative connotations of the 'Generation Bachelor' in its media representation and an attempt at correcting the image associated with this particular generation did the students contemplate the influence their grouping based on an assumed shared experience in the new Bachelor system could have for them. That their belonging to this generation actually has no significant influence on their lives and does not describe their personal life-world led the seminar participants to conclude that a critical closer examination of the generations proclaimed by the popular media is essential in order to evaluate the potential for identification they offer.

Moving on from the students' own personal life-worlds, a similar discussion about the benefit and use of the term developed in the exemplary literary analysis of Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000). Specifically the notion of 'the migrant experience', often presented as a unified collective memory, e.g. in museum exhibitions,[4] raised central questions about the practice of labelling 'first-' and 'second-generation immigrants'. This common distinction of literary characters, adopted from migration studies (cf. chapter 2.2.1), reduces individuals to their geographical birthplace in relation to the country they live in. Therefore, the distinction between first- and second-generation migrants is comparable to the unreflecting application of the concept 'generation'

[3] This seminar was held at Justus-Liebig-University Giessen during the summer term 2012 in the module "Introduction to Literary and Cultural Studies" in the Department of English and American Literature and Culture.

[4] In an exemplary fashion, this is the case in the collection of The Library of Congress "American Memory" (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afctshtml/tsme.html>) where migration after World War I is presented as a unified, collective experience in which personal memories and experiences are levelled by the national institutionalization of this memory. An alternative to the The Library of Congress is presented by the British equivalent in The National Archives (<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/lesson11.htm>), which speaks of "Experiences of immigration to the UK" thus acknowledging the plurality of experiences that migration processes bring for the individual.

through the media and the shared experience that is ascribed to literary characters on this basis has to be questioned.[5]

While the everyday understanding of the concept of 'generation' already offers a number of interesting approaches to the concept of 'collective identity'[6] and is helpful as a category of order and differentiation, this use neglects both the vast amount of research and theoretical development in generation studies and creates an impression of unity at the expense of the individual experience. Especially when the distinction between first- and second-generation immigrants is applied against the backdrop of authorial biography in the attempt to integrate migration literature in the classification system of literary history (cf. Sommer 2005) or to assign specific literary genres to generations of migrant authors as privileged modes of writing (cf. Stein 2004) the potential of the concept of 'generation' is reduced to its ordering function.

The versatility of the concept of 'generation', which in the aforementioned use is limited to a synchronic approach to 'generation', can best be illustrated by an etymologically informed approach:

> Like the English usage, ancient Greek and Latin terms for generation (*genos*, *genea*, *genesis*, *gonē*, *genus*, *generatio*, etc.) carry a wide scope of meanings, from birth and reproduction to age, time of life, cycle of life, race, family, or even species. All these words stem from a common Indo-European root, **gen-* […] the fundamental signification of which is "to come into existence." But even when it is closely tied to its primary meaning, the concept of generation maintains an ultimate relativity: the child forms a generation only with respect to his parents, or when children are in turn born to him. Generation, then, is the reference point, in ancient usage as well as today, for a multitude of concepts, a very metaphor for existence. (Nash 1978: 2)

Within this wide range of meanings, from "birth and reproduction" to "species", the common thread is that the concept of 'generation' describes processes of coming "into existence". Nash's understanding of 'generation' as a metaphor for existence that gives rise to a multitude of concepts points towards the problem of 'generation': similar to the

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[5] In an exemplary fashion this is thematized by Barbara Korte in her 1999 essay "Generationenbewußtsein als Element 'schwarzer' britischer Identitätsfiktion", in which she problematizes the concept 'generation' in connection to the aspect of gender.

[6] For a very critical examination of the concept 'collective identity' cf. Niethammer (2000) and Straub (1998). For the conceptualization of the collective identity of generationalities this study will draw on Jan Assmann's work on collective identities and cultural memory (1997: 132): "Unter einer *kollektiven* oder *Wir-Identität* verstehen wir das Bild, das eine Gruppe von sich aufbaut und mit dem sich deren Mitglieder identifizieren. Kollektive Identität ist eine Frage der *Identifikation* seitens der beteiligten Individuen. Es gibt sie nicht 'an sich', sondern immer nur in dem Maße, wie sich bestimmte Individuen zu ihr bekennen. Sie ist so stark oder so schwach, wie sie im Bewußtsein der Gruppenmitglieder lebendig ist und deren Denken und Handeln zu motivieren vermag."

everyday use of the term, the wide scope of meanings – which makes 'generation' particularly attractive for research in different fields – impedes an easy understanding of what exactly 'generation' refers to in specific contexts. Therefore, employing the concept of 'generation' always requires a terminological disambiguation: first by dissociating an everyday understanding of 'generation' from the scientific concept, and second by pointing out whether a synchronic or a diachronic approach to the concept is chosen.

Etymologically traced back to both Greek and Latin, attesting to its "ancient usage", the conceptual origins of 'generation' cannot be pinpointed, although studies like *Das Konzept der Generation: Eine Wissenschafts- und Kulturgeschichte* (2008: 33) by Parnes, Vedder, and Willer manage to trace the concept back to Aristotle, who used the distinction between *genesis* and *genos* to illustrate the difference between procreation and classification. It now finds application in across-the-boards fields of research because of its function as a category of difference and order as well as its usefulness for the systematization and interpretation of change and development. These manifold possibilities to apply the concept of 'generation' not only in the social sciences, political sciences, or history but also in biology, engineering, or materials sciences already shows its potential to bridge the gap between the natural sciences and the humanities (cf. chapter 2.1.1).

Because of its versatility, its historical background in various fields, and its diversity in application, the present study regards 'generation' as a travelling concept.[7] For one thing, 'generation' is a concept because, although the field of generation studies is rapidly expanding – as the work by the Centre for Literary and Cultural Research in Berlin or the post graduate programme "Generationengeschichte" at Göttingen University prove – there is no coherent theory of generations available. Because of the different aspects the concepts unites, it rather offers multiple "miniature theories, and in that guise, help[s] in the analysis of objects, situations, states, and other theories" (Bal 2002: 22). Furthermore, as will be shown in the course of this study, 'generation' is not a fixed concept. Instead it travels "between disciplines, between individual scholars, between historical periods, and between geographically dispersed academic communities" (ibid.: 24). Therefore, 'generation' is an inherently interdisciplinary

[7] This study uses 'travelling concept' as developed by Mieke Bal in her seminal *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities* (2002). The metaphor of travelling concepts has, amongst others, been taken up by Neumann/Tygstrup (2009). A previous conception of the travel-metaphor was developed by Said (1983) in his essay on "Traveling Theory".

concept, whose meaning and operational value (cf. ibid: 24) changes according to the travels between the disciplines.

Following Bal's remarks, "Narrating Generations" sends the concept of 'generation' onto a journey from sociology, history as well as political sciences into literary and cultural studies. While the concept has previously been applied to literary history and genre theory, the present study breaks new ground in leaving behind the authorial biography, temporal classifications in literary periods, and the notion of family resemblances to analyse representations of generations in contemporary migration literature (cf. chapter 1.2). A text-immanent, work-oriented focus on how the two central aspects of 'generation', generationality and genealogy (cf. chapter 2.1), are represented in narratives and their functions for the texts is this study's point of departure. The field of contemporary 'migration literature', a term coined by Søren Frank (2008) to indicate "a move away from authorial biography as the decisive parameter, emphasizing instead intratextual features such as content and form as well as extratextual forces such as social processes" (2008: 3),[8] presents an object for study in which the full potential of 'generation' can unfold. For the very reason that this study moves beyond previous applications of 'generation' to authorial biography, Frank's terminology of 'migration literature' is favoured over contesting labels such as 'intercultural literature', 'multicultural literature', or 'fictions of migration' because it

[8] Frank develops the term 'migration literature' in distinction to Roy Sommer's 'fictions of migration' (2001). This study prefers the work-oriented 'migration literature' to 'fictions of migration' because the latter is too restrictive for this particular study, as it already assumes a number of conflicts that are based on an application of 'generation' as a category of difference: "Der zweite Teil der Bezeichnung, der Begriff *migration*, ist in diesem Zusammenhang nicht auf die wörtliche Bedeutung einer räumlichen Bewegung beschränkt, sondern meint allgemein das Oszillieren zwischen zwei entgegengesetzten kulturellen Polen, sei es zwischen alter und neuer Heimat, zwischen Einwanderen der ersten Generation und den in Großbritannien geborenen *black Britons*, zwischen unterschiedlichen Minoritäten oder zwischen Minoritäten auf der einen und der Mehrheitskultur auf der anderen" (Sommer 2001: 6). The many conflicts drawn upon in the conceptualization of migration already indicate tensions that are – with the exception of the conflict between minority and majority cultures – boiled down to the relationships between different generations. This inevitably brings the differences between generations into focus and neglects notions such as, for example, intragenerational solidarity. Furthermore, in his theoretical elaborations on interculturality, multiculturality, and transculturality in *fictions of migration* Sommer automatically restricts the genre to authors born in Great Britain because they are confronted with the problems of a multicultural society: "Autoren der zweiten, in Großbritannien geborenen Generation wie Hanif Kureishi oder Courttia Newland sind dagegen als Vertreter ethnischer Minderheiten mit anderen Problemen konfrontiert […]" (Sommer 2001: 11). Thus, in addition to the generation conflict inherent in fictions of migration, Sommer employs a generational approach to the authorial biography, which is a take on the subject the present study wants to avoid.

highlights the "work-oriented approach rather than an author-oriented way of reading and categorizing migration literature" (ibid.: 16) and allows for a thematization on a "thematic and social level" as well as on a "stylistic and formal level" (ibid.: 17). Frank thus conceptualizes migration literature in a way that encourages 'generation' to travel into a literary field that allows a combination of 'generation' with migration without restricting the concept to a category of classification.

This study's object of research is contemporary British Asian literature, a literature that classifies as 'migration literature'.[9] Within this particular field of literature, which offers a wide range of texts and a growing body of research, 'generation' will be analysed on the textual level. The choice of British Asian literature originates from the popularity of this particular literature, the many publications within this field in recent years, and the critical acclaim British Asian narratives have found. As a consequence of the British imperial past, this study understands British Asian literature to include writing that deals with migration from countries of the Indian subcontinent that formerly belonged to the British Empire. By narrowing down the selection of narratives to this specific migration literature, the concept of 'generation' can be analysed in a body of writing that shares a set of cultural practices that are recurrent issues in British Asian writing such as, e.g. traditions, religious diversity, language proficiencies, as well as the memory of the Partition of India in 1947.[10] Within this range of cultural practices, which are problematized through the experience of migration, British Asian literature offers room to analyse different representations of generations and at the same time sets a clear-cut limit to the literature subsumed under the label.

The decision to send 'generation' onto a journey into migration literatures, looking specifically at British Asian narratives, originates from the first supposition this study is

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[9] This study understands 'contemporary' in relation to historical events (cf. Bluhm 2007: 267). Similar to the German reunification (1989/90) as a beginning of contemporary German literature, the Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's departure from office offers a point of departure for a definition of contemporary British literature. Although the Conservative period of government only ended in 1997 when the Labour candidate Tony Blair, who coined the slogan "Cool Britannia", was elected Prime Minister, 1990 marks the end of 'Thatcherism', as the politics of privatization, anti-trade unionism, and euroscepticism have come to be called; see Kavangh (1987), Diller (1994).

[10] To describe this set of cultural practices in British Asian narratives one can draw on Doris Bachmann-Medick's (1998 [1996]: 8) metaphor of the textuality of cultures: "Literatur, Texte, Filme, Medien sind Träger kultureller Darstellung und Kodierung, wie sie für Prozesse des Kulturtransfers entscheidend sind. Durch sie werden Traditionen und Überzeugungssysteme, Schlüsselsymbole und –praktiken sowie Fremd- und Selbstbilder ausgebildet und für die praktische interkulturelle Auseinandersetzung geradezu aufbereitet bzw. hierfür strategisch einsetzbar gemacht."

based on. While previous studies have either focused on the authorial biography or used 'generation' as a category of order, this study assumes that by taking into consideration both aspects of 'generation', genealogy and generationality, the concept has much more to offer than merely pointing out generation conflicts. Analysing the representations of generations in British Asian narratives will show that a focus on either one of the aspects of 'generation' is not reasonable. The intricate interplay of generationalities and genealogies in the narratives and the intersections of these aspects open up new interpretative approaches that go beyond the classical generation conflict as a plot structure. Therefore, this study firstly supposes that a generation studies' perspective on British Asian narratives will enrich the literary interpretations. Secondly, the generation studies approach highlights the fact that the aspects of the concept of 'generation' cannot be viewed as distinctly delimited. Only by looking at the intersections of generational and genealogical relations does the concept of 'generation' develop its full potential for the analysis of literary texts.

Likewise, the metaphor of the travelling concept also implies that the concept that is sent on the journey into literary and cultural studies will take something with it from its journey (cf. Bal 2002: 24). As an overview over the state of generation studies in chapter 2 of this study will show, this very diverse and interdisciplinary field benefits from the combination of generation and literary studies in that the latter provides a methodological approach to representations of generations in narratives that is conducive to further research. Thus, not only will an analysis of contemporary British Asian narratives profit from the introduction of 'generation' into literary studies, but generation studies will equally benefit from the methodological approach that literary and cultural studies have to offer.

Most importantly, the second supposition of this study claims that an analysis of narrative texts allows generation studies unique insights into formation processes of social generations on the synchronic axis of the concept and the dynamics in relationships in familial generations on the diachronic axis. This contribution to generation studies, which the present study aims to make, is best analysed in migration literatures because the universal phenomena the concept of 'generation' implies are highlighted by the experience of migration which the literary characters have to cope with. In these circumstances families are focused on who are dealing with the consequences of migration and processes of integration, thus exacerbating potential tensions between family members and the roles members of a family fulfil. Similarly, whereas generation studies in history or political sciences tend to only describe and analyse generations in hindsight, an analysis of British Asian narratives provides

insights into the formation processes of social generations and generationalities. Especially in migration literatures, in which not only a distinction from the parent generation but also a differentiation from mainstream generationalities are of interest for literary characters dealing with the experience of migration these processes can be successfully analysed. Furthermore, turning towards literature to analyse generations, the intricate relationships between generational and genealogical ties between characters become open to scrutiny, as this study does not restrict the focus to either of the two aspects of 'generation' but aims to find and interpret the intersections of both.

The title of this study, "Narrating Generations: Representations of Generationality and Genealogy in Contemporary British Asian Narratives", already indicates these two basic assumptions of this thesis. Furthermore, the play on words in "Narrating Generations" highlights the fact that not only can generations narrate their stories, but generations can also be narrated or narratively created (cf. Nieberle/Strowick 2006b; Nünning/Nünning 2006). Additionally, two further elements of the title, namely 'representation' and 'narrative', demand clarification. As generation studies usually deal with empirical data and real-world generations it has to be noted that this study refers exclusively to symbolic representations of generations in literature. The symbolic representation of generations in literary texts is therefore not to be confused with the real-world phenomenon that the concept of 'generation' can refer to (cf. Bal 2002: 22): "[R]epresentation is always *of* something or someone, *by* something or someone, *to* someone" (Mitchell 1995: 12). This triangular relationship of representation is embedded in the 'code' literature whose 'means' is language (cf. ibid.: 13). The representation of generations in language is symbolic because "letters, words, and whole texts represent sounds and states of affairs without in the least resembling what they represent" (Mitchell 1995: 14). The literary representation of generations is thus an aesthetic representation, of e.g. fictional characters or events, that allows for the analysis of generationalities and genealogies presented in narratives texts. The term 'narrative' is preferred over 'literature' or 'fiction', for its inclusive characteristic in which the novel is "one of a number of narrative possibilities" (Scholes/Phelan/Kellog 2006 [1966]: 3). 'Narrative' includes all literary works that share the two major characteristics: "the presence of a story and a story-teller" (ibid.: 4). This basic definition offers a way to limit the body of writing in a way that excludes dramatic and lyrical texts but includes new forms of life writing, of which one particular form is included in this study's analysis of primary literature (cf. chapter 7).

Furthermore, the choice of 'narrative' indicates the third supposition of "Narrating Generations". Analysing representations of generations, this study assumes that a

generation studies' perspective on migration literature allows the scope of previous studies' discussions of genres favoured in British migration literature to be broadened. As will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3.1, the representation of generations is a generic feature of a number of literary genres. Some of these genres, such as the Bildungsroman and the family novel, have been argued in the past to be paradigmatic modes of writing in British migration literature (cf. Sommer 2001; Stein 2004). However, previous studies have often restricted themselves to an analysis of the representation of either generational or genealogical relations in literature, leading to a dichotomous distinction between the family novel and the Bildungsroman (cf. e.g. Ru 1992; Redfield 2006). In order to take previous research one step further by incorporating both aspects of 'generation' and pointing out the intersections and correlations of genealogies and generationalities, this study argues that an umbrella term such as 'generation narrative' (cf. Bohnenkamp 2009) offers new perspectives that invite interpretations of the narratives to go beyond an either-or-approach. Furthermore, it will be argued that narratives that elude traditional genre attributions because of their poetic complexity invite new readings by engaging a generation studies approach to the novel. Therefore, although the established genres will be discussed to highlight the representation of generations, "Narrating Generations" will have to transgress traditional generic borders to show that the more inclusive term 'generation narrative' contributes to a combination of generation studies and literary studies.

"Narrating Generations" consequently aims to explore three central research objectives. First, this study wants to explore the full potential of the travelling concept 'generation' by examining its versatility that can be broken down to the aspects 'generationalities' and 'genealogies'. Studying the functions of both aspects and highlighting the intersections as well as the correlations of both, the present study aims at a combination of generation studies and literary and cultural studies to offer new approaches to the interpretation of migration literature, which so far has received only scant attention. Second, the present thesis aims to provide a comprehensive methodological framework to analyse literary representations of generations that will inform generation studies' methodological approaches that until now are limited to empirical research. Third, exploring the notion of 'generation narratives', "Narrating Generations" hopes to make a contribution to the discussion of genres that represent generations in migration literature by pointing out how the representation of generations influences generic attributions and how focusing on generations leads to the development of new genres. These three main objectives challenge previous usages of 'generation' in literary studies and propose a new perspective on the field of British Asian narratives. The following

overview of the state of the arts will therefore highlight how the present study's approach is innovative, contributing to both generation studies and literary and cultural studies.

1.2. State of the Arts: Generation Studies and British Asian Literature

This study's aim to integrate a generation studies' perspective in the analysis of British Asian narratives complements and advances prior applications of the concept of 'generation' in literary studies. Focusing on literary history and genre theory, 'generation' is traditionally applied as a category of order and difference in literary studies. Sharing the same etymological origin, 'generation' and 'genre' – the latter referring more generally to 'category' or 'type'[11] – share several characteristics, such as continuity and procreation, which allow for development and evolution. Parnes, Vedder and Willer (2008: 32-36), in their comprehensive cultural history of the concept of 'generation', have traced the interdependence of 'generation' and 'genre' back to the writings of Aristotle. Analysing different German translations of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* they point out that 'generation' and 'genre', the Greek *genos* (genre, type, gender, sex, tribe, species, kind) and *genesis* (procreation, birth, origin, emergence), are related both lexically and semantically:

> Die grundlegende Definition "*gonos* ergo *genos*"[12] ist eine *figura etymologica*, ein bedeutungsvolles Wortspiel; Vokablen wie *genos* (Gattung, Geschlecht, Verwandtschaft, Stamm, Art), *genea* (Geburt, Abstammung, Herkunft), *genesis* (Zeugung, Geburt, Ursprung, Entstehung), *geneté* (Geburt), *gonos* oder *gone* (Zeugung, Geburt, Abstammung), *gyné* (Frau), *genesthai* oder *gignomai* (werden, entstehen, geboren/gezeugt werden) konstituieren im Griechischen ein ausgedehntes Wortfeld, das eine Vielzahl gedanklicher Korrespondenzen nicht nur anzeigt, sondern auch befördert. (Parnes/Vedder/Willer 2008: 33).

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[11] This use of genre as type or category reminds of Helmut Bonheim's discussion of "Genre and the Theory of Models" (1999) where he states: "A literary genre such as a novel or a play is rather like a model house: the approximate size, shape and structure are copied and also varied, each copy being capable of serving as a model in its turn. In literature as in architecture, the model can also take the form of an abstraction or description rather than an example of the art" (ibid.: 11).

[12] This play on words is a quote from Laura L. Nash's essay "Concepts of Existence: Greek Origins of Generational Thought" (1978: 1) in which she points out: "But our most secure standard for defining a generation rests on the Greek root of the word, *genos*, whose basic meaning is reflected in the word *genesthai*, 'to come into existence'; until 1961 the first definition of the word in Webster's unabridged dictionary was still 'procreation.' That moment when a child is born simultaneously produces a new generation separating parent and offspring – *gonos* ergo *genos* – and the very concept educes the paradox of an evershifting threshold in time." Parnes, Vedder and Willer translate the play on words into German as "[d]ie Zeugung bewirkt die Gattung" (2008: 32).

Relating this lexical field to the initially discussed definition by Nash it carries a scope of meaning ranging from birth and reproduction to "age, time of life, cycle of life, race, family, or even species" and establishes 'generation' as a relational concept: "Generation […] is the reference point, in ancient usage as well as today, for a multitude of concepts, a very metaphor for existence" (Nash 1978: 2). As a metaphor, Nash further argues, generational and genealogical continuity is a touchstone of the stability of tradition (cf. ibid.: 18) and it is exactly the generational and genealogical continuity, which is adopted to create and describe literary histories. 'Generation', as an organizational tool, offers "two different criteria for classification – procreation or mutual participation in an event" (ibid.: 16), which have both been taken up by literary studies in literary history and genre theory.

On the level of literary histories the most avowed position drawing on genealogical reasoning is Harold Bloom's argument in *Anxiety of Influence* (1997 [1973]), in which he discusses the basically Oedipal relations between authors and their respective precursors:

> Poetic influence or as I shall more frequently term it, poetic misprision [sic! misinterpretation] is necessarily the study of the life-cycle of the poet-as-poet. When such study considers the context in which that life-cycle is enacted, it will be compelled to examine simultaneously the relations between poets as cases akin to what Freud called the family romance, and as chapters in the history of modern revisionism, 'modern' meaning here post-Enlightenment. (Bloom 1997: 7 f.)

Bloom sees literary history as a genealogical development of poets who have to surpass the poetic influence they are under in order not to be viewed as mere epigones. Referring to Freud's conception of the family romance,[13] which implies fictional stories about a person's ancestry that compensate autobiographical anxiety (cf. Weigel 2006: 77), Bloom refers to processes of suppression between the poets who have to free themselves from the paramount works of their literary predecessors. He thus conceives the literary scene as a kind of family in which children have to overcome their parents' influence. Sigrid Weigel views this conception of literature rather critically:

> Während Freud mit seinem Konzept des Familienromans auf die verschwiegenen und unheimlichen Elemente genealogischer Erzählungen hingewiesen hat, kommt es bei Harold Bloom statt dessen zu einer Familialisierung der literarischen Tradition. Dabei verengt sich der Blick auf die Literaturgeschichte zu einer rein literarischen Genealogie, während die Textpraktiken allein der Vermeidung von Einfluß dienen, so als ob Literatur nur aus Literatur entstehen würde: Literaturgeschichte als Junggesellmaschine. (Weigel 2006: 79)

[13] Bloom refers to Freud's essay "Der Familienroman der Neurotiker" (1909).

Weigel criticizes Bloom's reductionist view on literary traditions and emphasizes that in his conception poets do not pass on literary genres as a kind of inheritance but would rather view themselves as bachelors who do not produce 'literary heirs'.

Further critique of Bloom's decidedly male genealogical understanding of literature has been brought forward by Susan Gubar and Sandra Gilbert, whose introduction to *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979) discusses the metaphor of literary paternity. However justified their criticism on Bloom and however crucial their discussion of female writers in the 18th and 19th century, Gubar and Gilbert's call for a 'secret sisterhood' invokes similar genealogical conceptions of literary history producing an example of "matriarchal reading" (Williams 1992: 54). This is critically pointed out by Linda R. Williams who picks up on Alice Jardine's argument from "Notes for an Analysis" in which she aims to avoid the "mother/daughter paradigm here (so as not to succumb simply to miming the traditional father/son, master/disciple model), but it is difficult to avoid being positioned by the institution as mothers and daughters" (Jardine 1989: 77).[14] For the reason that the mother-daughter paradigm again establishes a power differential in feminist literary history, Jardin and Williams argue for an "intra-generational solidarity" (Williams 1992: 53) that would erase these power differentials by establishing a generationality of authors. The genealogical thinking in literary history thus seems to be a double-edged sword, highlighting both patrilineal and matrilineal literary histories in which kinship and the abstract idea of a family are consulted to explain and describe the development of literature.[15]

The concept of 'generation' is further applied to national literatures and specific literary epochs, which are often equated with genealogical perspectives (cf. Weigel 2006: 181 ff). By way of example, Rolf Lundén and his colleagues use empirical methods to study the "status of literature in social space" (Lundén/Ekelund/Blom 2002: 302) in research on literary generations in United States of America between 1940 and 2000 to examine the social conditions of authorship in this national context. Thus, looking at cohorts of authors and their first works this study uses 'generation' to discuss the status of literature in a particular literary epoch.[16]

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[14] For a comprehensive study on mother-daughter relationships in literature from a feminist and psychoanalytic perspective, see Hirsch (1989); for a very informative study on mother-daughter conflicts in Asian American literature see Schultermandl (2009).

[15] The conception of literary histories as history of kinships is further advocated by Wai Chee Dimock (2007).

[16] Similarly, Samuel Hynes (1976) presents a comprehensive study of the Auden generation. This generationality of authors is characterized by their having missed the opportunity of participating in World War I. The best known member of this generationality is Evelyn

Apart from the field of literary history, the concept of 'generation' has also found application in the study of literary genres.[17] Two aspects that of are of particular interest from a generation studies' point of view are the metaphor of family resemblances developed by Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953) and subsequently taken up by literary scholars in genre theory. Closely related to this is, the discussion of differences between genres and in genre development as represented in abstract models of genealogical trees of genres, as in exemplary fashion proposed by Franco Moretti (2007 [2005]: 67 ff.).

Of these two aspects, Ludwig Wittgenstein's metaphor of family resemblances is most frequently drawn upon in discussions of the characteristics of particular genres. One of many possible examples is Richard Humphrey's elaboration on the family novel, in which he lists "the generic features of the family chronicle" (2004: 386). After illustrating the twelve generic features of the family novel he closes his definition with a reference to the unclear boundaries of the genre and highlights the difficulties of the socially constructed notions of genre (cf. Zymner 2007: 261). Humphrey draws on Wittgenstein's "theory of family resemblances" to argue that "[t]o be a family chronicle is to possess enough of the above family resemblances to be sensibly considered a family member" (Humphrey 2004: 388). While Wittgenstein's usage of family resemblances actually points out that some concepts are "*not* closed by a frontier" (1968: 33; italics in the original) – thus underscoring Humphrey's argument for the open borders of the genre – Humphrey's indication that Wittgenstein actually proposed such a 'theory' is disputable. 'Family resemblances' are a metaphor rather than a theory because the way in which Wittgenstein uses the metaphor to point out the similarities and relationships discovered when looking at 'games' is a description of those not a theorization (cf. ibid.: 31 f.).[18] When Wittgenstein proposes the metaphor to "exhibit the lack of boundaries and the distance from exactness that characterize different uses of the same concept" (Biletzki/Matar 2011: n. pag.) in relation to his discussion of games he concludes:

Waugh who contributed to the establishment of a generational identity with writings such as "The War and the Younger Generation" (1929). The most prominent example in migration literature is the label 'Windrush generation', which refers to the first authors with a migratory background. Named after the ship Empire Windrush that brought the first major wave of migrants to Great Britain in 1948, the term is, e.g., employed by Weiss (2009).

[17] For comprehensive discussion of theories of genre see, e.g., Fowler (1982), Raible (1980), and Hempfer (1973).

[18] 'Games' refer to Wittgenstein's language games, which he uses to illustrate his thoughts on language. Interestingly, the metaphor of family resemblances is thus an analogy twice removed from the actual object of discussion in this part of the *Philosophical Investigations* (1968), namely language, and yet in genre theory this is only rarely reflected upon.

> And the result of this examination is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of details. 67. I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than "family resemblances"; for the various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. etc. overlap and criss-cross in the same way. (Wittgenstein 1968: 32)

The metaphor uses kinship relations to compare single entities that share similarities produced either through inheritance in a direct line of descent or existing between co-descendants as for example siblings or cousins.[19] As these genealogical relations are not further specified, the metaphor suggests an 'affinity by consanguinity' which "connects not only ancestors and their descendants but also relatives" in contrast to "affinal ties (as implicit in the term *in-laws*) [which] are viewed as merely contractual" (Zerubavel 2011: 55). Figuratively transferring the notion of 'affinity by consanguinity' to literary texts, this genealogical relationship can be used to describe literary genres. This description, however, supports the arguments made by Bloom or Gubar and Gilbert, who propose a very narrow and prescriptive underdstanding of a literary canon.

A different criticism of Wittgenstein's metaphor is presented by David Fishelov, for whom the metaphor suggests that "genres are totally open and undelineated categories" (Fishelov 1991: 125) if it is taken out of its context. He therefore criticizes the practice of isolating one particular element of family resemblances

> from his network of analogies and, ignoring its function in the entire conceptual set, [using] it exclusively to establish the analogy frequently found in genre theory: between a 'family' (designating some group of related individuals) and a 'genre' (designating the various texts that are considered to be its members). (Ibid.: 125)

His criticism is that, instead of demonstrating the network of relationships between members of a literary family, the isolated metaphor highlights the negative aspects of the family resemblance, "namely, the statement that there is no single trait shared by all members" (ibid.: 130). Therefore, he proposes a model that combines the notion of family resemblances with that of a prototype: "[L]iterary genres are perceived as structured categories, with a 'hard core' consisting of *prototypical members*. These prototypical members are characterized by the fact that they bear a relatively high degree of resemblance to each other" (ibid.: 131).[20] This suggestion, which proposes a

[19] Very interesting insights into the genealogical relations are offered by Eviatar Zerubavel's most recent work, *Ancestors & Relatives: Genealogy, Identity, & Community* (2011). For the different genealogical relationships such ancestry, descent, and co-descent cf. pages 15-52.

[20] Marie-Laure Ryan (1981: 118) argues along similar lines when she writes about the generic categories which constitute the family-resemblance notion: "Under this proposal, each genre would be associated – as Mary Pratt suggests in her contribution – with a 'group of characteristics, only some of which may be present in a given member of the genre'. Once

qualitative examination of literary works in their positioning in a genre, points to what Eviatar Zerubavel has called "genealogical distance" (2010: 37): "The genealogical distance between co-descendants progressively increases with each reproductive step away from their common ancestor." The prototypical member of a genre could in this comparison be thought of as the common ancestor, which suggests a literary procreating within the construct of a genre, in which the evolution of a genre compares to a kinship structure.

Following this line of argument, Anna Hirsbrunner (1996) poses the question "Which Family?" and discusses the difficult relation between genre and gender. Drawing on various approaches to genre theory that use metaphors of the family in the constitution of genres she points out the strengths and weaknesses of the metaphor and how further analogies are used to exemplify definitions. Hirsbrunner further promotes Fishelov's notion that genre theories relying on the family metaphor always employ a genealogical perspective in which "the series of writers who have participated in shaping, reshaping and transmitting the textual heritage established by the 'founding father' of the genre, including the dialectical relationship of 'parents' and 'children' in genre history" (Fishelov 1991: 135). Fishelov thus proposes a 'genre family' that consists of individual writers that have contributed to a specific genre tradition and applies the metaphor of the family tree to genres: "And as a family tree maps for us the diverse lines of descent of a family […], so does the 'family tree' of a genre" (ibid.: 135). For both Fishelov and Hirsbrunner the genealogical approach to genre, just as with the literary histories discussed above, necessarily includes both, text and author.

Similarly, Franco Moretti takes the genealogical conception of genres a step further, when he uses "evolutionary trees [which] constitute *morphological* diagrams, where history is systematically correlated with form" (2007: 69) to describe the development of detective fiction. Moretti chose "clues as the trait whose transformations were likely to be most revealing for the history of the genre" (ibid.: 72) and charted the relationship between Arthur Conan Doyle and some of his contemporaries as a series of branching. The interesting findings Moretti presents are "the 'formal' fact that several of Doyle's

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again, there would be highly typical and less typical members of every genre, but the less typical ones would differ qualitatively and in a variety of different ways from the most typical ones, rather than quantitatively along a single dimension. […] This approach invites us to think of genres as clubs imposing a certain number of conditions for membership, but tolerating as quasi-members those individuals who can fulfill only some of the requirements, and who do not seem to fit into any other club. As these quasi-members become more numerous, the conditions for admission may be modified, so that they, too, will become full members. Once admitted to the club, however, a member remains a member, even if he cannot satisfy the new rules of admission."

rivals […] did not use clues – and the 'historical' fact that they were all forgotten" (ibid.: 72). Thus focusing on a particular element in the texts that later comes to be a significant element of the genre, Moretti shows the evolutionary development of the genre in which the genealogical approach shows how specific genre characteristics are transmitted.

Much more problematical than this discussion of the usage of genealogical concepts in genre theory is Moretti's suggestion to explain the popularity of specific genres at a particular historical time based on Karl Mannheim's (1928) theory of generations. Discussing the rise and decline of literary forms, Moretti argues that the cause for these developments must be "*external* to the genres, and *common* to all: like a sudden, total change of their ecosystem" (2007: 20). Claiming that "[b]ooks survive if they are read and disappear if they aren't: and when an entire generic system vanishes at once, the likeliest explanation is that *its readers vanished at once*" (ibid.: 20; italics in the original) seems to be going too far in the explanatory power of the concept of 'generation'. It is debatable, on the one hand, whether genres actually vanish, as Moretti claims, simply because they are not written about in an academic context, and, on the other hand, whether his method of gathering the data allows us to make assumptions about the readership.[21] Moretti's reading of the graph he presents on genres, which shows that "literature remains in place for twenty-five years or so" (ibid.: 20), turns towards Mannheim's concept of generations. Discussing why genres disappear from his graph he argues: "*faute de mieux*, some kind of generational mechanism seems the best way to account for the regularity of the novelistic cycle – but 'generation' is itself a very questionable concept. Clearly, we must do better" (ibid.: 22). At this point, Moretti finds his own explanation for the disappearance of literary genres unconvincing, doing a disservice to the study of generations in literature. Morreti's rather weak explanation of literary developments and the popularity of genres, which is based on biased data on generational changes in the readership, does not apply Mannheim's concept in a useful way, thus illustrating the limits of the explanatory powers of 'generations'.

These limitations in applying 'generation' as a concept of order and differentiation on the macro-level of literary history and genre theory prompts the present study to move to the micro-level of specific literary works that represent the concept of 'generation' in both its genealogical and its generational sense. As attempts to combine literary and

[21] Moretti presents a figure entitled "British novelist genres, 1740-1900" in which he shows the clustered distribution of genres on a timeline. His quantitative approach relies entirely on second-hand data, which he lists in "A Note on the Taxonomy of the Forms" (2007: 31-33) together with "a few words of caution".

generation studies have thus far mainly focused on German literature, the aspect of generationalities, and a methodological framework informed by historical studies such as Lauer's (2010) collection *Literaturwissenschaftliche Beiträge zur Generationenforschung* or Bohnenkamp, Manning, and Sillies's (2009) collection *Generationen als Erzählung: Neue Perspektiven auf ein kulturelles Deutungsmuster*, and most recently Bohnenkamp's monograph *Doing Generation: Zur Inszenierung von generationeller Gemeinschaft in deutschsprachigen Schriftmedien* (2011), these studies leave room for further development of the interface of generation and literary and cultural studies.[22]

The choice of contemporary British Asian literature as the object for research is based on the feasibility to limit the analyses to works that deal with migration from the Indian subcontinent as a consequence of British Imperialism. Thus, comparable situations can be analyzed in regard to their generation building powers. Furthermore, a vast body of academic research on British Asian literature is available and continuously growing (cf. Bald 1995). Ever since the publication of Barbara Korte and Klaus Peter Müller's collection *Unity in Diversity?* (1998) and especially Helge Nowak's contribution, which challenges the label 'Black British' literature for its seeming homogeneity reflecting neither the versatility of the writing subsumed under this label nor fulfilling its political function anymore (cf. Modood 1995), the label 'British Asian' literature has been firmly established in the study of British literature and culture.[23] Besides comprehensive research on immigration from the Indian subcontinent to Great Britain and studies on the actual living situation of British Asian citizens (cf. Robinson 1986; Visram 2002; Smith 2004; Wilson 2006), the growing number of studies on the Partition of India and its consequences on a political, social, but also a personal level in relation to migration to Great Britain establish British Asian culture as a diverse field of research (cf.

[22] Generation studies is a field of research that proves particularly popular in German academia; the lack of research on 'generation' in English is striking.

[23] See, e.g., Barbara Korte and Claudia Sternberg's *Bidding for the Mainstream? Black and Asian British Film since the 1990s* (2004), in which they discuss Black British and British Asian films separately. While many introductory works on contemporary British fiction still prefer to use more encompassing labels such as 'postcolonial' (cf. Bentley 2008) or 'multicultural' literature (cf. Reckwitz 1993; Lee 1995; Head 2002), many more recent studies particularly highlight British Asian literature as their object of research. See amongst others Gosh-Schellhorn (2000), Fludernik (2003a), and Weedon (2008). Interestingly, Suresht Renjen Bald in her very insightful essay "Negotiating Identity in the Metropolis" (1995), in which she discusses the different strategies of first- and second-generation immigrant characters to negotiate personal identities in Great Britain South Asian British fiction, employs the terms "South Asian migrants and their Black British children" (1995: 86) to distinguish the generations. See also Korte (1999).

Cowasjee 1983; Tan/Kudaisya 2000; Khan 2007).[24] Within this field, Avtar Brah's seminal study *Cartographies of Diaspora* (2002 [1996]) deserves highlighting for its application of an intersectional approach (cf. Winker/Degele 2010) to present a coherent picture of the situation of British Asian citizens. Pointing out the "intersections between 'race', gender, class, sexuality, ethnicity, and so on, precisely because these relationships were rarely addressed together" (Brah 2002: 10), Brah analyses "the economic and social conditions marking Asian experience, highlighting the interplay of state policy, political and popular discourse, and a variety of other institutional practices in the construction of 'Asian' as 'post-colonial' other" (ibid.: 11). *Cartographies of Diaspora* for the first time offers comprehensive insights into the intersections of the various categories of inequality with which British Asian citizens are often confronted. Furthermore, Brah develops a very concise definition of the contested term 'diaspora' that points out the manifold connotations of the term, raising questions of discourses of origin and home as well as the issue of a return to the home country.[25] While these questions are highly important for the study of British Asian culture, the focus of the present study lies decidedly on the study of British Asian literature and therefore differs from the sociological approach of previous studies to analyse the experience of migration and the inter- and intragenerational communication of this experience in narrative texts.

While the concept of 'diaspora' plays an important role in many studies on British Asian writing, such as in Susheila Nasta's *Home Truths: Fictions of the South Asian Diaspora in Britain* (2002) or the collection *Indias Abroad: The Diaspora Writes Back* (2004), recent works like Ruvani Ranasinha's *South Asian Writers in Twentieth-Century Britain* (2007) prefer a "generational comparison" that places "selected authors in the context of other writers of their generation [to situate] them within the social and cultural contexts of the Britain of their day" (2007: 4). Criticizing that studies focusing on diasporic identities privilege "space over time" (ibid.), Ranasinha aims to analyse the

[24] For a very interesting collection on comparative research on the South Asian Diaspora in Great Britain and the United States with a focus on religion, especially Muslim identities after 9/11 and 7/7 see Hinnells (2007).

[25] "*Inter alia* I suggest that the concept of diaspora should be understood in terms of historically contingent 'genealogies' in the Foucauldian sense; that is, as an ensemble of investigative technologies that historicise trajectories of different diasporas, and analyse their relationality across fields of social relations, subjectivity and identity. I argue that the concept of diaspora offers a critique of discourses of fixed origins, while taking account of a homing desire which is not the same thing as desire for a 'homeland'. This distinction is important, not least because not all diasporas sustain an ideology of 'return'" (Brah 2002: 180). For further information on the concept 'diaspora' in general and on the South Asian diaspora in particular see e.g. Clifford (1994); Mishra (1996); Mayer (2005).

generational dynamics in British Asian writing, to conceptualize the cross-cultural interplay between the migrant writers and their "'host' and 'home' cultures as a process of cultural translation" (ibid.), and to trace the generational changes in the body of writing in relation to its literary production and reception (cf. ibid.: 6). This extremely interesting study, which uses a generational approach to cluster the authors under scrutiny, thus relating back to the aforementioned practice of labelling generations of authors while at the same time reflecting on the potential difficulties of such an approach, indeed covers the range of Asian writing in Great Britain from the beginning until the end of the 20th century. With the first decade of the 21st century witnessing a continuation of interest in British Asian writing since the 1990s, Murphy and Sim's collection *British Asian Fiction: Framing the Contemporary* (2008) and Sara Upstone's *British Asian Fiction: Twenty-First-Century Voices* (2010) continue to provide up to date surveys of recent publications in this particular field of migration literature. Yet these studies' conceptions are rather broad in scope and therefore lack the concrete interpretative approach that the present study offers to the interpretation of contemporary British Asian narratives.

As this overview of applications of 'generation' in literary studies and research on British Asian writing has shown, a comprehensive analysis of the representation of generations and a discussion of their functions in contemporary British Asian narratives so far present research gaps which "Narrating Generations" aims to fill. Combining the two fields of generation studies and literary studies and applying the findings on the travelling concept 'generation' to migration literature, this study hopes to contribute to literary generation studies as well as to literary and cultural studies.

1.3. On the Structure, the Theoretical Approach, and the Methodological Framework of this Study

Echoing this study's three objectives of providing terminological disambiguation and introducing 'generation' into work-oriented literary studies, developing a methodological framework for generation studies, and furthering interpretations by conceptualizing the texts as generation narratives, "Narrating Generations" is structured along three major axes: first, terminological disambiguation and theoretical background; second, developing a methodological framework; and third, analysis and interpretation of representations of generations in contemporary British Asian narratives. These three parts of the study are interconnected by four aspects that are influential in both generation studies and literary studies. These four aspects, around which the concept of

'generation' evolves, are the categories of migration, time, memory, and youth.[26] These four categories establish fields of research in which the concept of 'generation' is theorized most extensively and which each offer links to connect applications of 'generation' to British Asian narratives.

Before diving into these four fields of research, this study follows Bal's (2002: 13) advice for "disambiguation" of the travelling concept 'generation':

> Their various aspects can be unpacked; the ramifications, traditions, and histories conflated in their current usages can be separated out and evaluated piece by piece. Concepts are hardly ever used in exactly the same sense. Hence their usages can be debated and referred back to the different traditions and schools from which they emerge, thus allowing an assessment of the validity of their implications. (Ibid.: 29)

Therefore, chapter 2 starts out with a terminological disambiguation and clarification to distance itself from a prescientific use of 'generation'. Highlighting the manifold implications of the concept by drawing on the etymological roots of 'generation' and deducing the two basic aspects of genealogy and generationality, this study first aims at establishing a coherent and intersubjective terminology. Pointing out utilizations of genealogy and revisiting theories of social generations, the first part of this chapter treats the two aspects separately in order to demonstrate the vast potential the concept carries. This creates the basis for a critical examination of the areas of interest in which 'generation' has found application. Concentrating on migration studies, studies on the acceleration of time, memory studies, and youth cultures, the second part of the chapter follows the itinerary of 'generation' through these fields, pointing out where and how the two aspects of generational and genealogical relations meet and intersect.

From these theoretical elaborations this study moves on to the question of how to analyse representations of generations in literature in chapter 3. The chapter starts off by examining literary genres that by definition represent generations. Confirming the distinction between genealogy and generationality, the genre analysis exposes how these genres focus on either generational or genealogical relations. The restriction to one aspect of 'generation' is firmly established and institutionalized through genre attributions, which fail to consider the intersections of the two forms of relationships. However, while the discussion of generation narratives mainly illustrates previous

[26] The focus on these four categories developed out of respective fields of research in which the intersections between generationality and genealogy are most significant, yet have been largely overlooked so far. The categories might therefore suggest to differ in terms of their level of abstraction, particularly categories such as memory and youth, with the latter possibly being substituted by age. However, the significant differences between age studies and youth studies justifies the usage of youth as one of four focal points of this study.

shortcomings in the clear distinctions of the genres, it also provides essential information for the methodological framework to be established in the second part of chapter 3. Once again drawing on Mieke Bal, this study turns towards the theory and study of narrative because "narratology can help supply insights that the field wherein such different objects [as generations] are traditionally studied has not itself developed" (Bal 1990: 730). Within the established framework of classical and postclassical narratology, categories on both the discourse and the story level, as well as two categories that bridge the gap between the two, are examined for their potential to analyse the representation of generationalities and genealogies in narrative fiction. The methodological toolbox developed in this second part of chapter 3 provides an analytical framework to research generations that illustrates the mutual influence of literary studies and generation studies. In both parts of this chapter the aforementioned fields of migration, time, memory, and youth influence the presentability of generations and are therefore considered in the discussions of specific genres and the narratological categories accordingly.

Following the terminological, theoretical, and methodological findings of the first chapters, chapters 4 to 7 each focus on one contemporary British Asian narrative. In these chapters the representations of genealogical and generational relations will be analysed and interpreted with a specific focus on their intersections. The choice of primary works for analysis was, on the one hand, guided by their recent publication, which opens up the opportunity to offer new approaches for interpretation focusing on 'generation', thus making original contributions to the research on British Asian narratives. On the other hand, all four novels highlight different aspects of the concept of 'generation' and reflect upon different intersections of generationality and genealogy. Each of the narrative texts offers notable insights into the entanglements of genealogical and generational relationships and how the four selected categories memory, migration, time, and youth provide new starting points for interpretation. Furthermore, by reading the narrative texts from a generation studies' point of view, each of the four analyses contributes innovative approaches to the novels. Especially the analyses of Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004) and Gautam Malkani's *Londonstani* (2006), both of which have been critically acclaimed, contribute a new perspective on previous research. The choice of Sathnam Sanghera's *The Boy with the Topknot* (2009), a memoir which has not yet been discussed in a scholarly context, is furthermore based on the development of a new genre, the generatiography (cf. chapter 3.1.2), of which this narrative will be argued to be an exemplar. Including autobiographical life writing in the body of narratives chosen for analysis of representations of generations serves to

broaden the scope of previous studies on British Asian fiction. The oldest and most thoroughly discussed novel focused upon is Meera Syal's *Anita and Me* (1996), which therefore at first glance might appear to be an odd choice. The analysis of *Anita and Me*, however, will exemplify how a focus on generations can challenge previous interpretations and genre classifications of the novel.

This tripartite structure of the study echoes the three objectives of achieiving terminological clarification, providing an original methodological framework for generation studies, and the establishment of generation narratives as a field of research in literary and cultural studies as well as generation studies. "Narrating Generations" will thus start out by tracing the concept of 'generation' through different research contexts that profited from its usage in order to demonstrate the benefits that working at the interface of generation studies and literary and cultural studies offers to the present study.

2. The Interdisciplinary Origins of the Concept of 'Generation' and its Uses in Generation Studies

As has been discussed previously, the concept of 'generation' can be viewed as a travelling concept (cf. Bal 2002). Travelling through different sciences, researchers within the field of generation studies have to point out time and again how and in which context the concept is applied to which scientific object. A specific approach to 'generation' is singled out from amongst a variety of approaches and transferred into a new academic context. This practice attests to the truly interdisciplinary origin of the concept. It does not belong to any one academic field of study but rather engages different areas of study in a dialogue.

As outlined by Ohad Parnes, Ulrike Vedder, and Stefan Willer (2008: 26-39), the cultural and scientific history of 'generation' with its various theoretical approaches inevitably has to start with the eclectic semantic levels of the concept.[27] The doubled conceptuality of 'generation' is based on the interrelationship of the etymological roots of the term: the Latin *generatio*, meaning 'procreation', and the Greek *genos*, meaning 'gender', 'genus' (cf. Riedel 1974: 274; Weigel 2006: 23-25; Lüscher/Liegle 2003: 36). These two semantic levels illustrate the different theoretical approaches to generations: Either, research on generations focuses on social generations and generationalities, meaning the formation of communities based on shared experience and the development of a generational identity; or on the succession of generations in families or other relational associations, conducting a form of genealogical research. This double conceptuality of generation, which is part of the terminology of such diverse fields of study as anthropology, sociology, biology, and the humanities (cf. Riedel 1974: 274), invites interdisciplinary research that characterizes generation studies (cf. Parnes, et al. 2008: 11).

Whereas the intricacies posed by the conceptualization of generation prove most beneficial for research in different fields and open up an increasing number of research questions, it is the use of the concept in everyday language that causes confusion in academic discussions:

[27] German literary scholar Sigrid Weigel's (2006: 159 ff.) research on the development of the semantic field of generation and genealogy in German dictionaries and encyclopedias of the 18th and 19th century offers interesting findings for the origins of the concept 'generation'. She not only shows how the encyclopaedias define aspects of generation differently, but also points out related terminology like 'ancestors', 'family register', 'pedigree', and 'clanship', thus conducting genealogical research on the semantic field of generation.

> Jeder scheint zu wissen, was eine 'Generation' ist, und kann mithilfe dieser Bezeichnung seine eigene Stellung als Individuum in sozialen Zusammenhängen angeben, ohne dass etwa die semantische Dopplung von Generationen familialer Abstammung einerseits und Generationen gesellschaftlicher Gleichzeitigkeit andererseits dabei stören müsste. (Parnes, et al. 2008: 11)

'Generation' becomes a terminological means to position oneself in social contexts by simply assigning the concept to a specific social phenomenon at a given time without considering the implications of the complex intersections of the semantic levels. The points of intersection of familial generations and social generations, which can create critical tensions in processes of identity formation, are largely ignored. Further, the everyday use of the concept 'generation' causes an emphatic overdeterminancy with which alleged generations are invoked (ibid.: 11): On the one hand, a considerable boom in pop literature – so called generatiographies (cf. chapter 3.1.2) –, ranging from Douglas Coupland's *Generation X: Tales from an Accelerated Culture* (1991) to Florian Illies' *Generation Golf* (2000), attests to a nostalgic use of the community building effect of generations. Its aim is to find a place in a social context belonging to a group that shares the experience of being young at a certain time in a certain place. On the other hand, the public discourse dominated by different media uses the concept as a label to describe phenomena of a certain range, the latest new and fashionable categorization being the 'Twitter Generation' referring to a group of 'digital natives' who use social networking sites to communicate with their peers.[28]

The everyday, inflationary use of the label 'generation' shows that the discourse on generations is part of socio-political debates as well as academic efforts to find adequate definitions and descriptions for recent cultural phenomena. It also shows that a lack of distinction between the various levels of meaning severely blurs the terminological intricacies, which leads Ulrike Jureit and Michael Wildt to conclude: "Denn oft wird von Generationen gesprochen, wenn Generativität oder Genealogie gemeint sind"

[28] Interestingly, it can be noticed that generational labelling in this form often has rather negative connotations, such as Tom Chivers' article for *The Telegraph* entitled "MoD issues videos warning Twitter generation that 'Careless talk costs lives'" (June 14, 2011). Even more interestingly, in this particular case the article and the discussed videos toy with the readers' expectation insofar as the video shows a woman in her late fifties to early sixties posting a status message on Facebook and shortly afterwards opening her door to an alleged burglar who gathered from her message that she was alone in her house. As generational labels such as 'Twitter Generation' are usually applied to younger people, these video warnings do not only subvert the reader's expectations about who to warn of the use of communication platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and the like, but also marks the middle-aged woman as not belonging to the generation for she does not know how to use the name-giving technology properly. The article as well as the video therefore hint at the relation between the uses of generation as a diachronic form of community building and age, which will be discussed in this thesis.

(Jureit/Wildt 2005: 8). The theoretical indistinction that dominates the public discourse on generations therefore has to be cleared up before attempting to analyse representations of generations.

In order to address the elusiveness of the concept, the following chapter 2.1 first of all aims at a disambiguation of the semantic and conceptual levels of 'generation'. Distinguishing between genealogical and generational relations, the following chapters emphasize the benefits of the two constituent parts of the concept, highlighting their interdisciplinary applicability. The discussion of the two sides of the same coin will provide this study with the necessary terminological and conceptual precision to be able to introduce both dimensions of the concept into literary studies.

Yet, the discussion that aims at terminological precision will also reveal the many intersections of the approaches to genealogical and generational relations. It will become clear through the discussion of genealogical and generational aspects that although they are often treated as mutually exclusive approaches, it is at the intersections of both approaches that productive tensions are created. This study consequently shows that it is often neither feasible nor reasonable to keep genealogical and generational approaches strictly separated. Therefore, the second part of these theoretical explorations (chapter 2.2) points out where 'generation' enters the field of the study of culture. Four approaches – to migration studies, research on the experience of time, memory studies, and youth cultures – have been selected to interlock generation and literary studies and to develop starting points for further analysis.

2.1. Terminological Disambiguation: Genealogy and Generationality

The following chapters, which focus on the terminological disambiguation of the two semantic levels of the concept of 'generation', aim at providing an overview of theoretical approaches to genealogical and generational research. Key terms and theoretical implications will be introduced and illustrated with applications in the different disciplines that have approached generation studies to borrow concepts and methods. The two semantic levels of 'generation' will be introduced in their cross- and interdisciplinarly history. Arguing that 'generation' can be viewed as a travelling concept, it is one of the aims of this chapter to illustrate the disciplinary backgrounds of the concept in order to introduce it into the study of literature and culture. Therefore, connections and applications of the various findings of such diverse fields as, for example, sociology and genetics will discussed accordingly.

2.1.1. Genealogy: The Succession of Kindred Generations

The following discussion of 'genealogy' as a component of the concept of 'generation' will place emphasis on the various applications genealogy has found in different fields of research. It will be shown that genealogy is not restricted to the notion of familial generations, which is the best-known use of the term 'generation', but can also be applied as a research method and viewed as a cultural technique. This will illustrate how genealogy offers a way to bridge the gap between different disciplinary traditions, an argument that will first be substantiated by a short illustration of various modes of visualizing genealogies. Following this, a key argument of generation studies in favour of genealogical research will be presented in the discussion of how genealogy can bridge the gap between the sciences and the humanities, which is one of the most important characteristics of genealogical research. Elaborating on the aspect of heredity, it will be shown that both biological as well as economic and cultural inheritance are questions that focus on genealogy. After these versatile aspects of genealogy have been introduced, this chapter will turn towards familial generations. Focussing on the sociology of the family, a set of theoretical approaches that enable a discussion of definitions of family and their functions as well as insights into the relations and interactions between family members will be provided.

Defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as the "account of one's descent from an ancestor or ancestors, by enumeration of the intermediate persons" (*OED online*), genealogy is presented as a narrative of origin. Etymologically, genealogy can be defined as the knowledge of the order of life in the dimension of time through its two Greek components *genos* and *logos*, which refer to the logic, the language, or the order of generations (cf. Weigel 2002b: 79). Related to nativity, origin, parentage, and ancestry, the most important aspect of 'genealogy' is continuity (cf. Jureit 2006: 31).

The importance of continuity is also underlined in the concept of the genealogical memory of a family (Heck 2002: 46) – distinct from the communicative memory, which Jan Assmann conceptualizes as generational memory (cf. Assmann 1997: 50; cf. chapter 2.2.3) – that outlasts the lifetime of the individual member of a family. Heck argues that an illustration of the cyclic succession of related generations can be called genealogy.[29] The continuity and genealogical memory of a family are important when analysing the representation of multigenerational families in genealogical and family novels (cf.

[29] "Die zeitübergreifende Präsenz und memoriale Dauerhaftigkeit einer Familie veranschaulichen sich erst durch das Aufzeigen der zyklischen Abfolge der einzelnen Generationen. Und dieses Wissen um die verwandtschaftliche Verbundenheit der einzelnen Generationen kann mit dem Begriff der Genealogie bezeichnet werden" (Heck 2002: 46).

chapter 3.1.1). According to Heck it is not the relation between generations itself but the knowledge of the relation between the generations that is called genealogy. This rather broad definition offers two interesting insights: firstly, it shows that the knowledge of a relation between people is more important than the actual relation. Therefore analysing kindred generations does not exclude modern families, which might not be held together by blood ties, but also allows us to take different forms of living together into consideration such as in adopted extended families and multi-local families in which some generations of the same family have never met in person. This is a recurrent theme in migration literatures that grapple with the ramifications of immigration, for example, by illustrating the importance of the extended family that had to be left behind upon immigration or adopting fellow immigrants as a substitute extended family. Secondly, Heck's definition shows that blood relations are not the only ones that can be analysed genealogically.

Approaching genealogy on a meta-level, Weigel (2006: 15) points out that genealogy is neither merely a term nor a full-fledged theory, but a figure of thought (*Denkfigur*) in which diverse phenomena can be discussed in the form of a narrative of origin.[30] The most prominent example of an application of this figure of thought is Michel Foucault's discussion of Nietzsche's *The Genealogy of Morals* (1887), in which he carefully differentiates between Nietzsche's usage of the concepts of 'Herkunft', 'Ursprung', and 'Entstehung'. Foucault describes genealogy as "gray, meticulous, and patiently documentary", operating on "a field of entangled and confused parchments, on documents that have been scratched over and recopied many times" (Foucault 1987: 76). Defining 'genealogy' as the "analysis of descent" (ibid.: 83), he relates genealogy on the one hand to Nietzsche's concept of 'Herkunft': "it is the ancient affiliation to a group, sustained by the bonds of blood, tradition, or social class" (ibid.: 80 f.). On the other hand, Foucault supports the argument that 'generation' can be viewed as a travelling concept: He exemplifies that a narrative of origin, as genealogical analysis offers it, is not limited to research on successive, related generations in a familial context.[31] Instead, genealogical analysis can be applied as a methodological tool that

[30] "[Es handelt] sich bei der *Genealogie* weder um einen Begriff, eine Theorie oder Methode […], sondern um eine Figur, in der Phänomene oder Gegenstände im Muster einer Herkunfts-, Ableitungs- und Folgelogik gedacht und dargestellt werden […]" (Weigel 2006: 15; italics in the original).

[31] A critical reading of Foucault's use of genealogy has been offered by Martin Saar (2002), who observed Foucault's rather incoherent use of the concept as, on the one hand, a methodological term or title for a critical historical-philosophical project and, on the other hand, as a synonym for history or genesis (cf. ibid.: 231). Based on this observation Saar proposes a philosophical interpretation of genealogy, looking at three distinct but interwoven

allows for archaeological research. He uses genealogy as a tool to examine Nietzsche's analysis of concepts, such as for example 'liberty', in relation to the history of reason, thus applying genealogy as an archaeological instrument. Similar to this usage as a research method, literature can employ genealogical research thematically when topics such as family secrets, the development of a specific family, or reasons for immigration are addressed. Thus, especially in migration literatures the notion of genealogical research figures prominently, because literary characters always leave behind a part of their family history upon their migration to another country that might have to be recovered later on.

Additionally, 'genealogy', based on its usage as a research method and its capability to reflect on the historicity of its object, can be considered to be a cultural technique (*Kulturtechnik*): Genealogy is its own history of the passing on of knowledge.[32] The information that is transmitted from generation to generation and whose minimal variation is the impetus for any kind of evolution (cf. Piazza 2007: 96 f.)[33] does not necessarily have to be at the core of an analysis of a genealogical process. It is rather the practical and technical aspects through which knowledge or information is passed on, the symbolic, iconographic, or rhetorical practices and the passing of knowledge that are essential for an understanding of genealogy. Genealogy is a cultural technique because it is able to record and reflect on its own historicity. Genealogy is therefore not restricted to family generations in the sense of an account of one's ancestors but it can also be used as a methodological approach to look into the history and development of theories, concepts, usages of terminology, and the like. These manifold ways of using

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levels: as a mode of writing history or historical method, as a mode of evaluation and critique, and as a textual practice or style of a specific genre (cf. ibid.: 232). He further postulates that on all of these three levels a "decisive and constitutive relation between genealogy and subjectivity or a 'self' that comes into play in different ways and forms" (ibid.: 232) has to be recognized, a point Foucault only implicitly took notice of and, according to Saar, only acknowledged in his later works.

[32] "Die Genealogie *ist* die Geschichte der symbolischen, ikonographischen und rhetorischen Praktiken, der Aufschreibesysteme und Kulturtechniken, in denen das Wissen von Geschlechtern und Gattungen oder von der Abfolge des Lebens in der Zeit überliefert ist" (Weigel 2006: 26; italics in the original).

[33] "There must be a mechanism of 'transcription' […] that transmits the information from one organism to another, perhaps with some slight modification. […] The literary metaphor of the rib [which, according to the biblical Genesis God took from Adam to create a companion for this first human being] (consciously or not) offers an elegant introduction to the concept of the transmission of information: we know today that DNA sequences are chains of chemical molecules, whose function is to contain the information that regulates the life of each of our cells, and to transmit it from one generation to the next, with changes that may be minimal but are very important for evolution" (Piasza 2007: 96 f.).

the term 'genealogy' complicates the selection and focus on specific aspects of genealogy.

A conceptualization of genealogy further has to reflect upon its importance as an interdisciplinary bridge between the sciences and the humanities and touch upon the visualization of genealogies in the form of genealogical trees. This narrowing of the theoretical frame will not only allow for a critical examination and evaluation of research on the family, especially sociological research on families, but also opens up the possibility of including questions of heredity, in a biological sense relating to illness and disability or on a personal level when considering the passing on of tradition, gender roles, or religion, and in material inheritance. This combination of different theoretical and disciplinary approaches to genealogy will not only try to bring together the natural sciences and the study of culture. It will also combine the different sociological paradigms of structural functionalism and symbolic interactionism, which, on the one hand, will present a theoretical framework to analyse the roles of family members within the system of the family. This approach will be shown to be transferable to the analysis of character relations in literature. On the other hand, this combination will provide starting points for a discussion of the function of genealogical relationships in families as well as in not kindred relations, such as adopted extended families that are represented in literary works.

The significance of genealogy in its intermediate position between the humanities and the sciences has so far principally been discussed by Sigrid Weigel in her seminal monograph *Genea-Logik* (2006) but also in her edited volume *Genealogie und Genetik* (2002a). She proposes the concept of 'generation' with its component genealogy as an original and successful link between the study of culture (*Kulturwissenschaft*) and the natural sciences.[34] She places genealogy at the very origin of the gap between the humanities and natural sciences but at the same time underlines that it also has the power to re-connect the work of those two major scientific fields.

> In wissenschaftstheoretischer Hinsicht ist 'Generation' ein *Grenzbegriff*; er kann entweder als verbindendes Medium oder aber als Kampfbegriff auftreten. Als

[34] Weigel sees genealogy and generation as one possible and working link between the study of culture and the natural sciences and addresses questions about genetics and the knowledge it produces about man, the discussion that arises out of this knowledge, and the responsibilities that it entails. Thus, Weigel rejects the creation of a third research culture that supposedly bridges the gap between the natural sciences and the humanities as e.g. the life sciences propose. Weigel argues that such a procedure would just be a reformulation of the old dominance of the natural sciences over the humanities and therefore works genealogically to find where and when the dialogue between the research cultures went wrong (Weigel 2002b: 89 f.).

> verbindendes Medium wirkten genealogische Überlegungen, Verwandtschafts- und Generationsdiskurse Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts. In der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts geriet der Generationsbegriff dagegen ins Zentrum der von Konkurrenz und Abgrenzung geprägten Verhandlung zwischen Natur- und Geisteswissenschaften […]. (Weigel 2006: 11 f.; italics in the original)

According to Weigel, the natural sciences and the humanities started drifting apart in the second half of the 19th century. She actually places 'generation' at the heart of the processes of demarcation and dissociation of the two academic cultures. She draws upon the etymological development of the concept to support her argument and shows that a semantic and epistemic change can be detected when the Latin word *generatio* entered a German dictionary for the first time in the late 18th century (cf. ibid.: 11).[35] Firstly, this diversification of the figure of thought that went together with the differentiation of the sciences and its usage as a research method proves the concept's flexible adaptation to changing scientific demands. Secondly, Weigel illustrates that the concept is deeply rooted in various scientific disciplines, always carrying different connotations and implications in each of its semantic levels of meaning. It becomes clear that genealogy is a unifying as much as a distinguishing concept that, depending on its application, can bridge the gap between the sciences. On this aspect Weigel elaborates in her discussion of shared visual aids used by the humanities and the sciences.

The genealogical or family tree is the most important and best-known shared feature for the visualization of complex evolutionary developments of the humanities and the natural sciences. The model has recently, with the renewed interest in the concept of 'generation' for the study of culture, become a significant research objective in itself.[36] Thomas Macho concisely argues for the tree as a symbolic representation of evolutionary coherence that is a suitable model for visualizing complex relations.

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[35] "Auch im Falle der Generation stellt sich die Einbürgerung ins deutsche Lexikon als Moment in einer Konstellation weitreichender semantischer und epistemischer Umbrüche dar, zumal sie zu einer Zeit geschah, als sich einzelne gelehrte Diskurse als Fachwissenschaften etablierten, wie z.B. die Erörterungen über die Naturgeschichte der Arten, die Gesetze der Fortpflanzung und Bildung von Organismen als Biologie. Fortan finden sich unter dem Titel 'Generation' sowohl biologische Zeugungs- und Vererbungstheorien als auch anthropologische und literaturgeschichtliche Darstellungen oder Abhandlungen zur Erziehungskunst" (Weigel 2006: 11).

[36] Claudia Castañeda (2002: 57) draws attention to the fact that in German the term *Stammbaum* is used in the natural sciences, specifically in biology, as well as in the humanities without any specific connotations. In contrast to this unified use of the one term, the English language distinguishes between the biological term *pedigree* and the term *genealogical tree*, which because of its cultural connotations is not as frequently used in the natural sciences. *Phylogenetic tree*, according to Castañeda, is used in both research cultures.

> Erstens sind Bäume Doppelverzweigungssysteme; sie verästeln sich in den Wurzeln *und* in der Krone. Diese Eigenschaft lässt sich beispielsweise gut auf temporale Ordnungen übertragen: Die Wurzeln repräsentieren die Vergangenheit, die Blätter oder Früchte die Zukunft, der Stamm die aktuelle Gegenwart, welche Vergangenheit und Zukunft verbindet. […] Zweitens sind Bäume dreidimensionale Gestalten, die auch in ihrer flächigen Projektion gleichsam einen Komplexitätsüberschuss transportieren: Jeder Strukturbaum lädt sich wie von selbst mit einem Mehrwert an Bedeutungen auf, die nicht seiner aktuellen zweidimensionalen Darstellung, sondern vielmehr einer vorgängigen Wahrnehmung seiner dreidimensionalen Gestalt entspringen. Drittens schließlich sind Bäume selbstreferentiell: Die Prinzipien der Bäume lassen sich am besten auf Bäume selbst anwenden. (Macho 2002: 28; italics in the original)

The manifold ways to represent temporality, the three-dimensionality, and the self-referentiality of the abstract representation are the three basic reasons why the tree has been the prevalent structural model in both the history of ideas and the history of visual representation of genealogical systems.[37] Functions of the genealogical tree have traditionally been the proof of ancestry in dynastic marriage policies, the biological and medical genetics in which categories of purity, legitimacy, and evidence proved to be conditions of possibility to reformulate heredity in racial theories (cf. Weigel 2006: 44; Castañeda 2002: 63).[38]

Its function of being able to produce order along a temporal axis is the reason why Franco Moretti, in his much discussed book *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for Literary History* (2007 [2005]), tests the genealogical tree for its application in literary history. Moretti finds the genealogical tree an interesting tool to research and visualize genre developments in literary history because "evolutionary trees constitute *morphological* diagrams, where history is systematically correlated with form" (2007: 69). They are, for example, "a way of sketching *how far* a certain language [or any other

[37] However, trees are not only used in genetics and medicine, but also in historical linguistics and research on the history of noble lines to represent ancestry, mutation and therefore evolution. In his historical analysis Macho presents the tree as genealogical system, tracing the family tree as well as the liberty tree back to the biblical Tree of Life and Tree of Knowledge (cf. Macho 2002: 16; Weigel 2006: 29). The tree can be viewed as a cross-disciplinary diagram that serves to visualize morphological relations with a history dating back to the 3rd century when philosopher Porphyrios (233-304) first drew a 'philosopher's tree' (*Philosophenbaum*) (cf. Macho 2002: 21). The original Liberty Tree was an elm tree that stood in Boston before the American Revolution and gained symbolic meaning as a meeting point for the growing resistance against British authorities. Later on, other towns designated their own liberty trees. For a detailed discussion of the Liberty Tree, see e.g. Schlesinger (1952: 435-58).

[38] The genealogical tree has in the last decades found an additional use that: So called 'genetic consultants' (*Genberater*) use the genealogical tree as a source of information on the risks of hereditary illnesses (cf. Castañeda 2002: 64 f.). For a very interesting and concise overview of the impact of genetic ancestry testing in ancestry and genealogical research, see Shriver/Kittles (2004: 611-18).

object represented] has moved from another one, or from their common point of origin" (ibid.: 70). According to Moretti, this is the main advantage trees have in contrast to graphs: "whereas graphs abolish all qualitative difference among their data, trees try to *articulate* that difference" (ibid.: 77; italics in original). The question this form of representation poses is that trees indicate important developments in both their length and their width. Moretti therefore wonders:

> which is the most significant axis, here – the vertical, or the horizontal? Diachronic succession, or synchronic drifting apart? This perceptual uncertainty between time and (morpho-)space – this impossibility, in fact, or really 'seeing' them both at once – is the sign of a new conception of literary history, in which literature moves forwards *and sideways* at once; often, more sideways than forwards. (Moretti 2007: 91; italics in the original)

It is this combination of diachronic succession and synchronic variation that makes the genealogical tree particularly interesting for the natural sciences, especially genetics. Especially when the particular form of relatedness is important the arborescent imagery is helpful in its visualization of both "lineal and collateral ties" (Zerubavel 2011: 34). This form of visualization of different forms of relationships within a family could be interesting to apply to British Asian narratives that introduce different terms for different relations in order to classify positions in the family (cf. the discussion of the memoir *The Boy with the Topknot*, chapter 7, in which the narrator lists the different titles of family members [cf. *BT* 146]).

There are, however, social developments, such as adoption (cf. Castañeda 2002: 8 f.), new ways of reproduction, or even the futuristic technology of cloning (cf. Weigel 2002b: 73) that make the graphic representation of an origin in a schematic tree almost impossible. In contrast to political, social, and historical conceptualizations of generations, which will be discussed below, the genealogical approach presupposes the existence of generations as a biological fact (cf. Jureit 2006: 64). Processes of procreation are central to the continuation of generations replacing preceding generations. New forms of reproductive processes, however, challenge this biological fact and the consequences of this challenge are major topics of discussion, as the discussion about the legalization of preimplantation genetic diagnosis in Germany shows.[39]

[39] The ethical and legal issues arising from this form of genetic diagnosis before and during pregnancy were discussed at length by the media prior to its prohibition in Germany. Information and central points to the discussion can be accessed via the German National Ethics Council (<www.ethikrat.org>).

Genetic heredity is, however, not the only form of inheritance between generations, as Sigrid Weigel shows:

> Neben einem *kulturellen Erbe*, wie es die Form des literarischen Nachlasses darstellt, und neben einem gleichsam *natürlichen Erbe* in Form biologischer Vererbung zählt dazu vor allem das *testamentarische Erbe*, das ist: die Hinterlassenschaft von Besitz und Vermögen. (Weigel 2006: 61; italics in the original)

Although Weigel reduces the cultural inheritance to a material form, it can also encompass the transmission of traditions or religion.[40] Employing the concept of 'intergenerational continuity' (Kertzer 1983: 135), the sociological study of parent-child value transmission can, for example, focus on multiple generations of one family to try to identify generational differences in specific values (cf. e.g. Bengtson 1975) or how political attitudes are transmitted.[41] Intergenerational continuity and forms of inheritance are particularly interesting in the analysis of migration literatures because they often deal with exactly these questions of inter-generational transmission of traditions. However, Weigel limits the understanding of inheritance to the actual legacy of a deceased person to his or her heir. Therefore heritage is the central concept to deal with mortality and finiteness, questions that will be taken up again in the discussion of generations and the experience of time (cf. chapter 2.2.2).[42]

Thus far, this chapter has successfully established that 'genealogy' is not to be limited simply to the examination of familial relationships and the succession of kindred generations but instead includes a wide variety of aspects for further research. Yet, as

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[40] For an exemplary piece of research of the transmission of religiosity in US American families cf. Myers (1996). A study on transmission of religion and culture among Korean Protestant immigrants in the USA was provided e.g. by Pyong Gap Min/Dae Young Kim (2005).

[41] 'Intergenerational continuity' is a sociological concept that is employed by studies that critically investigate the concept of a 'generation gap' and generational conflicts (cf. Kertzer 1983: 134). Studies that draw on 'intergenerational continuity' research the transmission of values between familial generations to show that a generation gap is not a necessary result of emancipation processes of younger generations from their predecessors.

[42] "Denn das Erbe zählt zu den verbreitesten Konzepten im Umgang mit Sterblichkeit und Endlichkeit des individuellen Lebens. Hinterlassen, Vererben und Testieren sind die wohl gebräuchlichsten Ausdrucksformen des Unsterblichkeitswunsches in einer Welt, die keinen Jenseitsglauben oder zumindest keinen Glauben an ein Fortleben mehr kennt. Das Erbe ist also die herausragende Technik der Sorge um das Fort- und Nachleben des Eigenen nach dem Tod in einer säkularen Kultur" (Weigel 2006: 62 f.). The extent to which monetary and material value is inherited in the present society lead sociologists to speak of a 'society of heirs' (*Erbengesellschaft*), a label which Sigrid Weigel, Peter Breitschmid, and Martin Kohli have adopted for their research project: "Generations and Inheritance: Towards an Interpretive Framework for Socio-Cultural Change" at the Centre for the Study of Literature and Culture in Berlin (cf. <http://www.zfl.gwz-berlin.de/forschung/kulturgeschichte-des-wissens/generationenforschung/>).

the aspect of familial relations is central to concept of 'generation' and vital for the analysis of character relations in literature, theoretical approaches that will allow for a generation studies' perspective on British Asian narratives will be introduced into the discussion.

Insights into the workings and functions of the family can be drawn from a branch of general sociology, the sociology of the family. Developed in the middle of the 19th century (cf. Nave-Herz 2002: 149 f.), it considers the family vital for the functioning of society. Especially the 20th century saw a rising interest in research on the family, as many influential studies, including work by Talcott Parsons and Robert F. Bales (1968 [1956]), show. A central issue within the sociology of the family is the definition of the object of research itself, 'the family'. As a definition of 'family' depends on whether a macro- or micro-sociological perspective is employed,[43] the sociology of the family has generally accepted a typology of characteristics that differentiates the family from other social systems. Thus, the family is characterized by its biological-social dual nature that requires it to perform the functions of reproduction and socialization, by a differentiation into generations, a designated structure of roles, such as father, mother, daughter, son, brother, sister, and so on, and a specific relationship of cooperation and solidarity between the members of a family (cf. Nave-Herz 2002: 149). Further, the sociology of the family distinguishes between different types of families, based on research by William J. Goode (1965: 45; italics in the original):

> What are the main family forms to be considered? The *nuclear* family is a unit composed of husband, wife, and their children. […] The household may be enlarged *generationally* as well as laterally by the addition of other nuclear units. The term *extended* family is loosely applied to a system in which the ideal of the society is that several generations should live under one roof.

Although the definition of the nuclear family, which Goode further specifies as the conjugal family, has to be viewed critically from a contemporary point of view, the definition also reflects upon social norms and expectations of the 1960s, not only in the USA.[44] Therefore, though the definition of family based on shared characteristics and

[43] As Nave-Herz (2002: 148) points out, the range of definitions coincide with a macro-sociological and a micro-sociological perspective on the family. A macro-sociological definition of 'family' describes the family as a social institution that is publicly recognized and has to perform social tasks. A micro-sociological perspective defines the family as a small group in which a married couple lives together with their biological offspring. This minimal definition reduces the family to its biological aspects, a definition that cannot account for modern families in which adoption or single-parent households are no longer unusual.

[44] Besides these various forms of families that exist all over the world, Goode analysed rules of residency that for example in U.S. American contexts, but also European societies, expects

the different forms of families will serve as a starting point for analysis, it has to be kept in mind that the classics of the sociology of the family were basically dominated by two different approaches, that were prevalent in all branches of sociology: structural functionalism and symbolic interactionism.[45] Though the latter offers more obvious links to an analysis of literature, some basic assumptions of structural functionalism will be introduced in the following as they will complement a generation studies' perspective on the family.

Structural functionalist approaches to the sociology of the family,[46] which developed in the 1950s, view the family as a subsystem that provides coherence to society and its structures (cf. Parsons 1968: 19).[47] Talcott Parsons, looking at the U.S. American society in the first half of the 20th century, assumes that the family loses its function in a highly differentiated society, in which the family "does not itself, except here and there, engage in much economic production; it is not a significant unit in the political power system; it is not a major direct agency of integration of the larger society" (Parsons 1968: 16). However, he suggests that the family has two "basic and irreducible functions" (ibid.: 16):

> [F]irst, the primary socialization of children so that they can truly become members of the society into which they have been born; second, the stabilization of the adult personalities

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married couples to set up a new residence apart from either parental home and which is called neolocality (Goode 1965: 46), and forms of households.

45 In the last 30 years these two paradigmatic approaches, which have dominated not only in the sociology of the family but also in general sociology, have been complemented by the rational-choice theories. Yet, as rational-choice theories are grounded on economic principles and view the family as a productive collective that contributes to society by consolidation of resources and differentiation of labour (cf. Schmidt/Moritz 2009: 26 ff.), this approach does not contribute to an analysis of generations in literature and will therefore not be discussed in further detail.

46 Structural functionalism has been criticized, on the one hand, for viewing the family as a system on a macro-level, neglecting the actions of the individual because human interaction is only viewed as a performance of functions. On the other hand, it has also been subject to criticism because of its retrospective assumptions about the functions of the family in the past. Generally, complex realities are reduced to simple and abstract system coherences. But social phenomena, such as the family, and therefore generational relations within the family, cannot be simply reduced to a purely functional analysis, because reality is characterized by the complex interactions and interdependencies of social structures (cf. Schmidt/Moritz 2009: 16 ff.).

47 Of specific interest is the correlation between changes in society and familial relations that were witnessed from industrialization onwards. Émile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons, the widely acknowledged exponents of structural functionalism, analysed the structural components of the family. Durkheim mainly concentrated on the contribution the family as an almost autonomous and functionally differentiated subsystem can and has to make to the preservation of society, while Parsons focused on the nuclear family and its position with and meaning for society (cf. Schmidt/Moritz 2009: 8 f.).

> of the population of the society. It is the combination of these two functional imperatives, which explains why, in the "normal" case it is both true that *every adult* is a member of a nuclear family and that every child must begin his process of socialization in a nuclear family. (Ibid.: 16 f.; italics in the original)[48]

Qualifying this absolute statement, Parsons adds that "the child is never socialized only for and into his family of orientation, but into structures which extend beyond his family, though interpenetrating with it" (ibid.: 35). Socialization through school and peer groups thus merges with the function of the nuclear family, which offers a way of approximating the functions of the family with questions of migration.

While researchers such as Talcott Parsons and William Goode (1965: 108 f.) propose a loss of the functions that a family can perform, others interpret this development as a further functional specification (cf. Schmidt/Moritz 2009: 14). The hypothesis of the family's loss of its social functions, however, coincides with the question of the disintegration of the family. What René König calls the "cultural lag" (König 1946: 45, qtd. in Schmidt/Moritz 2009: 16) is a crisis of the family's adaptation to changed social conditions, leading to a late adjustment of both family and society to the new functions, expectations, and roles that both systems have to take over in order to function in unison. This crisis can be exacerbated by the experience of migration, as the reading of Nadeem Aslam's novel *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004) will show (cf. chapter 5)

Symbolic interactionism serves as a supplement to the outlined theoretical perspectives of structural funtionialism to provide further starting points for the analysis of genealogical and generational relationships between fictional characters. Symbolic interactionism originated in the 1920s mainly in the works of George Herbert Mead and is based on the assumption that reality can be created, preserved, and modified. The term 'symbolic interactionism' was coined by Herbert Blumer (1969) in his seminal monograph of the same title, thus first competing with and later replacing Mead's term 'social behaviourism', which basically denotes the same approach.[49] Symbolic

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[48] Other functions, which are a combination of different structural functionalist works collected by Schmidt/Moritz (2009: 11) are: "Reproduktion, Statuszuweisung oder sozial Platzierung, Sozialisierung und soziale Kontrolle, biologische sowie emotionale und wirtschaftliche Erhaltung des Individuums."

[49] Taking up Mead's work, Blumer was concerned with the problem of how an individual becomes an object to him- or herself (cf. Manning/Smith 2010: 38). To approach this question, Blumer drew upon Mead's work on child development in which the latter had analysed how children learn to master role-taking and rule-following behaviour. To that research Blumer added three very straightforward ideas: "The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them. Such things include everything that the human being may note in his world – physical objects, such as trees or chairs; other human beings, such as a mother or a store clerk; categories of human beings, such as friends or enemies; institutions, as a school or a government; guiding

interactionism adds to an understanding of the workings and functions of the family by analysing interaction in daily family life. Assuming that the family is created and preserved by interaction, it is of vital importance for the family that stability is achieved through the negotiation of meaning, expectations, and needs of the family members that are based on the different roles that all the family members take on (cf. Schmidt/Moritz 2009: 23). In these processes of interaction the individual with his or her personality is taken into account much more than by the structuralist functionalist approach. Research for example on married couples has shown how a construction of reality within a marriage works:

> Durch eine Ehe bauen sich die Partner eine eigene Welt auf. Erfahrungen, die jeder der Ehepartner in seiner Vergangenheit gemacht hat, werden dabei überdacht und in Bezug auf das aktuelle System einer neuen Interpretation und Definition unterzogen. Ein Konsens wird aus den unterschiedlichen Erfahrungen geschaffen, der dann für die Ehepartner die Eherealität darstellt […]. (Ibid.: 24)

These findings about the interactional situation within a marriage are transferable to the family situation with more than husband and wife to establish meaning in a constructed reality. The same symbolic interaction takes place between parents and children, even spanning more than two generations.

Therefore, genealogy as the relation between kindred generations is one of the channels through which meaningful interaction can be analyzed, because it always takes into account the role of the individual but also the social role he or she is taking within a family. The genealogical relation between grandmother and grandchild, in which for example knowledge about the meaning a specific object has for both grandmother and grandchild and how the meaning of that object has to be re-negotiated between them, is a different interaction than for example between mother and child. As the experiences of the members of the interaction are different, each individual evaluates the situation differently and arrives at diverging interpretations. These findings, of how meaning is created and re-created by individuals in different social settings, are able to contribute to the analysis of literary texts in that they offer new perspectives on the actions of fictional characters. Especially in migration literature, in which the response of a literary character to his or her environment is a central starting point for interpretation, the symbolic interactionist approach will enrich traditional reading strategies. Further,

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ideals, such as individual independence or honesty; activities of others, such as their commands or requests; and such situations as an individual encounters in his daily life. The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters" (Blumer 1969: 2).

the symbolic interactionist approach to the research on familial generations makes a very valuable contribution to the theoretical framing for the analysis of generations in literature. It understands generations as a part of a symbolic system and therefore the generations' interpretations and constructions of meaning are of a second order. The methods of interpreting the construction of meaning are very similar to the interpretations of literary representations, which equally constitute a symbolic system. [50]

While these early theories on the family proposed the nuclear family as the only form of cohabitation that would survive the changes of the 20th century in modern capitalist societies, sociological theories of modernity have gone one step further and summoned the end of the family altogether. The prophetic discussions of the end of the family, reminiscent of postmodernism's declaration of the end of grand narratives (*sensu* Lyotard), which followed the heyday of structural functionalism and symbolic interactionism and entered the public discourse as some generational labels prove,[51] could however be disproved by empirical studies. As works on familial generations and family commitments have shown, the negative prognoses have not come true. Quite to the contrary, as Hans Bertram (2000) argues in an essay on multi-local multi-generational families, the solidarity between members of a family is still quite high. Therefore it has to be stated that on this level, on which generations describe a lineage of grandchild, child, parent, grandparent, and so forth, an intergenerational solidarity prevails, debunking the myth of the end of the family.[52]

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[50] For all that, a fundamental critique on the interpretative methodology that symbolic interactionism employs is that the descriptions of everyday examples do not represent a coherent theory and that they lack any kind of empirical validation. A further criticism that has to be acknowledged is the approach's basic assumption that linguistic categories and the underlying components offer access to an individual's understanding of the world when the theory fails to show how the construction of meaning through interaction actually works (cf. Schmidt/Moritz 2009: 25).

[51] See, e.g., <www.single-generation.de>.

[52] Intergenerational solidarity basically works on three different dimensions or levels: a functional dimension, an affective dimension, and an associative dimension. Functional solidarity refers to supporting activities between members of different generations. These can be monetary transfers, supporting children during their education or elderly parents during retirement, or spending time with each other to take care of each other, whether it is childcare performed by parents or care of the elderly through children or grandchildren. But also the matter of co-residency, which might be related to either matters of financial support or caring activities, belongs to the functional solidarity between family generations. Affective solidarity relates to the emotional ties between individuals that are part of one family and the associative dimension of intergenerational solidarity is connected to the frequency and kind of contact between members of different generations (cf. Kohli/Szydlik 2000: 11).

These elaborations on a structuralist functionalist and a symbolic interactionist approach to genealogy draw attention to a variety of issues that can be addressed in the analysis of migration literature. Firstly, it will be interesting to take a closer look at the roles the members take over in the family. Particularly the roles of characters belonging to different generations have to be viewed in relation to one another and contrasted with the social roles these characters fulfil outside the family. A focus on the examination of how the interaction between family members generates meaning will be one starting point for the analysis of literary representations of generations. Secondly, finding out about the functions the represented family relations have will be insightful. In order to fufil both aims, a combination of the theoreticl approaches will be used for the literary interpretations. The notions of social roles and the functions of the family will further be combined with genealogy as a narrative of origin to interpret developments within a family. This approach offers insights not only into the structures of a representation of a family but also opens the discussion for findings on how inheritance changes the roles of family members.

2.1.2. Social Generation and Generationality: The Contemporaneity of Generations

Research on social generations and generationalities first became of interest for the social sciences at the beginning of the 20th century. Previously, only art and literary history and philosophy had used and developed the idea of social generations to categorize artists and their works as well as artistic and literary developments chronologically.[53] These early uses of the concept of 'generation' were significant influences on the sociologist Karl Mannheim, who in his seminal essay "The Problem of Generations" (1928) attempts to develop the first coherent and applicable theory of

[53] Especially German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) and art historian Wilhelm Pinder (1878-1947) made use of the concept 'generation' in their writings. Dilthey (1961 [1875]) focused on the development of the humanities in contrast to the natural sciences, while Pinder (1926: 6) classified European art history by generations: "Damit ist freilich die Behauptung aufgestellt und eine Gliederungsmöglichkeit vorgeschlagen, die wieder eine Abstraktion bedeutet: die 'Generation' als Arbeitshypothese, die Generationsgeschiche als eine Linie mehr, keineswegs als die einzige Linie, nach der wir zu blicken haben. Die 'Generationen' sind Abstraktionen. In jeder Minute wird eine neue Generation geboren. Aber es ist, um dem Chaos des Allzuvielen zu entrinnen, eine Möglichkeit da, gewisse Gruppen annähernd Gleichaltriger zusammenzufassen, ihnen den Namen einer 'Generation' zu verleihen."

social generations.[54] Although the essay "did not go beyond a provisional sketch with a few historical examples", it still marked a "high point" and showed the "low level of theoretical discussion up to this point", as Hans Jaeger (1985: 278) remarks. Although Mannheim's work can be criticized for a number of shortcomings in its theoretical design, it has to be recognized as the first – and for a long time the only – discussion of the relation between social change and social generations.

The appeal of theories on social generations and generationalities for the analysis of literary texts is based on their characteristic feature of being a form of communal relationship. While literary studies often focus on individual figures such as narrators or single characters or on genealogical structures such as families, the focus of generation studies on social generations can open up a new perspective on analysing groups of characters and the quality of their relationships. The following paragraphs will therefore concentrate on Mannheim's theory of generation and its further developments to facilitate the transmission into literary and cultural studies.

Karl Mannheim situates himself in the tradition of what came to be called the 'imprint hypothesis'. Supporters of the imprint hypothesis, in contrast to adherents of the 'pulse-rate hypothesis', believe that generations "are a secondary phenomena, brought about through the development of history as a whole" (Jaeger 1985: 276). Theoreticians such as Mannheim reject the basic assumption of a uniform, or in any other way regular, rhythm of generations, while proponents of the pulse-rate hypothesis, such as Wilhelm Pinder (1926), François Mentré (1920), or José Ortega y Gasset (1923) "presuppose the existence of a rhythm of historical generations with an interval resembling a pulse rate governed by some kind of law" (ibid.: 277). While this distinction between the imprint and the pulse-rate hypothesis is rarely revisited in contemporary research on generations – Jürgen Reulecke (2008: 119) is one notable exception – it is the starting point for theories on social generations.

Mannheim observed and commented upon the intermittent and sometimes unreflecting use of the concept of 'generation' by the two previously dominant approaches to generations, the positivist and the romantic-historical approach (cf. Mannheim 1997 [1928]: 276), which basically constitute the differences between the imprint and the

[54] "The Problem of Generations" (1928) is an essay in which the considerations and reflections presented are an *attempt* to put forward a theory on social generations. More recent scholars of generation studies have pointed out the various blind spots of the essay. Especially the works by Joachim Matthes (1985), who offers a reading of Mannheim's essay from the perspective of a sociology of thinking (*Denksoziologie*), and Oliver Neun (2009), who offers an extensive analysis of Mannheim's terminology, have to be mentioned in this regard.

pulse-rate hypothesis.[55] The basic distinction between the positivist and the romantic-historical approach corresponds to quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches. The Positivists' aim was to find the average period of time that it takes for the older generation to be superseded in public life by a younger generation and to find a natural starting point in history from which to determine a new period (cf. ibid.: 278).[56] The most important aspect of this approach was that generations constituted one of the essential driving forces of progress (cf. ibid.: 281). Romantic-historicist research on generations, in contrast, relied on data gathered by observation that ultimately resulted in evidence against the positivist concept of a unilinear development in history: "The problem of generations is seen here as the problem of the existence of an interior time that cannot be measured but only experienced in purely qualitative terms" (ibid.: 281).[57] The two methodologically radically different approaches to the problem of generations were thus presented as mutually incompatible, with the main difference being their conceptualization of time and whether or not it can be measured objectively. Mannheim's theory ultimately aimed at unifying the diverse disciplinary and nationally oriented approaches to the problem of generations (ibid.: 287), while at the same time favouring the "romantic and historicist German mind" (ibid.: 281).

Working on a coherent theoretical grounding for the research on social generations, Mannheim developed the terminological triad of 'generation location', 'generation as actuality', and 'generation unit'.[58] With the help of these three conceptual units, which

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[55] Mannheim (1997: 280 ff.) firmly places the positivist tradition in France and the romantic-historicist approach in Germany.

[56] The background for this reasoning was, according to Mannheim, a "sudden eclipse of liberal cosmopolitanism as a result of the arrival of a nationalistically-minded young generation" (1997: 280). For liberal Positivists the research on generations therefore served "above all as evidence in favour of its unilinear conception of progress" (ibid.: 281). Applying a mechanistic and externalized concept of time, the Positivists attempted to use it as an "objective measure of unilinear progress by virtue of its expressibility in quantitative terms" (ibid.: 281).

[57] Dilthey contrasts exactly the mechanistic and objective conceptualization of time with his idea of generations, which equals what Mannheim called the interior time: "Dem Verhältnis zwischen Sekunden und Minuten der Uhr und dem inneren psychologischen Zeitmaß entspricht für große Zeiträume des geschichtlichen Ablaufs das zwischen Jahrzehnten, Jahrhunderten und andererseits dem Menschenleben in seinem mittleren Durchschnitt und in der Aufeinanderfolge seiner Lebensalter, da in dem Verlauf des Menschenlebens die natürliche Einheit für anschauliches Abmessen der Geschichte geistiger Bewegung gegeben ist" (Dilthey 1961: 36).

[58] The terminology used in the discussion of Mannheim's concepts is based on the English translation of his German essay. Other scholars dealing with his theory have chosen a different terminology, such as Hans Jaeger (1985: 278): "generational stratum, generational context, and generational unit." However, the terms generational stratum and generational

delineate different forms and substructures of a social generation, he tried to find a way into the interdisciplinary background of the concept and offered an understanding of how generations work as a motor for social change. This terminological triad will prove particularly interesting for the application in literary studies as these precise definitions allow for structural comparisons of literary representations of generationalities and social generations and an interpretation of their functions respectively.

Most notably, Mannheim drew on the works of Wilhelm Dilthey and Wilhelm Pinder, who both argued that generations gain more than a mere chronological significance because more than one generation can exist at the same time (cf. Dilthey 1961 [1875]: 36; cf. Pinder 1926: 3).[59] As elaborated on in "The Problem of the Generations", Dilthey assumed that the "same dominant influences deriving from the prevailing intellectual, social, and political circumstances are experienced by contemporary individuals, both in their early, formative, and in their later years" (Mannheim 1997: 282) and that contemporaries who are subject to common influences constitute a generation.[60] This uncoupling of experience and year of birth led Mannheim to draw on Pinder's (1926: 3) notion of the non-contemporaneity of the contemporaneous,[61] which presumes that different generations live at the same time. This assumption of multiple generations existing at the same time gains importance for the analysis of their representations in literature because the focus of literary works often lies on tensions

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context do not reflect the inherent meaning of Mannheim's choice of 'location' and 'actuality' as they miss the theoretical derivation.

[59] Pinder (1926: 3) in parts became a little polemical in arguing for the simultaneous existence of several generations: "Das Wissen darum ist sogar so naiv, daß in jedem geschichtlichen 'Augenblicke' verschiedene Generationen behaupten mögen, er sei in Wahrheit oder eigentlich der ihrige – was ja eben die Anwesenheit der anderen voraussetzt."

[60] Dilthey's German original reads: "Generation ist alsdann eine Bezeichnung für ein Verhältnis der Gleichzeitigkeit von Individuen; diejenigen, welche gewissermaßen nebeneinander emporwuchsen d.h. ein gemeinsames Kindesalter hatten, ein gemeinsames Jünglingsalter, deren Zeitraum männlicher Kraft teilweise zusammenfiel, bezeichnen wir als diesselbe Generation. […] So gefaßt, bildet eine Generationen einen engeren Kreis von Individuen, welche durch Abhängigkeit von denselben großen Tatsachen und Veränderungen, wie sie in dem Zeitalter ihrer Empfänglichkeit auftraten, trotz der Verschiedenheit hinzutretender anderer Faktoren zu einem homogenen Ganzen verbunden sind" (Dilthey 1961: 37).

[61] "Es ist das Problem der gleichzeitigen Anwesenheit mehrerer Generationen in jedem geschichtlichen 'Augenblick'; […]. Gibt es einen Klang, eine Farbe des Gleichzeitigen? Gibt es darin und dazu die Mehrfältigkeit der Generationen, also eine fühlbare und sichtbare Ungleichaltrigkeit – 'Ungleichzeitigkeit' des Gleichzeitigen? Was heißt dann noch 'gleichzeitig'? […] Wie könnten wir den Grad an 'innerer Ungleichzeitigkeit' oder 'Gleichzeitigkeit' bestimmen?" (Pinder 1926: 3).

between different generations that try to differentiate each other from preceding, succeeding, or contemporaneous generations.

To assess how generations develop, Pinder drew on the Aristotelian idea of 'entelechy', the condition in which potentiality becomes actuality (cf. *OED online*; cf. Pinder 1926: 16). For Pinder, "the entelechy of a generation is the expression of the unity of its 'inner aim' – of its inborn way of experiencing life and the world" (Mannheim 1997: 283).[62] It therefore seems to be an autonomous, vitalizing influence of an experience that gives rise to the construction of generations based on an intrinsic factor whereas at other times in different circumstances no such development takes place. Pinder thus "denies the question of causality" (Jaeger 1985: 281) because the realization of the potentiality of a generation is not predictable but can only be verified in retrospect.[63] One important advantage of a analysis of social generations as presented in narratives is therefore that literary texts are able to convey the process of realizing a potentiality, while the social sciences can only retrospectively evaluate a social generation's existence.

Basing his theory on these two assumptions, Mannheim broke new ground by drawing on Max Weber's (1985 [1978]: 43 ff.) theory of social class, who in return referred to Karl Marx's *Capital* (1867) to establish 'generation' as a social category.[64] Mannheim uses class position, a social category that shares a structural resemblance to generations, to reflect upon the character of generations and deduce a definition. The class position of an individual in a society can in a wider sense be defined as "the common 'location'

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[62] Dilthey, quite similar to Pinder, assumed that the formation of generations depended on the forces of nature and therefore neglected to ponder the question of why and how generations are constructed: "Und hier scheinen wir nun ganz der Willkür der schaffenden Natur übergeben zu sein, aus deren rätselhaftem Schoß die Individuen in einer bestimmten Auswahl und Reihenfolge sich erheben" (Dilthey 1961: 38).

[63] However, for Pinder – a supporter of the pulse-rate hypothesis – an entelechy "denotes an intellectual formative tendency characteristic of a certain period of time, which cannot be derived from 'some milieu' and which cannot be explained causally in any way" (Jaeger 1985: 281). Pinder therefore argues for an acknowledgement of a kind of historical procession of clearly distinguishable entelechies that has the effect on regular groupings of important dates of births. At least for an European history of arts Pinder finds it remarkable that "Bach, Handel, and Scarlatti were born in the same year (all in 1685) […]" (Jaeger 1985: 281-82). This borrowing of useful and appropriate terminology and ideas in Mannheim's interdisciplinary theory of generations can be seen as further evidence for the conception of generations to be an example of a 'travelling concept'.

[64] Although the reference to social class is Mannheim's starting point for his terminological triad, it proves to be problematic when subject to a closer look, as Hans Jaeger (1985: 285) points out: "A generation can be envisioned as made up of threads which appear at some point in history and cease to exist at a later point in time. Class, on the other hand, is a social context which exists across generations, and which is not determined by age, but rather by the material relationships of individuals."

(*Lagerung*) certain individuals hold in the economic and power structure of a given society as their 'lot'" (Mannheim 1997: 289; italics in the original). The class position of an individual is an objective fact, whether or not the individual is conscious of or acknowledges his class position.[65] A 'generational location', in analogy to class location, can therefore be established by "a similarity of location of a number of individuals within a social whole" (ibid.: 290). This very basic definition of the unity of a generation through similar location is the cornerstone of Mannheim's theory. However, his failure to specify what is encompassed by the 'social whole' and whether or not other categories such as gender (cf. Neun 2009: 228-31; cf. Jureit 2006: 33) influence the similar location of the individual has to be criticized. He also fails to acknowledge cultural differences between societies, as Joachim Matthes (1985: 371) points out. [66]

The most important characteristic of a generational location is the tendency to produce certain modes of behaviour, feeling, and thought, thus creating mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion:

> The fact of belonging to the same class, and that of belonging to the same generation or age group, have this in common, that both endow the individuals sharing in them with a common location in the social and historical process, and thereby limit them to a specific range of potential experience, predisposing them for a certain characteristic mode of thought and experience, and a characteristic type of historically relevant action. Any given location, then, *excludes* a large number of possible modes of thought, experience, feeling, and action, and *restricts* the range of self-expression open to the individual to certain circumscribed possibilities. (Mannheim 1997: 291; my own emphasis)

The notion of a generational location therefore not only includes all individuals who find themselves in a shared social location and offers them a certain mode of thought, it also specifically excludes anyone who does not share the location and thus denies them this "characteristic mode of thought". This predisposition for a characteristic mode of thought and experience, a precursor of Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' (cf. chapter 2.2.4), establishes Mannheim's notion of generational location as an elitist formation. Beate Fietze, who not only draws attention to the positive and negative aspects of generational locations, but also specifically marks the difference between class and generational location, puts forward a similar criticism:

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[65] However, a class position is not always accompanied by class-consciousness, although the class position can give rise to a consciousness and thus might results in the formation of a 'conscious class' in Karl Marx's sense (cf. Mannheim 1997: 289 f.). If a generation articulates a shared consciousness, according to Alan B. Spitzer (1973: 1360), this establishes a "generational ideology."

[66] For a discussion of the charges of Mannheim's conceptualization of generations as a National Socialist concept, see Neun (2009: 231, 235-37).

> Die soziale Lagerung bestimmt die Zugangsweise zu dem gesellschaftlich-historischen Geschehen, das nur aus einer durch die Lagerung bestimmten Perspektive überhaupt wahrgenommen werden kann. Negativ formuliert beschränkt jede soziale Lagerung die Wahrnehmungs- und Handlungsspielräume, positiv formuliert legt sie aufgrund ihrer "inhärierenden Tendenz" "eine spezifische Art des Erlebens und Denkens" und "eine spezifische Art des Eingreifens in den historischen Prozess" nahe (vgl. Mannheim 1964: 528f.). Diese positive wie negative Selektivität des Realitätszugang der Individuen trifft im Falle der Generationslagerung in noch stärkerem Maße zu als im Falle der Klassenlagerung, denn anders als im Falle der Klassenlagerung kann ein Individuum seiner Generationslagerung nicht durch sozialen Aufstieg oder sozialen Abstieg entkommen. (Fietze 2009: 73 f.)

Fietze points towards one of the central weaknesses of Mannheim's analogy between the social categories of class and generation. Unlike the class position, which the individual can change by either climbing or descending the social ladder, the individual generational location cannot be influenced whatsoever.

Recognizing that "a generation in the sense of a location phenomenon falls short of encompassing the generation phenomenon in its full actuality", for "[t]he latter is something more than the former, in the same way as the mere fact of class position does not yet involve the existence of a consciously constituted class" (Mannheim 1997: 303), Mannheim introduces a further development in his conceptualization of 'generations': the 'generation as an actuality'. While it suffices that "one has to be born within the same historical and cultural region" (ibid.: 303) to share a generation location, a generation as an actuality involves more than that: "A further concrete nexus is needed to constitute a generation as an actuality. This additional nexus may be described as *participation in the common destiny* of this historical and social unit" (ibid.: 303; italics in the original). Through this further specification Mannheim establishes the 'generation as an actuality' as a specific connection between the members of a generation. This bond is created through the members "being exposed to the social and intellectual symptoms of a process of dynamic de-stabilization" (ibid.: 303). The difference between a generation location and a generation as an actuality is therefore made by the difference between the potentiality of participating in a shared experience and the actual participation (cf. Fietze 2009: 75). The 'actual generation' is therefore a further specification of the generation location.

With this interim step Mannheim leads the reader to the core of his triad, the 'generation unit'. This term designates the most concrete social formation in Mannheim's theory of generations:

> The generation unit represents a much more concrete bond than the actual generation as such. Youth experiencing the same concrete historical problems may be said to be part of the same actual generation; while those groups within the same actual generation which

> work up the material of their common experiences in different specific ways, constitute separate generation units. (Mannheim 1997: 304)

One actual generation may consequently result in several generation units depending on how the groups cope with their shared experiences. Therefore imagining social generations as a consistent and unitary phenomenon that generates a collective identity by distancing itself from previous generations is no longer possible.

With the concept of the generation unit Mannheim introduces intra-generational differences in addition to inter-generational differences (cf. Fietze 2009: 85). Generation units in fact constitute the form of social generation that is of greatest interest in both generation studies and literary and cultural studies, as this qualification eventually allows for multiple generations to exist at the same time within a historical context. Yet it is not a necessary given that each generation as an actuality brings forth a fully developed generation unit. As Jureit (2006: 23) argues, some generation units stay on the sideline or accept a subordinate role to more dominant trends.

This assumption leads to two fundamental questions: First, what produces a generation unit and, second, which circumstances give rise to a generation unit in a particular social and historical context. One important factor in the formation of a generation unit is the "great similarity in the data making up the consciousness of its members" for "they have a socializing effect" (Mannheim 1997: 304). This 'mental data'[67] can cause individuals to form a group and even unite spatially scattered individuals. [68] However, the formation of a generation unit, which is the very basic precondition of its existence,

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[67] 'Mental data' is Paul Kecskemeti's translation, who is both editor and translator of the *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*. The German original of the text uses 'Inhalte' or 'Gehalte' when relating to mental data: "Das Erste, was auffällt, wenn man eine bestimmte Generationseinheit ins Auge faßt, ist die weitgehende Verwandtschaft der Gehalte, die das Bewußtsein der einzelnen erfüllen. Gehalte haben – soziologisch gesehen – Bedeutsamkeit, nicht durch die in ihnen enthaltenen und erfaßten Inhalte, sondern durch das Faktum, daß sie die Einzelnen zur Gruppe verbinden, 'sozialisierend' wirken. Die Idee der *Freiheit* z.B. war für jene liberale Generationseinheit nicht allein wichtig durch die darin enthaltene inhaltliche Forderung, sondern weil in diesen Inhalte und durch diese Inhalte räumlich und sonst zerstreute Individuen zu einer Einheit verbunden werden konnten" (Mannheim 1970 [1928]: 544). Mental data can therefore be more or less any content or idea that connects a group of individuals.

[68] This form of community building anticipates a later conceptualization of generations as 'imagined communities' in the sense of Benedict Anderson (1998 [1983]) as Ulrike Jureit (2006: 41) and Mark Roseman (2005) argue. This idea primarily relates to the fact that generations do not naturally exist but are being created and that they are not fixed entities. Generations can therefore be perceived as being based on a belief in communality of individuals of the same age who feel connected because of their specific mode of thinking, feeling, and acting that creates a common perception and action pattern, might never actually meet one another in person (cf. Jureit 2006: 41).

is not to be mistaken as its coming into being. Avoiding the question of which impetus is needed for the generation unit to come into being, Mannheim points out that not every generation location creates collective impulses and formative principles original to itself and adequate to its particular situation. Therefore, when the formation does happen, he argues to be the "*realization of potentialities* inherent in the location" (ibid.: 309; italics in the original), namely the entelechy of the generation. This new generation entelechy is what Mannheim understands to be the formation of a "new generation style" (ibid.: 309) of which the manifestations may be portrayed in narrative texts. However, the consciousness of a generation unit, similar to class-consciousness, does not always have to be distinctly pronounced for a generation unit to come into being. Mannheim concedes that one generation unit may be active and creative, being aware of its existence as a group without realizing or perceiving itself as a generation unit while another generation unit may consciously experience and even emphasize their character (cf. ibid.: 309).

Mannheim's drawing on the concept of *Zeitgeist*, or "the spirit of an epoch" (ibid.: 313), to explain formation processes of generations is a source of conflict amongst interpreters of his theory because it establishes elites of different kinds as the core of the formation of social generations:

> The mentality which is commonly attributed to an epoch has its proper seat in one (homogeneous or heterogeneous) social group which acquires special significance at a particular time, and is thus able to put its own intellectual stamp on all the other groups without either destroying or absorbing them. (Mannheim 1997: 313)

Commenting on the connection between the *Zeitgeist*, the existence of which he actually denies (cf. ibid.: 316), and the leadership role of one social group, it has to be noted that Mannheim assumes the existence of social elites that gain a significance in society in one way or another. Generation units become the "carriers" (cf. Berger 1960: 10) of the *Zeitgeist* and thus form a kind of social elite that puts their "intellectual stamp" on other groups. One of these social elites is argued to be the literary men as the interpreters and agents of the *Zeitgeist* who manage to pick up on the different currents and trends and incorporate them into their workings (cf. Mannheim 1997: 317). In this line of argument, literature fulfills a "seismographic function" (Jaeger 1985: 287).

> [That] the pictures of generations in the fine arts and in music do not seem to appear with the same precision as they do in literature may be explained by the fact that language responds more easily and naturally to concrete historical changes than do other artistic expressions. And in such changes should be found the basic factors which form generations. (Jaeger 1985: 287)

While Mannheim naturally draws on older examples of German literature, Jaeger offers the example of German literature before and after the Second World War:

> A case in point in the most recent German history of literature is a distinct separation of generations caused by the Second World War between those authors – as, for example, Wolfgang Borschert [sic] – whose writings are still influenced by the immediate experience of the war (Heinrich Böll speaks of "rubble literature"), and a later cohort of literary people born after 1925 including Ingeborg Bachmann, Siegfried Lenz, Martin Walser, Günter Grass, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, and Uwe Johnson who develop a more generalizing-reflective and at the same time esthetically [sic] more demanding style, as is suggested by the new security of life circumstances. (Jaeger 1985: 288)

Jaeger's argument is an important affirmation of the claim that literature is a privileged medium for the study of generations, even if authorial biography is not the focus of the present study. In his interpretation of Mannheim's essay, Jaeger comes to the conclusion that generations are most easily recognized when they are clearly articulated – whether it be theoretically or artistically – as an intellectual generation (cf. ibid.: 291).

The most influential advancement of these theoretical elaborations on social generation has been put forward by the German historian Jürgen Reulecke (2003, 2007, 2008). Reulecke introduces another terminological sophistication by distinguishing between 'generation', 'generationality', and 'generativity', a triad that will prove to be of importance in analysing the representation of generations in literature.[69] He defines 'generation' as "a group within a society that is characterized by its members having grown up in the same particularly formative history era" (Reulecke 2008: 119). Reulecke therefore employs the term 'generation' in an almost equivalent way to Mannheim's generation as actuality, for it is not only the generational location in which the individual finds himself, i.e. being born within the same historical and cultural region, but a more or less active participation in the common destiny of the historical or social unit. Reulecke assumes that "a generational identity exists throughout its members' lives due to their having experienced times of radical upheaval and new beginnings (primarily in adolescence) and as a result sharing a specific habitus" (ibid.: 119). The recurrence of the notion of habitus and the assumption that the formation of a generational identity mainly happens during adolescence shows how close Reulecke's definitions are to Mannheim's theory. However, Reulecke does not consider the

[69] Exponents of generation studies use the terms 'generationality' and 'generativity' in very different, sometimes contrasting ways, see e.g. the contributions to *The Generative Society: Caring for Future Generations* edited by Aubin/McAdams/Kim (2003). A distinction from e.g. Vera King's (2010: 68) usage of the term, which is discussed in more detail in chapter 2.2.2, footnote 82 in this study, amongst others has to be highlighted. This study will use Reulecke's concept to preclude further terminological confusion.

formation of a generational identity that lacks the experience of "times of radical upheaval and new beginnings" to be possible.[70]

Reuleckes's term 'generationality', which is synonymous with the German term *Zeitheimat* – a term coined by W.G Sebald (Jureit/Wildt 2005: 10)[71] and elaborated on by German historian Reinhart Koselleck (cf. Reulecke 2007: 34) –, highlights particular features of a generational identity and has a twofold meaning,:

> On the one hand, it refers to characteristics resulting from shared experiences that either individuals or larger "generational units" collectively claim for themselves. On the other hand, it can also mean the bundle of characteristics resulting from shared experiences that are ascribed to such units from the outside, with which members of other age groups – and often also public opinion as expressed in the media – attempt, in the interest of establishing demarcations and reducing complexity, to identify presumed generations as well as the progression of generations. (Reulecke 2008: 119)

The twofold meaning of 'generationality' reflects upon the self-description and the ascription through others that define and label a generational identity. Generationality, especially in its second meaning, the ascription of particular shared experiences to identify social generations, has in recent years given rise to a multitude of blanket labels, which leads Reulecke to the conclusion that "generation and generationality are, in the end, not tangible entities but rather mental, often very zeitgeist-dependent constructs through which people, as members of a specific age group, are located or locate themselves historically, and accordingly create a we-feeling" (Reulecke 2008: 119). Just like Jureit and Wildt (2005), Reulecke highlights the aspect of communitization and collectivization that the phenomenon 'generation' offers to its members. The generational identity is therefore always already a collective identity.[72]

The new concept in Reulecke's triad, 'generativity' – a synonym for Hannah Arendt's concept of 'natality' (cf. Reulecke 2007: 35) –, places the generational identity in a genealogical context: "[Generativity] refers primarily to the – conscious or unconscious

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[70] This prerequisite is shared by Pierre Nora, who bases his definition of a social generation on the one hand on the idea that a generation is by nature an individual phenomenon that only makes sense when seen collectively, and on the other hand acknowledges that although the notion of generation originated in a framework of continuity it only makes sense in a framework of discontinuity and rupture (cf. Nora 1996: 507).

[71] For a concise elaboration on the connections between Sebald's *Zeitheimat* and Mannheim's theory cf. Bude (2005: 28 ff.).

[72] Conceptualizing 'collective identity' this study draws on Jan Assmann's (1997: 132) definition referred to in the introduction to this study: "Unter einer *kollektiven* oder *Wir-Identität* verstehen wir das Bild, das eine Gruppe von sich aufbaut und mit dem sich deren Mitglieder identifizieren. Kollektive Identität ist eine Frage der *Identifikation* seitens der beteiligten Individuen."

– examination, especially within particularly distinctive generationalities, of their ties to the diachronic sequence of 'generations' in the genealogical sense of the word" (Reulecke 2008: 122).[73] Reulecke links this concept to findings by Sigmund Freud, who considered how a generation transfers its specific mental problems to the next generation: "According to Freud, no generation is capable, in the end, of hiding meaningful mental processes from the following generations" (Reulecke 2008: 122).[74] This transfer of mentalities can in extreme cases result in a generation break, or 'generational rejection' (Koselleck, qtd. in Reulecke 2008: 122), which belongs to the elementary preconditions of a generation becoming aware of its own historicity.

Reulecke's terminological development of Mannheim's theory has many advantages in the application to literary texts. Especially his concept of generationality, which highlights the constructed and performative character of a generation, is essential for a transmission into literary and cultural studies. For the discussion and analysis of representations of generations, Reulecke's terminology offers more conceptual freedom because the term 'generationality' with its performative character is applicable to a literary text and invites interpretation. Therefore, the term generationality will be preferred in the following discussion of narratives and the term social generation will be used when real-life phenomena are addressed.

2.2. Intersections of Genealogy and Generationality

The previous elaborations on the scientific origins, theoretical conceptualizations, and methodological approaches to the multi-facetted concept have shown that 'generation' offers several links between different academic cultures: on the one hand, bridging the gap between the study of culture and the natural sciences and, on the other hand, connecting different concepts and approaches that open up new dimensions in the research on generations. Because of the interdisciplinary character of 'generation' and the many intersections it offers, central categories such as class, gender, ethnicity, body, and age always have to be kept in mind when analysing generationalities and genealogies. As they are descriptive characteristics of generations, the importance of categories that might generate forms of inequality always has to be reflected upon.

[73] See Ulrike Jureit's (2006: 28) definition: "Generativität bezeichnet zum einen den physisch-organischen Reproduktionsprozess, zum anderen die Weitergabe und Tradierung kulturellen Kapitals."

[74] For a comprehensive account on transgenerational transmission of guilt and traumata, cf. Parnes/Vedder/Willer (2008: 291-313). The issue of transgenerational memory will be discussed in more detail in chapter 2.2.3 of this study.

Research on generations and their various forms becomes only possible by accepting the intersectionality of categories that are typically used to analyse social inequality.

As has been shown in the discussion of Mannheim's theory of generations, social generations were conceptualized as dominated by privileged young men, invoking notions of a gendered elitism. These ideas, which date back to the beginning of the 20th century, have to be challenged, just as the definitions of the nuclear family of the same time have to be reconsidered, as is shown by much of the contemporary research within generation studies.[75] The present study presupposes the importance of categories of social inequality as they are always part of the characterization of a generation. Instead of specifically focusing on one or more of the inequality-generating categories mentioned above in their literary representation, this work uses a comprehensive framework of the key concepts migration, temporality, memory, and youth as the points of reference to connect them to theories of 'generation'. In this framework the previously made theoretical assumptions about generationalities and genealogies will be tested for their applicability in the interdisciplinary space that the study of culture offers to concept 'generation'. The concepts migration, temporality, memory, and youth have been selected for further discussion, on the one hand, because they are all already incorporated in conceptualizations of generation. On the other hand, as chapter 3 on generations as generic feature in narrative texts and the methodological approach for a narratological study will show, these concepts are absolutely essential when studying the British Asian narratives selected for analysis. Therefore the following elaborations on the different approaches and applications in the study of culture foreshadow the representations of generations in literature.

[75] Eva-Maria Sillies (2010) has shown how notions of gender, class, and age can be incorporated in a historical analysis of generations in her study on generational experiences of emancipation of German women through the development and dissemination of the pill as a method of contraception. Her study shows that contemporary research on both generationality and genealogy has to consider various categories of social difference in order to be able to meaningfully discuss and analyse phenomena of social change. For a comprehensive collection of essays on questions of gender and generation, see Kolarova/Sokolova (2007).

2.2.1. Migration as Family Project: Conceptualizations and Applications of Generationality and Genealogy in Migration Studies

The concept of 'generation', with its two constituents 'generationality' and 'genealogy', is a central idea within the interdisciplinary field of migration studies[76]: One of the "workhorses of sociological studies of immigration is the concept of first, second, and third generations" and the "usage of the generation concept […] is much more problematic than most scholars have acknowledged" (Kertzer 1983: 141). The starting point for any discussion of the use of 'generation' in migration studies, be it sociological, historical, or literary, has to be Marcus Lee Hansen's 1937 lecture on "The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant" (1987).[77] In his speech to the Augustana Historical Society in Rock Island, Illinois, (today the Swedish-American Historical Society) an organization devoted to the study of the history of Swedish immigrants to the United States, Hansen addressed questions of integration and assimilation of immigrants in relation to the time of immigration of the individual. Portraying processes of immigration to the United States at the beginning of the 20th century, he first highlighted how immigrants were viewed as a 'problem' until they "accommodated themselves and reconciled themselves to the surrounding world of society" and became

[76] The concept is frequently drawn upon in migration studies in an attempt to represent a unifying experience of migration. Titles such as Alba/Waters (2011) collection *The Next Generation: Immigrant Youth in a Comparative Perspective,* for example, use the concept rather unreflecting. What exactly the field of migration studies encompasses has been defined by King (2011: n. pag.): "*Migration studies* is the description, analysis, and theorization of the movement of people from one place or country to another. These movements are for longer than visits or tourism and may involve either short-term / temporary or long-term / permanent relocations." For an introduction into migration theory cf., e.g., Brettell/Hollifield (2008). On the importance and value of an intersectional approach in migration studies, see the article by Hans-Joachim Bürkner (2011) "Intersectionality: How Gender Studies Might Inspire the Analysis of Social Inequality among Migrants". Bürkner not only summarizes the history and achievements of the approach known as 'intersectionality' so far, but he further portrays how an intersectional approach can be introduced into the field of migration studies and human geography. He proposes the use of the categories gender, age, and body in analysing migrant communities, transnational migration and temporal configurations of exclusion/inclusion (for example of different migrant generations).

[77] Being a cultural historian, Hansen initially conducted large-scale research on processes of immigration from Europe to America from the middle of the 19th century onward and later on set out to write "the whole history of immigration to the United States" (Handlin 1987: 9). His early death in 1938 prevented Hansen from finishing this large-scale project, but he left behind a manuscript of the first volume of what was planned to become a trilogy. The Pulitzer Prize winning book *The Atlantic Migration, 1607 – 1860*, published posthumously in 1940, covers social as well as economic backgrounds of settlers and immigrants up to the civil war.

"'Americanized'" (Hansen 1987 [1937]: 12). Hansen then moved on to discuss the struggles of second-generation immigrants as they were "subjected to the criticism and taunts of the native Americans and to the criticism and taunts of their elders as well" (ibid.: 12). He observed that the children of immigrants were born into a predicament in which they were neither accepted by the American society nor allowed by their parents to fully assimilate to the host society:

> Whereas in the schoolroom they were too foreign, at home they were too American. Even the immigrant father who compromised most willingly in adjusting his outside affairs to the realities that surrounded him insisted that family life, at least, should retain the pattern that he had known as a boy. Language, religion, customs and parental authority were not to be modified simply because the home had been moved four or five thousand miles to the westward. When the son and the daughter refused to conform, their action was considered a rebellion of ungrateful children for whom so many advantages had been provided. The gap between the two generations was widened and the family spirit was embittered by repeated misunderstanding. How to inhabit two worlds at the same time was the problem of the second generation. (Ibid.: 13)

Hansen describes the prevalent conflict between immigrants and their descendants born in the host society. The only solution to this conflict, as he proposes in this speech, is economic independence from the migrating parents, which is used by the second generation to strive for complete assimilation. In this narrative of historical immigration to the United States, Hansen describes very general trends and focuses on only one process of integration. Continuing his rather biased presentation to a non-specialist audience that was personally affected by exactly the same processes, Hansen calls for the preservation of the cultural roots and heritage of migrants, who see these elements dwindle because of the assimilation of the second generation. Yet Hansen reassures his audience, who are immigrants trying to preserve their cultural heritage, that "[a]ll has not been lost" (ibid.: 15):

> Whenever any immigrant group reaches the third generation stage in its development a spontaneous and almost irresistible impulse arises which forces the thoughts of many people of different professions, different positions in life and different points of view to interest themselves in that one factor which they have in common: heritage – the heritage of blood. (Ibid.: 19)

This inevitable development "makes it possible for the present to know something about the future" (ibid.: 15) and describes "the almost universal phenomenon that what the son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember" (ibid.: 15). Hansen's theory of a circular process of acculturation and integration still occupies researchers today not only in migration studies. Scientists interested in human geography or sociology, but also literary authors, such as Hanif Kureishi, who raises similar issues in his short story "My Son the Fanatic" (1997), critically discuss developments in integration.

Owing to the format of the remarks of "The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant", Hansen fails to provide empirical evidence for his statements. He stresses the positive effects of the third generation's return to traditions, religion, language, and culture of their immigrant grandparents uncritically. Hansen draws the picture of a renaissance of immigrant culture, reassuring the audience that in the future their descendants will not forget their struggles upon immigration. Yet regardless of how the format influenced the elaborations, it has to be criticized that Hansen's theory only extends as far as the third generation immigrant. Although he proclaims that his theory enables him to make a prophecy for future social developments, he does not pursue his theory any further. His prediction of processes of integration ends with the third generation, which can partly be explained by the missing data on further generations.[78] Apart from that, Hanson's considerations are based on a genealogical concept of generations that he mixes unreflectively with the notion of generations as cohorts, which makes his theory inapplicable to empirical research. In simply counting the familial generations since the event of immigration and then generalizing a shared experience of these generations, Hansen firstly ignores the socio-historical and political conditions that influence the experience of the immigrants. Not only the integration strategies developed by the immigrants influence coping mechanisms, but forms of integration are just as well determined by a cultural and political sense of openness towards immigrants and an appreciation of the cultural enrichment resulting from immigration.

Secondly, the genealogical conception in Hansen's theory is inconclusive because he assumes a general pattern of the first generation migrating and the second generation born in the new country. This pattern ignores various scenarios of migration in which for example parents emigrate with infants or young children, or even multi-generational migration in which the nuclear family gets the grandparent-generation to join them in the new country. Hansen's simplified sequence of migration and integration and the resultant theory therefore lack the potential to integrate variation and ignore the possibility that not all descendants of immigrants integrate according to the same patterns. Furthermore, questions of the experience of time, the acceleration of individual experiences of time (cf. chapter 2.2.2), the average numbers of generations of a family or the duration of the phase in which adults possess social positions as "agents or

[78] Although at the time of his speech Hansen had collected vast amounts of data on European migration to the United States, he had not conducted a longitudinal research on the integration processes of migrant families and could therefore not provide the needed data. Furthermore, internal migration of families within the United States between the two World Wars and continuing flows of immigrants further complicated the study immensely.

'carriers' of major cultural changes" (Berger 1960: 10) are not taken into consideration. Despite these points of criticism, it is the quandary of conceptualizing generations that is the basic issue with Hansen's theory. Specification of the concept, as demanded by for example Kertzer (1983), is often neglected by studies on multi-generational migrant families.[79]

Attempting to correct the quandary, Rubén G. Rumbaut (2004) highlights the difficulties of any typology of generational cohorts defined by age and life stage at the time of migration for quantitative research and offers parameters that help to research international migration and processes of integration and adaptation. Most importantly, Rumbaut highlights differences in nativity, which Hansen disregards completely. Other factors are language and accent, educational attainment and patterns of social mobility, outlooks and frames of references, ethnic identity and the propensity to sustain a transnational attachment over time (cf. Rumbaut 2004: 1164). Along the lines of these parameters, in combination with the nativity or the age at which immigrants entered the host society, he proposes that there are fundamental differences in the pace and mode of adaptation or integration between individuals who migrate as adults and those who do so as children (cf. Rumbaut 2004: 1166). His solution to the question of how to conceptualize generations in migration research, namely to re-define the terminology of first and second generation and to refine the category 'generation' according to the data at issue and the research question, point out the general difficulties of using the concept of 'generation' in migration studies:

> 1) those who arrive in early childhood (ages 0-5) – whom I have elsewhere labeled the 1.75 generation because their experience and adaptive outcomes are closer to that of the U.S.-born second generation – are pre-school-age children who retain virtually no memory of their country of birth […]; 2) those who arrive in middle childhood (ages 6-12) – the classic 1.5 generation – are pre-adolescent, primary-school-age children […]; and 3) those who arrive in their adolescent years (ages 13-17), who may or may not come with their families of origin […] – a 1.25 generation whose experiences and adaptive

[79] Quite similar to Hansen, the German sociologist Hartmut Esser, whose influential research on immigration in Germany since the late 1970s has covered topics such as labour migration and integration, or integration and language learning, has equally avoided to conceptualize generations and issues of time, even though his contribution to the collection of essays *Generation und Identität: Theoretische und empirische Beiträge zur Migrationssoziologie* is entitled "Nur eine Frage der Zeit? Zur Frage der Eingliederung von Migranten im Generationen-Zyklus und zu einer Möglichkeit, Unterschiede hierin theoretisch zu erklären" (1990: 73-100). Indeed, Esser names multiple factors that influence integration of first- and second-generation immigrants of Turkish and Yugoslavian origin and descent in Germany, but he applies a similar mixed concept of generation based on genealogy and birth cohort without discussing the use of the concept 'generation' for the research of migration or reflecting on the links the use of the concept offers for the study.

> outcomes are hypothesized to be closer to the first generation of immigrant adults than to the native-born second generation. (Rumbaut 2004: 1167)

With this distinction of the second-generation immigrants from any other in-between-generation Rumbaut offers an accurate analytical tool for migration studies. By linking generation to life stages and age he specifies the experience of migration and manages to connect the methodologically easier to handle cohort to a genealogical conception of generation. This enables him to describe the different experiences of migration and the processes of integration of the second generation. Splitting the second generation into smaller units, numerically placing them closer to the migrating generation than the succeeding generation actually born in the host country, Rumbaut refines 'generation' as an analytical tool. His studies of integration processes are therefore more informative than for example Hansen's statements. Yet, Rumbaut's focus on the generations 1.25 to 1.75 loses track of the second generation and the difficulties that arise for it out of the tensions of socialization through their family and their peers.

Emphasizing five issues to consider when employing generation in migration studies, Kertzer identifies further problems that arise from using generation as analytic method. He thus generally questions the applicability of generation as an analytical tool and as a category of differentiation within migration studies on multiple levels:

> (*a*) Unless the migration was restricted to a brief period, people sharing the same generational location in fact belong to different historical periods, confronting different historical conditions at their arrival and coming from a society that itself was different from the one earlier migrants had left. (*b*) Parents often migrate with their children, and occasionally three-generation families migrate together. In such cases we are either left with the anomalous case of children and their parents belonging to the same "generation" or with some immigrants of a certain age being considered first-generation (having no parents accompanying them) and others of the same age being considered second-generation (arriving with their parents). (*c*) Related to this point, immigrants range in age from infancy to octogenarians. Does it make sense to lump these together as members of the same generation? The cultural imprint of foreign birth on the 80-year-old is entirely different from the imprint on the infant. (*d*) What of the not infrequent cases in which the migrant, resident for some time in the new country, is joined by his or her parents? Does the younger migrant shift from first- to second-generation migrant, or are both parents and children members of the same generation? (*e*) Finally, as we move beyond the first generation, all these initial problems are magnified because marriages are not necessarily "generation" homogeneous or ethnically endogamous. (Kertzer 1983: 141)

Kertzer challenges Mannheim's notion of the generational location, which implies that the migrant is born within the same historical and cultural region as his fellow migrants assigned to the same generation (cf. Mannheim 1997: 303). Questioning the validity of the assumed same generational location, Kertzer points out that the experience of the historical period of the migration cannot be the same for all immigrants who are the first of their respective family to leave the home country. Adding the observation that in

many cases migration is a family project in which more than one generation migrates together,[80] he not only shows his concern about the notion of generational locations but also scrutinizes the idea of counting generations upon their arrival in the host country. Thus combining objections against an unreflecting application of generations on both a familial and a social level, Kertzer introduces changing temporal structures as one of the main questions of significance the study of culture offers to widen the scope of the concept of 'generation'.

As the discussion of applications of 'generation' in migration studies has shown, the combination of generationalities or social generations and migration – at least in empirical research – raises more questions than it actually answers. The concept of a second-generation immigrant, as enticing its seemingly explanatory potential appears, is a treacherous construct that has to be used very carefully: the expression 'second-generation immigrant' is an oxymoron, for persons born in the host country, in his study the USA, cannot at the same time be immigrants to that country (Rumbaut 2004: 1165)! Especially when turning towards literature later on it will become clear that generalizations of the experience of migration do not necessarily further an interpretation.

2.2.2. Acceleration and Rivalry for Time: Temporality in Generational and Genealogical Relations

Hartmut Rosa (2005) takes up the aforementioned notion of time to analyse the acceleration of social change from modernity to late modernity and identifies a contraction of the present (*Gegenwartsschrumpfung*).[81] His findings of the acceleration of social change have direct consequences for research on generations because generations are carriers of culture (cf. Berger 1960: 10). The acceleration of social change implies that "attitudes and values as well as fashions and lifestyles, social relations and obligations as well as groups, classes, or milieus, social languages as well as forms of practice and habits, are said to change at ever-increasing rates" (Rosa 2009:

[80] Franz Hamburger (2011: 90) validated the idea that migration can generally be thought of as a family project: "Bis weit in das 20. Jahrhundert hinein und bei Wanderungen außerhalb der Arbeitsmigration auch in der Gegenwart ist die Migration ganzer Familien, die oft über eine Kernfamilie hinaus Verwandtschaften einbeziehen, die Normalform der Migration."

[81] In his monograph *Beschleunigung* (2005), Rosa specifically points towards the works of Zygmunt Bauman (cf. *Liquid Modernity*, 2000), Manuel Castells (cf. *The Power of Identity*, 2004) and Arjun Appadurais (cf. *Modernity at Large*, 1996), thereby placing himself in the tradition of modernization theory.

83).[82] To this list 'generations' can be added as one of the many things to change at "ever-increasing rates". This entails a contraction of the present, a concept Rosa adopts from the German philosopher Hermann Lübbe (2000: 11-20): it is the consequence of the accelerating rate of cultural and social innovation.[83] The present is viewed as the time span in which "the horizons of experience and expectation coincide" (Rosa 2009: 83), producing a relative stability that allows people to "draw on past experiences to orient our actions and infer conclusions from the past with regard to the future" (ibid.: 83). [84]

Focusing on the development of the family, Rosa argues that change "has accelerated from an *intergenerational* pace in early modern society to a *generational* pace in 'classical' modernity to an *intragenerational* pace in late modernity" (ibid.: 84; italics in the original). The advancement from an intergenerational to intragenerational tempo of social change has wide-ranging consequences for the relations between generations, especially when keeping in mind Wilhelm Dilthey's (1961: 37) declaration of the length of a generation to be thirty years and Wilhelm Pinder's (1926: 8) observation of the 'non-contemporaneity of the contemporary'.

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[82] The implications of the acceleration of social change were already anticipated by Karl Mannheim, who argued that it might lead to the "mutual destruction of the embryo entelechies" (1997: 310). The figurative embryos, i.e. the generation units, would be nipped in the bud by forever new developing potentialities that can actually never be realized because in the instance of the creation of a new generational style the next realization of a potentiality would already have to take place.

[83] The term *Gegenwartschrumpfung* refers to the contraction of the extensions of spaces of time – the spatial metaphors for discussing time are important in both Koselleck's and Lübbe's work – in which the individual can expect a certain amount of consistency in his living conditions: "Erfahrungsraum und Zukunftshorizont werden inkongruent" (Lübbe 2000: 11). The space of time in which consistency is given through an approximation of experience and expectation becomes shorter and shorter. One of his most memorable examples concerns the half-life of academic writing that is sometimes outdated before the textbooks have reached the bookstores (cf. ibid.: 15).

[84] This definition of the present is taken from Reinhart Koselleck, who uses the categories of experience and expectation to conceptualize historical time: "Erfahrung und Erwartung sind zwei Kategorien, die geeignet sind, indem sie Vergangenheit und Zukunft verschränken, geschichtliche Zeit zu thematisieren. […] Erfahrung ist gegenwärtige Vergangenheit, deren Ereignisse einverleibt worden sind und erinnert werden können. Sowohl rationale Verarbeitung wie unbewußte Verhaltensweisen, die nicht oder nicht mehr im Wissen präsent sein müssen, schließen sich in der Erfahrung zusammen. Ferner ist in der je eigenen Erfahrung, durch Generationen oder Institutionen vermittelt, immer fremde Erfahrung enthalten und aufgehoben. […] Ähnliches läßt sich von der Erwartung sagen: auch sie ist personengebunden und interpersonal zugleich, auch Erwartung vollzieht sich im Heute, ist vergegenwärtigte Zukunft, sie zielt auf das Noch-Nicht, auf das nicht Erfahrene, auf das nur Erschließbare" (Koselleck 1989: 353 ff.). Koselleck uses both categories to argue that in the modern era the gap between experience and expectation keeps widening (ibid.: 369).

> Die Beschleunigung des sozialen Wandels lässt sich daher, so mein Argument, insgesamt deutlich ablesen am Verhältnis der Generationen zueinander: Von einer vormodernen Situation, in der strukturelle und kulturelle Bestände über viele Generationen hinweg im Wesentlichen einfach tradiert wurden, führte sie in eine Moderne, in der, wie Ansgar Weyman [sic] feststellt, "Generationen […] als kollektive Akteure strukturbildend und innovativ" [cf. Weymann 2000: 44] wirken, Veränderungen also am Generationenwandel abgelesen werden können, und schließlich in eine Spätmoderne, in der sich die Verhältnisse innerhalb der einer Generation zugemessenen Zeitspanne selbst grundlegend verändern. (Rosa 2005: 184)

When social change reaches an intragenerational tempo, Rosa expects consequences especially for forms of social integration and cultural production. The transfer of knowledge from one generation to the succeeding one is affected because the needs and expectations of the generations drift apart. This leads the older and the younger generations to develop separate and isolated spheres of life in which they not only use different media for communication and acquisition of knowledge but also physically inhabit different spaces: "Die Erfahrungen, Praktiken und Wissensbestände der Elterngeneration werden für die Jungen zunehmend anachronistisch und bedeutungslos […]" (ibid.: 187). The asynchronous life-worlds and experiences of succeeding but contemporaneous generations keep drifting apart, thus complicating intergenerational communication solidarity.

Notably, this diagnosis of the acceleration of social change again neglects the specification of the concept of generations. Re-considering Mannheim's argument for social generations as the carriers of culture, an acceleration of change that appears to overrun the formation of generations has to be discussed critically. The outlined consequences of an acceleration of social change imply that the formation of social generations is complicated by the continuous overlapping of existing generations.[85] This problem has already been taken into account in Mannheim's theory, in which he anticipated Rosa's observation of an intragenerational tempo of social change. Mannheim further conceptualized three modalities of the relation between succeeding generations and processes of social change:

> Auf der einen Seite der Skala in historischen Phasen langsamer sozialer Entwicklung identifiziert Mannheim einen generationsspezifischen Mechanismus "sozialer Elastizität" als einen unbewusst verlaufenden Prozess kultureller Anpassung. Auf der anderen Seite der Skala in historischen Phasen extreme beschleunigten Wandels spricht Mannheim von "Zwischengenerationen" als einem Phänomen verhinderter Generationsbildung, deren Mitglieder den Wandel sehr wohl zur Kenntnis nehmen, ihm aber keine altersspezifische und zugleich "adäquate" kulturelle Form geben können, sondern sich den vorausgegangenen oder den nachfolgenden Generationszusammenhängen anschließen.

[85] The usage of 'social generation' here is based on the reference to social reality and not to representations of generations.

> Historische Generationen, der dritte Modus, entstehen nur, wenn das Tempo des sozialen Wandels die Ausbildung altersspezifischer Situationsdeutung ermöglicht und befördert. (Fietze 2009: 81)

Of these three modalities the social resilience in times of decelerated social change and the so-called in-between-generations, which could be mere trends or fashions (cf. ibid.: 82), are two extremes of the spectrum. The actual formation of social generations can only take place when the pace of social change allows for the emergence of age-specific interpretations of the situation.

Furthermore, the acceleration of social change relates to social as well as familial generations. The effects of the accelated social change on generations have been complicated by what Vera King compellingly labelled "The Generational Rivalry for Time" (2010). Returning to Rosa's study, King points out that "acceleration, from the perspective of subjective constructions of meaning, might represent the attempt to compensate for the finiteness of life-time. […] [A] secular strategy replacing religious notions of the consolation of eternal life after death" (King 2010: 55). For King the acceleration of time implies a necessary "struggle to gain time" (ibid.: 56) that leads to a tension between the individual life and the generational relationship, which exceeds the individual finite life-span. The caretaking function of generational relationships,[86] which demands taking time to spend it with succeeding generations, whether in the form of child-raising or in giving impulses to generationalities in formation, bears the "potential for transcendence" in that the "identification with the generational line […] is potential for a symbolic extension of an individual life-time" (ibid.: 57). Thus, the background of this responsibility towards the next generations does not emanate from an altruistic wish to inform and pass on knowledge but rather from quite an egoistic wish to extend one's own life-time by passing on something of oneself to the next generation. The ambivalent perspectives resulting from the obligation to take care of the younger generation in combination with a growing social demand for youthfulness and

[86] King uses the term 'generationality' in this context to label "*social generational relationships, that is, of historically, culturally and socially varying structures and attendant 'dispositives' (in Foucault's sense) and practices of care-taking* [sic] *relationships to younger generations, as well as correlating social forms of the regulation of generational succession*" (2010: 68; italics in the original). In contrast to Reulecke's usage of 'generationality', King's understanding encompasses familial and social generations and basically only refers to the form of relation between the generations. King's usage of generationality actually compares to Reulecke's term 'generativity'. She stresses that the relation between generations is characterized by the function of caretaking. King's understanding of this caretaking-relationship, however, only extends from the older to the younger generation, ignoring the fact that in accelerated modern societies a reversal of this relationship is required in order to achieve intergenerational solidarity.

flexibility in all life-stages, according to King, might lead to "generative paradoxes of contemporary society" (ibid.: 62):

> Accordingly, adults, driven both internally and externally by life under conditions of acceleration to youthfulness and flexibility, tend to be in a permanent state of awakening, in continual search of new departures. A generative behavior toward the *real* adolescents would, in contrast, be contingent upon the recognition of generational *alterity*. It would be based upon the recognition of difference: not to be able to be everything and not to be forever. *Such acts of integration, however, stand in contradictory tension to the social ideals of continuing flexibility*. (Ibid.: 62; italics in the original)

The paradox lies in the impossibility of fulfilling the assigned obligations of taking care of the younger generation and at the same time wanting to comply to societies' demands to remain young and flexible in order to react to the new situations that an accelerated modern society confronts the individual with.[87] Failing to recognize the generational alterity of the younger generation and its need to develop its own identity that is not overshadowed by the older generation trying to keep up with adolescent trends can lead to a generational struggle over the annexation of "the time of the adolescent successors" (ibid.: 65). King's argument centres on the caretaking function of generational relations that present a potential for transcending one's own finiteness through the identification with the generational line that extends beyond an individual lifetime. The younger familial generations have to fight for emancipation if the parents keep extending the moratorium of adolescence in order to slow down the acceleration of time and the concomitant contraction of the present. Similarly, social generations have to compete for their right to become the carriers of culture in society (cf. Berger 1960: 10), taking over from preceding generations.

This competition between different generations raises questions of how social generations and generationalities are limited in time and when succeeding generations have a claim to become the bearers of culture in society. As Mannheim has shown, the generational experience at a particular historical time is crucial for the formation of generations. The common understanding about a shared experience at a certain time and the collective identities that result from the formation of a generation, which according to Corsten (1999: 252) is often researched in combination with collective memory,[88]

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[87] The importance of youth is pointed out by Pierre Nora: "Youth has ceased to be a transitory stage of life; it has emancipated itself from the sociological reality of being a social minority and even freed itself from the symbolism of age to become an organizing principle for society as a whole, a mental image that guides the distribution of roles and positions, an end unto itself" (Nora 1996: 510).

[88] 'Collective memory' refers "to the symbolic order, the media, social institutions and practices by which social groups construct a shared past. 'Memory', here, is used metaphorically. Societies do not remember literally; but much of what is done to reconstruct

show that the concept of 'generation' refers to 'social time', which indicates "a specific *human ability to work on the experience of change, to react, to organize and confer meaning on the experience*" (Tabboni 2001: 7; italics in the original).[89] It is thus the collective aspect of time implied in social time that is of importance for the formation of generations. As Corsten argues, generations as collectives "identify and locate themselves in the historical process […] by self-thematization, by identifying their patterns of interpretation and validation of collective experience in discourses" (Corsten 1999: 261). The individual temporal awareness thus becomes secondary, because it is "none other than the junction of various currents of memory, the meeting point of collective times" (Tabboni 2001: 19), thus inevitably leading into the field of memory studies.

2.2.3. From Generational to Transgenerational Memory: 'Generation' as a Key Concept in Memory Studies

Introducing the importance of memory in the production of a collective experience of time, the study of culture provides a further central concept to broaden the discussion of intersections of genealogy and generationality. The field of cultural memory studies offers a variety of approaches that draw on intersections between generationality and genealogy: from Nora's statement that generations are paradigmatic sites of memory to Marianne Hirsch's concept of postmemory, a form of transgenerational memory. Although this part focuses on the theoretical approaches, this study will later on show how the combination of memory and generation studies can be very productive because of the various representations of memory in literature portraying generations.

Pierre Nora states in accordance with Mannheim and succeeding generational theorists that generations do not emerge spontaneously. Instead, generations are the product of memory, an effect of remembering (cf. Nora 1996: 522). Jeffrey K. Olick (1999: 339)

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a shared past bears some resemblance to the processes of individual memory, such as the selectivity and perspectivity inherent in the creation of versions of the past according to present knowledge and needs" (Erll 2009: 218).

[89] The concept of 'social time' applied by Corsten goes back to Norbert Elias' work (cf. *Time: An Essay*, 1990; *Über die Zeit*, 1984), which has contributed greatly to the sociology of time by not only pointing out the social nature of time but also by tracing the development of time to explain "why time has become what it is today. Time is no longer merely the collective rhythm of different activities, but a social construction which varies in the course of the process of civilization, becoming today an extremely abstract symbol, a cognitive instrument borrowed from the natural sciences and thus a constrictive social *habitus*" (Tabboni 2001: 20).

concisely describes the relation of generation and memory as "mutually constitutive, not because of some objective features of social or cultural structure but because of experiential commonalities and resultant similarities in individual memories of historical events." Exemplified by the French Revolution of 1789 and the student revolts of 1968, Nora conceptualizes social generations as a genuine French phenomenon: "the Revolution was generational in its pedagogical obsession and reversal of time, in its eschatology of rupture, in its instantaneous transition from the Old to the New. The twilight of legitimacy, the dawn of the notion of generation" (Nora 1996: 502). Though this reasoning is accounted for by the objective of his project *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past* (1996), namely an analysis of French national identity, his examples serve the purpose of elucidating the emergence of generations and the function that the self-conception of the generation had for the revolution. The French Revolution, in Nora's line of argumentation,

> established the notion of a generation, not only because it gave birth to one (a preposition whose proof would itself be an effect of retrospective genealogy) but because it cleared the way for, made possible, and accelerated the advent of a world of change, an egalitarian world in which 'generational consciousness' was born. (Ibid.: 503)

The young generation of 1789 had to seize power in order to overthrow the absolute monarchy that had ruled France until the revolution. The social generation had therefore emerged before the political events took place and developed a generational consciousness, a self-conception as political and social agent, in order to realize their aims. In contrast, the student movement of 1968 gained its self-conceptualization as a social generation only after the movement started in France, thus employing a retrospective explanatory power, "thereby constituting it, from its inception and in a primary, purely temporal sense, as a *lieu de mémoire*" (ibid.: 500). This retrospective development of a generational consciousness questions the emergence of such a generational consciousness through the members of the generations themselves. If the social generation has a retrospective explanatory function, the public must have ascribed the generational consciousness to that generation.

The emergence of a generation is therefore not just a reflection on its own construction over time but can also be influenced by public ascription. Because a generation is always a mixture of "memory and history", a product of memory, "an effect of remembering" that "cannot conceive of itself except in terms of difference and opposition" (ibid.: 522), Nora argues for a historical generational memory. It is historical because

> it is first imposed from without, then violently internalized. Generational self-proclamation is in fact the outcome of a solicitation from outside, a response to an appeal,

> a reflection of external scrutiny by parents, 'teachers,' journalists, or public opinion, which has a cumulative or snowball effect. (Ibid.: 523 f.)

A collective identity has to be internalized not just in hindsight, but in the process of emergence of the generational identity, which is first imposed on the generation by outsiders. It is created in retrospect through a negotiation of the solicitations that the generation is being informed through an influential public.

Consequentially, Nora distinguishes between a collective memory and a generational memory. For Nora generational memory does not mean the memory of the generation, but rather the memory that the generation has to process:

> Generational memory is stocked with remembrances not so much of what its members have experienced as of what they have not experienced. It is these memories of what stands behind them that the members of a generation share in common, a painful, never-ending fantasy that holds them together far more than what stands in front of and divides them. (Ibid.: 525)

This form of memory is not a matter of individual psychology, as Nora states (1996: 526), but grows out of social interactions "that are in the first place historical and collective and are later internalized in a deeply visceral and unconscious way so as to dictate vital choices and control reflexes of loyalty – matter in which 'I' is simultaneously 'we'" (ibid.: 526). It is thus not the actual personal memory of the individual who remembers a particular historical event, but rather the collective memory that brings together the members of a generation who have to make sense of the collective experience of history.[90] This definition of generational memory can be read as an example of what Jeffrey K. Olick calls the "collected memory approach" to collective memory: "collected memory approaches do not necessarily begin by assuming the existence of a collectivity which has a collective memory (though they often do begin in this way), but instead can use the inquiry to establish whether or not the colloquial collective designation is or is not salient" (Olick 1999: 339; cf. Erll 2009: 218). Generational memory validates the status of a generationality rather than being the reason for its emergence. It is created in retrospect because the members of the generation have to be able to participate in the collective memory of the historical event that triggers its emergence. Therefore, generational memory, which for Nora represents a *lieu de mémoire* because it is historical and collective, is not an unseen entity that vaguely describes the formation of a generation. Nora defines sites of memory as

[90] Olick (2008: 159) points out that "we must remember that memory is a process and not a thing, a faculty rather than a place. Collective memory is something – or rather many things – we *do*, not something – or many things – we *have*." He further (1999: 345) defines "genuine collective memory" as "public discourses about the past as wholes or narratives and images of the past that speak in the name of collectivities."

> simple and ambiguous, natural and artificial, at once immediately available in concrete sensual experience and susceptible to the most abstract elaboration. Indeed, they are *lieux* in three senses of the word – material, symbolic, and functional. Even an apparently purely material site, like an archive, becomes a *lieu de mémoire* only if the imagination invests it with a symbolic aura. A purely functional site, like a classroom manual, a testament, or a veterans' reunion belongs to the category only inasmuch as it is also the object of a ritual. And the observance of a commemorative minute of silence, an extreme example of a strictly symbolic action, serves as a concentrated appeal to memory by literally breaking a temporal continuity. (Nora 1989: 19)

A *lieu de mémoire* therefore always consists of these three aspects, the functional, the symbolic, and the material. Based on these three aspects, the generational mnemonic site is conceived of as public place, social interaction, and centre of participation, not as private recollection of individual members of a generation who link their own personal memories to the public events necessary for the emergence of the generation.[91] Therefore, a historical generation, as Nora calls what in the context of this work is also referred to as political or social generation and is distinguished from a generationality (cf. chapter 2.1.2), is a *lieu de mémoire* not simply because shared experiences imply shared memories.

> [I]t is material by its demographic content and supposedly functional – since memories are crystalized and transmitted from one generation to the next – but it is also symbolic, since it characterizes, by referring to events or experiences shared by a small minority, a larger group that may not have participated in them. (Nora 1989: 19)

Conceptualized as *lieux de mémoire*, historic or social generations become a place for social interaction in which the participation of individuals is inevitable. As Ann Rigney (2008: 345) emphasizes, memory sites, "by encapsulating multifarious experience in a limited repertoire of figures, […] provide a placeholder for the exchange and transfer of memories among contemporaries and across generations." Not only the contemporaries or members of a particular social generation but also their successors might thus be able to avail themselves of the generational memory that leads to the emergence of a social generation.

Conceptualizing social generations as memory sites highlights the importance of a collective memory for the emergence of generations and the interactional and social

[91] These explications of historical generations as mnemonic sites have to be complemented with a more general definition of *lieux de mémoire*, which have to be distinguished from historical objects as they "have no referent in reality; or, rather, they are their own referent: pure, exclusively self-referential signs. This is not to say that they are without content, physical presence, or history; it is to suggest that what makes them *lieux de mémoire* is precisely that by which they escape from history. In this sense, the *lieu de mémoire* is double: a site of excess closed upon itself, concentrated in its own name, but also forever open to the full range of its possible significations" (Nora 1989: 24).

function of generational memory. Furthermore, the notion of generations as memory sites offers a bridge to the conceptualization of memory in families and the transfer of memory between familial generations. Eviatar Zerubavel's (1996) approach of 'mnemonic socialization' through 'mnemonic communities' complements and refines the notion of a transfer of memory between generations. Zerubavel introduces a social function of memory into the wider discourse of memory studies by pointing out the importance of the family – the first mnemonic community an individual is born into – for processes of remembering. Regarding the experience that "other people sometimes have even better access to certain parts of our past than we ourselves" (Zerubavel 1996: 285) it is remarkable that "[p]arents, grandparents, and older siblings […] often remember people and events from our own childhood that we cannot." In doing so, the "mnemonic others" (ibid.: 285), a term alluding to the sociological category of the 'significant other' (cf. Mead 1934; cf. chapter 3.2.4), remember events for the individual. However, as much as the mnemonic others provide lost memories for the individual person they also predetermine what will be remembered. Such a pre-selection of memories has to be challenged in the social setting of the family in which parents decide for children what is to be remembered and what is to be forgotten.

Mnemonic socialization is not necessarily restricted to the family but continues beyond the family upon entering a new "thought community (such as when we get married, start a new job, convert to another religion, or emigrate to another country)" (Zerubavel 1996: 286). These events require a reinterpretation of personal memories in view of new "*mnemonic tradition*[s]", which point towards the "normative dimension of memory" (ibid.: 286).[92] This normative dimension becomes most obvious when questioning the "social *rules of remembrance* that tell us quite specifically what we should remember and what we can or must forget" (ibid.: 286). The examples used by Zerubavel show that the main function of social rules of remembrance is to divide the past into "a memorable 'history' and a practically forgettable 'pre-history'" (ibid.: 288). Thus, joining mnemonic communities such as families, organizations, or even nations with their own traditions of remembering and forgetting presupposes the ability to experience events that happened to the community in question before the individual joined the group as if it was part of the individual's own past (cf. ibid.: 290). The familiarization of community members with the group's past is an important means for the community

[92] The normative function of memory is also refered to by Ron Eyerman (2004: 163), who discusses the politics of remembrance and forgetting in relation to, for example, media representations of traumatic events. He ascribes great power to political elites that select which perspectives of events are represented in the mass media and which perspectives are to be forgotten.

to incorporate new members. However, Zerubavel's argument that leaving a community in return often involves forgetting its past seems to be rather problematic. As early as 1937, Marcus Lee Hansen refuted the theory that the assimilation of immigrants leads to a rejection of the country of origin's cultural heritage. Zerubavel's claim that children of assimilated immigrants do not learn much about the history of the societies they have left behind from their parents will therefore have to be reconsidered in relation to the works of literature focused upon in this thesis.

A particularly interesting point in Zerubavel's remarks is, however, that he assigns to elderly members of mnemonic communities the social role or function of custodians of a communities' social memories. They "have traditionally served as mnemonic go-betweens, linking historically separate generations who would otherwise never be able to 'connect' with one another mentally" (ibid.: 291). With this social function to fulfil, the role of the older generation is strengthened particularly in the social setting of the family. The intergenerational transfer of memories thus becomes a vital aspect of research on succeeding generations with the mnemonic go-betweens serving as figures of transmission. Anticipating the discussion of youth cultures in relation to 'generation' and considering the importance of youth in the formation of generationalities, this argument is particularly interesting. The tension that is created through the function of mnemonic go-betweens and young people will have to be analysed in greater detail in the literary representations of generations, with the character of the grandmother in *Anita and Me* as the prime example.

In addition to this discussion of the notion of 'transgenerational memory', a further concept, namely 'transgenerational trauma' has to be introduced in order be able to connect the triad of generation, memory, and migration later on. Sigrid Weigel (2002c: 268 ff.) has traced the 'transgenerational trauma' back to Sigmund Freud's idea of 'archaic memory', which is described as "'obscure and distorted memories' passed down from the experiences of earlier generations to those born later" (Freud 1975: 569, qtd. in Weigel 2002c: 270). Analogously, transgenerational memory affects the generation that did not participate directly in the traumatic event but is influenced by the preceding generation. As a major part of research on transgenerational memory focuses on the remembrance of a trauma, such as the Holocaust, one of the most important findings is the entrance of the trauma into historical time by the transgression of the period of an individual life and the formation of belated symptoms of a trauma that is carried over into later generations (cf. Weigel 2002c: 269). In this conceptualization, the 'transgenerational', an inherently genealogical term that denotes the transmission of memory in an intergenerational context, is firmly connected to the traumatic experience

of a generation of either perpetrators or survivors who pass on the remembrance of what happened to their children. Generation then becomes a category of memory in this context

> with a genealogy anchored in the unconscious. Although the generation as a traditional historico-philosophical term marks the intersection of the continuum and the division into time periods, the figure of the transgenerational incorporates within itself both, break and genealogy. No more is it a break within genealogy, but rather it is the notion of a propagated break in civilization and its consequences or heritage. (Weigel 2002c: 269)

Marianne Hirsch has coined the term 'postmemory' to describe exactly the same phenomenon. In connection with her research on family photographs of victims of the Holocaust, Hirsch has conceptualized postmemory as the specific description of

> the relationship of children of survivors of cultural or collective trauma to the experiences of their parents, experiences that they 'remember' only as the narratives and images with which they grew up, but that are so powerful, so monumental, as to constitute memory in their own right. (Hirsch 2001: 9)

The term postmemory, with its emphasis on the narratives of memory, competes with concepts such as 'absent memory' or 'inherited memory'. According to Hirsch these terms focus on the depth of the connection experienced by the descendants of people who survived traumatic events with the previous generation's remembrances of this, and that the connection can be called memory. In these extreme cases memory is assumed to be transmitted to those who were not actually alive at the time of the events. However,

> this received memory is *distinct* from the recall of contemporary witnesses and participants. Hence the insistence on 'post' or 'after' and the many qualifying adjectives that try to define both the specifically inter- and trans-generational act of transfer and the resonant aftereffects of trauma. (Hirsch 2008: 106; italics in the original)

This contradiction between the admitted transfer of memory between generations and its inherent differentness based on the individuality of the memory relates to Halbwachs' distinction between 'autobiographical memory' and 'historical memory': "The former concerns the events of one's own life that one remembers because they were experienced directly. The latter refers to residues of events by virtue of which groups claim a continuous identity through time" (Olick 2008: 156).[93] Because memory,

[93] Autobiographical memory, according to Hirsch (2008: 110), is a form of communicative memory, which Jan Assmann defines as following: "Das *kommunikative* Gedächtnis umfaßt Erinnerungen, die sich auf die rezente Vergangenheit beziehen. Es sind diese Erinnerungen, die der Mensch mit seinen Zeitgenossen teilt. Der typische Fall ist das Generationen-Gedächtnis. Dieses Gedächtnis wächst der Gruppe historisch zu; es entsteht in der Zeit und vergeht mit ihr, genauer: mit seinen Trägern. Wenn die Träger, die es verkörperten, gestorben sind, weicht es einem neuen Gedächtnis. Dieser allein durch persönlich verbürgte

especially autobiographic memory, is not static and fixed but fluid (cf. ibid.: 155) and is transferred through its externalization as stories and narratives, the memory of the individual who witnessed the traumatic event has to be distinguished from the memory passed on to the succeeding generation.[94]

Postmemory is therefore not synonymous with these forms of transgenerational memory because it acknowledges its distinction from memory via generational distance and from history via deep personal connection (cf. Hirsch 2002: 22). It is rather a particular form of memory because it is connected to its object through an "imaginative investment and creation" (ibid.: 22):

> Postmemory characterizes the experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are evacuated by the stories of the previous generation shaped by traumatic events that can be neither understood nor recreated. […] Postmemory – often obsessive and relentless – need not be absent or evacuated: it is as full and as empty, certainly as constructed, as memory itself. (Hirsch 2002: 22)

Although connected to the aforementioned forms of transgenerational memory, postmemory as defined by Hirsch is a distinct form of memory. Postmemory becomes the second-generation's own memory of the traumatic events that dominate their own life-stories. Through continued and repeated descriptions of the "narratives and images with which they grew up, but that are so powerful, so monumental, as to constitute memories in their own right" (Hirsch 2001: 9), the second generation is shaped by events that it did not experience itself. The prefix "post-" thus conveys the "temporal and qualitative difference from survivor memory, its secondary, or second-generation memory quality, its basis in displacement, its vicariousness and belatedness" (ibid.: 9). Postmemory thus defines the "familial inheritance and transmission of cultural trauma"

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und kommunizierte Erfahrung gebildete Erinnerungsraum entspricht biblisch den 3-4 Generationen, die etwa für eine Schuld einstehen müssen" (Assmann 1997: 50). Assmann here offers generational memory as a paradigmatic form of communicative memory and differentiates it from collective memory. The former is always a social interaction whereas the latter is an institutionalized form of mnemonics (cf. ibid.: 52). Assmann thus uses generational memory not in quite the same way as Pierre Nora, whose understanding of generational memory is a form of collected memory according to Olick. The aforementioned individual memory, in contrast to collective memory, is further characterized by Olick (2008: 153) as "not just fundamentally individual, but quintessentially so, as primal and lonely as pain."

[94] Highlighting the difference between postmemory and memory, Hirsch (2008: 109) states that "of course we do not have *literal* 'memories' of others' experiences, of course different semiotic principles are at work, of course no degree of monumentality can transform one person's lived memories into another's. Postmemory is not identical to memory: it is 'post,' but at the same time, it approximates memory in its affective force." Hirsch thus rejects the notion of a transgenerational memory in favour of the concept postmemory.

(ibid.: 9)[95], and the familial structures of the mediation and representation of memory facilitate the "*affiliative* acts of the postgeneration" (Hirsch 2008: 115; italics in the original).

A central question that arises from the use of a concept like postmemory is the scale of the cultural trauma that has to be experienced to qualify for this particular form of transgenerational memory. Whereas scholars like Marianne Hirsch or Karein Goertz (1998) apply postmemory only to the study of Holocaust representations, the specific characteristics of the concept invite an analysis of the representation of generations in migration contexts as well. As postmemory relies foremost on the narrative transfer of memories across generational boundaries, thus highlighting the imaginative investment and creation of memories by the concerned generation, and stresses the internalization and creation of their own memories of the traumatic event in the preceding generation, postmemory can be applied to collective and cultural traumas other than the Holocaust as well. In order to discuss postmemory in the family context, without necessarily restricting it to this, the specific circumstances of the family in question have to be taken into consideration and the cultural trauma has to be defined accordingly. In this context the process of immigration can be considered to be a cultural trauma for the migrating family.

Focusing on cultural trauma in relation to postmemory makes it possible to combine individual and collective trauma and view migration as a form of trauma. Cultural trauma can be defined as "a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people who have achieved some degree of cohesion" (Eyerman 2004: 160). The "trauma need not necessarily be felt by everyone in a group or have been directly experienced by any or all" (ibid.: 160). It is therefore important to establish an event as the significant cause of the trauma and its traumatic meaning has to be determined and accepted through a process requiring time, mediation, and representation (cf. ibid.: 160).

For the purpose of analysing the representation of generations in migration literature, migration is defined as the "movement of a person or people from one country, locality, place of residence, etc., to settle in another" (*OED online*). On the basis of this definition, migration can be understood as a "tear in the social fabric" of a person or people. Although not everyone concerned might experience it as such, migration can be viewed as a cultural trauma regardless of whether it was voluntary or forced. The

[95] Yet postmemory is not restricted to the family as the place of transfer: "through particular forms of identification, adoption, and projection, it can be more broadly available" (Hirsch 2001: 10).

reasons for migration, as well as the experience of migrating and memories of the country of origin, are not transferred transgenerationally. The transmission rather takes place in the form of stories, traditions, and images that are being passed on. Especially in the case of families in which the parents have migrated, and whose children are socialized in the host society, the postmemory of migration can become a highly influential and dominating part of the second generation's members lives. Postmemory of the cultural trauma of migration can become such a dominating influence in the postgeneration's lives (cf. Hirsch 2008) that their own stories are "evacuated by the stories of the previous generation shaped by traumatic events that can be neither understood nor recreated" (Hirsch 2002: 22). As a cultural trauma is not experienced in exactly the same way by all the persons concerned by the event, not all immigrant families perceive their relocation as traumatic and therefore not all second-generation immigrants are influenced by their parents' memory to such an extent. But if the migration process is experienced as traumatic and the memory of the event is transmitted by way of "familial inheritance" (Hirsch 2001: 9) the notion of postmemory is applicable.

In cases in which a familial generation is characterized by postmemory, the formation of a generationality becomes virtually impossible as will be demonstrated in the reading of *Maps for Lost Lovers*. As has been discussed previously in this chapter, the emergence of a social generation is dependent on the possibility to demarcate a generational memory from the collective memory of previous generations. As Bernhard Giesen (2004: 33) states, "[t]he unity of a [social] generation and of its collective memory is constructed by a fundamental common experience that devalues the experience of the previous generation." Therefore, the transfer of memory that connects familial generations prevents social generations from emerging, or rather keeps the individuals from actively participating in a social generation (cf. chapter 5).

An alternative to this deadlock might be the concept of 'multidirectional memory' as introduced by Michael Rothberg (2009). Rothberg defines multidirectional memory "as subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing; as productive and not privative" (Rothberg 2009: 3). One of the central features of this specific form of "multicultural and transnational" (ibid.: 21) memory is the interaction of different historical memories that show a productive and intercultural dynamic (cf. ibid.: 3). Assuming that neither are memories owned by groups nor groups by memories (cf. ibid.: 5), this concept allows migrating families to participate in multiple collective memories. Conceptualizing memory in this way implies, on the one hand, that not only the members of a family that actually experienced migration have a claim to this

memory. The following generations of a migrating family can share this collective memory through processes of ongoing negotiation and borrowing without being prevented from forming generationalities. Apart from that, multidirectional memory also means that historical memories of societies are also multidirectional in that they must not exclude immigrants to this society from the collective memory. Multidirectionality creates an opportunity for both the host society and the immigrants to participate in a collective memory that is "partially disengaged from exclusive versions of cultural identity and acknowledges how remembrance both cuts across and binds together diverse spatial, temporal, and cultural sites" (ibid.: 11).

This discussion of possible intersections of the field of memory studies and the concept of generation has established an important category for the analysis of representations of generations in migration literature. Within the broad field of memory, a distinction between the collective memory, or rather collected memory that is the basis of generational memory, and the transfer of memory between familial generations in form of postmemory has been highlighted. Postmemory is an inherently genealogical concept that simultaneously strengthens the role and function of the family and strongly involves the individual in the family context in both its positive and negative effects.

2.2.4. Subcultural Generations and the Importance of Youth in Generation Studies

It has been argued that migration can be an event causing postmemory if it entails an experience of cultural trauma. Correspondingly, generational memory that collects experiences that create the collective identity of a social generation can also be based on the experience of migration, as Giesen (2003: 60) in reference to Koselleck illustrates:

> Eine solche kollektive Identität und eine klare Unterscheidung zwischen verschiedenen Generationen, die auch für diese Generationen überzeugend ist, wird erst […] durch eine fundamentale gemeinsame Erfahrung geschaffen, mit der die Erfahrung der Älteren entwertet und die Einzigartigkeit der neuen Generation gestiftet wird (Koselleck 2000). Derartige generationsstiftende Erfahrungen werden in siegreichen oder verlorenen Kriegen, in Migrationen oder Vertreibungen, in der Teilnahme an sozialen, politischen oder kulturellen Bewegungen gemacht.

The participation in migration processes is here put on the same level as an experience of war or the participation in cultural movements. The only conditions that sociologist Giesen formulates for the successful emergence of a social generation based on the shared experience of migration, are the "believability and authenticity" of an event and the "[c]orporeal experience[s]" (ibid.: 34). When conceptualizing migration as the

trigger of a collective memory, the question arises whether second-generation immigrants can claim an authentic and corporeal experience of migration, for it was not them who lived through and decided on the migration but usually the parent generation.

Giesen convincingly argues that even an indirect and mediated presence can generate corporeality in a weakened form (cf. ibid.: 34) and corporeal experiences are reinforced by rituals and remembered by collective rituals (cf. ibid.: 35). It is therefore quite reasonable to argue that indirect corporeal experience of migration processes can be mediated across familial generations through collective or individual rituals and traditions. Consequently, second-generation immigrants, even if not necessarily claiming the traumatic experience of migration but the participation in social movements or the production of symbolic representation can indeed be considered to form a generationality. The "devaluation of tradition and the invention of the new" (ibid.: 34) offers multiple ways for the construction of a collective identity of a generation. This basis for the shared experience then enables Giesen to introduce a very interesting distinction between two forms of social generations:

> Ich werde drittens zwischen geschichtlichen Generationen, die sich durch eine traumatische Erfahrung oder durch ein Projekt der Gesellschaftsveränderung bestimmen, und subkulturellen Generationen unterscheiden, die sich über besondere symbolische Repräsentationen und Rituale abgrenzen. (Giesen 2003: 60 f.)

Giesen here draws attention to the subcultural generations, which he distinguishes from the previously discussed historical or social generations, offering a link to a possible conceptualization of distinctive youth cultures as generations.[96] Such a conceptualization encourages, but also offers explanations for, the media attention that the concept of 'generation' has experienced lately. It also offers a link between generation studies and questions of milieu and habitus as the defining method of inclusion and exclusion of generations.

Subcultural generations are distinct from social generations mainly in the strength of their generational identity, which again underlines the argument to rather use the term 'generationality' for these generations.[97] The generational identity of subcultural

[96] The focus on subcultural generations in their capacity to demarcate generations based on peer and youth groups from historical and social generations, and their function to highlight generational differences between subcultural and parent generations, will necessarily push their potential for social criticism and resistance, which helps contest hegemonic structures and values, into the background. However, the stress on the active creation of meaning, as put forward in subcultural theory (cf. Macey 2001: 368; Mayer 2008: 692), is central to the interpretation of subcultural generations.

[97] Lutz Niethammer (2003: 10) defines 'generational identity' as a combination of individual and collective identity: "[…] nämlich die Ausschließung des Anderen aus einem als

generations is less strong than the identity of social generations because they lack a traumatic experience as the foundation for its formation. "Sie [i.e. die subkulturelle Generation] muß sich ihre leibliche Erlebnisgrundlage zumeist über die Teilnahme an symbolischen Repräsentationen und subkulturellen Ritualen – etwa über Musik und Tanz, Mode und Haartracht – selbst schaffen" (Giesen 2003: 65). Because symbolic representations such as music, style, and fashion often lose their potential for identification with their participants' coming of age, subcultural generations tend to vanish with adulthood. Despite the alleged impermanence of such a collective identity, the participation in subcultural uses of symbolic structures "create a sense of identity" (Macey 2001: 368) and can be viewed as "triumphant events" (Giesen 2004: 33) that create a collective memory comparable to a traumatic event. The unity of a generation and its characteristic collective memory are constructed on the basis of a common experience that devalues the experiences of previous generations (cf. ibid.: 33). "These experiences provide a common horizon of meaning to which […] outsiders have only limited access" (ibid.: 33). A subcultural generation that forms its collective identity on the basis of a triumphant event that devalues the experiences of previous generations develops the same mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion as a social generation.

Based on Giesen's assumption that subcultural generations cannot be retained beyond adolescence[98], the social construct of youth and adolescence and their role in the emergence of these generations are emphasized. As Shmuel N. Eisenstadt argued in "Archetypal Patterns of Youth" (1962), age groups in general and youth groups in particular tend to rise in modern societies, in which the family or kinship units cannot guarantee the attainment of full social status of their members. Two aspects characterize these societies:

> First, the membership in the total society (citizenship) is not defined in terms of belonging to any such family, kinship group, or estate, nor is it mediated by such a group. Second, in these societies the major political, economic, social and religious functions are performed not by family or kinship units but rather by various specialized groups

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homogen unterstellten Erfahrungsraum und seine Einbeziehung in der Kontinuierung des Alterns." Criticizing that generational identity is a blind spot within research on identity politics (cf. Niethammer 2003: 2), Niethammer conceptualizes 'collective identity' as an empty container to be filled with a content that is distinct from other collective identities and thus works as mechanism of inclusion and exclusion: "Wichtig ist mir vor allem, daß diese Identität ein beliebig füllbarer Container ist, dessen Inhalt ein Wesenskonstrukt ist, das sich allein nach seiner Differenz von einem oder mehreren andern bestimmt. […] Die Identität von Generationen – also ein Wesenskonstrukt über eine Alterskohorte – teilt zunächst einmal diesen Relativierungseffekt" (Niethammer 2003: 8 f.).

98 This notion is questioned by Eyerman and Turner (1998), who assume that through the use of new media technologies these forms of generationalities can connect across national boundaries and keep up the generational habitus over time.

> (political parties, occupational associations, etc.), which individuals may join irrespective of their family, kinship, or caste. (Eisenstadt 1962: 34)

Belonging to a family becomes less important for the adolescent in order to acquire full status in a modern society and functions that were previously fulfilled by the family are now performed by youth groups and peer groups: "these can serve as a transitory phase between the world of childhood and the adult world" (ibid.: 34). The so-called "role moratorium" (ibid.: 31) of youth thus gains significance in the formation of both individual and collective identity of young people. Contact to peer groups and youth groups becomes more important for attaining full social status than the contact to different familial generations. Amongst children of immigrants this influence of peer groups is even more important, as Eisenstadt (1962: 36) argues:

> The emergence of the peer group among immigrant children is a well-known phenomenon that usually appears in the second generation. It occurs mainly because of the relative breakdown of immigrant family life in the new country. The more highly industrialized and urbanized that country (or the sector absorbing the immigrants) is, the sharper the breakdown. Hence, the family of the immigrant of second-generation child has often been an inadequate guide to the new society. The immigrant child's attainment of full identity in the new land is usually related to how much he has been able to detach himself from his older, family setting. Some of these children, therefore, have developed a strong predisposition to join various peer groups. Such an affiliation has sometimes facilitated their transition to the absorbing society by stressing the values and patterns of behavior in that society – or, on the contrary, it may express their rebellion against this society, or against their older setting.[99]

Consequently, peer and youth groups have an increased functionality for immigrant youths. In addition to the normative function, which serves the preservation and passing on of values and standards, and a comparative function, which helps the individual to evaluate his or her own abilities in relation to peers (cf. Rheinberg 2002: 69 f.), the peer and youth group also has an integrative function. Peer groups can either help the youths

[99] In the seminal monograph *From Generation to Generation: Age Groups and Social Structure* (1964 [1956]: 174), Eisenstadt goes into more detail explaining how and why the peer group takes over important functions of the immigrant family: "(a) the limitation of the effective capacity of family life and relations caused by the necessity to concentrate most of the available energy on various problems of adjustment to the new country, i.e., the diminished capacity of (mainly) the parents to fulfill adequately their family roles; and (b) the general, more permanent trend of transplantation into a society where (unlike the situation in most of the immigrants' countries of origin, especially that of peasants) the family does not constitute a basic unit of the division of labor and where its general sphere of activities is much more limited." Eisenstadt's sociologist writings on the immigrant family have to be criticized from a contemporary perspective for their generalizing view on migration as a movement from third to first world countries, which is implied in some of his descriptions of the immigrant family as coming from peasant societies. However, the underlying assumption that migration processes put the family under pressure no matter what the reasons for the migration are is still valuable today.

with integration into the host society or in processes of seclusion from the society creating so-called parallel societies.

Either way, peer groups and youth groups are of specific importance in the contexts of migration. It will therefore be argued that these peer groups provide immigrant adolescents with opportunities for "triumphant events" that can lead to the construction of a collective identity. As the peer groups facilitate generational differences in immigrant families, these subcultural generations go beyond "[s]light shifts of lifestyle [which] are blown up to fundamental differences" (Giesen 2004: 38). They display generational differences that cannot simply be appropriated by "almost everybody regardless of age" (ibid: 38) to distinguish themselves from the previous generation through participation in cultural production, thus creating a form of social closure as an organizing principle. "Social closure is a strategy for controlling resources in a context of competition by defining membership by reference to some (arbitrary) principle of inclusion/exclusion such as skin colour or age" (Eyerman/Turner 1998: 93). Subcultural generations, which develop out of the peer group, highlight the generational differences by marking their use of symbolic structures as a form of social closure against previous generations. They create "generational cultures" (ibid: 93) which become "embodied in their cultural dispositions (dress, language and emblems) and the postures of individuals (walk, dance preferences and songs)" (ibid: 93).

These generational cultures, as Eyerman and Turner have labelled the "generational embodiments of culture" (ibid: 93), relate to the Bourdieu's notions of habitus and hexis (cf. Bourdieu 1990: 52 ff.; Holder 2009: 124 ff.; Rehbein/Saalmann 2009: 110 ff.). Eyerman and Turner (1998: 93) define generations as

> a cohort of persons passing through time who come to share a common habitus, hexis and culture, a function of which is to provide them with a collective memory that serves to integrate the cohort over a finite period of time. Such a definition draws special attention to the idea of a shared or collective cultural field (of emotions, attitudes, preferences and dispositions) and a set of embodied practices (of sport and leisure activities), that is, it identifies the importance of collective memory in creating a generational culture or tradition.[100]

[100] As this definition shows, Eyerman/Turner stay very close to Mannheim's notion of the generation as actuality (cf. chapter 2.1.2), which he describes as "more than mere co-presence in such a historical and social region. […] Only where a concrete bond is created between members of a generation by their being exposed to the social and intellectual symptoms of a process of dynamic de-stabilization, can one speak of actual generations" (Mannheim 1997: 303). Yet, by emphasizing the finiteness of these generations, Eyerman/Turner relate the generations as actuality, which is more than mere co-presence but is not a "concrete bond" as in the case of generation units (ibid.: 304), to Giesen's notion of subcultural generations.

Just like Mannheim's conceptualization of generation, which specifically refers to Max Weber's work, Bourdieu's notion of habitus is related to the concept of social class.[101] Habitus is defined as a product of "conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence" to function as "structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organise practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them" (Bourdieu 1990: 53). In this definition, the conditionality between social class as a form of social structuring and habitus is made clear.

Extending the connection between habitus, social class, and generations, this thesis argues that migratory youth cultures can develop into subcultural generations and develop a specific "generational habitus" (Eyerman/Turner 1998: 98) that distinguishes them from mere youth cultures. Arguing that "generational cultures become embodied in their cultural dispositions" (ibid: 93), Eyerman and Turner adopt Bourdieu's concept of habitus for a theory of generations. Analysing "generational embodiments of culture" (ibid: 93), their focus lies on the control over cultural capital through collective rituals as means of inclusion and exclusion, thus distributing cultural resources (cf. ibid: 94). Therefore they argue that "taste in music or clothing has strategic value, even where this might be unacknowledged by both the producers and consumers of such items" (ibid.: 94). These shared notions of fashion, which are embedded in a generational habitus and represented in a generational style (cf. ibid.: 98), invite an analysis of these cultural structures. The combination of Giesen's conception of subcultural generations that points at generational differences and Eyerman and Turner's link between generation and habitus therefore presents the theoretical frame to interpret literary representations of migratory youth cultures as subcultural generations. Such a subcultural generation will be discussed in detail in this study's reading of the novel *Londonstani*.

This chapter has shown that the inherently interdisciplinary concept 'generation' informs different areas of academic research in the study of culture. The aspects that have been highlighted offer a number of approaches to analyse migratory generations and call attention to the intersections of generationality and genealogy. Four major fields of study that influence the analysis and interpretation of the primary literature of

[101] The connection between habitus and social class becomes most obvious in Bourdieu's explanation that sociology treats all biological individuals as identical who have the same habitus because they are products of the same objective conditions: "A social class (in-itself) – a class of identical or similar conditions of existence and conditionings – is at the same time a class of biological individuals having the same *habitus*, understood as a system of dispositions common to all products of the same conditionings" (Bourdieu 1990: 59).

this thesis have been called upon and the following chapter will pick up on these categories to develop a set of analytical categories. Focusing on migration, time, memory, and youth cultures, these categories offer multiple approaches to an analysis of generations in contemporary British Asian literature.

3. Generation Narratives

3.1. Representations of Generations as Generic Feature in Literary Genres

The intricate relations between 'generation' and literary genre offer valuable insights into the concept's presentability in literature. The umbrella term 'generation narratives' refers to all kinds of narratives about generations (cf. Bohnenkamp 2009: 72 ff.). The following discussion focuses on literary genres that by definition represent generations and will show that these literary genres fail to consider the intersections of generational and genealogical relations that have been established in the previous chapter. Instead, they focus on the representation either of generationalities or of genealogies.

In this chapter it will therefore be the aim to first concentrate on the forms of generations presented in novels and investigate their functions for the genres. The implications, which the restrictive representation of generations can have for the interpretation of generation narratives, will then be critically reviewed in the literary analysis of British Asian narratives. Besides highlighting the presentability of generations, this chapter will also employ the genre definitions to clarify the choice of narratological categories for the analysis of the primary literature discussed in the following chapter.

Furthermore, as has been shown in the previous chapter, the study of generations is closely connected to concepts and questions of time, memory, youth cultures, and migration. As generation studies highlight the interrelations between 'generation' and these key concerns, this chapter shows how these interrelations run through the genres as a common theme.

3.1.1. The Genealogical Novel and the Family Novel

The two most prominent genres to discuss when focusing on the literary representation of genealogical relations are the genealogical novel and the family novel, two genres that are somewhat difficult to distinguish from each other clearly. The genealogical novel, a genre put forward by A. E. Zucker in 1928, is especially marked by its set of characters:

> Instead of dealing, as the biographical novel usually does, with a single hero, and beginning the story at his birth or perhaps a little before, as in *Tristam Shandy*, the

> genealogical novel affords a panorama of several generations, which link together the leading figures in the story. The fortunes of these characters in succeeding generations are presented in detail as each moves through the picture. (Zucker 1928: 551)

Defining the genealogical novel against the backdrop of the biography,[102] which only deals with one particular life story, this initial definition already highlights one of the most important characteristics of the genre. Through an extended set of characters, which are connected to one another in a kinship relation, and which present not one but several successive lives of the members of one family, the genealogical novel spans multiple life-times.

It is crucial that the characters represent succeeding generations to enable the reader to follow the fortunes of one genealogical line without gaps and ruptures as "the fact that the successive heroes are all members of one line scattered over more than a dozen centuries does not make a work a genealogical novel" (ibid.: 551). The coherence of the generations within a family is particularly important because the genealogical novel is a result of the "new interest aroused in the doctrine of heredity" (ibid.) based on the public interest in discussions of evolution theories towards the end of the 19th century, sparked off by Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859).[103] The contiguity of these scientific findings and literature are most notably found in Émile Zola's paradigmatic *Les Rougon-Marquart* (1871-1893):

> His series of novels was designed to illustrate the workings of the laws of heredity, which Zola, as he explains in his introduction, believed could be computed as accurately as the workings of the law of gravity. Given the ancestors, the deeds and the characters of the third and fourth generation were to follow from them according to an immutable necessity. The trunk of his family tree was to explain the branches and the branches the leaves. (Zucker 1928: 553)

Zola's work was well informed by his study of the works of Darwin and other writers on evolution and heredity (cf. ibid.: 555).[104] It is thus of great importance that the characters presenting the succeeding generations of a family must follow each other without any gaps or genealogical distances: "Zola emphasizes throughout the physical

[102] Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson define the biography in distinction to life writing: "In biography, scholars of other people's lives document and interpret those lives from a point of view external to the subject. In life writing, subjects write about their own lives predominantly, even if they write about themselves in the second or third person, or as a member of a community" (Smith/Watson 2010: 5 f.).

[103] For a discussion of genealogical figures of thought in Darwin's work, see Müller-Wille (2005).

[104] It is not only the scientific frame of the novel that causes the fascination with the laws of heredity, but also the implications this has for the continuation of the genealogical line. For a discussion of the representation of generations in Mendel's theories on heredity, see Rheinberger (2005: 261-266).

side of his characters as the causes of hereditary influences – certain lesions produce disease and insanity, which are transmitted to future generations" (ibid.: 554).[105] Not only does this conception of heredity draw attention to a sense of origin and belonging in the genealogical relation amongst characters, the genealogical novel thus also permits an outlook into the future.

In addition to the extended character cast, the possibility of using collectives as protagonists,[106] the location of characters in their particular historical period, the use of contrasts, and a satirical style, Zucker points towards one of the reasons for the popularity of the genealogical novel in the late 1920s: the naturalist realism of the beginning 20th century. The genealogical novel is deeply rooted in naturalism, with the realist representations of families and generations. This mode of representation further promotes the connection to national backgrounds:

> *Decadence*, one feels, could have been written only by a Russian. It is a characteristic of its own national background as the experimental, extremely naturalistic but at bottom somewhat sentimental *Rougon-Macquart* is of France. In fact, each nation has stamped its peculiar genius on novels in this genre: British satirical detachment in *The Way of All Flesh* and *Told by an Idiot*; the German love of thoroughness and detail in *Buddenbrooks*; and the native vigour and crudity of the American frontier reflected in *The Three Black Pennys*, *Certain People of Importance*, or *The Nuptial Flight*. (Ibid.: 560)

In spite of drawing on national stereotypes that do not do justice to the works discussed by Zucker, he still puts forward a valid argument in locating all of these genealogical novels in their national background. It is exactly this quality, which moves contemporary scholars to turn to this almost forgotten genre, to discuss the creation and production of cultural identity through literature (cf. Brems 2011).[107] Furthermore, it is

[105] Zola included a genealogical table depicting the different branches of the presented family in one of the novels presumably for reader orientation. Similarly, John Galsworthy's *The Forsyte Saga* (1906-1921) includes a family tree (cf. Zucker 1928: 557). A contemporary example is Evaristo's *Lara* (2009 [1997]). For a discussion of the use of family trees in genealogical stories see Smith/Watson (2010: 271 f.).

[106] Zucker mentions Maxim Gorky's novel *Decadence* (1927) as an example in which a collective is presented to be the antagonist: "There is no hero in the book, as Tolstoi said; there is a villain, however, and this villain is – the bourgeoisie" (Zucker 1928: 559). A similar point is made by Aleida Assmann in her discussion of German memory literature. Referring to the family novel she argues that "generations are simultaneously actors within the family and within history, and thus also represent collective experiences and values, mentalities and patterns of prejudice" (Assmann 2006: 34).

[107] Elke Brems draws on the genealogical novel in contemporary Flemish literature, arguing that its concern "with descent and origin, of an individual, a group, or a nation […] tells the story or the past in order to enlighten the present" (Brems 2011: 2). She discusses genealogical novels "in which a literary quest for the personal identity and individual past of the narrator goes hand in hand with a broader reflection on the collective identity of Flemish and national history" (Brems 2011: 3).

also an important starting point in any discussion of migrant literature in which the notion of a national background has to be challenged.

The genre most closely related to the genealogical novel is the family novel with which it shares characteristic features and from which it is often hard to distinguish. The reason why the family novel has yet to be discussed as distinct from the genealogical novel is that the attributes usually ascribed to family novels will, on the one hand, draw further attention to possible categories for the narrative analysis of representations of generations. On the other hand, while the genealogical novel seems to have been almost forgotten, as the very small number of publications dealing with this genre attests to, the family novel is as popular as ever.[108]

The most comprehensive research on the family novel is still Yi-ling Ru's study (1992) which characterizes the family novel by three distinguishing features:

> [F]irst, it deals realistically with a family's evolution through several generations; second, family rites play an important role and are faithfully recreated in both their familial and communal contexts; third, the primary theme of the novel has a peculiar narrative form which is woven vertically along the chronological order through time and horizontally among the family relationships. (Ru 1992: 2)

Ru's understanding of the family novel differs from Zucker's description of the genealogical novel in one important point: the narrative moves vertically along the order of time and horizontally among kinship relations. Of importance are not the representation of at least four succeeding generations, but the contemporaneous relations among family members – not necessarily of the same generation. The significance of the family's evolution over several generations reminds of the discussion of the biological evolution within a family that is a characteristic feature of the genealogical novel. Although Ru does not specifically refer to this aspect, she echoes Zucker's argument when she highlights the social and cultural development of the family and points out the importance of family rites.

Furthermore, Ru's definition focuses on setting, time, theme, and narrative form. She argues that the "first mark of a family novel is its development of the story depicting a family chronology" which gives the reader a "sense of reality" (ibid.: 5). As "the family novel tries to trace the life of this group through several generations and to represent its life through the flow of time" (ibid.), Ru argues that the family novel as a genre is

[108] The 2011 German Book Prize being awarded to Eugen Ruge for his family novel *In Zeiten des abnehmenden Lichts*, as well the continuous popularity of U.S. American writers such as Jonathan Franzen attest to the interest of contemporary readers in this genre. Publications on family novels, especially the intercultural family novel, include Holdenried/Willms (2012) and Costagli/Galli (2010).

"essentially realistic" (ibid.: 6). The realistic description of a family's numerous generations, which covers a lengthy period and according to Ru draws on autobiographical sources (cf. ibid.: 8), and the "[s]ocial concerns [depicted] tie the family novel closely to the world" (ibid.: 7). Against current findings in the field of sociology of the family,[109] Ru assumes that family novels always describe a process of decay:

> The death of the traditional family is demonstrated not only by its economic and biological decline, but also by its moral and spiritual deterioration. More importantly, this dying out of a family signals the end of both the traditional community structure and the larger society of which it is part. (Ibid.: 7)

Consequently, the depicted family is characterized by the decline of values and of progeny. One of the outstanding features of the family novel is its meticulousness "in terms of characterization" (ibid.: 19), which underlines the "often melodramatic fate of individuals in the family novel [that] derives not only from their clashes within the family, but also from the fact that their troubles coincide with the decay of the family" (ibid.: 10). The individuation of the family members is contrasted with the decline of the structuring family.

The second characteristic which distinguishes the family novel from other genres, is its "elaborate recreation of traditional community life" in which "family rites play the foremost role, because they help to define the family and its members as an integrated group" (ibid.: 12; cf. Humphrey 2004: 387). The importance of family rites, which are "a way of uniting people and strengthening the sense of community" and in which "the whole clan joins together to celebrate the prosperity and unity of the group" (Ru 1992: 13), is highlighted as it reminds the members of a family of their origins. The rites Ru refers to are for example "dinners, gatherings, holiday celebrations, weddings, and funerals" (ibid.: 14).[110] A function of these family rites is the "[r]emembrance of the ancestors", which is "necessary in reviving values and virtues in the communal life" (ibid.: 17). The ancestral worship and the family rites are therefore "the living symbol of the family's existence as a community" (ibid.: 25). Again focusing on the decay of the family as a social structure, Ru assigns to the family rites not only the function of

[109] For a discussion of the transition from modern to postmodern families see, e.g., Cheal (1993).

[110] These rites are familiar to most readers and thus function in a similar way to the detailed characterization of individual family members for the reader, namely that they "will connect the character's fate with their own and thereby be enabled to cope with their changing background" (Ru 1992: 10). The reader's ability to empathize is thus required by both of these characteristics of the family novel.

inspiring empathy in the reader but also of attesting to a viability of the family in a communal remembering of its values and traditions.

Concomitant with the central theme, Ru points to the centrality of the family conflict in the genre of the family novel. As the story develops around the conflicts within the family and concentrates on the human relationships revealed in the family circles (cf. ibid.: 28), the central theme concerns the family's values and their changing vitality through time. Important thematic features include the conflicts between fathers and sons, respectively between mothers and daughters (cf. ibid.: 31 f.; cf. chapter 3.2.4) or the depiction of a second, parallel family that functions as a foil to the central family; it broadens the scope of a novel and "enrich[es] its thematic significance" (Ru 1992: 33 f.). A particularly well-suited example is Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000), in which three families are portrayed in contradistinction to each other. This thematic focus is complemented by the "peculiar narrative structures" (Ru 1992: 36) of the family novel.

> The chronology constructs a long, forward-moving vertical structure. At the same time, all kinds of conflicts among family members, including those between fathers and sons, mothers and children, husbands and wives, and between brothers form what might be described as the horizontal structure. The plot of the family novel, therefore, is weaved by these two intersected narrative structures. (Ibid.: 36 f.)

These intersections of the vertical structure of passing historical time and the horizontal relations among kin are the basis of the family novel's genre definition. Hence, the family novel is chronologically structured and has to cover the evolution of a family through the lives of many individuals of different generations but at the same time it also has to deal with the fate of a group of people at a certain point in history. Important events in the family life are "always designed to closely connect with those of the nation" (ibid.: 37). Through this connection of the family to a historical context the genre of the family novel is once again moved closer to the genealogical novel.

While this insistence on the central theme of the decay of the family has to be contested to a certain extent, Ru's characterization of the genre has added further categories for analysis, as the focus on a plot structure dominated by generation conflicts and the decay of the family offer new categories for analysis. Complementary to an analysis of characters and character constellation, the family novel demands an analysis of narrative time. The contextual time and space of the narrative add to the analysis of the narrative form of the genre. Furthermore, the family novel offers an opportunity to

discuss the production of a familial memory that expands into the cultural memory of a community.[111]

A shift towards the functions of memory in the family novel – one of the key concepts in generation studies – leads to another seminal contribution to the genre definition by Richard Humphrey (2004). He discusses five functions of memory in the family novel, which he – in light of his preoccupation with memory – prefers to designate as family chronicle:[112] firstly, he views the family novel as a "new institution of memory" (Humphrey 2004: 383); secondly, family novels work as "recollections of the family as institution" (ibid.: 383); thirdly, the family novel pushes the "devices of narrative memory […] forward to new frontiers" (ibid.: 384) as it deals with the "re-narrated and re-re-narrated to encompass the various realities of postness and the Shoa, of Empire and post-colonialism, of Alzheimer's and incontinence" (ibid.); fourthly, the genre is informed by "several doctrines of genetic memory […], a form of creative evolution by inherited memory" (ibid.); and lastly, Humphrey lists "postmodern memories and re-memberings of the genre" (ibid.). These five forms of memories and their functions range from the representation of memory in the narrative, via the memory of a social institution, the narrative memory and the transmission of memory, to the memory of the genre itself. As the focus lies on generations as a generic feature of literary genres, Humphrey's argument that the family novels function as institutions of memory and present recollections of the family as an institution is highly important for this discussion. It complements Ru's definition that focused on the decay of the family and consolidates some of the most important functions of the representation of generations in the family novel.[113]

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[111] Aleida Assman (2006: 33) even goes as far as to subsume the German family novel as a subgenre under the umbrella term 'memory literature'.

[112] Humphrey prefers the term 'family saga' from the range of possible labels which he views as synonymous: "The apparently delimiting genre specification – family chronicle, family saga, *chronique de famille*, *Familiensaga*, *Generationen-* or *Stammbaumroman* – belies the genre's actual range." (Humphrey 2004: 383; italics in the original) This enumeration highlights the broad range of possible genre labels and exemplifies the variety of possible foci the family novel has to offer.

[113] Humphrey's (2004: 386 ff.) definition of the family novel includes twelve generic features. For the present discussion the following eight are of interest: the "trans-generation span" (ibid.: 386), "the chronicle within the chronicle" (ibid.: 386), the "pronounced intertextuality" (ibid.: 386), "keepsakes, mementoes and heirlooms – all the knick-knacks of familial memory" (ibid.: 387), family gatherings at which "much time is devoted to family chit-chat" (ibid.: 387) and which constitutes the "'communicative memory' in action" (ibid.: 387), the setting indoors, and a cast that is restricted to the members of the depicted family and the household. Significantly, he closes his discussion with a reference to Wittgenstein's metaphor of the family resemblances. For the discussion of the importance of Wittgenstein's

A stronger focus on the importance of the representation of generations in their synchronic as well as diachronic aspects can inspire a combination of the family and the genealogical novel. Exemplary, Erll (2007) points out the most important features of the synthesis, which she labels the family and generation novel. First, multiple generations are represented and the relations between family members and the different generations are of importance for the plot of the narrative. Both the narrator and the characters reflect upon the genealogical line of the family and their family history. Second, the family and generation novel are at the same time chronicles of contemporary history. The character constellation spans up to four generations, which extends the story time to approximately 100 years. Thus, Erll picks up on Humphrey's argument of the communicative memory and Zucker's argument that characters of the represented family can function as a representative of their generation, thus allowing the reader to experience different historical epochs through the characters. The third, and for this study most important feature of the family and generation novel is, however, the illustration of 'generation' not only in its diachronic but also its synchronic dimension (cf. Jahn 2006).[114] Hence, both the genealogical aspects of generation, for example biological origins, family trees and their cultural function for dealing with historical experiences, as well as the specific lifestyles and identity formations of spatiotemporally anchored age groups as part of a population are brought together in this paradigmatic genre definition (cf. Erll 2007: 117 f.).

This definition succeeds in emphasizing the most important features of the family and generation novel highlighting the importance of time, memory, plot, character constellation, narrative situation, perspective,[115] and most importantly the representation of generations. However, the most notable achievement of combining aspects of the

metaphor in genre theory cf. the introduction of this study. Anniken Telnes Iversen (2007), who developed the Bildungsroman Index of 91 features that mark the genre but are not necessary qualities, uses a polythetical classification of the genre which is a similar approach to define the Bildungsroman to the one Humphrey employs here.

[114] Bernhard Jahn (2006) discusses the importance of the diachronic dimension of generations in the family and generation novel in contrast to pop literature: "Indem die neuen Familienromane nicht nur die synchrone Dimension des Generationenbegriffs erzählerisch gestalten, sondern sich auch an dessen diachrone Seite wagen, handeln sie sich bestimmte Probleme ein […]. Die soziologische Seite des Generationenbegriffs ist verhältnismäßig unbelastet, ja sie dürfte einer popliteraturerprobten Generation von Autoren schon insofern entgegenkommen, als sie die Möglichkeit bietet, die Abfolge der Generationen als eine Abfolge unterschiedlicher Lifestyle-Konzepte zu realisieren" (Jahn 2006: 582). Jahn's definition already anticipates features of the generatiography.

[115] Jahn (2006: 583) even uses the feature of multiple perspectives as the sole selection criterion for his analysis of narrative construction of genealogical relations in contemporary German generation novels.

family and the genealogical novel is the considerations that follow the discussion regarding these traditional and long-standing genres in contemporary British migration literature.[116] The claim that the family and generation novel serves as literary generation of meaning in multicultural and postcolonial societies (cf. Erll 2007: 119) makes the genre particularly attractive for migration literatures. Moreover, the genre manages, on the one hand, to bring together diverse themes such as for example postcolonialism, multiculturalism, and the experience of history (cf. ibid.: 119). On the other hand, it offers a positioning to the individual character on both a diachronic and synchronic level of a society at a certain time that enables him or her to establish both a collective and an individual identity in processes of formation (cf. ibid.: 120).

Reading Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000) as an intercultural family novel, Erll (2007: 129) distinguishes her interpretation from a genre that has been dominating the discussion of British migration literature: the black British Bildungsroman. Highlighting the differences between the family novel and the Bildungsroman, the most interesting feature is the apparent focus on the individual:[117]

> Erstens stehen im Familien- und Generationenroman in der Regel keine einzelnen Protagonisten im Mittelpunkt, sondern Kollektive: Familienverbünde, mehrere Angehörige einer Generation usw. Insofern ist das Genre von Bildungs- und Erziehungsroman abgrenzbar, in welchem der Fokus per definitionem auf ein Individuum gerichtet ist. (Erll 2007: 129)

While this assertion is undeniably true, this study will in the following argue that the Bildungsroman as well as generatiographical writing not only portray a generational identity or generationality that potentially offers identification to an individual but also integrates a broader view on society and might even offer the reader ways to participate in the generationality via their communicative structure (cf. Bohnekamp 2011: 87-101).[118]

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[116] So far the genre of the family and generation novel in migration literatures has been largely overlooked in favour of the Bildungsroman. Yet especially in the context of German literature in the wake of the family novel boom that has for example been described by Jahn (2006), the genre moves into focus in discussions of German intercultural literature, see e.g. Martin Hielscher (2010: 195-206), who emphasizes the continuity and discontinuity of genealogies in migration literatures. He highlights the oral tradition many migration literatures call attention to and points towards the importance of narrating a family story in contrast to many German family novels after 1945 that mainly illustrate the silence of and between generations (cf. Hielscher 2010: 196; cf. Ostheimer 2009: 203-25).

[117] The other two additional features besides the distinction from the Bildungsroman focus on the complex character constellation and the role of humour in the family and generation novel (cf. Erll 2007: 129).

[118] The term '(Auto)Generatiographie', here translated as (auto)generatiography or generatiographical writing, has been introduced by Björn Bohnekamp (2010; 2011) in order

3.1.2. The Bildungsroman and the Generatiography

The genre of the Bildungsroman, which is sometimes translated as 'formation novel' (cf. Cuddon 1998: 81) and in German occasionally used synonymously with 'Erziehungsroman' (cf. Heinz 2007: 88), is most commonly rooted in German literary history with Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795) as the "archetype of the European *Bildungsroman*" (Moretti 2000: v; cf. Buckley 1974: 12).[119] Franco Moretti, however, in his seminal *The Way of the World* (2000) distinctly locates the Bildungsroman in European culture and discusses influential works from various European countries, including Great Britain. The significance of the Bildungsroman for an analysis of the representation of generations lies in the fact that, very similar to theories on generationality, the genre emphasizes the importance of youth (cf. Buckley 1974: vii). This "new paradigm" that "sees *youth* as the most meaningful part of life" (Moretti 2000: 3) and its impact on the Bildungsroman as "the 'symbolic form' of modernity" (ibid.: 5) are at the heart of Moretti's elaborations. Referring back to Karl Mannheim's essay on the problem of generations, Moretti points out that the role of youth and 'being young' has changed significantly in the transition from traditional to modern societies (cf. ibid.: 4; cf. Buckley 1974: 19). Youth becomes a "role moratorium" (Eisenstadt 1962: 31) in which the individual is offered the time and space to develop an individual identity as well as a collective identity through a peer group. This process of "fusing, or at least bringing together, the conflicting features of individual personality" (Moretti 2000: 10 f.) is represented in the Bildungsroman. The genre thus naturally illustrates the moment in a fictional character's life that generation theorists such as Mannheim deem crucial in the formation of generationalities.[120] Presenting a character's moment of formation in relation to the historical, cultural and

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to describe narratives that do not only represent the life of one individual but aim to represent a whole generation.

[119] Placing the Bildungsroman in a German tradition has, according to Anniken Telnes Iversen (2007: 68), ultimately led to a 'genre war' between two factions that have developed. The one faction is the Germanist tradition that sees the Bildungsroman as a German genre strongly tied to the period of Goethe, which expresses typical German and late 18th or early 19th century ideas about education, humanism, and personality formation as the characteristics of the genre. The second position that highlights plot and character more strongly than Germanist definitions and thus downplays the national connection and instead points out the genre's ties to modernity as e.g. Moretti (2000) does. For the discussion of this second position see also Todd Kontje (1993) who provides an overview over the history of the Bildungsroman and the discourse about the genre.

[120] Mannheim stresses the importance of youth as an impressionable time in an individual's life when he argues that "[y]*outh experiencing the same concrete historical problems may be said to be part of the same actual generation*" (1997: 304; italics in the original).

social problems that a character and his contemporaries have to face in order to develop their individual and collective identities enables the reader to witness the moment of the formation of a generationality. Through this representation of formation, the Bildungsroman – even though depicting the struggles of an individual character – can also be read and discussed as a 'collective Bildungsroman' (cf. Bohnenkamp 2011: 115 f.) as it presents one character's formation that representatively stands for his or her generationality. The potential to represent generationalities is thus one of the distinguishing features of the Bildungsroman.

One of the most comprehensive and detailed surveys is Christoph Schöneich's (1999) study on the British Bildungsroman after 1945, which decidedly focuses on novels with a male protagonist.[121] His elaborate analysis of the genre and the many characteristic features he discusses ultimately converge in the central category of narrative self-conception (Schöneich 1999: 96). Rita Felski boils down Schöneich's survey to an essence:

> Briefly, the *Bildungsroman* can be defined as biographical, assuming the existence of a coherent self; dialectical, understanding identity to be conditioned by a process of interaction between psychological and social forces; historical, describing identity changing over time; and optimistic, in the belief in a possibility of meaningful development. (Felski 1986: 138)

This concise summary revisits the main characteristics and highlights the most important features of the genre. Especially the understanding of identity to be conditioned by the process of interaction between different forces is crucial for the analysis of the representation of generationality and genealogy and their respective interactions. Analysing the different 'forces' that play into the formation of an identity is only of importance if a literary character's identity can be assumed to be the result of a continuing negotiation process of these different forces.

The dialectical and historical condition of the Bildungsroman that Felski highlights is further complicated by migration literature's adaptation of the genre. In order to analyse the representation of generations in British Asian literature the importance of the

[121] Schöneich argues that the female Bildungsroman has been at the centre of scholarly attention for most part of the 20th century. He focuses on the male Bildungsroman, which lately became a blind spot in the field (cf. Schöneich 1999: 14), to discuss the continuity and change of the genre in the last century proving the Bildungsroman to be a valuable and popular genre that finds further development in the black British Bildungsroman as discussed by Mark Stein (2004) and Roy Sommer (2001). The central questions of his study is whether or not the Bildungsroman as a literary form is still adequate to negotiate the relation of the individual and the world in the 20th century (cf. Schöneich 1999: 10 f.).

Bildungsroman for migration literature and how migration literature transformes the genre have to be examined.

In his discussion of the significance of the Bildungsroman in migration literature, Mark Stein argues that the Bildungsroman has become a "central genre in black British literature" (Stein 2004: 27).[122] The label 'novel of transformation' in Stein's use appears more inclusive than the wider known and more popular term Bildungsroman:

> This mode describes and entails subject formation under the influence of social, educational, familial, and other forces. The black British novel of transformation, as I understand it, has a dual function: it is about the formation of its protagonist as well as the transformation of British society and cultural institutions. (Ibid.: 22)[123]

The alternative label is thus chosen because it is not only restricted to an individual. Through applying the label 'novel of transformation' for the adaptation of the Bildungsroman through migration literature (cf. ibid.: 23), Stein manages to include the education and formation of the individual protagonist and the repercussions on society and asks "*how* the bildungsroman genre is used and in which ways the genre is changed in its appropriation by black British literature" (ibid.: 27).

Regarding its content, the black British Bildungsroman, just as Schöneich has argued for the classical British Bildungsroman, is "about the problematics of subjecthood attained through dialectical interaction between self and society" (ibid.: 92 f.). This situation is "articulated in a chronological and linear narrative structure" (ibid.: 93) that "presupposes the possibility of development in time" (ibid.: 93). Stein likewise points out the connection to travelogue and quest narrative, but instead of highlighting the portrayal of the everyday, he assigns to these features the function of helping the "genre's protagonist and narrating subject […] to find a language to express his or her journey, a language which is tied to access to knowledge and power" (ibid.: 93). Overcoming speechlessness, which ties the text as well as the individual protagonist to a larger group facing the same problem – such as for example his or her peer group or

[122] Stein uses the contested category 'black British' in order to create a "wide conception of a body of writing, wide enough to accommodate a variety of black British literary forms, and to cut across the bounds of cultural identity, ethnicity, race, class, generation, and gender. […] The term *black British literature* does not necessarily claim to represent a singular experience. Rather, I use it as a collective term that covers an imagined experiential field of overlapping territories" (Stein 2004: 17; italics in the original).

[123] For a comprehensive discussion of the significance of the term "Bildung", cf. e.g. Marc Redfield (2006: 192 f.) who illustrates the range of aesthetic associations the term implies. See also Redfield (1996). For further information on the black British Bildungsroman, the development of the genre Bildungsroman and its adaption in migration literatures, see Sommer (2001: 110-114).

family –,for Stein (1998: 93) is the main distinction from the traditional Bildungsroman.[124]

Stein convincingly argues that the voicelessness does not have to imply that "the narrating subject is necessarily silenced at the beginning of the *Bildungsroman*" (1998: 93) but is portrayed in the "radical generational conflict" (ibid.: 29) that is implied. The voicelessness is presented in the context of the protagonist's parents fuelling the generational conflict, which "in many cases […] is a conflict between a generation that migrated to Britain and one that was born there" (Stein 2004: 29). This conflict – in contrast to every day generational conflicts that the generativity between generations produces – is exacerbated by the experience of migration that the generations share although both generations have not lived through the process itself. The experience of migration has a distinct influence on the formation of generations and succeeding generations in a familial context. The Bildungsroman proves itself to be a genre that is particularly well suited to represent a generational conflict that is informed by cultural differences between the generations, on the one hand, and the formation of a generationality that is shaped by the generational conflict, on the other (cf. Sommer 2001: 113).[125] The generic features of the black British Bildungsroman as discussed by Stein (2004; 1998) and Sommer (2001) incorporate the characteristics of the traditional Bildungsroman, yet particularly highlight the exacerbated generation conflict in migrant families.

While the Bildungsroman emphasizes the potential for conflict, generatiographical writing – the last of the four selected genres to be discussed – illustrates the process of the formation of generationalities. The generatiography, which is defined by its performative production of a generational identity (cf. Bohnenkamp 2011: 16), in its contemporary form can be considered as pop literature.[126] Generatiographies share

[124] For the notion of speechlessness in the female Bildungsroman, see Felski (1986: 133).

[125] In addition to highlighting these characteristic features of the black British Bildungsroman, Stein attributes two performative functions that were already hinted at in problematizing the choice of using the genre label 'novel of transformation' instead of Bildungsroman. The first performative function is the construction of a number of subject positions that become available to the characters through their very conception, and the second is the constant redefinition of what can be understood as Britishness and the modification of the image of Great Britain that is accomplished by using the Bildungsroman as an instrument of cultural representation and reproduction (cf. Stein 1998: 94).

[126] For an overview over the development and coinage of German pop literature, see Liesegang (2004: 262 ff.). As the generatiography is very closely related to the autobiography it has to be pointed out that although the genre has had new impetus especially in the 1990s, it is not an entirely new genre. Bohnenkamp offers proof for this in his reading of e.g. Goethe's biography (cf. Bohnenkamp 2010: 105-132).

features that characterize pop literature such as "music, media and brand names [that] are integrated in the literary text through techniques such as quotation and montage" (Nielsen 2008: 65). Although pop literature has been criticized for its superficiality and extensive use of brand names, Nielsen argues with Moritz Baßler (2002) that these features are a phenomenon in their own right (Nielsen 2008: 65): "In pop literature the use of brand names, song titles, TV-shows, and other cultural phenomena are essential to the 'archiving' of the surrounding world." The use of the term 'archive' in connection with contemporary pop literature appears to be contingent upon the mechanisms of "cultural memory in today's media age and by ongoing changes in the literary institution, where the boundary between the literary archive with its status of art and pop culture is blurred" (ibid.: 67). The main functions of pop literature are therefore to represent a 'now', an illusion of presence, and to become a literature about collective memory, "short lived as it may be" (ibid.: 68).

Generatiographies as generation narratives have thus far only been discussed and analysed in German pop literature – and even more crucially not from a literary but only from a generation studies point of view, its prime example being Florian Illies' *Generation Golf* (2002 [1995]). Therefore, the following introduction of this genre and the illustration of the characteristic features will prove to be crucial additions to the analysis of representations of generations in contemporary British Asian literature.

As has been mentioned previously, the term generatiography is a new literary label that was introduced by Björn Bohnenkamp (2010). Bohnenkamp draws on Karl Mannheim's theory of generations, specifically on his notion of the generation as actuality: "Die Generatiographie gibt dabei dem Aufschreiben eines Generationenzusammenhangs seine Form. Statt einer individuell verschiedenen Bildung eines Einzelnen porträtiert er die allgemein gültige Ökonomie des Geistes der Vielen" (Bohnenkamp 2010: 127). He thus combines the literary representation of a generation as actuality with the notion of formation as it has been discussed in relation to the Bildungsroman. However, the most important distinction is of course that not the formation of the individual is of interest in the writing about a generation as actuality, but the formation of a group of people that participate in the common destiny (cf. Mannheim 1997: 303). The importance of the individual dwindles in favour of the collective.

Yet, the individual is still of importance in generatiographical writing as this genre is also closely related to the autobiography (cf. Bohnenkamp 2011: 127). Therefore even generatiographies that might not be specifically labelled as memoirs or autobiographies can still be considered forms of life writing. In presenting the life of an individual who

is part of the generation as actuality, the narrative can locate the narrator – in case of autobiographies or memoirs the author – as part of the generationality:

> Bücher wie das von Illies thematisieren nicht nur Generationen, sie adressieren nicht nur spezifische Generationen oder ordnen ihren Autor paratextuell einer spezifischen Generation zu. Sie gehen viel weiter, sie *schreiben eine Generation* – die so erschriebene Generation kann schließlich in Diskursen kommentiert, verworfen, gefeiert werden, sie dient als Identifikationsangebot, das angenommen oder abgelehnt werden kann. (Bohnenkamp 2010: 132)

This summary shows the manifold functions that generatiographies have and highlights the focus on the performative aspects of the genre. As the name already suggests, generatiographies actually write generationalities into being, which – if successful – leave the boundaries of the text to enter public discourse.

Generatiographical writing employs a number of stylistic devices to convey a generational attitude towards life that Bohnenkamp has deduced from an analysis of paradigmatic examples of the genre: "glossenhafter Stil, Struktur, Erzähl-Perspektive, Figurenentwicklung, thematisierte Wirklichkeitsbereiche und paratextuelle Rahmung" (Bohnenkamp 2011: 121). The typical structure of the generatiography is a chronological narration that starts early in life to show the formative years of the individual that represents the generationality (ibid.: 121). In this phase different media typically dominate the socialization:

> Es geht hierbei aber nicht um einen klassischen, über Generationen hinweg tradierten kulturellen Kanon, der noch im klassischen Bildungsroman die Grundlage der Lektüreerfahrung bildet. Stattdessen wird der Kanon aus einer Assemblage populärer Medienformen, aus Musik, Filmen, Fernsehserien, Romanen, gebildet. Diese Konstellation entfaltet allerdings ex-post ihre Wirkung als Kanon, indem sie als Teil einer eine bestimmte Generation verbindende Erinnerungskultur zelebriert werden kann. (Ibid.: 121)

This structural element of the genre definition is closely connected with one of the key concepts that is of importance both in genealogical and generational relations, namely memory in its various forms. In generatiographical writing it is one of the central functions of the literary text to highlight a collective cultural memory in order to represent a generationality via shared memories, which can only be achieved through the retrospective structure of chronological narration.[127]

The narrative transmission is characterized by its claim to speak for a generationality through an autodiegetic narrator (cf. ibid.: 121) who might even use the first-person plural pronoun to offer inclusion to the reader who is invited to take part in the identity

[127] Quoting the author of the novel *Tristesse Royale* (2002), Joachim Bessing, Nielsen claims that he wanted to write an "ethnography of his own generation" (Nielsen 2008: 69).

formation process of the generationality. The characters are divided into in-group and out-group:

> Illies und Kullmann ordnen diese Figuren jeweils generationstypischen Merkmalen zu – oder eben generations-untypischen Merkmalen wenn die Figur nicht Teil der beschriebenen Generation sein soll. Ihr fiktionaler Charakter wird nicht näher bestimmt, im Gegensatz zum Fall des Autor-Erzählers wird hier kein Beleg für die außerfiktionale Existenz angeführt. Trotzdem übernehmen sie als Beispiele die klare Funktion, die Evidenz der Generation aufrechtzuerhalten – sie sind Beweis dafür, dass der Erzähler nicht allein ist. (Ibid.: 121 f.)

Comparable to its function in the family novel and the genealogical novel, the set of characters serves as a confirmation of the claim that a generationality is represented. This claim is underlined by paratextual signals on the book cover or in information on the author declaring the text as a generation narrative (cf. ibid.: 122).

Bohnenkamp's argument that narratives can produce a generational identity through its performative aspects is contingent on the fact that the narrative needs a point of reference in reality:

> Zur Erzeugung von Glaubwürdigkeit bedient sich die Gattung der Generatiographie einer Topik der Referenz. […] Autobiographien – und auch Generatiographien – müssen und können keinen historischen Wahrheitsanspruch erfüllen. Vielmehr müssen Generatiographien den Topos der Referenz bedienen und die entscheidenden Kategorien adressieren. Damit ist die Referenzmodalität dieser Gattung, um auf den Begriff S. J. Schmidts zurückzukommen, genau auf der Grenzlinie zwischen Fakt und Fiktion angesiedelt. Entscheidend für den faktischen Anspruch einer Generatiographie ist nicht nur die individuelle Glaubwürdigkeit, also die Möglichkeit des Abgleichs von geschilderten prägenden Ereignissen und wirkenden Sichtbarkeiten mit außer-fiktionalen Informationen. (Ibid.: 122)

While this specific feature aims more at the reader's own experience of a generational identity, the references to reality can also be read as part of Baßler's (2002) archivist function of pop literature.

These elaborations on the intricate relation between different narrative genres and their potential to present generations in the literary text have provided a number of important insights. First, it has been shown that literary genres that focus on the representation of generations generally focus on either genealogical or generational relations. Second, the genres that are prone to represent generations, especially the family novel and the Bildungsroman, have proven to be particularly popular with migration literatures. Therefore the initial claim that the representation of generations is a phenomenon that can be analysed particularly productively in British Asian literature is substantiated by this discussion. Third, this discussion of genres has shown that the means to represent generations are inherent on both the discourse and the story level of the narrative text.

To provide further analytic tools for the in-depth analysis of the representation of generations in literature, the following subchapter will illustrate how narratology and generation studies can inform each other to allow for an analysis and interpretation of the so far neglected intersections of genealogies and generationalities.

3.2. Generating Narratives and Narrating Generations: Narratological Contributions to Generation Studies

The categories for a narratological analysis of representations of generations on both the discourse and the story level provide valuable insights into the questions of how and which manifestations of generations are represented. The most original aspect literary generation studies offers is a change of perspective from describing generations in hindsight to studying generations in the making. The analysis of narrative texts enables generation studies to move from retrospectively characterizing and describing generationalities and genealogies to study formation processes and monitor the development of genealogical relations. This chapter's contribution to generation studies therefore comprises the combination of the theoretical approach to generations and the methodological instrument to make generations visible in narrative texts. The structural analysis of narrative texts through narratological categories enables a generation studies' perspective on narrative texts to describe and interpret the formation of generations at the time of their coming into being and to adequately analyse changing relations within genealogical lines.

To illustrate the change in perspective on the formation and development of generational and genealogical relations, this chapter will first focus on the question of how narrative texts represent generations, and which information is transmitted and by whom. Subsequently, attention will be drawn to the representation of generations on the story-level for the discussion of a set of categories that enable a precise description of the represented forms of generations, which in turn facilitate an analysis of the intersections of generational and genealogical relations. The categories 'perspective' and 'time' will bridge the discourse-story-divide as they are hybrid categories that contribute to both narrative levels. Furthermore, the discussion of narratological categories that are useful for the analysis of generation narratives will continue to return to the four major concepts informing this study's approach to literary generation studies, namely how experiences of migration, the temporality of generations, the transmission of memory, and the importance of youth can be negotiated through a

narratological analysis emphasizing the narratological contributions to a literary analysis of the concept of 'generation'.

3.2.1. Generating Generation Narratives: Narration and Focalization

The following remarks on 'how' generations can be presented in narratives are based on the terminology and taxonomy developed by Gérard Genette and other narratologists. The theoretical and methodological distinctions introduced in *Narrative Discourse* (1980) and his later comments and terminological refinements in *Narrative Discourse Revisited* (1988) offer the basic model for the a narratological toolbox that will bring together literary and generation studies.[128] The narratological approach for the first time allows a combination of generation studies and the analysis of narrative texts and provides categories that inform the following interpretation of the represented generations in British Asian narratives.

As the transmission of information through a mediating entity is one of the defining characteristics of narrative texts (cf. Scholes/Phelan/Kellog 2006 [1966]: 4), a focus on 'voice' will be the starting point of this discussion. Genette introduced the term 'voice' to specify the general term 'point of view' into the questions 'who sees or perceives' and 'who speaks'. Asking 'who speaks', 'voice' relates to the transmission of information through the mediating entity.[129] The basic distinction between narrating instances in hetero- and homodiegetic narrators (cf. Genette 1980: 244 f.), which allows for an evaluation of the knowledge of the narrator,[130] provides valuable insights into the

[128] However, while the tenor of this chapter follows Genette's elaborations, the theoretical developments since then as well as criticism on his work will be taken into account. Lanser (1981: 39) summarizes the drawbacks of the formalist-structuralist approach: "a concentration on the quantifiable and on binary oppositions; avoidance of what appears at this stage of research to be 'intuitive' because its definition is still imprecise; a tendency to grapple primarily with surface structures of the text; adherence to a supposedly value-free methodology; and, most critically, an isolation of texts from extraliterary contexts and from their ideological base."

[129] According to Mieke Bal (2006: 8), by "information, Genette means what is constituted by the narrated object – and from this perspective, the maximum amount of information is the object narrated with as many details as possible."

[130] Wolf Schmid (2010: 99 ff.) raises the question of knowledge in his development of a model of narrative point of view and distinguishes between 'comprehension' and 'representation' which he, although they are not equivalent to Genette's distinction between 'mood' and 'voice', develops along a similar line of argumentation as an 'ideological point of view': "The ideological perspective encompasses various factors that determine the subjective relationship of the observer to an occurrence: knowledge, way of thinking, evaluative position and intellectual horizons" (Schmid 2010: 101). The notion of an ideological point of view addresses issues of narrative mediation and representation of generations. This study

representation of generations. Questions concerning knowledge, such as whether or not the narrator can provide insider information on generational and genealogical relations based on the characters' position in- or outside the story-world, are of great importance for the analysis of representations of generations. Furthermore, through the distinction between hetero- and homodiegetic narrators and the resulting questions of who perceives and who tells – characters or narrators – Genette's approach allows for a detailed description of the narrator's relation to the characters in the narrative.

Interestingly, Genette's distinction between hetero- and homodiegetic narrators bears structural resemblances to Reulecke's previously discussed definition of 'generationality':

> The term "generationality" gets at the particular features of this identity and has a twofold meaning. On the one hand, it refers to characteristics resulting from shared experiences that either individuals or larger "generation units" collectively claim for themselves. On the other hand, it can also mean the bundle of characteristics resulting from shared experiences that are ascribed to such units from the outside, with which members of other age groups – and often also public opinion as expressed in the media – attempt, in the interest of establishing demarcations and reducing complexity, to identify presumed generations as well as the progression of generations. (Reulecke 2010: 119)

Encompassing both self-description and description by others, generationalities in narrative texts have to be qualified according to who gives which information about the group. The important question therefore is whether or not the narrating instance that reports on the generationality is part of the narrated world.

The description of generationalities and genealogies through heterodiegetic narrators can be more objective because homodiegetic narrators are necessarily more invested in the representation of a generation. As generationalities function to reduce complexities and establish demarcations, a homodiegetic narrator will aim for one of these functions and position him- or herself in relation to the generationality presented. A case in point is Nikesh Shukla's homodiegetic – even autodiegetic – narrator Amit in the novel *Coconut Unlimited* (2010), who relates the formation of subcultural generation of British Asian hip hoppers of which he is a member in distinction to other subcultural generations influenced by other trends in cultural production. Heterodiegetic narrative instances, or 'authorial voices' (Lanser 1992: 15), in contrast to homodiegetic narrators "need not be identified by sex" (ibid.: 18) or age, ethnicity, or ability and can keep a greater or lesser distance from what they tell in the narrative (cf. Genette 1980: 162). Through the outsider position, the abstract narrative instance is able to give a relatively

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will later on discuss the category of 'perspective' and 'perspective structures' to focus on questions of value and beliefs.

objective presentation of a generationality. Concerning the genealogical relations that can be represented in a narrative, a heterodiegetic narrator is able to give information on the various kinds of genealogical relationships between the characters, such as on the lineal and collateral ties between relatives (cf. Zerubavel 2011: 31). Again, the heterodiegetic narrator can present facts more objectively than a character-narrator with limited knowledge, which is of interest when generational struggles and conflicts dominate the plot, as for example in Nikita Lalwani's novel *Gifted* (2008 [2007]).

Dependent on the degree of the explicitness of the narrator, his or her overtness or covertness (cf. Chatman 1978: 196 ff.), an explicit heterodiegetic narrator might invite the reader "to attribute personal characteristics and value judgements to such a speaker" (Neumann/Nünning 2008: 94). Thus, a covert narrator who does not participate in the narrative action can give an unbiased representation of genealogical and generational relations. However, although such an authorial voice of the heterodiegetic narrator might offer more objective information than other forms of narrators, its neutrality does not have the same effect as a character-narrator in relating information on the formation processes and developments of generationalities and genealogies, because he or she can give insider information and has a personal relationship to the generational and genealogic associations because he or she is a character in the story-world.

The case of homodiegetic narrations has to be further specified, as it is crucial to determine whether the narrator who is a character in the story is a member of the generationality focused upon in the narrative, a member of an adjacent and therefore most likely rival generationality, or a mere bystander. The same applies to the character-narrator's position in a genealogical relation of which he can either be part of or an outside commentator. Depending on the location in the genealogical relation the narrator will be able to critically present the social behaviour and the roles taken by members of the family. Therefore, it is not only of importance to establish whether or not the narrating instance is a character in the story but also whether the story is his or her own.

Autodiegetic narrators (cf. Genette 1980: 245) can present insider information on a generationality, describe the processes of formation, and reveal the origin of the shared experience from within the generationality. As Lanser (1992: 18) has argued with regard to the question of the gender of a personal narration, which is revealed through the autodiegetic narrator being the hero of his or her own story, it also gives more information on the age group the narrator belongs to. As the discussion of youth in relation to generationalities and the formation of subcultural generations has shown, the disclosure of the participating narrator's age in the formation of a generationality is

essential for the interpretation of the information the narrative provides. Additionally, in migration literature the disclosure of the ethnicity of the narrative instance gives further insights into characteristics of a generationality because it might be based not only on the experience of migration but on particular features such as religion or language.

The narrator's position in generational and genealogical relations further raises the question of a character-narrator's reliability regarding the representation of genealogies and generationalities.[131] Especially in the case of underreporting, in which the narrator fails to relate important information to her or his narratee (cf. Phelan/Martin 1999: 92),[132] – such as his or her age or ethnic identity, which are important characteristics of belonging to a generationality – is an interesting aspect of unreliability. Phelan and Martin (1999: 92) complement the phenomenon of underreporting with the concept of 'underreading', which implies that the narrator does not consciously know or admit to himself what the reader can infer about his personal interests from the narration.[133] The most important distinction between these two forms of unreliability that make the reader question the validity of information presented on a generationality or a genealogy is thus located on the different axes on which unreliability occurs:

> If he is underreporting, the unreliability does exist along the axis of ethics: Steven [the narrator *The Remains of the Day*] is being intentionally deceptive. […] If he is underreading, then the unreliability exists along the neither the axis of ethics nor the axis of events but along a different axis, one that previous work on unreliability has not sufficiently noticed: the axis of knowledge and perception. (Phelan/Martin 1999: 92)

This distinction between underreporting and underreading and the quality of the unreliability along the axes of ethics, events, and knowledge and perception will prove to be relevant for the interpretion of represented generationalities and genealogies

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[131] The concept 'unreliable narration' was first introduced by Wayne Booth (1975 [1961]: 158 f.; italics in the original): "Our terminology for this kind of distance in narrators is almost hopelessly inadequate. For lack of better terms, I have called a narrator *reliable* when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author's norms), *unreliable* when he does not." For a comprehensive overview over the topic of unreliable narration, see Nünning (1998). A critical point concerning the formalist approach to the underreporting of narrators has been discussed by Lanser (1981: 40): "Similarly, a narrator can be perfectly reliable with respect to the 'facts' of a given story, but unreliable regarding opinions and judgments about the story world; how do we classify such a narrator with respect to 'reliability'? Indeed, a narrator might even be reliable about some facts and not about others."

[132] The 'narratee' is the audience the narrator tells his or her story to and is not to be confused with the real reader, because of the respective locations within the communication system of the narrative text (cf. Diengott 2008: 338).

[133] Phelan and Martin (1999: 93-96) distinguish between six forms of unreliability: underreporting and underreading, misreporting, misevaluating, misreading, and under-regarding.

through unreliable, homodiegetic narrators. Yet although it appears to be an obvious case of unreliable narration if the homodiegetic narrator "tells us less than s/he knows" (ibid.: 95), Phelan and Martin conclude that not all underreporting constitutes unreliability. They argue that if the underreporting is a sign of a character's reticence it depends on "whether we decide that he expects his narratee to infer" (ibid.: 96) from the scene what has actually happened. Underreporting might thus be a sign of a specific character trait rather than a case of unreliable narration, thus linking the analysis of narrative transmission to the analysis of fictional characters.[134]

Especially with autodiegetic narrators, who can give information on the characteristics that generationalities or genealogies ascribe to themselves, the issue of reliability in combination with the character's memory is particularly informative. The narrative representation of memory through autodiegetic narrators, that are distinguished into a narrating *I* and an experiencing *I* who might be separated by a temporal distance represented by age and experience (cf. Genette 1980: 252), is especially relevant considering the importance of a collective memory for the emergence of a generationality:

> The classic example is the autodiegetic narrative, where the distinction between the 'narrating I' and the 'narrated' or 'experiencing I' […] is actually a distinction between a 'remembering I' and a 'remembered I', between the *act* of memory and the *content* of memory. […] The restrictions of the first-person [autodiegetic] narrator are the restrictions of the rememberer: you cannot remember what you yourself have not experienced, and what therefore is not part of your episodic memory system. Neither can you recall what you have not heard, read, or seen, and what therefore is not part of your semantic memory. (Erll 2009: 215; italics in the original)[135]

This distinction between a narrating and an experiencing *I* is similar to the remembering and remembered *I*, a differentiation that is very interesting in the case of life-writing. In life-writings a self-reflexive commentary on the limits of memories in relation to both genealogical and generational memory are addressed, as for example in the memoirs by

[134] Underreporting on the level of the narrative transmission leads to Genette's (1980: 195) concept of 'paralipsis', which he locates on the level of focalization. Allowing paralipsis to occur in heterodiegetic narrators who use internal focalization thus broadens the scope of this phenomenon. Therefore, while the terms underreporting and paralipsis describe the same problem in a narrative text they are still not synonymous as they offer different perspectives on who withholds which kind of information from whom, the reader (Genette) or the narratee (Phelan/Martin). It is therefore rather surprising that Phelan fails to recognize this distinction in the glossary of his 2005 *Living to Tell About It* and subsumes the phenomenon under the lemma 'paralipsis' (Phelan 2005: 217).

[135] The 'remembered I' is a category Erll adopts from Michael Basseler and Dorothee Birke (2005: 123-148), who introduce the term as a hidden category between the 'narrating I' and the 'experiencing I'.

Sathnam Sanghera (*The Boy with the Topknot*, 2009) or Sarfraz Manzoor (*Greetings form Bury Park*, 2008). As already indicated, the distinction between the remembering *I* and the remembered *I* questions the reliability of narrators, a notion that is crucial to keep in mind because it "is the literary representation of problems of memory (such as forgetting and distortion) or a fragmented traumatic memory that may in many cases lie at the heart of unreliability" (Erll 2009: 223).[136]

In addition to the question 'who speaks' or who presents the narrative information on genealogical and generational relations, the question 'who perceives' generationalities and genealogies is essential for the topic at hand. Focalization, or "narrative perspective – in other words, the second mode of regulating information" (Genette 1980: 185), asks "*who is the character whose point of view orients the narrative perspective?*" (ibid.: 186; italics in the original). Accordingly, the analysis of focalization offers answers to the question of who perceives the represented generational or genealogical relations in a narrative text. Furthermore, because it regulates information on the basis of the cognitive and sensory faculties of the character or narrator perceiving events in the narrative, it can also serve as a way of characterizing the members of generationality or genealogy.

The term 'focalization' is closely related to the concept of 'point of view'. Yet, focalization has become widely accepted in narrative theory for a number of reasons:

> The term "focalization" is preferable to the traditional terms because it is more technical and thereby can be used in a way that is both more restricted and more extensive. The term excludes the psychological meanings of point of view, which is the reason Genette prefers it. At the same time, it can extend to any object of the "gaze", whether that object be a character, a place, or an event. (Bal 2006: 17)

It is thus its technicality and precision that qualifies focalization as the more appropriate term for analysing 'who perceives' in a narrative. As Gerald Prince has pointed out, the verb 'to perceive' is to be understood in broad sense:

> to apprehend with the senses (to see, hear, touch, etc.) or with the mind, or with something like their equivalent. In other words, what is perceived may be abstract or concrete, tangible or intangible – sights, sounds, smells, or thoughts, feelings, dreams, and so on. (Prince 2001: 44)

To this list of sensory and cognitive activities the verb 'to remember' has to be added, as remembering constitutes one of the most important ways of perceiving generationalities and genealogies. Furthermore, Bal's functional distinction between the

[136] For example, an autodiegetic narrator can comment on the formation of a generationality because of his or her own participation, but his or her restricted memory and insider knowledge do not allow for a change in perspective.

"subject of the focalizing: the focalizer" and "the object of the focalizing: the focalized" (2006: 15) is of great importance for the analysis of generationalities and genealogies in literature because the distinction allows for a generation to be either the object or the subject of focalization.

Focalization thus regulates information based on the cognitive and sensory faculties of the character or narrator perceiving events. For an analysis of the representation of generations this implies that while the amount of information on the generations depends on the narrative transmission, it is further filtered through the perceiving instance. Therefore, the characteristics of a generational identity have to be interpreted by questioning who speaks as well as who perceives the generationality. Even more so, genealogical relations between characters and how the characters involved experience them can best be analysed through focalization. Internal focalization, one of Genette's original three basic forms of focalization (cf. ibid.: 189),[137] can give insight experiences of the represented generationalities and genealogies and it is important to note that only this form of narrative transmission can relate the personal experiences of their roles within a kinship. Personal and subjective elaborations on social roles and their developments in relation to changing positions of the character-narrator in the genealogical line – for example through reproduction or starting a new family – can provide valuable insights into how conflicts between familial generations are perceived by the characters involved.

Additionally, focalization serves as a means to characterize members of a generationality and a genealogical kinship relation, by providing implicit as well as

[137] Manfred Jahn (2007: 97 f.; italics in the original) provides a very concise description of these three modes of focalization: "A. In the mode of *non-focalization* or *zero-focalization*, events are narrated from a wholly unrestricted or omniscient point of view […]. The narrator has access to (in principle) limitless (i.e. unrestricted) information which clearly transcends what is accessible to ordinary humans […]. B. In the mode of *internal focalization* the story's events are 'focalized through' one or more story-internal reflector characters, and narrative information is restricted to data available to their perception, cognition, and thought. […] Genette distinguishes three sub-patterns of internal focalization. (1) Texts employing *fixed focalization* are exclusively told from the point of view of a single focal character […]. (2) *Variable focalization* occurs in narratives that employ more than one reflector. […] (3) Finally, *multiple focalization*, which is a special case of variable focalization, occurs in texts in which the same events are told repeatedly, but are each time seen through a different focal character. […] C. *External focalization* marks the most drastic reduction of narrative information because it restricts itself to 'outside views,' reporting what would be visible and audible to a virtual camera." Most importantly, Jahn highlights that focalization patterns do not have to extend across the whole text but can be restricted to individual sections. Only fixed internal focalization is a "static pattern by definition (if it weren't static, one wouldn't call it 'fixed'), whereas dynamic patterns allow various shifts between patterns" (Jahn 2007: 99).

explicit characterizations. These perceptions of genealogical and generational relations can, on the one hand, be influenced by the memory or postmemory of migration. As both manifestations of generations are very closely connected to questions of memory, be it family memory or generational memory, or the inter- or intragenerational transmission of memories, these questions highlight the importance of the focalizer as well as the focalized in representing generations.[138] On the other hand, communication difficulties between the familial generations represented, which might be introduced through a discrepancy in language use between the narrator and the characters (cf. Gymnich 2007: 209 ff.), can be highlighted through the use of focalization. Comments on mutual understanding and comprehension can illustrate the relation between characters and narrators. If, for example, a narrative text employs a homodiegetic narrator who uses Standard English while one or more characters use a language other than English the "linguistic constellation between the narrator and one of the characters correlates with the generation gap between immigrants and the next generation, who have grown up in a linguistic and cultural environment that remains alien to their parents" (Gymnich 2002: 72).[139] In these cases, focalization can offer both the narrator's perception of the communication processes complicated by matters of language proficiency as well as the character's perception.[140] While the analysis of this phenomenon has to start on the level of narration, turning towards focalization can reveal that the linguistic gap does not necessarily have to represent a generation gap.

[138] The distinction between narrating and experiencing *I* can be of further interest when considering the focalization. The distinction highlights the importance of including 'remembering' in the list of verbs of perception, as Bal (1981: 205) argues in her discussion of the dependence of spatio-temporal proximity on the nature of focalization and the possibility of a narrator or character focalizing his or her own past. Further substantiating the claim that the categories of narration and focalization are very closely connected, Phelan (2001: 51-64) has pointed out that narrators can be focalizers and that the autodiegetic narrator that has to be split into a narrating and an experiencing *I* can be a focalizer in both instances.

[139] Interestingly, few contemporary British Asian novels actually use different languages to signify the linguistic differences between the generations. *Anita and Me*, e.g. actually uses Punjabi vocabulary to highlight the protagonist's process of learning the language. In contrast, Bobby Nayyar's *West of no East* (2011) presents the language differences only through the autodiegetic narrator's perspective: "'There'll be plenty of time for photos later,' he said in Punjabi so Gurjit could understand" (Nayyar 2011: 107). The translation of the father's Punjabi highlights the cultural differences between the Indian born parents and the English born narrator.

[140] Gymnich (2002: 69-73) offers a detailed overview over the various combinations between forms of narrators and their relations with characters through language proficiency and the effects they can have on the text.

The range of modes of focalization from fixed to variable (cf. Nünning/Nünning 2000) offers a wide range of possible functions that the focalization can perform in representing generations in migration literature. Through multiple focalization, the special case of variable focalization in which the same event is narrated repeatedly, each time from the perspective of a different focalizer, the intersections of generational and genealogical relations can be examined from different points of view. Variable focalization can also provide diverse perceptions of generation conflicts or intergenerational solidarity. Both modes might "motivate[s] the reader to re-read the text in order to compare the many twice-told events, to reconstrue the personalities of the characters, and to appreciate the many leitmotifs and contrasts" (Jahn 2007: 105). In contrast to this, fixed focalization can demonstrate the domination of one generation over another and the mechanisms of demarcation as well as inclusion and exclusion. By allowing for only one character or the narrator to perceive the story-world, the representation of generations could function as a means of characterization of the focalizer and the focalized and the representation of the intersections of the manifestations of generations would be one-dimensional. Therefore, although fixed internal focalization can give interesting insights into the formation processes of a generationality and a detailed, yet one-sided description of genealogical relations, it returns to questions of reliability.

3.2.2. Narrative Generation of Generationalities and Genealogies: Perspective and Perspective Structure

While the technicality and the exclusion of psychological meanings from the category of focalization are precisely what makes the concept attractive (cf. Bal 2006: 17), the present study focuses on the intersections of generationalities and genealogies which are very much determined by clashing world-views, value systems, and experiences. While narration and focalization already offer valuable insights for the analysis of generations, the concept of 'perspective', "a character's or a narrator's subjective worldview" (Nünning 2001: 207), has to be taken into account in order to analyse the different attitudes of generations.

The notion of perspective as well as the perspective structures that emerge from a juxtaposition of different perspectives within one narrative text is indispensable for the analysis of generations in their manifestations in literary texts. The analysis of perspectives facilitates an interrogation of the value systems, belief systems, and world-views that characters and narrators apply to the fictional world. Thus, the information

presented and filtered through narrators and focalizers is enriched by insights into the characters' and narrators' world-views. Applying Manfred Pfister's (2000 [1988]) theory of perspective in drama for the study of narrative texts, Nünning (2001) translates Pfister's findings and adds the vital distinction between character-perspective and narrator-perspective to the theory of perspectives and perspective structures. It thus becomes possible to discern the different perspectives that the various sources of information on generational and genealogical relations have. As these might be contradicting, but also coherent perspectives, the analyses of character- and narrator-perspectives promise crucial insights into represented generationalities and genealogies, as well as into what happens at their intersections, how conflicts between generations come into being, and how they can be bridged.

Although the concept of perspective transgresses the boundaries between discourse and story level (cf. Surkamp 2003: 2 f.; Nünning 1989: 64 ff.), the few comprehensive studies available – such as Surkamp's (2003) – focus on the story level of perspective structures and the semantization of narrative transmission. The present study, however, puts forward the argument that 'perspective' is one of the ways in which a narrative text can at the same time produce and represent generations and give information on the characters and narrators who do so. Therefore, from a generation studies' perspective a clear allocation of 'perspective' to either the discourse or the story level oversimplifies the achievements of the concepts 'perspective' and 'perspective structure', which is why 'perspective' and later on 'narrative time' function as a bridge between discourse and story level.

Defining character-perspective, Nünning (2001: 210) picks up on Pfister's three factors that determine from which perspective a character observes the world, which include the level of information a character has access to, his or her psychological disposition, and the ideological orientation of a character. Each "verbal utterance and each physical or mental act of a character provides insights into his or her perspective" (Nünning 2001: 210). Surkamp has elaborated upon these parameters, providing a comprehensive definition of the term 'character-perspective'[141]: "his/her knowledge and abilities, psychological disposition, system of norms and values, belief sets, attitudes,

[141] *Die Figurenperspektive umfaßt das Wirklichkeitsmodell einer literarischen Figur, d.h. die Gesamtheit aller inneren Faktoren (z.B. psychische Disposition, Werte, Deutungsschemata) und äußere Bedingungen (z.B. biographischer Hintergrund, kulturelles Umfeld, situativer Kontext), die in die von dieser Figur entworfenen subjektiven Ansichten von der fiktionalen Welt und in jede ihrer Handlungen eingehen und die die Motivationsstruktur, Bedürfnisse und Intentionen dieser Figur wesentlich bestimmen* (Surkamp 2003: 40 f.; italics in the original).

motivations, needs and intentions as well as his/her sex, gender, sexuality, ethnic identity, and the general economic, political, social, and cultural conditions under which s/he lives" (Surkamp 2008: 424) are all factors that determine a character's world-view. Basically every trait of a fictional character as well as the situational conditions at the time of the narrative influences his or her perspective.

Complementary to the character-perspective, Nünning introduces the concept of the narrator-perspective, which he defines as the subjective world-view of the narrating instance (cf. Nünning 2001: 212 f.). The narrator-perspective is thus analogous to the character-perspective, yet with the restriction that only overt narrators can articulate a perspective due to their anthropomorphism (cf. Nünning 2001: 213; Surkamp 2008: 424).[142] The option of the narrator-perspective entails the logical consequence that a narrative text may comprise as many character- and narrator-perspectives as it has characters and narrators, including a distinction between the perspectives of the narrating and the experiencing *I*.[143] The system formed by all these perspective as well as the patterns of relationships between them establishes the perspective structure of a narrative text (cf. Nünning 2001: 214).

The perspective structure depends on the selection and arrangement of the individual perspectives and has a paradigmatic and a syntagmatic dimension. The paradigmatic aspect of a perspective structure consists in the selection of individual perspective: "The greater the spectrum of social, moral, and/or ideological differences between the various character-perspectives, the more diversified and complex is the perspective structure that emerges" (Nünning 2001: 215). The syntagmatic dimension of a perspective structure highlights how individual perspectives are combined and coordinated and includes a number of relevant parameters: "These include gender, generational differences, social class, and race. In addition to these, the construction of the perspective structure of a text usually involves a wide range of psychological, moral, and ideological features" (ibid.: 215).

Through a combination of contrasting or corresponding perspectives the perspective structure can give information on the world-views of different characters and narrators.

[142] Thus, while all homodiegetic narrators can display their perspectives, only heterodiegetic narrators that can be characterized as individual subjects and are clearly recognizable in the narrative as being the instance that presents information can reasonably be said to have a narrator-perspective. Surkamp (2003: 45) goes even further and defines the perspective of the narratee.

[143] Burkhard Niederhoff (2011: n. pag.) criticizes this approach and argues that "the mere existence of a character does not imply that his or her perspective is of any importance."

A whole range of different types of perspective structures can be created according to the degree to which individual perspectives differ, overlap or converge:

> If the perspectives can be integrated into a unified worldview or if a single point of view is privileged, the narrative text has a 'closed' perspective structure […]. If the perspectives contrast and contradict each other and if there are unresolved differences between conflicting world-models, the perspective structure of the text remains 'open' […]. (Surkamp 2008: 424)[144]

Conceptualizing closed and open perspective structures as two opposing poles on a scale of possible types facilitates a flexibility in differentiating between the types. A text can therefore vary to a certain degree in its representation of perspectives: first creating a closed structure that is consequently punctuated with conflicting or opposing perspectives and is thus forced to open up.

The concepts of character- and narrator-perspectives in closed and open perspective structures prove particularly interesting for literary generation studies. The world-views of both individual members of either generational or genealogical relations but also a collective of characters can be analysed through the category of 'perspective'. Returning to the definition of generationalities, in which the focus lay on "shared experiences that either individuals or larger 'generation units' collectively claim for themselves" but also on the "bundle of characteristics resulting from shared experiences that are ascribed to such units from the outside" (Reulecke 2010: 119), a focus on the perspectives of narrators and characters as well as perspective structures enables a comprehensive analysis of generationalities.

Characters that are portrayed in genealogical or generational relationships can present their subjective world-views, their belief and value systems through their character-perspectives. These can give valuable information on the intersections of genealogies and generationalities because the character-perspectives can portray world-views that are either contrasting or corresponding, which in return will produce a generation conflict or strengthen generational solidarity. A case in point is Zahid Hussain's *The Curry Mile* (2006), in which the clashing world-views of Sorayah and her father lead to a conflict between the familial generations, which is not truly resolved as the opposing life plans of the generations cannot be reconciled until the very end of the novel, which relates the father's death.

[144] For the more detailed German definition of perspective structure, in which Surkamp also discusses that it is not the sum of the individual perspectives but their relations to each other, cf. Surkamp (2003: 49-52).

Character- and narrator-perspectives can also provide essential insights into formation processes of generationalities, a key function literary texts can perform for generation studies. By describing the shared experiences that lead to the formation of a generationality, a literary text can even present different generationalities that coexist at the same time and give information on the establishment of multiple generation units within one generation. The same applies to genealogical relations in which character- or narrator-perspectives give insights into processes of socialization within a family, the transmission of values, traditions, and religion. Specifically in migration literature, in which the genealogical conflicts are aggravated by different linguistic and cultural environments (cf. Gymnich 2002: 72), the perspectives of the members of the familial generations can give some indication as to the origins of the differing perspectives.

A particularly crucial aspect in the depiction of generations is the question of closed and open perspective structures. Whether a text allows contradicting perspectives that might present very different subjective world-views or privileges one view and thus marginalizes opposing perspectives influences the representation of generations. Especially in narratives that are dominated by a generation conflict, such as Nadeem Aslam's novel *Maps for Lost Lovers*, an analysis of perspective structures can provide valuable insights into the crisis and whether or not there are ways to overcome it.

3.2.3. Representing the Non-Contemporaneity of the Contemporaneous: Temporal Order and Narrated Time

The linearity of time in narratives and its relation to a genealogical understanding of the progression of time are most prominently discussed by Patricia Tobin, who proposes the metaphor of the 'genealogical imperative' (Tobin 1978: 6 f.): "It equates the temporal form of the classical novel – the conceptualized frame within which its acts and images find their placement – with the dynastic line that unites the diverse generations of the genealogical family." She thus relates the temporal sequence of classical narratives, of which the Bildungsroman is her case in point, to the relationships within a family. She argues that "events in time come to be perceived as begetting other events within a line of causality similar to the line of generations, with the prior event earning a special prestige as it is seen to originate, control, and predict future events" (ibid.: 7). While her reasoning for the Bildungsroman as the paradigmatic novel performed though time and pre-formed by time (cf. ibid.: 5) because it focuses on the "life-as-education wherein the *process* of a young life is projected as the *shape* that will govern its remaining years" (ibid.: 5; italics in the original) is very convincing and exemplifies the notion of the

genealogical imperative, this approach disregards the idea of the contemporaneity of generations: to highlight the chronological, linear development of narrative time, and then to focus on family structures resembling a specific idea of time is too restricted an approach to incorporate intersections of genealogy and generationality.[145] Yet exactly where these two semantic levels of the concept of 'generation' meet in migration literature is the central question of this study. This chapter therefore focuses on how these processes can be portrayed in narrative texts.[146]

The following elaborations refer to Genette's (1980) categories of the representation of time, namely order, frequency, and duration. These categories offer the basic distinctions of narrative time for an analysis of events on the story level and their representation on the discourse level:[147]

> connections between the temporal *order* of succession of the events in the story and the pseudo-temporal order of their arrangement in the narrative […]; connections between the variable *duration* of these events of story sections and the pseudo-duration (in fact, length of the text) of their telling in the narrative – connections, thus, of *speed* – […]; finally, connections of *frequency*, that is […], relations between the repetitive capacities of the story and those of the narrative […]. (Genette 1980: 35; italics in the original)

In this definition Genette presents the basic relations between story time and narrative time, or "the quasi-fiction of *Erzählzeit*, this false time standing in for a true time and to be treated – with the combination of reservation and acquiescence that this involves – as a *pseudo-time*" (ibid.: 34; italics in the original).[148]

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[145] For an overview over historical changes of conceptualizations of time in relation to the novel, see Middeke (2002: 1-20).

[146] Other approaches to narrative time include the philosophical perspective of Ricœur's "Narrative Time" (1980) and *Time and Narrative* (1984-1988) as well as Currie (2007); for a comprehensive combination of Genette's structuralist approach and Ricœur's phenomenological approach, see Nünning/Sommer (2002: 33-56). An alternative narratological approach to time is proposed by Monika Fludernik (2002; 2003b), who focuses her analysis on deictic indicators and grammatical tense. Fludernik and Nünning/Sommer (2002: 46) agree on the importance of grammatical tense in research on narrative time, an issue which has been largely neglected by Genette.

[147] Matz (2011) argues that the temporal dynamics of a narrative as represented in these time-schemes might constitute an 'art of time' through which to practice temporal diversity. His essay addresses the question of "how, why, and with what effect they [Lyotard and Ricœur] ask us to address real-world time-crisis through a practice of narrative engagement" (Matz 2011: 275).

[148] The terms 'time of narration' (*Erzählzeit*) and 'narrated time' (*erzählte Zeit*) go back to Günther Müller's inaugural lecture on "The Significance of Time in the Narrative Art" from 1946, an English translation of which is included in the anthology *Time – From Concept to Narrative Construct: A Reader* edited by Meister/Schernus (2011).

Especially the concepts of order and frequency are of interest for an analysis of how and when generations are narratively created. While the aspect of duration with its elements of summary, speed, pause, scene, and ellipsis (cf. ibid.: 86-112) are important means of analysing temporal structures, their interpretive merit is limited to specific narrative events important to generational and genealogical relations that are focused upon to highlight their significance. This contribution must not be underestimated, as it can, for example, draw attention to momentous events in the formation of a generationality or the origin of a genealogical conflict in pausing the narrative for a detailed description of an event. However, the categories of order and frequency offer aspects that can be more efficiently combined with the analytical categories of narration, focalization, and perspective, adding insights into the notion of perspective structure and will therefore be focused upon in more detail.

The two most important phenomena in the alaysis of the temporal order of a narrative, the "order in which events or temporal sections are arranged in the narrative discourse with the order of succession these same events or temporal segments have in the story" (Genette 1980: 35), are analepsis and prolepsis.[149] A very important function analepses can perform, which distinguishes literary generation studies from other disciplines researching generations, is that the narrative can go back to the moment of formation of a generationality and thus share this process with the narratee. Only the literary and cultural study of generations can give testimony of the formation of a generationality that otherwise can only be analysed in retrospect. Similarly, prolepses can jump to the moment where genealogies and generationalities will intersect, possibly leading to a crisis in the narrative, to then go back to the narrative's presence. Thus, the narratee's awareness is raised for clues that will further the interpretation of the intersections. Prolepses are not as common in narrative texts as analepses (cf. ibid.: 67) and the latter are further highlighted in this study because they are a very important device to represent memories.[150]

[149] A third type of anachrony, which for the study of generations is not as important as the two basic anachronies but for the sake of completeness shall be mentioned, is 'co-occurrence' (Ireland 2008: 592).

[150] Descriptions of how long the anachronies last and how far they go back into the past or jump forward in time are designated by the terms 'reach' and 'extent': "An anachrony can reach into the past or the future […]: this temporal distance we will name the anachrony's *reach*. The anachrony itself can also cover a duration of story that is more or less long: we will call this its *extent*" (Genette 1980: 48). This distinction is significant for the study of generations as they can give information about, e.g., how far in the past the formation of the generationality has taken place and how long processes of establishing a generational identity have taken. It can further be a helpful in the analysis of family or genealogical

In distinction to analepsis, frequency relates to the repetitions of story events on the level of the discourse: "Schematically, we can say that a narrative, whatever it is, may tell once what happened once, *n* times what happened *n* times, *n* times what happened once, once what happened *n* times" (ibid.: 114). These phenomena describe what Genette conceptualizes as 'singulative narrative', 'iterative narrative', and 'repeating narrative'. For the study of generations in literature the category of frequency implies the possibility of being presented with multiple accounts on the key moments during which a generationality comes into being, a genealogy is continued or discontinued, or in which the intersections of generationality and genealogy create vital tensions.

Genette's theory on narrative time and story time offers a comprehensive set of categories for the analysis of generations in narrative texts. However, the very technical and structural approach to temporal order and narrated time signals an objectivity that has to be questioned (cf. Nünning/Sommer 2002: 49 f.). In order to avoid the descriptive scheme that is suggested by Genette's terminology, the character's subjective experience of time as well as possible clashes of the experienced time with the externally constructed time (cf. Nünning 2002) will have to be taken into account. Furthermore, the analysis of time always has to be related to the narrative transmission of information as well as to focalization because of the semantization of the presented structures. At the same time, 'time' is a category that bridges story and discourse level and offers links to other narratological categories such as character analysis, plot structures, or setting on the story level.

3.2.4. Narrated Generations: Setting, Character, and Plot

Having established how narratological concepts of the discourse level as well hybrid categories inform a generation studies' perspective on migration literature, this last section turns towards the constituents of the story level to review their contributions to the analysis of generations in literary texts. Although the focus will be on the categories of setting, character, and plot, it has to be pointed out that they, too, have to be related to their representation through a narrative instance and focalization respectively.

The importance of considering discourse when discussing elements of the story level was first highlighted by Seymour Chatman's (1978: 141) definition of setting: "A normal and perhaps principal function of setting is to contribute to the mood of the narrative." In his discussion of Joyce's short story "Eveline" (1914), Chatman basically

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novels in which a heterodiegetic narrator gives information on multi-generation families to elucidate events of the presence.

portrayed the semantization of space in that he derives information on the character through an analysis of the setting. This form of interpretation, in which "[e]lements of setting can serve multiple functions" (Chatman 1978: 142), is extended to include ways "in which setting may be related to plot and character" (ibid.: 143), thus serving to connect these three elements of the story level. As they inform each other, all three categories gain from the general examination of who gives the information on setting, character, and plot.

The relation between discourse and story level, although not as intricate as in the case of the categories of perspective and time, is still highly relevant to the analysis of represented generations. The state of this debate is concisely presented by Nünning (2002) who points out the use of temporal structures in setting and vice versa.[151] Time structures influencing the description of narrative setting can thus highlight the presence of the past by displaying the temporality of a setting. In this function the intersection of time and space correlates with one of the functions the concept of 'generation' can perform in contexts of cultural-historical research. As Reulecke points out, a generational approach "places the concrete temporality of humans, including their generational 'baggage,' into the context of general historical change, which the individual may face passively as well as actively" (Reulecke 2008: 121). The historicity of an individual within the framework of his realm of experience as well as his life story are linked to a spatio-temporal location: a narrative text will always have to give at least some indication of its temporal and spatial setting. These links are vital for the analysis of generations as these are by definition always related to these parameters.[152]

The thematization of migration is a constitutive characteristic of the narrative texts selected for this study. The following considerations on the contributions the category setting offers to generation studies turn towards feminist and postcolonial approaches to narratology for techniques to analyse narrative space in migration literature. As Hanne Birk and Birgit Neumann (2002: 137) point out, especially the notion of crossing spatial frontiers and the notion of the 'go-between' offer valuable insights for the discussion of setting in combination with a focus on identity forming concepts such as generation.

[151] "Charakteristisch für die Zeitstruktur der Raumbeschreibung ist es, dass die Gegenwärtigkeit der Vergangenheit durch eine Verzeitlichung des Raumes betont wird. Räume und Gebäude werden dabei insofern wie ein Palimpsest dargestellt, als sie die Spuren verschiedener Zeitebenen in sich tragen und daher wie ein mehrfach beschriebenes Pergament die Gleichzeitigkeit verschiedener historischer Epochen verkörpern" (Nünning 2002:410).

[152] For the interdependent relation between time and space in narratives, see Hallet/Neumann (2009: 21 f.).

Thus, analyses of the transgression of boundaries and the go-betweens who move freely in a liminal space between frontiers as well as notions of displacement are of interest for an analysis of migration literature. While from a generational studies' perspective spatial borders can present valuable insights into generational conflicts and gaps, the notion of the 'contact zone' (cf. Reichl 2002) enables a discussion of generational solidarity through a semantizised space. This approach invites an interpretation of the categories introduced by Würzbach (2004) such as the garden as liminal space, the house as signifier of an assigned social role, or the window-view as transgressive space. As Würzbach (2004: 55) argues, the interdependence between setting and identity construction of characters is of importance for an interpretation of both. For a literary study of generations this implies that not only the temporal structure influences the interpretation of the setting with a focus that combines the concerns of migration with those of generation, but also the spatio-temporal location of the individual character has to be taken into consideration. It will therefore be of interest to discuss which generationality is established in a particular setting, whether genealogical relations share a specific location, and how characters move in-between different spaces.[153]

Furthermore, as has been discussed in relation to generatiographical writing in the previous chapter, in a narrative setting the extratextual references might be used to relate the fictional text to reality. This strategy offers potential for identification with characters located in generational and genealogical relations which are closely connected to a specific extratextual setting (cf. Nünning 2009: 40 f.), thus establishing a reference to reality that invites actual readers to identify with the represented generation (cf. chapter 3.1.2). This potential for identification then leads to the question of who to identify or sympathize with.

The narratological analysis of characters, according to Fotis Jannidis (2004), is a fragmented field in which the high number of publications cannot hide the fact that no coherent research on characters is being done.[154] The main contribution to generation

[153] The interdependence of setting and narrative transmission is discussed by Nünning (2009: 45 ff.).

[154] Jannidis laments (2004: 2): "Um Zahlen zu nennen: mindestens 100 Titel zum Problem der Figur in fiktionalen Texten und ca. 250 erzähltheoretische Titel zum Thema. Sie werden kaum zur Kenntnis genommen, und die damit häufig verbundenen Folgen sind deutlich sichtbar: Bereits formulierte Probleme werden als neu wieder eingeführt, bereits erledigte 'Lösungen' werden freudig erneut präsentiert." In one of the few recent approaches to literary characters from a narratological point of view, Jannidis himself, however, aims not so much at combining the existing approaches into a coherent theory, but he focuses instead on the role of the character in processes of literary communication models and its importance in semiotic systems and processes. Thus, Jannidis again highlights one particular area of

studies in this fragmented field is the work of Uri Margolin (2007), who proposes a mimetic study of characters and offers three major theoretical perspectives on character, of which the first two have interesting overlaps with the approaches to the study of generations in migration literature:

> [C]haracter as a literary figure, that is, an artistic product or artifice constructed by an author for some purpose; character as non-actual but well-specified individual presumed to exist in some hypothetical, fictional domain – in other words, character as an individual within a possible world; and character as text-based construct or mental image in the reader's mind. (Margolin 2007: 66)

The first theoretical approach to character, viewing a literary figure as an artifice, calls for an analysis of the properties ascribed to the literary figure (cf. ibid.: 68 f.). A number of literary types have been developed based on this view, which are constituted by a "limited, fixed set of co-occurring properties, which can be exemplified with additions and variations by numerous individual figures" (ibid.: 70).[155] These types offer an invaluable connection to the use of the concept of 'generation' in migration studies.

As the traditional, empirical conceptualization of first- and second-generation migrants has shown, migrants are often reduced to their age at migration. This limited criterion then is supposed to give information on processes of integration and assimilation, which again are measured in categories such as, for example, language proficiency. Thus, migrants become types that are classified based on a genealogical relation and consequently can come to be represented as literary types in migration literature. Subsequently, this can raise the expectation that migration literature with a multi-generational cast must include a conflict between the generations originating from the distinction between first- and second-generation migrants.

These basic theoretical assumptions are sufficient for a character analysis focusing on the generational and genealogical relations. A literary character's belonging to a specific generationality can be analysed based on certain character traits displayed and by figuring out whether or not these are shared with other characters. In this way the generational habitus of subcultural generations and youth cultures can be analysed and

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research in character analysis, thus reinforcing the impression that research on literary characters remains to be a fragmented field.

[155] While character types are helpful for the ensuing discussion of plot and plot types, a counteraction to the simplification and reduction to one-dimensional characters and types can be achieved by focusing on processes of individuation: "For the purpose of literary analysis it is useful to group the kinds of properties a character can possess into several dimensions: physical; behavioral (action-related) and communicative; and mental, with the latter being further subdivided into perceptual, emotive, volitional, and cognitive" (Margolin 2007: 72 f.).

interpreted. Similarly, the location in a genealogical relationship can be assessed by analysing the function of a literary figure in the narrative, such as a role he or she plays in a family context. Consequently, characters always have to be analysed in relation to other characters, which either stand in relation to the generationality or belong to the same genealogy as the character in question. The analysis of character constellations has to be complemented by the notion of character- and narrator-perspectives and perspective structures in order to assess the world-views, value and belief systems of the literary characters. The perspectives of characters and narrators are an important factor in the representation of both generational and genealogical relations and the perspective structure of a narrative text can give valuable insights into the prevalent system of values represented by these relations (cf. chapter 3.2.2).

A vital contribution to the analysis of genealogical relationships between literary characters and identity construction against the background of family relations is the concept of the 'genealogical other' introduced by Eviatar Zerubavel (2011: 8). In his sociological study Zerubavel conceptualizes the genealogical other as a newly found relative that provides a revelation about an ancestor's identity that can change how an individual sees him- or herself.[156] In reference to Lacan's distinction between 'other' and 'Other', the 'genealogical other' relates to the mirror-stage, in which the 'other' is an image, a counterpart, another person (cf. Lacan 2010 [1949]: 1161).[157] The concept

[156] Before Zerubavel introduced the term 'genealogical other' in his study *Ancestors & Relatives*: *Genealogy, Identity, & Community* (2011), it was used by Michel de Certeau (1980: 54) in an essay on the works of the French ethnologist Joseph-François Lafitau (1681-1746), specifically on the frontispiece of his major work *Moeurs des sauvages Ameriquains comparées aux moeurs des premiers temps* (*Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times*, 1724). The picture de Certeau interprets "sets for the image of writing and of time" (1980: 39). Focusing on the writing woman in the picture he claims that the writer is "cut off from [his] genealogical debts" (1980: 53) and that "his work no longer depends on a particular tradition or on his fidelity to his first fathers" (1980: 53 f.). Instead, "[t]he writer is the mother and the beginning of a world; he symbolizes the absence of the (genealogical) other on the productivist stage where man can play the role of *genitrix* as a transvestite: he thus gives witness to a conquering bourgeoisie and to the science it rendered possible" (de Certeau 1980: 54). The genealogical other is conceptualized as the absent male father figure, whose absence causes a rupture and crumbling of "the genealogical pressure" that goes "together with the establishment of a scientific insularity" (de Certeau 1980: 54), thus strengthening the position of the writer who is the creator of a world. De Certeau thus breaks with Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence* (1973), in which the latter argued that literary history was a genealogical development.

[157] Lacan, in his seminal essay "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience" (1949), conceptualizes the mirror-stage as the moment in a child's development when he recognizes his own image in a mirror. The function of the mirror-stage is to establish "a relation between the organism and its reality – or, as they say, between the *Innenwelt* and the *Umwelt*" (Lacan 2010: 1164).

of the 'genealogical other' can be further understood as a development of George Herbert Mead's concept of the 'significant other' (cf. Mead 1972 [1934]: 135 ff.), which describes a person who has a very strong influence on another individual's self conception.[158] This is often a family member with a caretaking function such as mother or father, but can also be any other person with whom the individual has a close relationship. The notion of the genealogical other can be transferred to the study of literary characters andthe relation between characters can be analysed with a focus on how processes of dissociation of familial relations, but also an identity formation in relation to these characters, can work. This argument is supported by Monika Fludernik's (2007: 261) essay on narrative identity:

> Narrative identity, therefore, is part of a general performative identity which we create inside our social roles – as teachers, as wives, as parents, as drivers, etc. […] Identities cannot be upheld without the co-operation of others. The continuity between present and past self that subjectively exists for individuals relies to a significant extent on the support that identity construction receives from the other, especially because – as Jacques Lacan argues – we see ourselves as other and as others see us. […] Consequently, identity is not merely differentiated from alterity, the other, by singling itself out from a multiplicity of others; it is itself constituted in a dialectic process that interacts with the other.

As argued in psychoanalytic identity theories, the creation of a narrative identity is produced in interplay with 'an other'. The determination of the social roles within a genealogical relation will facilitate an analysis of how the identity construction works against a genealogical other. However, Zerubavel's concept of the genealogical other will not be strictly restricted to a newfound member of the family, who has to be related by blood. This particular form of a genealogical other is portrayed in Preethi Nair's *100 Shades of White* (2004 [2003]), in which the protagonist Maya discovers that her presumably dead father is still alive. Instead, a genealogical relation can also be established based on new biographical information about a character, such as in the memoir *The Boy with the Topknot,* in which the figure of the genealogical other functions as a catalyst for a change in self-understanding of the main characters. Re-considering the discussion of youth cultures and the importance of peer groups in adolescent identity formation, this could also be a field of interest to consider the idea of a 'generational other'. A similar process could be argued to take place when literary characters change their self-understanding and identity with regard to their generationality.

[158] For a definition of the concept 'significant other' and an application in attitude formation theory in which the influence of significant others was analysed, see Woelfel/Haller (1971: 74-87).

Concluding this chapter, the plot structures or plot types prevalent in migration literature that highlight intersections of generational and genealogical relations will be the centre of attention. Because of its general acceptance, the distinction between story and plot, which is elaborated upon in all introductions to the study of narrative fiction (cf. Herman/Vervaeck 2005; Neumann/Nünning 2011), will not be revisited.[159] Rather, its function will drawn attention to: "Its function is to emphasize or de-emphasize certain story-events, to interpret some and to leave others to inference, to show or to tell, to comment or to remain silent, to focus on this or that aspect of an event or character" (Chatman 1978: 42). In the following, the focus will therefore be on the emphasizing and de-emphasizing of story-events that further the interpretation of genealogies and generationalities in narrative texts, inferring from the plot how intersections of the two manifestations of generation become possible and what their functions for the narratives are.

As has become clear in the discussion of literary genres that focus on the representation of generationalities and genealogies (cf. chapter 3.1), amongst the four genres considered especially the family novel and the Bildungsroman emphasize specific plot types that recur in variations and constitute an integral part of their genre definitions. It has been outlined by Yi-ling Ru that the family novel is decisively constituted by its focus on the "development from a family's rise to its fall" (1992: 37) as the basic plot type, reminding of Brémond's (1970: 262 ff.) 'degradation'. The chronological narration relates events in the history of a family through several generations and uses the representation of family rites as a point of reference in the narrative (cf. Ru 1992: 2). The generation conflict that is at the heart of this plot type is thus produced at family gatherings where the communal remembrance of family values leads to the conflict. A case in point for this plot type will be the analysis of *Maps for Lost Lovers,* in which the family gathering eventually leads to the end of the depicted family.

In contrast to this notion of the deterioration plot, the genre definition of the Bildungsroman as proposed by Christoph Schöneich (1999: 89) focuses on a modern variant of the quest as a catalyst for the narrative. The depiction of the youthful protagonist's biography centres on a number of conflicts and crises, which the literary figure has to master in order to develop a coherent identity. Again, the generation conflict is incorporated in the genre definition in that the conflicts mainly arise out of a need for emancipation from the parental home and a positioning of a self in a generational context that stands in opposition to preceding generationalities. These

[159] For a comprehensive overview over theories on plot, see Gutenberg (2000).

conflicts are mastered in the course of the traditional Bildungsroman, constituting a type of narrative that Brémond (1970: 252 ff.) labelled a 'procedure of improvement'. Variants of the Bildungsroman may reverse this kind of plot structure to highlight the impossibility of achieving a coherent personal identity.

The discussion of genres that are prone to depict generations because of their plot sturctures is supported by Andrea Gutenberg, who develops a comprehensive typology of plot types prevalent in English novels by female authors. Combining a narratological approach with feminist theories of cultural plots (cf. Gutenberg 2000: 1). Gutenberg develops a set of plot types, which she categorizes as focusing on 'family and group-specific interaction' (ibid.: 194). In this category Gutenberg highlights a variety of plot structures dealing with genealogical as well as generational relations:

> Unter familien- und gruppenspezifischen Plots sollen hier Plotmuster erfaßt werden, in denen es inhaltlich vorrangig weder um das Individuum noch um eine Paarbeziehung geht, sondern um die Interaktion zweier oder mehrerer verwandter oder befreundeter Figuren bzw. einer Gruppe von Figuren, die in einem Verhältnis schulischer, beruflicher oder sonstiger Kollegialität zueinander stehen. […] Das entscheidende Kriterium für einen familien- oder gruppenbezogenen Plot ist folglich eine erkennbare Schwerpunktsetzung auf familiären Konstellationen oder gruppendynamischen Prozessen. (Ibid.: 194)

The twofold focus of this definition of family and group-specific plots correlates with the two semantic levels of the concept of 'generation'. Including both aspects of generation, generational as well as genealogical relations, the plot types proposed by Gutenberg cover a variety of plots that allow for an analysis of the intersections of generations. Gutenberg distinguishes between the two basic plot types of either family plots or group-specific plots based on the character constellation (cf. ibid.: 195). Differing character constellations, one based on kinship, the other on friendship or collegiality, are the cornerstones of these two plots. In relation to the definition of the family plot, attention has to be drawn to the changing conception of the family as a social group as has been discussed in chapter 2.1.1, in which the social and familial roles as theorized in the symbolic-interactionist approach as well as the functions of the family in a structuralist-functionalist approach to the sociology of the family are discussed.

The family plot, with its sequential events that can, on the one hand, have the function to constitute and stabilize relationships and, on the other hand, function to destabilize these relationships (cf. ibid.: 198), always bears the potential for conflict.

> Zwei hauptsächliche Konfliktquellen des Familienplots ergeben sich aus der Unvereinbarkeit von familiärer Rolle und außerfamiliären Rollenerwartungen zum einen

> und aus der Kluft zwischen verschiedenen Generationen, ihrem Lebensstil und ihrem Normen- und Wertesystem zum anderen. (Gutenberg 2000: 199)

The 'generation plot' is a sub-category of the family plot defined by a thematic focus on characters questioning their biological origin or ancestry. Other sub-categories are the mother-daughter-plot and its equivalent, the father-son-plot (cf. ibid.: 202 ff.), in which the prevalent aim is the protagonist's emancipation from a parent, and the sister-plot (cf. ibid.: 208) with a complementary brother-plot, in which the potential for conflict is inherent in the characterization of the siblings.[160]

The plot type Gutenberg labels the group-specific, and later calls the group plot, basically describes a plot type that includes the representation of generationalities:

> Im Gruppenplot verhalten sich die fiktiven Individuen dominant kooperativ, wenn sie bemüht sind, durch gemeinschaftliche Interaktion gemeinsame Ziele und Interessen durchzusetzen und einzelne Gruppenmitglieder zu schützen. […] Häufig jedoch birgt die Binnenstruktur der Gruppe ein Konfliktpotential, das auf Handlungsebene ausgetragene wird und in dem zum Beispiel die Rollenidentität einzelner Mitglieder, die bestehende interne Hierarchie und Autoritätsverhältnisse sowie die Gruppenziele zur Disposition stehen. (Ibid.: 213)

This kind of plot, for which Gutenberg introduces the sub-category of the friendship plot, focuses on group dynamics and mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. As the group plot can be read as implicitly drawing analogies between the social group and the society it belongs to the main function ascribed to this plot type is social criticism (cf. ibid.: 214).

While the two basic plot types and their various sub-categories appear to be clearly distinguished on the basis of the character constellations and the potential for conflict that is closely related to the set respective of characters, they share the notion that clashes in value and belief systems, traditions, and role expectations are the catalysts for the narratives. These possible causes of conflict are inherent in the literary characters and are conveyed through the use of perspective and perspective structures (cf. ibid.: 215).

It thus becomes clear that the various elements of both discourse and story level that have been discussed for their potential to generate and to narrate generation narratives are interconnected on various levels. Furthermore, it has been pointed out that the four key categories influencing the general analysis of generations, youth cultures, memory, time, and migration, also affect the analysis of the literary text. Some categories offer more insights into the represented generations than others, which is why each

[160] For a feminist, psychoanalytic approach to the mother-daughter-plot, see Marianne Hirsch (1989).

interpretation will draw on the most helpful categories. Although discussed separately to highlight the contributions these narratological categories offer to generation studies these categories – just as genealogical and generational approaches cannot be strictly separated – will be combined to gain as full a picture of the interconnections of genealogy and generationality as possible.

4. Transgenerational Memory and the Genealogical Other in Meera Syal's *Anita and Me* (1996)

Praised as cultural translator (cf. Ranasinha 2007: 221) and celebrated as one of the new, post-Windrush, multicultural generation's voices (cf. Sommer 2007: 151), Meera Syal is one of the few British Asian women artists to find recognition not only as a novelist but also for her work in TV, radio, theatre, and cinema (cf. Ranasinha 2007: 229). Her debut novel *Anita and Me* (1996), which was awarded the Betty Trask Award,[161] has been critically acclaimed for interrogating "the homogeneity of the English nation from within the diasporic space", depicting "various subject positions within the diaspora itself" (Branach-Kallas 2004: 139), as well as for its "functional didacticism" (Reichl 2002: 164).[162] Many studies have pointed out that Syal's writing, just as much as Hanif Kureishi's, is "centrally concerned with the differences between first-generation immigrants' and their children's values and beliefs" (Ranasinha 2007: 225). While this statement naturally qualifies the work of both authors as being of interest to an analysis from a generation studies perspective, the generalization and compartmentalization of such assertions reduce the novels to this one particular theme, which does not do justice to Syal's novels. Ranasinha further points out that *Anita and Me* (*AM*) as well as Syal's second novel, *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* (1999) "portray discord between *generations* and *within* communities" (ibid.: 225) rather than focusing "on conflicts between *cultures*" (ibid.: 225).

This reading of Syal's work as focusing on generation conflicts has led literary critics to classify *Anita and Me* as a novel of transformation (cf. Stein 2004:36 ff.; Dunphy 2004), as an anti-Bildungsroman (cf. Schone-Harwood 1999), as an "initiation narrative, a rite of passage from the rural idyll of an eternal summer perspective to the dark and conflicted experience of a racialised and sexualised world" (Bromley 2000:

[161] The Betty Trask Award is presented by the Society of Authors for first novels by writers under the age of 35 who write in "a romantic or traditional, but not experimental, style" (cf. <www.societyofauthors.rog/betty-trask>). Further winners of this prize that can be subsumed under the umbrella term migration literature include Nadeem Aslam (1993), Ardashir Vakil (1997), Diran Adebayo (1997), Kiran Desai (1998), Rajeev Balasubramanyan (1999), Zadie Smith (2000), Mohsin Hamid (2001), Hari Kunzru (2002), Shamim Sarif (2002), and Siddharth Sanghvi (2004). This selection of award winners not only attests to the popularity of migration literature with the reading public and critics, but also points towards a trend in "romantic or tradition[al]" writing in migration literature.

[162] Reichl argues that *Anita and Me* is evidently „structured and conceived in a way that enables and encourages cross-cultural learning" (2002: 164).

144). While the genre classification as a novel of transformation or a Bildungsroman is undisputable, this study argues that in light of the possibilities that the concept of 'generation' offers for literary and cultural studies, a designation of *Anita and Me* as a novel of transformation falls short of interrogating the intersections of genealogical and generational approaches to forms of relationships and community building.

The present interpretation of Meera Syal's novel *Anita and Me*, which many scholars have read as semi-autobiographical (cf. Bromley 2000: 144; Dunphy 2004: 637; Schone-Harwood 1999: 161), will avoid pigeonholing the narrative in one particular genre, in order to explore how genealogical relations and generational self-location intersect and interfere with each other. The narrative creates tensions especially at the intersection of these two manifestations of 'generation', which enable the protagonist Meena to create a personal as well as a collective identity that help her to find a place in the society she has been struggling with. Furthermore, employing a generation studies' view, this analysis of the novel will not merely focus on the protagonist. While it is crucial to locate the protagonist Meena in her genealogical and generational relations, the characters of the preceding generations, particularly her parents and grandmother, offer valuable insights into the representations of generations in *Anita and Me*. Therefore, the narrow focus of many prior interpretations will be enhanced by not merely focusing on Meena's process of identity formation. Instead, Meena's development will be contextualized by her parents' belonging to a distinct generationality and it will be discussed how their generational location affects their children.

By firstly focusing not only on generation conflicts but also on genealogical relations, family roles, and the generationalities presented, this interpretation will highlight the intersections of the generational and genealogical manifestations in *Anita and Me* in order to illustrate how they create a productive tension not only for the protagonist but for all of the British Asian characters portrayed in the novel. Introducing the figure of the 'genealogical other' into the analysis will emphasize the influence of genealogical relations on the possibility of a generational location. Secondly, referring back to the discussion of literary genres that by definition portray generations in chapter 3.1, it is the aim of this analysis to show that classifying the narrative as a Bildungsroman without considering other features displayed in the novel fails to recognize the potential a generation studies' perspective offers for the literary analysis. It will be argued that an in-depth analysis of the representation of generations in this novel has to lead to a reconsideration of genre classifications applied to the text by previous studies.

In order to fulfil these two major aims, the analysis of *Anita and Me* will first revisit and critically re-assess the novel's characteristics that have led to the classification as a novel of transformation. While applying the necessary narratological categories for the analysis of the literary text, relevant formal and stylistic devices will be reviewed in order to support the argument for a combination of genre definitions that take into account the multifaceted relations between generations the novel presents. In a next step a focus on the genealogical other and the importance of peer groups for migrants will attest to the importance of analysing the intersections of genealogy and generationality. The idea of the inter- and transgenerational transmission of memory and its significance for the formation of a coherent self-perception will be at the heart of this reading.

4.1. The Kumars of Tollington

Referring to the BBC comedy "The Kumars at No. 42", in which Meera Syal plays the role of Sushila, the Kumar family's grandmother, this chapter heading points to one of the most commented upon stylistic devices in Syal's work, including *Anita and Me*: its humour (cf. Dunphy 2004: 643). Yet Syal's acclaim as "the most 'funny' British Asian voice" (Upstone 2010: 120), which her work on television and radio shows has firmly established, must not only be viewed as her way to "meet the image of a confident, self-assured British Asian identity" (ibid.: 120). As Upstone proposes, the comedy of Syal's work and in particular *Anita and Me* can also be interpreted as a challenge to a predominant mood of optimism that fails to acknowledge the continued difficulties of British Asian women in particular (cf. ibid.: 120).

Many of the comical situations the autodiegetic narrator in *Anita and Me* presents originate from the tensions generated by the portrayal of a nine-year old experiencing *I* of Meena Kumar and the grown up narrating *I* who relates her memories of being the only Asian child in the fictional village of Tollington. The temporal distance between narrating and experiencing *I* is disclosed in a paratextual preface,[163] in which the narrator imagines her biography and fabricates childhood memories which she "trot[s] out in job interview situation or, once or twice, to impress middle-class white boys who come sniffing round, excited by the thought of wearing a colonial maiden as a trinket on their arm" (*AM* 9 f.).[164] This admission indicates that the narrator is an adult British

[163] For a detailed analysis of the forms and functions of prefaces, see Genette (2001 [1987]: 161-293).

[164] Roger Bromley (2000: 144) reads the preface as the novel's way of distancing itself from "the stereotypical migrant narrative which it mocks […] by staging and stylising the 'Windrush' moment: deference, impoverished housing, sweated labour, pregnancy,

Asian woman and at the same time already points towards one of the key concerns of the narrative, the distinction between truth and lies, as the narrator states in the preface: "I'm really not a liar, I just learned very early on that those of us deprived of history sometimes need to turn to mythology to feel complete, to belong" (*AM* 10). The narrator addresses her own unreliability before the narrative starts and continues to challenge the notion of a trustworthy account when the first chapter starts with the nine-year old Meena crying out: "'I'm not lying, honest, papa!'" (*AM* 11) Yet by reflecting on the reliability of her own narration in the preface,[165] the narrator emphasizes that it is not actually the unreliability itself that is of importance for the interpretation of this novel, but rather the question of why both the grown up narrating *I* and the nine-year old experiencing *I* feel the need to turn to mythology or lies to spice up their biographies. Furthermore, the discussion will have to return to the question of why the narrator is deprived of history and why memories have to be fabricated.

The temporal difference between the adult narrating *I* and the child experiencing *I* is – with exceptions – bridged by employing the child Meena as the focalizing subject of the narrative, rendering the child's perception of the events of the story. Devon Campbell-Hall's (2009) semi-autobiographical reading of *Anita and Me*, which ascribes the paratextual preface's narrative transmission to the real author Meera Syal, shows that

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exclusion. In some ways, this has become a staple documentary, the obligatory realism of the migrant narrative." Maintaining the realist convention in the novel, the preface of *Anita and Me* highlights the narrative's status as fiction and ironically rejects the apparent universality of the migrant experience presented in earlier migration literature.

[165] Sara Upstone (2010: 123) reads the admission to unreliability as a warning not to trust the narrative: "I am an unreliable narrator of the worst kind: one who disguises their falsehoods with a veil of realism. Even though you will find little conscious narrative distancing in the novel to distinguish narrator from protagonist (only a handful of occasions in the whole book), this doesn't mean such a distance does not exist. Don't fall for the authority of the first-person voice and forget the subjectivity that lies behind it. Remember that the age of verisimilitude is long behind us: that realism is no longer, as indeed it never was, a synecdoche for truth. Don't look at just what is said here, but look beyond it, look behind it, look in between the often breezy, simple story offered. Undertake instead what Edward Said calls a contrapuntal reading: look for what is not said, and – when you discover what is missing – consider why it is absent, and what this absence might in fact stand for. Don't fall for the suggestion that, at the end of the novel, 'Meena understands that the lies she concocted in the past are no longer necessary', for – this introduction explicitly suggests – the narrator's propensity for falsehood is still clearly at work." While Upstone's plea underlines the argument of the present interpretation to read the novel not only as a Bildungsroman and aims at including genealogical relations in the analysis, some of her statements will have to be challenged. For example, as will be shown in the course of this chapter, the distance between narrating and experiencing *I* can often be found in social criticisms hidden in the humorous tone of the narrative. Therefore, while some of the points are valuable, this analysis will not restrict its focus to these points alone.

> [a]n adult writer fictionally rendering a child's point of view faces the challenge of creating an authorial voice that successfully marries the writer's adult experiences with the child's innocent perspective. The tensions inherent in this project prevent its narrative stability. One of the contributing factors to the instability of this fictional narrative space is the power-struggle between Meera Syal as an adult writer and Meena Kumar, her child-protagonist, as each battles to become the dominant narrative voice. (Campbell-Hall 2009: 293)

While the autobiographical elements of the novel cannot be denied, the present approach to the novel avoids equating the author with the narrator and therefore concludes that the noticeable struggle for narrative predominance is created through the age difference between narrating and experiencing *I* as well as the character conception of both. As the narrator announces in the preface, she has "always been a sucker for a good double entendre; the gap between what is said and what is thought, what is stated and what is implied, is a place in which I have always found myself" (*AM* 10). Meena, both as the narrator and the protagonist, is characterized as aiming for ambiguity to create a space for interpretation – her own interpretation of events as well as the narratee's – and to functionalize the age difference between the child and the grown up to offer possible interpretations of what is narrated: "Sometimes we must distinguish this child from the narrator, who is the same girl grown up; that is, on occasion the narrator does bring an adult perspective to bear on the things she is remembering and alludes to insights which she gained only much later" (Dunphy 2004: 643). These re-interpretations of events, which the child-perspective only recounts, are revisited by the adult narrator, a device that allows "polite sidestepping of awkward social issues" including "portrayals of violent racist attacks perpetrated by well-known members of the local community, and depictions of the effects of abuse within broken homes" (Campbell-Hall 2009: 294). The distinction between the narrating and the experiencing *I* thus allows the narrative to address these issues while maintaining the humorous tone.

The generally linear narrative comprises a story time of about two years, slowing down the speed of the narrative during the school holidays because this is the time of the year that important events happen in the life of the narrator. The narrative is continuously interspersed with analepses that refer to events taking place in Meena's life before the narrative sets in. The main effect of these analepses is to "create suspense as the reader has to wait for the conclusion of the drama which has been interrupted" (Dunphy 2004: 643). They further stylistically refer back to the theme of memory, which underlies the narrative by creating "a multi-layered effect, defying chronology as memory often does" (ibid.: 644). The analepses further function as a menas for comic relief; this is employed in situations in which the child Meena either does not fully grasp a situation but realizes that something is wrong or when she is trying to avoid having to face an

unpleasant encounter. A scene in which Meena reports her near death experience of almost choking on a hotdog while her parents are preoccupied with worrying, presumably about their families left behind upon migration (cf. *AM* 26 ff.), is examplary. This memory is an analepsis that reaches two years into the past and interrupts Meena's waiting for punishment after having been caught lying. While the flashback includes vital information for a characterization of Meena's parents, the narrator does not elaborate on them, but uses the jocularity of the memory, in which the child chokes on a sausage, to break the tension in the flashback itself as well as the actual narrated time, to which the narration returns. These information-carrying analepses are used especially in the first three chapters of the novel, "where the framework narrative represents the action of a single day, while the flashbacks form the bulk of the text and have far more informative content" (Dunphy 2004: 644).

The narrative centres on the nine-year old Meena Kumar, living with her parents Daljit and Shyam – who in the course of the narrative have a second child, Sunil – in the village Tollington during the 1960s. The fictional setting Tollington is located in close vicinity to Wolverhampton (cf. *AM* 12), thus establishing a reference to a real location outside the fictional text. The opening scene of the novel, in which Meena is dragged to a sweet shop by her father, who is rightly suspecting her of having stolen money from her mother's purse, offers an expository description of the village:

> I scuttled after papa along the single road, bordered with nicotine-tipped spiky grass, the main artery which bisected the village. A row of terraced houses clustered around the crossroads, uneven teeth which spread into a gap-toothed smile as the houses gradually became bigger and grander as the road wandered south, undulating into a gentle hill and finally merging into miles of flat green fields, stretching as far as the eye could see. We were heading in the opposite direction, northwards down the hill, away from the posh, po-faced mansions and towards the nerve centre of Tollington, where Mr Ormerod's grocery shop, the Working Men's Club, the diamond-paned Methodist church and the red brick school jostled for elbow room with two-up-two-downs, whose outside toilets backed onto untended meadows populated with the carcasses of abandoned agricultural machinery. There was only one working farm now, Dale End farm, bookending the village at the top of the hill, where horses regarded the occasional passers-by with mournful malteser eyes. (*AM* 11 f.)

Meena's depiction of the village presents a combination of the child's imaginative and naïve description of her surroundings with a sociological description of the class structure and economic situation of Tollington. Her anthropomorphization of the village, indicated by her use of corporeal vocabulary such as "artery", "teeth", "gap-toothed smile", and "nerve centre", shows that the child perceives the village as a living organism that exists through and is animated by its inhabitants. Tollington is further described as divided along economic factors, as the south end of the village appears to

be a better-off area with houses becoming gradually bigger and grander with a view over green fields and gentle hills. Down this hill with the bigger houses, the north end is described as being the bustling centre of village life in which houses have outside toilets and the meadows have developed into a wasteland in which only the Dale End farm managed to survive. Pointing out the "occasional passers-by" the narrator characterizes Tollington as a secluded community in which transgressing the village borders is the exception rather than the norm.

Tollington's relative seclusion in the shadow of the "industrial chimneys of Wolverhampton, smoking like fat men's cigars" (*AM* 12) was until the "late Fifties" (*AM* 14) supported by the source of the economic stability, the Tollington mine. "The mine and the village had been as intertwined as lovers, grateful lovers astonished by their mutual discovery; you could see it in the stiff backs of the men and the proud smiles of the women" (*AM* 14). The mine was the main source of employment in Tollington until its sudden closure rendered the village's established gender and class system void. Consequently, the able-bodied men and their families left the village in search of work, "leaving behind a gaggle of wheezy old geezers and dozens of stout, dour-faced miner's widows who had nowhere else to go" (*AM* 14). With the rural exodus taking effect in the late 1950s, the population of Tollington underwent a demographic change: "It had been a community of tough, broad-armed women and fragile old men until a few new families started moving in, drawn by the country air and dirt-cheap housing – families like us" (*AM* 14). Notably, the inclusive "families like us" refers to the country air and cheap housing, because the Kumars believe they are the only Indians in Tollington (cf. *AM* 22) until proven wrong towards the end of the novel by the owner of "the Big House" (*AM* 13) who is "an Indian man, as Indian as my father" (*AM* 317).

With the mine closed, the initially stable gendered division of labour is turned upside down. Because the remaining men are out of work, it falls to the women of Tollington to assure the families' livelihood:

> These women were commonly known as The Ballbearings Committee as they all worked at a metal casings factory in New Town, an industrial estate and shopping centre and our nearest contact with civilisation. The factory had opened, by way of compensation, soon after the mine closure, and everyone had assumed that the jobs would be given to the ex-colliers. But it was not the men they wanted; they wanted women, women who could do the piecework and feel grateful, women whose nimble fingers would negotiate their machines, women who, unlike their husbands, would not make demands or complain. So it was that in the space of a few months, the hormonal balance of Tollington was turned upside down. There must have been a time when women waved their men off on doorsteps with lunch boxes and a resigned smile, but I could not remember it. It seemed

> to me that they had always run the village and they had always been as glamorous and shocking as they were now. (*AM* 19)

Again with a mixture of the nine-year-old's innocent observation and the critical commentary of the adult narrator, Meena relates how the power relations in the village changed through the women being favoured as factory workers and how the factory replaced the mine as the main source of income for the inhabitants of Tollington. The criticism levelled at the working conditions specifically created for women because they are not organized in unions as the mine workers were, and the expected gratitude towards the employers for allowing the women to work, point to the unequal treatment of women and men in the work place in the 1960s. At the same time, however, this situation implies progressiveness in the small village in which it becomes the women's job to support their families, giving the former housewives a new independence from the old patriarchal structures. Yet the freedom and independence the women gain from the employment outside the house is in return indirectly problematized by introducing single mother-characters who need their neighbour's help when coming home late from work (cf. *AM* 28 f.) or women leaving their families (cf. *AM* 246). Again the humorous tone of the narrative manages to introduce this twofold social criticism by privileging the child's innocent perspective over the narrator's critical re-evaluations.

Being the only child of migrant parents, Meena struggles to find her place in the Tollington community. In the small village with few children to associate with, Meena seeks the friendship of Anita Rutter, "the undisputed 'cock' of our yard, maybe that should have been 'hen', but her foghorn voice, foul mouth, and proficiency at lassoing victims with her frayed skipping rope indicated she was carrying enough testosterone around to earn the title" (*AM* 38 f.). Anita is characterized as rude, tough, and precocious, embodying the "local, white working-class community" (Bromley 2000: 143). With her rough demeanour Anita soon becomes Meena's role model. Meena, in contrast to Anita, is scolded by her parents as well as her extended family (cf. *AM* 30), who find her boyish behaviour inappropriate.

Anita and her two friends, Fat Sally and Sherrie, are "much older" (*AM* 39) than Meena, an assertion which has to be relativized because of the child's perspective. While Meena experiences the age differences between herself and Anita and her friends to be quite significant, the fact that they are the only children in Tollington to associate with gives reason to regard them as Meena's peers; they are the only available characters that could be considered to become a generationality. Although this assumption will be disproven in the course of this chapter, the relationship between Meena and Anita has been highly significant for previous studies, which classified *Anita and Me* as a

Bildungsroman. Therefore, a closer examination of the generational relationship between the two characters – who eventually fail to be peers to each other, and which later on will be replaced by the genealogical relationship between Meena and her grandmother – will support the hypothesis that a limited focus on Anita in relation to Meena's transformation reduces the novel to the genre of the Bildungsroman.

Although a limitation to the character of Anita in the analysis of represented generations is too narrow an approach, a study of her character as a possible 'generational other' has to be the starting point in the examination of the character constellation. Because of her age and tough demeanour Anita is described as the ruler of the local playground:

> She ruled over all the kids in the yard with a mixture of pre-pubescent feminine wiles, pouting, sulking, clumsy cack-handed flirting and unsettling mood swings which would often end in minor violence. She had a face of a pissed-off cherub, huge green eyes, blonde hair, a curling mouth with slightly too many teeth and a brown birthmark under one eye which when she was angry, which was often, seemed to throb and glow like a lump of Superman's kryptonite. (*AM* 39)

Anita is the uncontested leader of the Tollington youths and exerts the power that comes with her rough behaviour to try out her moods on the playground children. An association with the "Comb wenches" (*AM* 39), as Meena calls them, thus raises her social standing in the microcosm of Tollington in which she belongs to the "littl' uns" (*AM* 39). Wishing to finally find a peer group that could help her find a place for herself in the village (cf. Schoene-Harwood 1999: 162), Meena hopes that her friendship with Anita will open the door for her to become a member of what she calls a "gang, which we named the Wenches Brigade" (*AM* 138). Eventually she even becomes Anita's co-leader of the gang by passing a dare of stealing a collection tin from the local shop (cf. *AM* 152) and getting away with it by blaming her younger cousins for the theft. Furthermore, Anita is not only the entrance to the closest thing to a peer group available in Tollington, but also "a passport to acceptance, her entrée to invisible and non-ethnic whiteness" (Bromley 2000: 146). Yet later on Meena "becomes aware that Anita is not an entrance but a cul-de-sac, part of a thwarted and blunted class fraction, powerless, excluded and marginalised: her name, Rutter, defining and confining her future" (ibid.: 146). Her standing in the Tollington play yard community initially casts Anita as Meena's role model, or 'generational other' (cf. chapter 3.2.4), to whom she is "or desires to be, a devoted supplement" (Bromley 2000: 144) until the village fete eventually proves to be a turning point of this relationship.

The fete is the first display of racism in the small village community in which Sam Lowbridge, whom Meena had considered a friend, openly criticizes the charity supported by the church: "'Yow don't do nothing but talk, "Uncle". And give

everything away to some darkies we've never met. We don't give a toss for anybody else. This is our patch. Not some wog's handout'" (*AM* 193). As a new motorway threatens Tollington and the closure of the local school is impending, some of the villagers seem to develop a war mentality, which includes turning against everything and everybody who they view as not belonging to the community. That this actually includes Meena is neither understood nor cared for by Anita, who admires Sam for his outburst (cf. *AM* 195). While Anita shares Sam's racist convictions, Meena realizes that "what happened at the Fete revealed how many strangers did indeed live amongst us" (*AM* 173).

Prior to this watershed event, Anita and Meena spend the summer holidays reading teen-magazines, daydreaming of moving to London, planning wardrobes, and eating sweets and sandwiches. Although the experiencing Meena is satisfied with being Anita's friend and confidant as she is her only friend besides her cousins, who are parts of her adopted extended family, the narrating Meena critically comments on their friendship:

> When I said that we talked, what I mean is that Anita talked and I listened with the appropriate appreciative noises. But I never had to force my admiration, it flowed from every pore because Anita made me laugh like no one else; she gave voice to all the wicked things I had often thought but kept zipped up inside my good girl's winter coat. (*AM* 138)

So actually from the beginning their friendship is characterized by an imbalance in power in which Anita uses Meena to boost her low self-esteem and Meena is happy to provide the admiration expected from her as she has found an outlet for her roguish spirit of adventure. Ultimately, the girls' friendship comes to an end over Anita's intimate relationship with Sam Lowbridge, who is best described as a small-town racist, and their involvement in a violent attack on an Indian Bank manager (cf. *AM* 274). Overhearing Anita bragging about going "Paki bashing" (*AM* 277) after a news-report on the Indian Bank manager being seriously hurt, Meena eventually turns away from the "Wenches Brigade" (cf. Schoene-Harwood 1999: 163).

Her recognition that Anita is just as racist as Sam Lowbridge, which after the incident at the village fete she had not yet realized, causes Meena to take one of the horses from Dale End farm, wanting to make a spectacular getaway that ends in a bad fall and Meena breaking her leg. The following stay at the hospital introduces Meena to the terminally ill Robert, who eventually turns out to be a like-minded peer and with whom she develops a real friendship (cf. *AM* 280). Robert's death only a couple of months later (cf. *AM* 296) is one of the deciding events in the narrative that changes Meena's attitude towards life in general as well as her own self-perception. Getting to know

Robert in the hospital opens up a world beyond the narrow confines of Tollington for Meena, giving her a first idea that her future might not lie in the old mining village.

From the beginning, Meena's parents disapprove of their daughter's friendship with Anita (cf. *AM* 97; 148). Both Daljit and Shyam are well educated and work in higher status positions for Tollington's social climate (cf. Dunphy 2004: 652; Neti 2008: 114): Daljit is a teacher at the local primary school (cf. *AM* 22) and Shyam works as a clerk outside Tollington, slowly climbing the career ladder (cf. *AM* 259). Although these employments do not appear to match their educational qualifications, Daljit and Shyam are already outsiders to the Tollington's working class community by not working in the factory.

Meena's father had left for the United Kingdom shortly after the Partition of India, sending for his wife after he had found a job. He had met Daljit at the university in Delhi (cf. *AM* 75) and after getting married they decided to leave the subcontinent. Their different religious backgrounds (cf. Dunphy 2004: 649) — Shyam is a Hindu (cf. *AM* 76) and Daljit is a Sikh (cf. *AM* 94 ff.) — as well as their wish for a safer and better future for their family after their experiences of Partition, are given as the reasons for their migration. Leaving behind their families in India, the Kumars want their children to get a good education, a wish especially Daljit sees threatened by Meena's friendship with Anita. Although her mother does not openly reject Anita as Meena's friend, her position towards the Rutters is made particularly clear on the occasion of Anita's mother Deirdre naming their dog "Nigger" (cf. *AM* 90). While Shyam tries to calm Daljit's anger by pointing out the Rutter's lack of better judgement, for Daljit the racist attitude expressed in this episode as well as Anita's violent and dominant behaviour is a bad influence on her daughter (cf. Dunphy 2004: 652).

However, Meena's misdemeanours such as lying and petty theft are not the only worries for Daljit and Shyam, given the circumstances of their migration. Both parents are very concerned about the families that they had to leave behind upon their migration to England:

> I caught a few English phrases, half-listening as I fixed on the flickering screen: '… can't worry about them, worrying won't do anything…' Mama whispered. Papa said, 'When they go, we won't be with them. We will get a letter, or a phone call in the middle of the night … everything left unsaid.' They were talking about their parents, the grandparents I had never seen except in the framed photographs that hung in my parents' bedroom. (*AM* 81)

The event of a neighbour's death and funeral triggered Daljit and Shyam's worries about their own parents, a worry which does not appear to bear down on them for the first time. Neither of them has visited their left behind family since their migration,

which must be at least thirteen years, as this is how long they lived in Tollington by the end of the narrative (cf. *AM* 29).[166] Therefore, it is of great importance for them to keep the memory of their families alive and to inform Meena about her relatives in India.

> It was a litany I knew well, from being sat down in front of photos from India and forced to memorise my parents' many brothers and sisters by name, occupation, and personality quirks. 'This is your *Thaya*,' papa would say. 'Clerk, sweet tooth, married, prone to crying over nothing in particular …' as if committing them to memory would make up for not being with them. (*AM* 30)

Introducing the portrayed siblings to their daughter is a way for Daljit and Shyam to remember all the relatives they have left behind in India. As Meena is not aware of her parents' reason for migration and only later on learns about their involvement in the scares of Partition, her experiencing *I* dismissively labels these commemorations "litany" while the narrating *I* re-evaluates the custom as an almost apologetic tradition, committing the brothers and sisters to their memory and keeping the memory alive to atone for leaving them behind (cf. Power 2007: 164). Adopting an extended family in Great Britain makes up for this loss of kinship:

> The Aunties all had individual names and distinct personalities, but fell into the role of Greek chorus to mama's epic solo role in my life. Although none of them, nor their husbands, the uncles, were actually related to me by blood, Auntie and Uncle were the natural respectful terms given to them, to any Asian person old enough to boss me around. (*AM* 29)

This adopted extended family fills the void the loss of their own families has created in Daljit and Shyam. The Aunties and Uncles, which the narrator emphatically distinguishes from real uncles and aunts, whom she – although she does not know them personally – addresses by their Punjabi titles of "*Chacha*", "*Thaya*", "*Masee*", and "*Buaji*" (*AM* 29 f.), are all part of Meena's life and upbringing. As the label of "Asian person old enough to boss me around" indicates, the Aunties constantly interfere in Meena's socialization, "inevitably backing up my parents' complaints" (*AM* 30). Yet Meena understands the importance of her extended family and appreciates their weekly visits.

> I rarely rebelled openly against this communal policing, firstly because it somehow made me feel safe and wanted, and secondly, because I knew how intensely my parents valued these people they so readily renamed as family, faced with the loss of their own blood relations. (*AM* 31)

[166] The narrating *I*'s statement that the Kumars lived in Tollington for thirteen years either indicates that Daljit and Shyam lived in Tollington for two years prior to Meena's birth or hints at a minor logical mistake by the narrator, because the story time encompasses two years and the narrator describes herself at the beginning of the narrative to be nine years old.

The extended family provides a sense of security for Meena, providing her with a social context in which she belongs solely on the basis of her feeling estranged in England and the fact that she lost a part of her history through her parents' migration. The members of her extended family all share these feelings, thus creating a substitute kinship for all those who had to leave their families behind. The function of providing security is the same for Meena's parents who value their friends as if they were their actual family. Furthermore, this family has been and still is a support system for its members as well as newly arriving migrants from India. By way of example, the Uncles exchange stories about how they picked each other up at the train station, looked for housing and jobs together (cf. *AM* 31). Quite naturally, when Daljit is taken to the hospital with complications in the second pregnancy, Auntie Shaila declines with thanks a neighbour's offer to participate in a rota cooking for Shyam and Meena as it is a family affair to take care of each other in times of need. When Daljit has to stay in the hospital for several weeks, the extended family is ready to help out in every possible way.

This illustration of Daljit and Shyam's well working peer group, however, highlights the significant absence of a comparable peer group for the child. While Meena struggles to make friends and establish herself in the Tollington playground, her parents do not have the need to get into closer contact with the English inhabitants of the village (cf. Branach-Kallas 2004: 141). Because the children of her adopted family do not offer any integration into the English society Meena faces at school, she consequently has to turn to the available characters of similar age in the village, and is thus torn between the English working class culture that Anita epitomizes (cf. Schoene-Harwood 1999: 161) and the traditional Indian culture of her parents' peers. Furthermore, access to the Indian culture of her parents is often impeded for Meena as her family habitually commemorates its experiences of Partition but excludes Meena from the shared memory because they do not want her to learn about the trauma they went through. This dilemma of being an integral part of a kinship in which she is excluded from the crucial shared experience is resolved by the introduction of her maternal grandmother Nanima, who comes to live with the Kumars for several months after Sunil's birth.

Nanima, who comes to Tollington after Daljit's stay at the hospital, which left her weakened due to complications giving birth, is meant to help her daughter deal with the housework and the new-born Sunil, who is worryingly focused on his mother. Her introduction into the narrative, and her actual presence in Tollington, make Nanima the one representative for a generation of parents and siblings left behind upon migration. Arriving in England, Daljit's mother is welcomed by the whole extended family, some of its members she actually might know from India or at least know a relation of

someone, but some of these people might indeed be strangers to her. Nevertheless, all of the Uncles and Aunties are keen on hearing Nanima's reports from India, "anxious to meet one of the generation they had left behind and to catch up on the latest news from the Motherland" (*AM* 201). Thus, the character of Nanima becomes a representative for a generation of parents whose children left for England in search of a better life. Her status as one of a collective makes her the surrogate parent for all of Daljit and Shyam's friends. Yet for Meena her grandmother fulfils a completely different function and eventually becomes her 'genealogical other'. The introduction of a genealogically related character changes the constellation – albeit temporarily – from a nuclear family to a multi-generational family without denying the importance of the adopted extended family.

4.2. The Formation of a Migrant Generationality and the Genealogical Other

Nanima's arrival in Tollington presents a turning point in the narrative, functions as a catalyst for change, and contributes to a change in Meena's perspective on her own life (cf. Branach-Kallas 2004: 145). Until then, Meena felt excluded from her parents' cultural heritage, partly because she did not understand their mother tongue Punjabi, but especially because she was excluded from the shared remembrance of India and the Partition. It is only Nanima's presence that provides access to her parents' and extended families' culture (cf. Reichl 2007: 210) and gives an incentive for her to learn her parents' language.[167]

Prior to her grandmother's visit, the remembrance of India, which the Kumars and their friends ritually celebrate at evening events, is exclusively meant for the generation that shares the collective memory and does not allow bystanders:

> Papa's *mehfils* were legendary, evenings where our usual crowd plus a few dozen extra families would squeeze themselves into our house to hear papa and selected Uncles sing their favourite Urdu *ghazals* and Punjabi folk songs. Once the mammoth task of feeding

[167] Complementary to the present study's approach, in her tellingly entitled essay "Siting Speech" (2008) Leila Neti focuses on the importance of language in the creation of Meena's cultural identity through her use of an exaggerated Tollington accent. She convincingly argues that the experiencing *I*'s use of the Tollington accent is her way to negotiate her experiences of being born in Great Britain but because of her skin colour being treated as an immigrant (cf. Neti 2008: 106). Concentrating on the difference between the child's deliberately exaggerated Tollington accent and the narrator's use of Standard English Neti (2008: 115) shows that "Meena's journey involves coming to terms with the idiom in which she speaks."

> everyone in shifts was over (kids first, men second, then the women who by then were usually sick of the sight of food), the youngsters would be banished to the TV room. (*AM* 71)

These mehfils, gatherings in which north Indian music is played, attract the extended family as well as other migrants to collectively celebrate their culture. The fact that Shyam plays a central role in organizing and hosting these mehfils highlights Meena's exclusion from her family's past. Being sent to watch television, so that she and her cousins do not disturb their parents' commemoration, is interesting as it highlights the cultural gap between the generations. Whereas the parents, who form a generationality through sharing both the experience of migration as well as the trauma of Partition, enjoy their traditional, Indian musical events, their British born children are sent to watch British television instead of being invited to partake in the collective identity of their parents' generationality:

> During these *ghazals*, my elders became strangers to me. The Uncles would close their eyes with papa, heads inclined, passions and secrets turning their familiar faces into heroes and gods. The Aunties would weep silently, letting the tears hang like jewels from their eyelids, tragedy and memory illuminating their features, each face a *diya*. The only sound besides papa's voice came occasionally from one of the Uncles who would raise their hands and simply shout, '*Wha*!' The word had no literal meaning, mama told me later, but what word would there be for these feelings that papa's songs awoke in everyone? I did not often stay for these mournful *ghazals*, preferring to creep off to bed unnoticed whilst my younger cousins slept in milky heaps like abandoned litter. There was no point in my being there; when I looked at my elders, in these moments, they were all far, far away. (*AM* 72)

The children's presence at these gatherings is not really welcome and when they attend the musical evenings their parents are too immersed in their memories to notice them. Particularly noticeable is Meena's feeling of her elders becoming strangers who are far away from this living room in Tollington, with mourning dominating the memories of tragic events in the past. The crying out of the Uncles, the unsuccessful attempt to articulate the tragedies that are remembered, the emotional upheaval triggered by the songs Shyam sings, are contrasted with the children sleeping on the ground "like abandoned litter". Unable to take their children on the journey to the past, they are momentarily neglected and forgotten by the generation who left India in a pursuit of better lives for exactly those children.

The generationality that is formed on the basis of the shared migration experience and the cultural trauma of Partition, thus a doubled cultural trauma, has overcome the religious segregation that the Partition of their home country enforced on the

population.[168] Discussing their personal fates with each other, it becomes clear that the group coming together is a mixed religious group including Hindus and Sikhs, such as the mixed-religious couple Shyam and Daljit, but also Muslims (cf. *AM* 73).[169] Their shared language, Punjabi, their memories of the time before Partition, and the horrors they experienced during Partition, make them a family as much as a generationality with Muslims and Hindus addressing each other as brothers and sisters.[170] They thus try to compensate for the cruelties each of the religious groups inflicted on the other and fill the void the lost families brought about (cf. *AM* 74). It is therefore not only the families that were left behind in the migration that are mourned by the Kumars, but also the families lost forever in the process of Partition.

All this is inaccessible to Meena, who is thus excluded from both the genealogical memory of her family and the communicative memory of her parents' generationality through a lack of language proficiency in Punjabi, of which Meena only knows a few words at the time of these gatherings (cf. *AM* 73). Meena's inadequate language skills, which are often used by her parents to their advantage when talking about things Meena is not supposed to know (cf. Dunphy 2004: 649), are a mechanism of exclusion for the child and of inclusion for the parents' extended family. Therefore, Meena finds herself

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[168] *Anita and Me* thus presents a counter-example in dealing with the cultural traumas of Partition and migration to Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers,* which will be discussed in detail in the following chapter 5 of this study.

[169] The Kumars' open-mindedness is also commented upon in relation to their celebrating Diwali as well as Christmas: "This was a typical example of Hindu tolerance, the reason, my mama told me, why so many religions happily coexisted in India – Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism and especially Islam" (*AM* 92). Yet the family is not very religious, Shyam even denies his religion on the basis of his traumatic experiences during Partition. Therefore, when Daljit takes Meena to the Gurudwara, the name of the Sikh temple, this is rather exciting for the narrator.

[170] Anna Branach-Kallas (2004: 141) offers a different interpretation of the situation, claiming "India, with its diversity of religions, languages and castes, appears a particularly artificial construct. This becomes apparent in *Anita and Me* when the Indian-born community discuss their very different memories connected with Partition; dependent on whether they are Muslims or Hindus, their view of India is not the same." This argument has to be contradicted in the present interpretation to a certain degree. As the Indian-born characters speak Punjabi with each other, they can be assumed to all come from the Punjab, today an area that is split up in a part that belongs to Pakistan and part that belongs to India. That the experience of the survivors of Partition differ from each other based on their religion cannot be disputed. However, the narrator reports a character saying to a Muslim friend: "'We all have these stories, *bhainji*,' Uncle Bhatnagar again, addressing her as his sister. 'What was happening to you was also happening to us. None of us could stop it. Mad people anywhere.' There was a murmur of consensus, subdued, fearful maybe because of all the old wounds being reopened" (*AM* 73). Therefore, I argue that in this particular novel, the migrating generation presents a rather unified view of India with people trying to return to the peaceful state and friendship they enjoyed before the Partition.

unable to connect to her family's past, neither understanding why her parents left India nor knowing about the political situation on the Indian subcontinent. She is stuck in the liminal space of not truly belonging anywhere: "I knew I was a freak of some kind, too mouthy, clumsy and scabby to be a real Indian girl, too Indian to be a real Tollington wench, but living in the grey area between all categories felt increasingly like home" (*AM* 150). She is not really a go-between between the two cultures that clash in the narrative, but rather in an in-between state in which she still needs to learn about her cultural heritage in order to be able to find a place in the society she is confronted with.[171] With her parents avoiding the task of educating Meena about her family's history, this responsibility eventually falls to Nanima.

Nanima initially comes to visit the family to help her daughter take care of Sunil, who due to the complications upon his birth is feared to be handicapped (cf. *AM* 132) and is very strongly attached to his mother: "Sunil's need was so great that mama seemed to have disappeared under it" (*AM* 170). Yet her influence on the family is much greater than only getting Sunil to open up to other family members (cf. *AM* 207 f.). In contrast to the mehfils, where the children are sent to watch TV so that they do not disturb their elders, Nanima takes the regular evening communal watching of TV as a cue to tell Meena about her life in India:

> Most of all I enjoyed her stories, usually told by the light of the flickering TV screen when the last plate had been wiped and put away and papa was absorbed in one of his favourite programmes, *The Prisoner* or *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In*. […] Nanima's stories never followed any pattern, and mostly she would come out with anecdotes sparked off by something on the television, to which she was heavily addicted. 'Go To Work On An Egg!' sang the advert, and Nanima would tell us how some passing British soldiers once took away all the family's chicken claiming they needed the eggs to sustain them during a long march to visit the Rajah of Patiala. (*AM* 209)

As she is not able to speak or understand English, Nanima picks up the visual cues to initiate her stories from India. She thus appropriates the technological attention getter that the television is and superimposes her narrative on the stories the television presents. That Meena is more interested in her grandmother's stories than in watching TV indicates her eagerness to learn about her family's past as well as her grandmother's

[171] From a generation studies' perspective, Roger Bromley's claim that Meena "successfully navigates the two world and is not caught 'in between cultures', because both are fluid and subject to change, but instead creates a new culture, a third space, which is a synthesis of both worlds" (2000: 145) cannot be fully agreed with. The focus on her parents' generationality and her genealogical detachment from her history rather invites an interpretation that views both cultures as yet irreconcilable for as long as Meena does not develop a sense of origin. Learning about her genealogical background from her grandmother, Meena can first develop an understanding of her family's origins to then focus on her own position in relation to the information and experiences she has.

everyday life. The mentioned example of one particular story shows that Nanima presents her memories of the British Empire without resentment or complaint. The serenity with which she appears to remember these events is thus put into stark contrast with the commemoration rituals of the migrated generation. Nanima's stories give Meena a context for the little information she got from her parents thus far:

> At first, these remembrances seemed so far fetched, so far removed from anything I recognised as reality, I wondered whether papa was having a joke at my expense and embroidering the translation when he got bored. […] But gradually I got used to Nanima's world, a world made up of old and bitter feuds in which the Land was revered and jealously guarded like a god, in which supernatural and epic events, murder, betrayal, disappearances and premonitions seemed commonplace, in which fabulous wealth and dramatic ritual was continually upstaged by marching armies and independence riots. (*AM* 211)

In time, the mysterious and far removed world of Nanima's past and present, which Meena initially cannot distinguish from the fictions of novels or movies, not being able to imagine there could be a different reality from her own, become familiar to her and provide a context for the little knowledge about India she gathered from schoolbooks and her parents. These stories, which relate Meena to a history she has so far been deprived of, give her a sense of continuity with the past (cf. Branach-Kallas 2004: 145).

Raising Meena's awareness of history, of her family's past and home country, Nanima succeeds in providing a genealogical origin for her granddaughter. Establishing a female genealogical relation, in which the oral tradition of story-telling falls to her "maternal grandmother, an imposing Mother India figure" (Schoene-Harwood 1999: 163), gives Meena a new perspective on her own position in the family as well as in Tollington. "It was all falling into place now, why I felt this continual compulsion to fabricate, this ever-present desire to be someone else in some other place far from Tollington" (*AM* 211). Her wish to reinvent herself through lies and imagined adventures, that even her friendship with Anita Rutter could not provide, was caused by a lack of knowledge of her own turbulent history, of the adventures her family had lived through in order for her to be growing up in Tollington. Nanima's stories are "genealogical epiphanies" (Zerubavel 2011: 8) that affect the way Meena sees herself, her personal identity, and her view of her family. Thus, Nanima becomes her genealogical other, the character whose existence enables Meena to explore her own "genealogical imagination" (ibid.: 11). This relation provides Meena with a personal as well as a collective genealogical vision that will "reveal the unmistakably social manner in which we construct families, nations, races, and other essentially imagined communities in our minds" (ibid.: 11). *Anita and Me* thus shows that for Meena a sense of belonging cannot be created through membership in a peer group, especially not the

friendship with Anita, but that she has to start with learning about her countries', her family's, and her parents' history in order to be able to create a sense of a coherent self.

While the focus of this chapter has so far lain on the intergenerational solidarity of Daljit and Shyam's peer group and the intragenerational transmission of memories through story-telling between grandmother and granddaughter, Nanima's interactions with her own English contemporaries and the functions they have for the other characters must not be ignored. Although she has come to Tollington to support her family, her scope is not restricted to the inside of the Kumars' house. She actually ventures out by herself to explore the village. On one of her trips around the neighbourhood she ends up in the house of Mr and Mrs Worrall, the only neighbours the Kumars have something comparable to a friendship with. There, Daljit and Meena find Nanima deep in conversation with the bedridden and speech impaired Mr Worrall. Talking to him in Punjabi and him responding with moans and jerking limbs, the two of them appear to understand each other without speaking the other's language (cf. *AM* 217). When Mrs Worrall informs Daljit how her mother told her she had not yet seen much of Tollington without her speaking Punjabi either, it is suggested that Nanima has a way of communicating that goes beyond the use of language, characterizing her as a benevolent mystical figure.

Shortly afterwards, a paradoxical situation evolves on a walk to Mr Ormerod's shop when Meena and Nanima run into Mr Turvey, one of the villagers. In a conversation with Nanima, the narrator relates that Mr Turvey is fluent in Punjabi, having learnt the language while serving in the British army during the Raj (cf. *AM* 222), whereas he was previously reported as not being able to pronounce Meena's name (cf. *AM* 16), which is why he just calls her Topsey instead.[172] After the short conversation with Nanima, Mr Turvey publicly admits the Raj to have been a mistake and appears to regret his participation in the British sovereignty in India. This portrayal of Mr Turvey leaves the narratee with conflicting information that offers two very different characterizations, both leading to a questioning of the narrator's credibility: Either Mr Turvey displays open racism towards Meena in refusing to pronounce her Indian first name, or he is a regretful former soldier who has come to appreciate the Indian culture and tradition and

[172] Mr Turvey's apparent racism towards the Kumars, which is indicated by his unwillingness to call Meena by her proper name, is thus contrasted by his admission of guilt about the Raj. Again, this divided characterization of Mr Turvey, who is a racist towards the foreigners who live in his village but has respect for the Indian population he fought against, is a hidden criticism of the underlying racism that permeates the British society at the time of the narrative. This form of racism is again hinted at when the doctor treating Meena after her accident calls her "Mary" because he cannot pronounce her name (cf. *AM* 280).

has even learnt the language. These two conflicting characteristics cannot be brought into accordance with each other.

Therefore, this situation allows for two different interpretations. On the one hand, it could be argued that Mr Turvey's meeting with an Indian woman of the same age actually changes his mindset, leading him to acknowledge his wrongs. Or, on the other hand, the discrepancies in Mr Turvey's characterization could refer to the narrator's announcement in the preface that she is unreliable. In this case, this situation levels the critical distance between narrating and experiencing *I*, which on other occasions has allowed the narrating *I* to reflect on the experiencing *I*'s perception of events (cf. Neti 2008: 114). The contradicting account of Mr Turvey's character then functions as an implicit characterization of Nanima, whose aforementioned almost magical communication skills are complemented by an extraordinary ability to induce characters to change their mindsets. Although this highlights character traits in Nanima, which both the narrating and the experiencing *I* consider to be essential, the almost magical quality of these characteristics exemplify the narrator's exaggeration and therefore point towards the unreliability of the narrator.

Indeed, both interpretations of the contradicting situation appear reasonable. However, the ensuing incident of Nanima getting the groceries at Mr Ormerod's shop eventually supports the first interpretation of Nanima bringing to light the importance of a moral sense in people. Too embarrassed about her behaviour towards Mr Ormerod, Meena sends in her grandmother to get the groceries on the list Daljit has written for her. When Nanima adds a chocolate bar to the shopping without telling her granddaughter, Meena accuses Mr Ormerod of having cheated her grandmother. Nanima's buying the chocolate bar for herself, leaving Meena to check the shopping list against their expenses and finding they are sixpence short (cf. *AM* 225), mirrors Meena's previous behaviour of stealing money from her mother's purse and stealing from Mr Ormerod. Therefore, by demonstrating that her behaviour is disrespectful and inappropriate in mirroring her transgressions, Nanima brings the misdemeanour home to Meena.

Thus, the character of Nanima fulfils manifold functions in the narrative, not only as Meena's genealogical other. Depicted as able to communicate with characters who are themselves without agency, such as Sunil and Mr Worrall, she is not portrayed as a speechless subaltern (cf. Spivak 2008 [1988]) but as a mediator between those linguistic as well as cultural systems. Furthermore, the meeting with Mr Turvey and the incident in Mr Ormerod's shop depict her as a moral authority who, without addressing the issues at heart directly, brings her counterpart to admit to their wrongs. Yet taken together, these characteristics add up to an idealized memory of the narrator's

grandmother, which in return opens questions about the reliability of her portrayal. While the question whether or not the character of Nanima is represented in a reliable manner is an interesting issue, her conformity to the novel's general value system and world-view support her significance for the development of the autodiegetic narrator, regardless of whether the report is reliable or not.

This view is encouraged by the loss Meena experiences upon her grandmother's return to India. Made worse by her stay in hospital, her getting to know and losing Robert, Nanima's departure and Robert's death are the catalysts for Meena's further development.[173]

> […] I had lost a Nanima, a soul mate and temporarily, a leg – enough excitement for a lifetime already. If mama and papa knew the whole picture, they might have called it punishment. But this was the oddest thing, this is what I realised, standing in the yard, a sweaty eavesdropper holding my breath, that at this moment, I was content. I had absorbed Nanima's absence and Robert's departure like rain on parched earth, drew it in deep and drank from it. I now knew I was not a bad girl, a mixed-up girl, a girl with no name or no place. The place in which I belonged was wherever I stood and there was nothing stopping me simply moving forward and claiming each resting place as home. This sense of displacement I had always carried round like a curse shrivelled into insignificance against the shadow of mortality cast briefly by a hospital anglepoise lamp, by the last wave of a gnarled brown hand. (*AM* 303)

The self-awareness articulated in this passage, on the one hand, highlights the narrating *I*'s dominance over the experiencing *I*'s perception at this point in time. It is improbable that the by now eleven year old Meena, although undeniably matured because of her experiences, is capable of such a high level of reflexivity. On the other hand, this passage ultimately attests to the importance of the two characters mentioned, Robert and Nanima. The time spent in the hospital therefore proves to be the most decisive turning point in Meena's development, which is finalized by her passing the eleven-plus exam through which she will be admitted to grammar school. Her feeling of not-belonging is relativized by her experience of loss, a "shadow of mortality", that makes her understand the impermanence of that feeling, which is not actually related to a physical location, not grounded in Tollington, but is a condition that changes with the relationships she has and will have. This highlights the importance of the genealogical relationships in the narrative and at the same time foretells that at the grammar school Meena will eventually meet the peers she was searching for in Tollington as well.

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[173] At this point in the novel Meena is not yet eleven years old, which is why the term 'coming of age' does not appear to be an appropriate label for her entering a new stage in her life. While the development of the character is actually portrayed as a rite of passage, her still young age does not allow one to characterize the development as a transition to adulthood yet.

4.3. *Anita and Me* as a Genealogical Novel of Transformation

As has been argued at the beginning of this chapter and illustrated in the analysis of *Anita and Me*, a reading of the novel that focuses only on the narrative as a Bildungsroman or novel of transformation misses several crucial aspects that only come to light when paying attention to the generational and genealogical relations depicted. Therefore, a discussion of the different readings of the novel as proposed for example by Schoene-Harwood (1999) and Stein (2004), who both focus on classifying the narrative as Bildungsroman, will serve to support the argument that both readings miss out on very important points. From a generation studies' perspective Schoene-Harwood's reading of *Anita and Me* has to be contested for several reasons. He argues that

> Meera Syal experiments with alternative, expressly anti-*Bildung* modes of hybrid self-authentication, modes perhaps most aptly designated as proprioceptive. Originally a physiological term defined in contradistinction to perception, proprioception refers to the means and processes by which the self receives and interprets information from within its own being, in particular information that pertains to its balance, accommodation and movement in space. (Schoene-Harwood 1999: 160)

This argument is based on the assumptions that first, "conventional *Bildungsromane* tend to insist on the narrative consistency of their characters, suggesting that, whilst they grow and evolve, they do not in fact change, but remain essentially identical with whom they were at the outset and will be in conclusion" (ibid.: 159). Second, this consistency of character is considered to be "irreparably punctured by the post-colonial experience of cultural dislocation" (ibid.: 159). These two basic suppositions for Schoene-Harwood's claim that *Anita and Me* is an anti-Bildungsroman suggest that the protagonist's postcolonial experience does not reflect the necessary consistency of character for a Bildungsroman. First, the notion of the consistency of character has to be challenged, because it implies a monodimensional character conception. In this conception the claimed growth and development would lead to a circular progression that leaves the character unchanged after all and suggests that while the character remains static, the society that previously had denied integration now promotes it although the character has not changed. Second, while the claim that the postcolonial experience of cultural dislocation indeed prevents social integration is valid to a point, this argument conceives of the cultural dislocation as being an inherently negative aspect of migration. Contradicting this view, the analysis of the parents' generationality in *Anita and Me* has proven that the cultural dislocation of the South Asian migrants after Partition has also led to a reconciliatory seizing upon the Indian tradition of private musical events in which traumatic experiences are collectively processed. Furthermore,

it has to be taken into consideration that the cultural dislocation in *Anita and Me* is not restricted to the postcolonial experience, but includes the whole village that finds itself in the middle of social, political, and economic changes that entail a gender-inversion in employment structures. It can therefore be reasoned that not only the postcolonial experience of the protagonist but also the socio-historical context of the narrative's setting present a form of cultural dislocation. Additionally, at the end of the novel the Kumars are reported to be moving into a neighbourhood in which half of the population is Hindu (cf. *AM* 327), which suggests that the family copes with their feeling of dislocation in the all English Tollington by moving into a socially better off area.

Most importantly, the claim that *Anita and Me* is an anti-Bildungsroman on the basis of proprioceptive modes of "hybrid self-authentication" has to be refuted on the grounds of the genealogical relations that have been established with Meena's parents and her grandmother. The development of Meena's character into a coherent self, which she displays at the end of the narrative, is not encouraged by information received from within her own being (cf. Schoene-Harwood 1999: 160) but is essentially motivated by her newly acquired knowledge about her genealogical origins. As the analysis and interpretation of the character Nanima has shown, the transgenerational transmission of memory encourages Meena's development. Therefore, the proposed classification as an anti-Bildungsroman does not appear to sustain these critical points.

Yet at the same time, Stein's argument that the "black British novel of transformation is not only about the character formation of its protagonists, it is at once about the transformation and reformation of British culture" (2004: 53) – which he grounds in his interpretation of the relationship between Sam Lowbridge and Meena – does not do the novel justice from a generation studies point of view either. While Stein criticizes Schoene-Harwood's conclusion that Meena's "identity has moved on … is moving … beyond (t)race" (1999: 167; ellipsis in the original) as "incautious" for assuming "that Meena can transcend 'race' beyond 'trace' in a society where race remains highly significant and racism deeply entrenched" (Stein 2004: 52), Stein ascribes too much significance to Meena's "triumph over Sam" (ibid.: 52).

This triumph refers to a scene at the very end of the narrative in which Meena confronts Sam about the anti-foreign slogans he proclaimed at the village fete. In their conversation it becomes clear that Sam does not include Meena in his racism, which is motivated by his feeling of discrimination for his lacking prospects of social mobility.

> 'But yow wos never gonna look at me, yow won't be stayin will ya? You can move on. How come? How come I can't?' And then he kissed me like I thought he would, and I let him, feeling mighty and huge, knowing I had won and that every time he saw another Meena on a street corner he would remember this and feel totally powerless. (*AM* 314)

Although a victorious experience for Meena, her personal impact on Tollington's skinheads – of which Anita is a member as well – seems overestimated. However, taking into consideration the situation between Nanima and Mr Turvey, in which the latter apologizes for British colonial rule in India, Stein's argument for a change of the society can be supported if the multi-generational constellation is taken into account. It is thus not only the protagonist's achievement that the Tollington community changes, but more so her family's. Nevertheless, the triumphant scene over Sam Lowbridge and the kiss that will remind him of Meena every time he sees an Asian woman refutes Schoene-Harwood's conclusion that Meena can indeed leave her ethnicity behind. The empowerment of the narrator through the confrontation of Sam further supports the view that *Anita and Me* does not employ a traditionally consistent character conception in Schoene-Harwood's sense, as a definite gain in agency in Meena can be registered.

Both classifications of *Anita and Me* as either a novel of transformation or an anti-Bildungsroman are not sufficient to characterize the novel, especially when drawing attention to the previously discussed narrative situation. Returning to the question of Meena's unreliability, a re-evaluation of the narrative's ending has to be considered.

> Thus Meena fulfils neither Stein's *bildungsroman* nor Schoene-Harwood's alternative of proprioception: an inward fulfilment rather than a capitulation to social conventions. Stein and Schoene-Harwood are engaged in a debate over the nature of *Anita*; […]. Yet, interestingly, both critics affirm ultimately the positive nature of *Anita*'s conclusion. This obscures the possibility that Meena as a child has, in fact, not yet learnt how to survive; it is the narrator, rather, who has achieved this, but only at the expense of a truthful rendering of experiences in favour of comic fantasy. (Upstone 2010: 128)

Drawing attention to the temporal difference between the narrating *I* and the experiencing *I* as well as the narrator's admission to being "a sucker for a good double entendre" (*AM* 10) raises the question of whether it is the experiencing *I* that manages to form a coherent self-identity or the much older narrating *I*. Upstone's argument for the formation of a coherent self through narrating her own life story is especially conclusive when taking into account the many interferences and re-evaluations of situations and interpretations of the narrating *I*. The achievement of the coherent self of the experiencing *I* as presented by the narrating *I* leads to a questioning of the genre classifications beyond the narrow confines of the Bildungsroman or novel of transformation with its focus on youthful protagonists.

Based on the proposed reading of *Anita and Me* from a generation studies' perspective, this study suggests taking into consideration the highlighted genealogical aspects of the novel, which have proven crucial for Meena's development, as well as the generational relations established with the extended family. Therefore, the narrative can be said to

present a genealogical novel of transformation because it incorporates important features traditionally ascribed to the family novel, such as the transmission of memories and family gatherings, as well as the transformation of British society in which the Kumars live and the representation of a generationality.

The analysis of *Anita and Me* has successfully demonstrated, firstly, how the genre classification as Bildungsroman focuses critical attention on certain aspects such as the youthful protagonist and his or her relation to society. Other characters that might yield significant information on other generational relations besides the youthful protagonist are often neglected. Secondly, this interpretation has illustrated the merit of analysing both genealogical and generational relations in a narrative text, highlighting where the intersections of both produce tensions that lead the plot or character development to turn into one or the other direction. Therefore, although *Anita and Me* has been thoroughly discussed by a number of critics, this reading has managed to highlight the gain in interpretation by employing a generation studies' perspective on a British Asian narrative.

5. Genealogical Inhibition of a Generationality in Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004)

Critically acclaimed as a "profound intervention" (Upstone 2010: 101), Nadeem Alsam's novel *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004) exposes the consequences of the failure to negotiate between strong religious beliefs and liberal values (cf. ibid.: 103). Aslam was praised for his "richly atmospheric" prose, his "engagingly introspective" tone, and the "elegiac pastoral sensibility" (ibid.) of his descriptions of the English countryside in his second of three novels to date.[174] *Maps for Lost Lovers* is acclaimed as a "powerful novel" (Kapur 2005: n. pag.), which in 2005 was awarded the Kiriyama Award,[175] the Encore Award for the best second novel, and was longlisted for the Booker Prize. Nevertheless, Akash Kapur criticizes the novel for its "anger that is occasionally overdone, yielding passages that read like an assault on the religion from which all the characters' unhappiness seems to originate" (ibid.). That both praise and critique of the novel are justified will become clear in the course of the following analysis and interpretation of *Maps for Lost Lovers* (*MLL*), as the novel indeed at times overstates the conflict between orthodox Islam and secular British values in that all character relations relevant for the analysis of generations are strongly dominated by this conflict. The whole novel is impacted by this one central conflict and therefore leaves very limited space for the development of the characters outside the binary opposition of religion and secularism. In this confined post-9/11 concern of British Muslim alienation the literary characters appear to have lost their humanity in interaction with each other,

[174] The other two novels are *Seasons of the Rainbirds*, published in 1993 and awarded the Betty Trask Award and the Author's Club First Novel Award for the most promising debut novel first published in Britain (cf. <http://dolmanprize.wordpress.com/best-first-novel-award/>), and *The Wasted Vigil* from 2008.

[175] The Kiriyama Prize is presented by Pacific Rim Voices, a non-profit organization with no specific political or religious agenda, and is awarded to books that "will contribute to greater understanding of and among the peoples and nations of the Pacific Rim and South Asia" (cf. <www.kiriyamaprize.org>). Presenting this particular prize to Nadeem Aslam, who emigrated from Pakistan to Great Britain at the age of fourteen (cf. Upstone 2010: 101), the awarding institution calls into question the inclusion of the author in the selection of British Asian narratives. However, as this study's aim is to move beyond the authorial biography to discuss the concept 'generation', it also strives to move beyond "citizenship legislation [that] has increasingly made birth central to definitions of Britishness" (ibid.: 4). Instead this study argues that Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* indicates a "distinct British Asian perspective" (ibid.: 103) in dealing with the consequences that arise out of the failure to negotiate orthodox religiousness and liberal values of contemporary, multi-ethnic Great Britain.

which suggests that the collective unhappiness that constitutes the prevailing mood originates from religious beliefs.

However, it is not the aim of the following analysis to judge the novel's shortcomings that structurally derive from including too many singular events that are not developed into coherent storylines and thematically boil down to the central conflict of religion versus secularism. Instead, these singular events support the basic argument of this analysis, highlighting the generational gap that is widening between those who adhere to the seclusion their orthodox belief offers them and who wish to transmit the cultural trauma of migration and those who refuse to be drawn into the endless spiral of cruelties to maintain an outlived system of values. This chapter argues that the generationality that refuses to be dominated by their parents' trauma of migration is marginalized to the point of being denied representation in the novel. It will be shown in this interpretation of *Maps for Lost Lovers* that through the use of a closed perspective structure the world-view of one generation is privileged by the heterodiegetic narrator. At the same time the perspective sturcture inhibits the formation of a generational identity in the succeeding generation. With one generation conspicuous by absence, the focus of this interpretation will be on the relationships between two succeeding generations to point out how the impossibility of reconciling orthodox Islam and secular Britain is represented on both discourse and story level of the novel. The interpretative focus will be directed at the two main characters of the novel who, because of the novel's closed structure and the narrator's strategy to conceal key information on events in order to keep up a homogeneous perspective structure, are the only way to get information on other characters, the relationships between characters, and events that precede the narrative. Therefore, the interpretation of the novel will be mainly based on a character analysis in order to enable a discussion of the prevalent perspective structure, which in turn informs the intersection of generational and genealogical relationships.

5.1. The Doubled Cultural Trauma of Post-Partition Migration

Set in an unnamed British town, *Maps for Lost Lovers* depicts a Pakistani immigrant community that is almost completely secluded from the host society and avoids integration at all costs. Revolving around an honour killing that predates the *in medias res* opening of the novel by five months, and which is not resolved until the narrative employs an analepsis that recounts the crime using the murderers as focalizers at the end of the novel, the story-time comprises almost a year of the lives of the inhabitants of the Pakistani community. The duration of the story-time is reflected upon in the

overall structure of the novel, which is divided into four parts that are further subdivided into several chapters. The four parts are labelled according to the seasons, starting with "Winter" (*MLL* 3-88) and ending with "Autumn" (*MLL* 259-369). The seemingly full circle of the seasons, which to the reader initially suggests completeness and closure, from the very beginning establishes the narrative's main theme of 'loss'. According to Shamas, one of the protagonists, he lost a season upon his migration to Britain:

> Among the innumerable other losses, to come to England was to lose a season, because, in the part of Pakistan that he is from, there are five seasons in a year, not four, the schoolchildren learning their names and sequence through classroom chants: *Mausam-e-Sarma*, *Bahar*, *Mausam-e-Garma*, *Barsat*, *Khizan*. Winter, Spring, Summer, Monsoon, Autumn. (*MLL* 5)

The overall theme of loss, which runs through the narrative as a golden thread connecting the different levels of the narrative from the basic structure to the narrative transmission to the lost characters, is thereby made clear from the very beginning of the novel.

Related to the theme of loss on the various levels is the strategy of the novel – manifest particularly in the character's actions – to deal with loss. On the structural level, the novel conceals the gap that results from the missing season, thereby highlighting the fact that, on the one hand, the characters are wanting a season, which they learned belonged to the circle of life. Thus upon their migration to England they are constantly reminded of what they have left behind. On the other hand, by refusing to fall back into pre-migration structures of the secluded Pakistani community, the novel emphasizes the importance of having to adapt to and integrate into the host society, which the characters in *Maps for Lost Lovers* avoid at any cost. The unwillingness to accept the new surroundings is portrayed in the substitute action that commemorates the loss of a season:

> A habit as old as his arrival in this country, he has always greeted the season's first snow in this manner, the flakes losing their whiteness on the palm of his hand to become clear wafers of ice before melting to water – crystals of snow transformed into a monsoon raindrop. (*MLL* 5)

The habit of greeting the first snow symbolizes the migrants' repression of the fact that things have changed upon their migration and its repetition at the very end of the novel illustrates that the events of the story do not change the feeling of dislocation. The main characters constantly long for their home country and try to remodel the British town in which they live to represent the Pakistani community they have left behind (cf. Lemke 2008: 273). In this longing, structural errors such as treating the first snow as a replica of a monsoon raindrop while the season of monsoon actually follows summer and

precedes autumn, and the fact that the English weather in general offers enough rain to resemble a monsoon season in autumn, are simply ignored.

A further aspect in which the longing for times past is pointed out is the transformation of the British town into a simulacrum of a home that in the memories of the characters takes various forms and implies different sets of values, religions, and traditions. The wish to recreate a familiar setting leads the characters to rename the streets of the city so that it eventually becomes an imitation of the hometown left behind. Yet, at the same time the change in street names reproduces the colonial appropriation of spaces on the Indian subcontinent. The simulacrum is therefore based on a palimpsestic re-naming (cf. Lemke 2008: 172) that does not actually have an original model anymore:

> As in Lahore, a road in this town is named after Goethe. There is a Park Street here as in Calcutta, a Malabar Hill as in Bombay, and a Naag Tolla Hill as in Dhaka. Because it was difficult to pronounce the English names, the men who arrived in this town in the 1950s had re-christened everything they saw before them. They had come from across the Subcontinent, lived together ten to a room, and the name that one of them happened to give to a street or landmark was taken up by the others, regardless of where they themselves were from. But over the decades, as more and more people came, the various nationalities of the Subcontinent have changed the names according to the specific country they themselves are from – Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan. (*MLL* 28 f.)

In time, the initially unified group of migrants from all over the subcontinent develops into many smaller groups that import resentments against each other to the new country and the newly united group of migrants that shares the experience of migration falls apart into parties that draw religious and ethnic boundaries through the community. The only thing the whole community agrees upon is the naming of the British town: "Dasht-e-Tanhaii. The Wilderness of Solitude. The Desert of Loneliness" (*MLL* 29). The community's description of their location "both linguistically and hermeneutically signals their segregation" (Upstone 2010: 104) pointing towards the seclusion from the host society. Because it is named in Urdu, the community places itself linguistically outside the British nation and the translation of the name to "The Desert of Loneliness" identifies a "desolate space of remoteness and seclusion" (ibid.: 104). The English name of the town in which Dasht-e-Tanhaii is located is conscientiously avoided in the text, "a fact that points once more to the strong will of the community to disregard its new location" (Lemke 2008: 173).

With this interpretation of their shared experience of dislocation being the only commonality, the inhabitants of Dasht-e-Tanhaii turn against each other as much as against the white population. However, the continuous references to racism towards the immigrants, as illustrated in phrases such as "white racist thugs" (*MLL* 272), appear to

be a thing of the past, of the time when the first migrants of the community came to Dasht-e-Tanhaii:

> It was a time in England when the white attitude towards the dark-skinned foreigners was just beginning to go from *I don't want to see them or work next to them* to *I don't mind working next to them if I'm forced to, as long as I don't have to speak* to them, an attitude that would change again within the next ten years to *I don't mind speaking to them when I have to in the workplace, as long as I don't have to talk to them outside the working hours*, and then in another ten years to *I don't mind them socializing in the same place as me if they must, as long as I don't have to live next to them*. (*MLL* 11)

This slow process of acceptance, which still portrays an air of condescension by the British citizens, is, however, met with racist prejudice of the migrants towards the white population, continuously indicating that "Britain is considered a hostile environment" (Waterman 2010: 20). While this kind of racism directed against whites aims at keeping up the segregationist mind-set of the immigrant community and is not based on any specific occurrences in the narrative, it is actually the racism towards other immigrant groups that fuels the story:

> The real threat comes from other immigrants, from Hindus and Sikhs. In a reflection of the situation in Pakistan, Hindus and Sikhs are seen as contaminating Muslim life even though the context of migration once served to unite them. […] The old feuds are renewed with the different parties using the same racist stereotypes as in Pakistan; stereotypes that focus on the question of racial and cultural purity. (Lemke 2008: 176)

The cultural and religious struggles in Dasht-e-Tanhaii recall the event of Partition in 1947 and translocate its repercussions to Great Britain fifty years later. While the composition of the community reflects upon the situation before Partition, the conflicts between the parties call upon the situation during and after the religious segregation of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (cf. *MLL* 74 f.). The first cultural trauma the characters of the novel have experienced during their childhood is thus the division of their home country along religious lines with horrible consequences, as the case of Shamas' father proves (cf. *MLL* 47). The novel is consequently dominated by longstanding conflicts between religious and ethnic groups that all inhibit Dasht-e-Tanhaii and share the experience of dislocation but are still divided and alone in their Wilderness of Solitude. A sense of community, according to Waterman (2010: 20), develops only out of a "solidarity based on siege mentality, of protecting the group at all costs in the face of external threats."

Consequently, *Maps for Lost Lovers* can be argued to present migration as a second cultural trauma. Previously defined as a loss of identity and meaning, as a tear in the social fabric of a group of people (cf. Eyerman 2004: 160), the trauma of the novel is doubled:

> Although these Pakistani immigrants have already suffered their first cultural trauma during Partition, a traumatic event which they perhaps share with all Pakistanis, exile further compounds their sentiment of vulnerability on leaving the familiarity of the subcontinent, highlighted early in the novel by their loss of the fifth season, the monsoon. (Waterman 2010: 18)

Yet it is through the process of "re-membering, literally using first-generation memories to reconstitute the community" (ibid.: 18) as an attempt to intergenerationally transmit memory that leads to the catastrophe of *Maps for Lost Lovers*. The doubled cultural trauma of first surviving Partition to then leave the newly formed state and migrate to the Empire's motherland are two memories that the experiencing generation wants to pass on to the succeeding generation in order to make their way of living, thinking, and believing understood and secure its continuity. In trying to convey their experiences, traditions, and religion, the first generation depicted in *Maps for Lost Lovers* tries to stop the acceleration of time (cf. Rosa 2009: 83). The first generation thus lays claim to the succeeding generation's time and keeps the younger generation from developing a distinct cultural and generational identity through the transmission of the cultural traumas, thus creating a "potential for transcendence" (King 2010: 57) to extend one's individual lifetime.

5.2. Failure of Intergenerational Communication

This interpretation of the representation of generations in *Maps for Lost Lovers* argues that it is the attempt to transmit and extend the doubled cultural trauma to succeeding generations that causes a loss greater than "the innumerable other losses" (*MLL* 5) upon coming to England. Coercing succeeding generations into a familial inheritance of the cultural trauma, thus forcing them into the position of a postgeneration (cf. Hirsch 2008: 115) through continuously evoking the narratives and images of the Pakistan left behind, and by enforcing religious and traditional values and norms, the community loses its future existence through the families' loss of their children. Through inhibiting the potentiality of participating in a shared experience, the first-generation immigrants of Dasht-e-Tanhaii prevent their children from forming a generationality with a specific generational identity. Therefore, this chapter argues that the failure of intergenerational communication, which eventually cuts the genealogical ties between family members, prevents the formation of generationalities within the portrayed community.

While this failure of communication between the generations is a protracted process that begins early on in the depicted family, it is the murder of Jugnu and Chanda – the lost lovers – that propels the conflict between the generations into the open and shows the

irreversibility of the damage done. Because it is not included in the narrative but precedes it by five months, the novel withholds the initial reactions of the characters to the lovers' disappearance and how the individual characters come to accept that Jugnu and Chanda must be dead. Only the main character Kaukab's strong conviction that in spite of all evidence they are not dead is repeatedly mentioned because the murder does not fit into her world-view: "Kaukab is unshakeable that they have not been killed and that they will return one day, that to give up hope is a sin, that the brothers could not have murdered their own sister in cold blood" (*MLL* 102). As will be discussed in more detail in the course of this chapter, Kaukab's view, which none of her family members share, serves to legitimize her religious belief rather than to express an altruistic wish for her brother-in-law to be safe. This is particularly interesting and very significant for the following character analysis of Kaukab, as her relationship to the deceased Jugnu has to be viewed as very ambivalent because of his role as mediator between her and her estranged children.

Despite his absence from the narrative – or maybe because of it –, with the exception of the analeptic chapter in which the circumstances of the honour killing are revealed, Jugnu's character functions as a 'genealogical go-between'. Acting as go-between, it is Jugnu that keeps up the relationship between the presented first and second generation of the family. In the course of the narrative the reader is informed of the antagonistic relationship between the married couple Shamas and Kaukab and the strain that Kaukab's religiosity puts on their marriage as well as on the relationship with their children. Jugnu's entering their lives in Dasht-e-Tanhaii helps them put aside some of their differences for the sake of the extended family and when he disappears these conflicts are brought out into the open again.

Being thirteen years younger than Shamas, Jugnu was thirty-one years old when he came to England in 1978 (cf. *MLL* 28) after having spent several years in the United States. He is thus the only adult character in the narrative migrating to England who did not live through Partition and who does not experience migration as a cultural trauma. The positive experience of migration and the lack of trauma connected to Pakistan situate him closer to the children of the family than to the parents. Jugnu appears to have been a positive role model for the family in terms of how to deal with the different cultures between which he seems to move comfortably. His joining the family in England is reported to have an extremely positive influence on the children "whose spirits he began to revive immediately upon arrival" (*MLL* 28) when they were thirteen, eight, and four years old. The narrator's choice of words for describing Jugnu's effect on the children significantly indicates that they were dead inside before his coming to

England. This anticipation of the parent-child-relationship supports the argument that Jugnu functions as a genealogical go-between. With the disappearance of the familial mediator the communication between the generations breaks down and the pressure to force the children into the position of a postgeneration, when actually they could have developed a generational identity informed by their uncle's inspiring example, resurfaces.

Despite the character's function as a link between parents and children, Jugnu's role in the lives of the children does not go beyond adventures that are connected to his hobby of collecting and cultivating butterflies and moths. While this opens a world to the children that would have been otherwise inaccessible, with its easy distractions such as going out to hills to collect the tiny insects and not returning till after dark (cf. *MLL* 26), it does not save the children from their parents' neglect and ignorance.

The lost lovers' absence from the narrative and the positioning of the chapter "A Leaf from the Book of Fates" in which their murder is portrayed, following the description of the family reunion after the murderers have been sentenced by a British court of law and the fate of Jugnu and Chanda is finally brought to light, again enhances the loss on the story-level and additionally reflects on it structurally. The only remains of Jugnu's presence in the family are the individual character's memories, some inanimate items, and the moths and butterflies. The members of the family do not discuss Jugnu's fate openly, as Kaukab's conviction that the lovers are still alive does not allow the family to mourn their loss. Thus, throughout the narrative, especially during the family reunion that would have given an opportunity to grieve together, the characters are alone in their loneliness:

> The emptiness of loss is matched by the emptiness of expression on the part of the bereaved. A strange mimetic correspondence is evident here, for the unrepresentability of loss can be 'shown' only by a loss of affect. It can be 'represented' only by absences: by missing words, gestures, movements, expressions. (Stamelman 1990: 12)

The use of internal focalization and the focus on character-perspectives renders the narrative unable to represent the loss, instead illustrating it by an absence. Through first portraying the family's break up in one chapter and then representing the lovers' fate, the narrative directly points towards the absence that causes the previously shown loss of affect.

The loss and the omission of loss in the representation of the genealogical go-between character, who only leaves traces behind in the form of symbolically invested moths and butterflies, and the consequences it has for the inhibited generationality are the focus of the present interpretation of the narrative. *Maps for Lost Lovers* exemplifies the intricate

connections between genealogical and generational relations and how the failure of one leads to the inhibition of the other. The analysis of the representation on discourse and story level will show how the strategic denial of differing world-views or value systems leads to catastrophe.

5.3. Suppression of Dissenting World-Views through a Closed Perspective Structure

The narrative portrays the life of the elderly married Muslim couple, Shamas and Kaukab, after the disappearance of Shamas' younger brother Jugnu and his girlfriend Chanda. The novel employs a heterodiegetic narrator who is able to intersperse analepses to give information on the fate of the missing couple into the otherwise chronological narration. While the narrator is rather covert at the beginning of the narrative and remains a neutral voice, "his comments become more and more explicit throughout the novel" (Lemke 2008: 179). Lemke argues that the narrator himself takes a "racist stance" (2008: 172), which is convincingly supported by the filtering of information through the heterodiegetic narrator, especially in the chapter that relates the event of the lovers' murder. However, the narrator's authority is also ubiquitous in his influence on the character discourse when he represents the character's text (cf. Schmid 2010 [2003]: 120 ff.) and without commenting on it switches between languages. The only occurrence when this practice is elaborated upon is during the argument at the family dinner when Kaukab tries to defend her behaviour, "turning now to Charag, now to Shamas, breaking into English occasionally to include Stella" (*MLL* 326), thus displaying a language proficiency that is not really compatible with her previous characterization (cf. *MLL* 35). The narrator's influence on the character text thus indicates that his filtering of information and his choices of what is presented strongly influence the representation of world-views and value systems.

Therefore, through variable internal focalization that equally uses the main characters of Kaukab, Shamas, and his mistress Suraya as focalizers, the narrative is able to convey these particular characters' views, value systems, and judgements of events. With few exceptions that allow other characters to become focalizers and thus to complement the very limited perspective the narrative offers, it is mostly through these three characters that information on the relationships between the characters, on the missing couple and what happened to them, and the self-enclosed community of Dasht-e-Tanhaii are presented (cf. Ranasinha 2007: 263). The mentioned exceptions to the narrator's focalization are restricted to two of Shamas' and Kaukab's three children, who are each

allowed to present their views in one chapter (cf. *MLL* 91 ff., 122 ff.), members of Chanda's family (cf. *MLL* 211-214, 218-221, 271 ff., 348 ff.) and the lost lovers and their murderers themselves (*MLL* 334 ff., 359 ff.) in the analeptic chapter, in which the event of honour killing is recounted. The dominating perspective is thus the one of the older generation, the parents' generation in the family, who were the first of their families to come to Dasht-e-Tanhaii. Their very limited and restricted perspective on things, which can be argued to present a closed perspective structure, is only rarely and very restrictively complemented by other characters that might represent a differing set of values, traditions, and attitudes towards integration into the British society.

Shamas is the character the heterodiegetic narrator provides most information on, so that the reader learns that he is almost sixty-five years old at the beginning of the narration (*MLL* 5) and immigrated to England in 1958 when he was twenty-six years old (*MLL* 80). He was born in Sohni Dharti, a "small place in Pakistan where he […] had lived permanently until his mid-twenties" (*MLL* 5 f.). The narrative setting however is limited to the unnamed British town in 1997. Initially concealing the exact setting in the beginning of the novel gives the narrative a utopian quality (cf. Lemke 2008: 173) that facilitates the atmosphere created by the invented name of the place, the Wilderness of Solitude or Desert of Loneliness, only to be resolved through an analepsis giving information on the context of immigration in the course of the novel.[176] The reason for Shamas' immigration was his political conviction:

> But then, in 1958, he had to leave Pakistan for England, fleeing the military coup. The new government began hunting for Communists and he came to England a month after police raided the offices of his publisher and noted down all the names they found there before torching the place. He stayed in England until he was thirty-one, working in the mills and factories around Dasht-e-Tanhaii. (*MLL* 80)

Shamas left Pakistan when he was awaiting his first publication of a collection of poetry and had already been well received by the publishing world of Lahore (cf. *MLL* 80) to become a factory worker in England. His losses upon migration thus include a promising career as a poet that was ended because of his Communist views. He returned to Sohni Dharti five years later to marry Kaukab in 1963 but, unable to find a "meaningful employment" (*MLL* 80), returned to England to work in a factory in 1965, a decision triggered by the arrival of their first child, Charag. Kaukab and their baby son

[176] Analysing the setting, the present study has to refute some assumptions made by Lindsey Moore, who speculates that "*Maps* is set in the post-industrial north of England in a town loosely modelled on Huddersfield and centres upon a family who arrived from Pakistan in the 1970s" (2009: 6). Although it can be argued that the novel is set in the north of England there is no indication that the community is modelled on Huddersfield, the town Aslam lived in with his family upon their immigration in the 1980s.

followed Shamas to England upon Charag's birth in the same year. At the time of narration Charag is therefore aged 32 and has two siblings: a sister, Mah-Jabin, who will be "twenty-seven this year and lives and works in London" (*MLL* 91), and a brother, Ujala who is four years younger than Mah-Jabin (cf. *MLL* 300), thus turning twenty-three, but who has not been in contact with his mother for eight years (cf. *MLL* 293).

Shamas is characterized as a mediator between the community of Dasht-e-Tanhaii and the British society: "[…] Shamas is the person the neighbourhood turns to when unable to negotiate the white world on its own, visiting his office in the town centre or bringing the problem to his front door" (*MLL* 15). Yet as the director of the Community Relations Council, an organization that helps the community of immigrants to tackle British bureaucracy, it is eventually not his aim to "facilitate their integration but to support his community in an 'us versus them' situation" (Lemke 2008: 174). While this argument for Shamas' latent racism is indeed substantial, his "responsibility to his neighbourhood" (*MLL* 15), however, prevents him from falling for the same old prejudices and stereotypes his wife unreflectingly adopts and spreads.

Yet, his open-mindedness towards the other religious minorities in Dasht-e-Tanhaii as well as his political views are held against him eventually:

> Shamas is at the same time considered impure, especially by his orthodox wife Kaukab, because of his affiliation with the Communist Party and 'his Godless ideas' (34), as well as his habit of drinking an occasional glass of whiskey. A political program from which God is absent could not be further from Islamic thought, and while he is respected in the community for his good heart, Shamas is nevertheless suspect for his high level of tolerance of other religions and western ideas of equality and justice (210). (Waterman 2010: 23)[177]

Especially his wife Kaukab condemns Shamas for his Communist mindset, which for Shamas includes a confidence in the equality of all people and fighting against social inequality. This is a godless idea to Kaukab as her version of Islam taught her that people are not all equal to each other and should not be treated as such. Her resentment towards other religions and other cultures is very strong and the antagonism opening up between the couple's world-views cannot be overcome.

But not only Kaukab views her husband's political commitment critically. On his only visit to his parents' house in eight years Ujala accuses his father of being "'too busy daydreaming about the world and the time his grandchildren were to inherit'" (*MLL* 324). He thus poses the question:

[177] The bracketed numbers in the quote refer to the same edition of *Maps for Lost Lovers* as used for analysis in this study.

> "What about your responsibility to the people who were around you here in the present? Those around her [Kaukab] were less important to her than those that lay buried below her feet, and for him the important ones were the ones that hovered above his head – those yet to be born." (*MLL* 324)

His youngest son thus accuses Shamas of having been too busy with his fruitless politics leading him to neglect his duties towards his children. Ujala refers to the cruelties not only he himself but also his siblings have suffered because of their mother's strict religious beliefs and their father's neglect to save them from the harm done by his wife. By way of illustration for both Kaukab's ignorant religiousness and Shamas' inaction, as well the difference in perception of events between husband and wife, the narrator relates the incident of Kaukab nearly starving the new-born Ujala because she was fasting during Ramadan. Upon finding out about Kaukab's fasting and the malnutrition Ujala suffered from because of it, Shamas reacts violently towards his wife and consequently moves out of the house in an act of punishment. While Kaukab merely mentions in passing that she did not feel all that "bereft […] when Shamas had moved out of the house to live on his own for nearly three years, all those years ago, when the children were young" (*MLL* 70), Shamas still feels bad about having slapped his wife for nearly killing their child (cf. *MLL* 139). Although Shamas' memory of his violence towards his wife elucidates the circumstances that made him leave his family, it also demonstrates that he left his children with their mother although he knew what Kaukab is capable of doing in her ignorance. Unable to deal with his wife's religious mania he abandons his children to their fate.

But it is not only his own children's suffering from the religious fundamentalism that dominates the family, but also Shamas' turning a blind eye to the dangers he recognizes in the community that has to be held against his seeming integrity. Having encountered a young couple whose relationship was forbidden by their parents for the lovers not being of the same religion, Shamas does nothing to prevent the catastrophe he indeed sees coming. Instead, he consigns the girl to her fate only to realize later that "the girl whom [he] saw on the riverbank with her secret Hindu lover a few weeks ago – the young couple looking for the place where the disembodied human heart was found – has been beaten to death by the holy man brought in to rid her of djinns" (*MLL* 185). In not preventing the murder, Shamas is to a certain extent complicit in the violence and cruelty happening in Dasht-e-Tanhaii.

Shamas is thus a very ambivalent character who in his open-mindedness and liberalism intends to help his community, in his lack of action however fails to meet his own expectations and thus causes almost as much harm as he tries to prevent. Another example for his abdication of responsibility for those around him can be argued to be

his extra-martial affair with Suraya – one of the characters whose perceptions are represented through extended focalization – who was divorced by her husband in one of his drunken stupors. Following the divorce, according to Islamic law, she needs to be married to and divorced from another man in order to be able to re-marry her first husband in Pakistan (cf. *MLL* 150).[178] Suraya schemes to get Shamas to marry her (cf. *MLL* 198) because she believes him to be as understanding of her situation as to divorce her again immediately (cf. *MLL* 224).[179] Shamas, however, refuses to marry her as he does not believe it to be right that Islam allows a man four wives. When Suraya confronts him with a positive pregnancy test (cf. *MLL* 240), which the reader will not get to know whether it was real or not, Shamas again wants to do what is right but is attacked by bounty hunters (cf. *MLL* 249), initially hired by Kaukab to find and bring back Ujala, on his way to meet Suraya. When Shamas finally recovers from the injuries he suffered in the attack months later, he finds that Suraya has married another man who has been married several times already but none of his wives has given him a son (cf. *MLL* 365). Seeing her standing at the window Shamas wonders:

> Does Suraya know that the man she has married has no intention of divorcing her soon, that he wants to see if she can give him a son first? […] She herself has no intention of bearing a child for him – she just wants him to divorce her so that she can marry her original husband again, to be with her son again. But the man has married her solely because he wants her to have a child. He must be forcing himself on her every night, taking her violently. […] And now he hopes she *has* become pregnant by him during the summer, that her new husband – thinking he himself is the father – is leaving her in peace because of it. Shamas's child is already saving her, already lessening the amount of pain in this Dasht-e-Tanhaii called the planet Earth. (*MLL* 366 f.)

Although Shamas does not have many options, he avoids all responsibilities for this situation, leaving Suraya to suffer from and for the mistakes she has made. While Shamas still does not know whether Suraya is pregnant with his child or not, he

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[178] The double standards of this demand by Suraya's husband is pointed out by Nadia Butt: "Suraya's husband violates Islamic injunctions by drinking alcohol but makes his wife fulfil the Islamic duty as a divorced woman to marry 'a new man' in order to seek 'a new divorce' so that she could finally be united with her husband as an obedient Muslim wife" (Butt 2008: 165).

[179] The extent of her scheming becomes clear when the heterodiegetic narrator reveals the following information focalizing Suraya: "The tumble of Suraya's own hair is gathered up at the nape of the neck by the narrow red-silk scarf that she dislikes; but she has it upon her each time she sees Shamas because it must remind him pleasantly of the first time they met, 'the cares of all the world falling out of my hands,' he'd joked during their last meeting, referring to the newspapers" (*MLL* 210). Later on, changing the focalization to Shamas, the narrative reveals how Suraya's scheme pans out: "He blinks and now Suraya is running along the edge of the lake, her veil blowing about her, and she smiles at him as she spots him in the window, strands of her fair and the red-silk scarf rising up into the air behind her, the scarf that she must love so much, wearing it as she does all the time" (*MLL* 222).

imagines himself to be saving her with his child. In his efforts to keep his infidelity a secret from Kaukab (cf. *MLL* 268) and his principles intact by not taking a second wife (cf. *MLL* 226), Shamas sacrifices Suraya to once more become the "self-inflicted victim" (Butt 2008: 159) of patriarchal Islamic laws.

Why Shamas wants to keep his relationship with Suraya a secret from Kaukab appears to be paradoxical as their marriage is described as unhappy and characterized by antagonisms: "Talking with Kaukab is, for both of them, frequently another way of being alone, the conversation highlighting the separate loneliness of each" (*MLL* 156). The respective loneliness of Shamas and Kaukab, the pain that is not eased by their companionship or by their family, is based on the two figures representing the respective ends of a scale between "the values of orthodox Islam" and "modern Muslims and secular society" (Butt 2008: 155). Yet although the differences between them could not be greater, their marriage is marked by an intimacy that decades of "exile and banishment" (*MLL* 6) have created. Talking is not necessary as the communication between them is described as if "it could almost be a thought being passed into her head from his" (*MLL* 60). Yet, although Shamas' still loves and desires his wife (cf. *MLL* 56), Kaukab finds his behaviour towards her inappropriate at their age:

> But now? No, no. It's too late in life to be rutting like animals. Kaukab had heard that to go to Shamas's house in Sohni Dharti was to often find his parents in bed together, lying next to each other contentedly or talking, joking, the door open, in full view of the children playing out in the courtyard. Well, *she* was born and bred in a mosque, and that wasn't the norm in her household. (*MLL* 56)

While Shamas does not see why his desire for his own wife is a reason to be ashamed, he himself having grown up in a family in which the love between his parents is more important than religious differences,[180] Kaukab is socialized in the belief that the

[180] One of the subplots of *Maps for Lost Lovers* concerns Shamas' father's religious backgrounds. As a child, Deepak – as his name was before his "drift into Islam" (*MLL* 48) – suffered a severe head injury during a British air raid in 1919 that caused memory loss in the ten-year-old Hindu child. He was subsequently adopted by a Muslim community and renamed: "The child Deepak, having drifted through the provinces for a year, fetched up at the shrine to a Muslim saint […]. He was given the name Chakor, because he seemed fascinated by the moon, and *chakor* was the moonbird, the bird that was said to subsist on moonbeams, flying ever higher on moonlit nights until exhausted, dropping onto roofs and courtyards of houses at dawn, close to death. A *chakor* is to the moon what the moth is to the flame. 'You are appropriately named,' his future wife would say, when he met her at the shrine in 1922. 'My name is Mahtaab. The moon'" (*MLL* 53). Eventually, Chakor remembered what had happened to him and that he was born a Hindu but can only tell his wife in 1947 when the British colonialists leave the subcontinent. After years of marriage and having founded a family, Chakor confesses to his wife what has happened to him: "*Not for a single moment,* Mahtaab wrote in answer to the letter in which Kaukab asked whether

display of intimacy and affection is to be concealed and inappropriate at a certain age. Her opinion on the unseemly behaviour of Shamas' parents also implicates her value system to be very much oriented towards the past, clinging to what she has learned and what she believes to be right and wrong. Kaukab's world-views are outmoded and her rejection of any kind of integration into British society fortifies her loneliness because her lack of understanding for her children's situation eventually drives them out of her life. Yet, she herself does not realize her own upbringing to be incommensurate with her living in Great Britain and consequently cannot understand the interdependence between her behaviour and her loneliness.

A characterization of Kaukab therefore has to carefully balance the descriptions of her by other characters, such as Shamas' and her children's, and her own view of herself and the resulting self-portrayal. It is the extremely wide discrepancy between her self-perception and her description through others, created through implicit characterization, that makes Kaukab a very intriguing figure in the narrative.

Similar to her husband of thirty-four years, Kaukab's actions in her own perception are guided by good intentions but end up causing grief and damage, "the result of her fear and incomprehension" (Moore 2009: 10). In consequence of her poor schooling (cf. *MLL* 32) and her orthodox religiousness, her life is directed by her belief "in djinns, in witchcraft, in spirits" (*MLL* 186) that are promoted by her version of Islam. She follows obscure traditions such as bathing and changing her clothes after having touched a white person to be able to say her next prayers (cf. *MLL* 39) or sharply expelling air from her nostrils three time upon waking up at night: "because the Prophet had said, 'If any of you wakes up at night, let him blow his nose three times. For Satan spends the night in a man's nostrils'" (*MLL* 22). She strictly adheres to her reading of the Koran, studying it in Arabic although she does not actually understand the language (cf. *MLL* 322), and does not accept the British legal system but only Islamic law (cf. *MLL* 115).

In contrast to Shamas, who ponders his losses upon migration but is aware of the fact that it was his own free decision to return to England after his intermittent stay in Pakistan to marry Kaukab, she experiences her life in England as a form of punishment:

> Kaukab knows her dissatisfaction with England is a slight to Allah because He is the creator and ruler of the entire earth – as the stone carving on Islamabad airport reminds and reassures the heartbroken people who are having to leave Pakistan – but she cannot contain her homesickness and constantly asks for courage to face this lonely ordeal that He has chosen for her in His wisdom. (*MLL* 31)

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she felt betrayed by her husband. *Imagine how much he must've suffered with that secret gnawing at his innards*" (*MLL* 77). This unconditional love that transgresses all religious and social boundaries is something Kaukab cannot comprehend.

She tries to find solace in her religion, but although this could give her a sense of community – especially considering that the majority of the population of Dasht-e-Tanhaii shares her feelings about England – Kaukab prefers suffering alone. Having arrived in England "with a rudimentary grasp of English, her education incomplete due to her marriage to Shamas, Kaukab has become increasingly reclusive" (Moore 2009: 9). Although she has made "friends with some women in the area" (*MLL* 32) who come to visit and provide her with news from the close-knit community, such as the matchmaker of the community (*MLL* 42) or neighbours, but also to "collect material for gossip" (*MLL* 105 f.), Kaukab is only presented indoors (cf. Moore 2009: 9).

Her house, which Shamas has painted in exactly the same colours as his home in Sohni Dharti (cf. *MLL* 5) to create what Aleida Assmann (1999: 301) has come to call a site of generations (*Generationenort*), comes to be her shelter and safe space (cf. Würzbach 2004: 53) that she does not leave in order to avoid contact with the British society: "For once she would like to go from her house to, say, the post office without being confronted by the decay of Western culture" (*MLL* 269). The only other space she is depicted in is sitting on the front step of her house looking over her garden (cf. *MLL* 105), a spatial setting that in its semantization is comparable to looking through the window (cf. Würzbach 2004: 53), signifying the impossibility for Kaukab to transgress the boundary of her safe space to venture moving into the unknown world beyond her front door. However, Kaukab does not perceive her behaviour as fearful but rationalizes it as a profound lack of interest that keeps her from leaving the house: "there's nothing for her out there in Dasht-e-Tanhaii, to notice or be interested in. Everything is here in this house. Every beloved absence is present here" (*MLL* 65).

Her whole life thus revolves around her religion and her family. When her brother in-law, Jugnu, joins Kaukab and Shamas in England after extended stays in the United States she is grateful to him "for being here in Dasht-e-Tanhaii because the move to England had deprived her of the glowing warmth that people who are born of each other give out, the heat and light of an extended family" (*MLL* 31). The familial bonds are very important to her, highlighting the kinship structures of the extended family living close to each other. Similarly, she declares that "[h]er children were all she had" (*MLL* 30) and that she will, although she despises England, not go back to Pakistan:

> 'We'll go for a visit of course, but I refuse to settle there permanently even though there is nothing I would like better. There is nothing on this planet that I loathe more than this country, but I won't go to live in Pakistan as long as my children are here. This accursed land has taken my children away from me. My Charag, my Mah-Jabin, my Ujala. Each time they went out they returned with a new layer of stranger-ness on them until finally I didn't recognize them any more. […] Perhaps Allah is punishing us for leaving behind our own parents in Pakistan and moving to England all those years ago.' (*MLL* 146)

Her standpoint is thus made clear when her husband suggests returning to Pakistan. Kaukab wants to stay in England because her children have all settled in England and are well integrated. Although Charag was still born in Pakistan and Mah-Jabin and Ujala were born in England their level of integration is the same, supporting the argument made in chapter 2.2.1, that the concept of 'generation' in migration studies is an ambivalent category to classify levels of integration that has to be open for negotiation. Kaukab's decision to stay in England for her grown-up children again signifies the importance of her family and her willingness to make sacrifices for her kin. However, it also points towards her self-portrayal as a martyr for the sake of her family, a role in which she repeatedly presents herself.

The tragedy of this situation is pointed out from the beginning of the narrative – concomitant with the establishment of loss as the central theme of the novel – when Shamas discloses to a Sikh friend of his, Kiran, the fact that all their children have left home (cf. *MLL* 8). Exactly how difficult the relation between the parents and their children is becomes evident in the parts of the narrative in which the narrator employs Kaukab as focalizer and gives information on the relationships between each of the children and their mother.

> It has been seven years and a month since she and Shamas heard from their youngest child, her beloved son Ujala. […] He was always recalcitrant – everything she did seemed to disgust him – and he left home as soon as he could. The daughter Mah-Jabin calls every month or so and visits once or twice a year. Charag, the eldest child, the painter, came during summer last year, and hasn't telephoned or visited since. He is divorced from the white girl – which means that Kaukab hasn't seen the grandson for two years and seven months. (*MLL* 30)

This rather impartial report on the familial situation by the narrator is complemented by Kaukab's view on her relationship to her children in which she portrays herself as the misunderstood and well-meaning mother who always blames others for her situation:

> Charag – the son whom she had sent away to university in London to get an education – had come home to inform her that he had a *girlfriend* who was not only *white* but also *pregnant*. The news stunned and repulsed Kaukab, and she held Jugnu responsible for her misfortune. (*MLL* 34)

In her outrage about Charag's life-choices, which she can neither comprehend nor accept because it does not fit into her system of belief, Kaukab continues to blame first Jugnu for setting a bad example by having relationships with white women, then Shamas for putting ungodly ideas in her children's heads through his Communist political views, and finally her own father for "not checking what kind of people he was handing over his daughter to" referring to Shamas' father being born a Hindu (cf. *MLL* 34). Her son's personal happiness does not matter to her at that moment or at any time

later, which becomes clear in a chapter that focuses on Charag and gives information on his life and character, how he became an artist against his parents' wishes and the pressure they put on him when he was a child.

> He was the elder son and, throughout his boyhood, was always accompanied by the sense that the family's betterment lay on his shoulders. Nothing was ever made verbal but this expectation had been inhaled by him with each breath he had taken during those early years. His parents wanted to return to Pakistan: he would become a doctor and go back with them – this was understood by him. They – all of them – would be free of England when he finished his studies. (*MLL* 122)

It is made clear to the eldest son that not only his own future depends on his fulfilling of his family duty, but his whole family's. The pressure of being the reason for his parents' migration, which is not true, as Shamas' account of his migration has shown, is put on the child while still at school. When Charag failed to achieve the grades in his A-levels that he would have needed for admission to medical school and does not want to retake the exam because he is far more interested and talented in the arts, Kaukab acts out her anger and disappointment on Mah-Jabin: "But he changed his mind when from the dark staircase he heard his mother slap the thirteen-year-old Mah-Jabin in the kitchen and say, 'Who would marry you now?'" (*MLL* 123) The emotional blackmailing of her son into a profession he is not qualified for and has no interest in thus puts the character of Kaukab in an entirely different light. Complementing her account of not having seen her eldest son in over a year with his memories of his childhood puts another complexion on the matter.

It further illustrates that in *Maps for Lost Lovers* the family is the only point of reference for the children and shows how this system fails, consequently supporting Eisenstadt's (1962) argument for the importance of peer groups in immigrant communities. He argued that the family of the second-generation immigrant child may be an inadequate guide to the new society and that children can only attain a full identity in the new country through detachment from their families (cf. Eisenstadt 1962: 36 ff.). Thus, the family situation in the novel proves Eisenstadt's theory on youths and the relations between the generations to be well applicable. Yet it also depicts that in Dasht-e-Tanhaii the idea of a role moratorium of youths (cf. ibid.: 31) is not an option and that the children are treated as if they were adults as long as it seems to fit the parents' purpose. Conversely, even the adult offspring is treated as if they were still children, with Kaukab still trying to arrange marriages for her children.

Similarly to her relationship with Charag, her relationship with her daughter Mah-Jabin is strained by Kaukab's insistence that after a failed arranged marriage to a first cousin in Pakistan at the age of sixteen, which was divorced by a British court, her daughter is

still married to the man according to the Sharia and therefore wants her to return to her husband (cf. *MLL* 115). Mah-Jabin, however, almost nine years after she left Pakistan and returned to England, does not allow any discussion of that matter and conceals the circumstances of her flight from Pakistan from her mother:

> […] and so Mah-Jabin has never revealed the truth about her marriage to Kaukab, to the extent that there are times she herself believes that her husband – the cousin she had gone to Pakistan to marry at sixteen and lived with for two years in the pale-green house in Sohni Dharti – was in desperate love with her, that he asks the trees of the forest where she has gone. In these fantasies he does not grab her by the throat – in a grip as strong as a tree root – to call her a 'wanton shameless English whore' for secretly touching herself towards climax after he himself had finished, rolled over and begun to fall asleep, having wiped himself on the nearest fistful of fabric in the darkness dark as the grave. (*MLL* 97)

Kaukab only learns about the extent of the physical violence Mah-Jabin had to endure from her husband when she finds a letter in which he threatens his ex-wife and brings back the memories of having burnt her with cigarettes and stabbed her with sewing needles (cf. *MLL* 306 f.). What she never learns, however, is that Mah-Jabin was pregnant when she returned to England and aborted the child (cf. *MLL* 109). Again, Kaukab blames Shamas for what has happened to Mah-Jabin (cf. *MLL* 328), whose nephew she was married to upon her own wish because the boy she liked had been arranged to marry somebody else (cf. *MLL* 118). That allowing a sixteen-year-old girl, who was just disappointed by a love she never even talked to, to marry a first cousin in Pakistan, although Shamas is aware of the dangers of such relationships (cf. *MLL* 189) and tries to warn the community of the risks of inbreeding (cf. *MLL* 119), was taking advantage of her daughter's situation does not come to Kaukab's mind (cf. *MLL* 111).

Mah-Jabin's marriage to a man in Pakistan was what Kaukab had wished for her daughter, as Charag recounts, because "[s]he could imagine Mah-Jabin's life, against a background she had thorough knowledge of" (*MLL* 129), which is important to Kaukab as her relation to her daughter was close and Mah-Jabin was her confidante and "friend" (*MLL* 93). Upon the end of her marriage, the shared experience of mother and daughter changed their relationship significantly (cf. *MLL* 91), and the scepticism with which both view each other becomes clear when Mah-Jabin comes to visit her mother. The relationship between them is further illuminated as the narrator allows for a representation of both mother and daughter in communication through reported speech and different modes of presenting their respective consciousness. In the conversation Kaukab is portrayed as very critical of her daughter, when she for example comments upon her recent hair-cut by asking whether this is how white girls wear their hair (cf. *MLL* 92) and complimenting on her cooking skills referring to her university lifestyle (cf. *MLL* 95). Kaukab's remarks are reported to "sear[…]" (*MLL* 95) Mah-Jabin's heart

and that she "squints" (*MLL* 92) at them, not responding to any of the criticisms, as she understands her mother's language too well: "And so she intercepted the secret codes and signals before they could be transmitted and understood. She saw it all as cats' eyes see in the dark" (*MLL* 93; cf. *MLL* 98). Thus, the communication between mother and daughter, between the two contemporaneous generations of a family, is dominated by silence. Things not being said, answers not given, accusations only spelled out when the accused cannot defend herself, is how Kaukab and Mah-Jabin communicate.

How the formerly friendly relationship is now controlled by Kaukab's jealousy of her daughter's freedom as well as Mah-Jabin's sensitivity is shown by her direct reaction to a remark by her mother:

> 'If we'd had you to guide us during those early years we would have done things differently, and I apologize if I repeat something I've already told you but I don't lead a life as varied as yours.' It wouldn't tip the scales on a pin, the amount by which a comment has to fall short from the ideal in the listener's head for it to be regarded an affront, an offence – a crime. (*MLL* 101)

The system of communication has completely broken down between the two of them with Kaukab at the same time expressing envy and harsh criticism of her daughter's lifestyle and Mah-Jabin lying in wait for the façade to break. Recognizing that her mother "is the most dangerous animal she'll ever have to confront" (*MLL* 111) as she appears to Mah-Jabin to be "[t]rapped within the cage of permitted thinking" (*MLL* 110) the conflict between mother and daughter escalates when Kaukab accuses her daughter of promiscuity.

> The hard open palm of Kaukab's hand lunges at Mah-Jabin and in striking her face takes away her breath. This is something Kaukab has longed to do whenever she has thought about the girl in her absence and really isn't a response to what she has just said: she simply happened to be within reach as the need overtook Kaukab and the moment chose itself. The force of the impact knocks Mah-Jabin off the chair, while Kaukab's rosary – looped double at the back of the chair – snaps and the beads clatter to the floor. Kaukab's hand alights and grips the girl's soggy gritty hair like a claw and slams the head many times against the wall with all her strength, the red henna growing richer and larger on the wall, Mah-Jabin crooking her elbow against the side of the head until Kaukab finally lets go and moves to the sink at the other side of the kitchen, washing the redness – sticky as blood – off her hands, her back turned towards the girl. (*MLL* 112)

Kaukab's excessive violence towards her only daughter, the only one of her three children that is in regular contact with her parents, can be interpreted as a displacement activity that is borne of her loneliness, frustration, disappointment, and misery. As the need to physically abuse her child overcomes her in Mah-Jabin's absence and is acted upon when her daughter questions her world-view and, even worse, points out Kaukab's interest in her actions:

> 'You must be a moral cripple if you think what you did to me wasn't wrong. Didn't you once tell me that a woman's life is hard because you have to run the house during the day and listen to your husband's demands in bed at night? So why didn't you make sure I avoided such a life? Answer me … Answer me … Why do you people keep doing the same things over and over again expecting a different result?' (*MLL* 113)

Disclosing her mother's intentions that do not cohere with her strict Islamic belief, but aim at making her child as miserable as she herself is, shatters Kaukab's self-perception in a way that she cannot deal with except with violence. Mah-Jabin's accusations support the argument that it is a transmission, in this case a repetition of experience, which prevents the child from making her own experiences. Kaukab does not want her daughter to be happy, but to have her repeat her own way of living. While in her reasoning her actions are guided by faith and love the result is violence, failed communication, and the loss of her children. However, although the fronts between them harden, in the final conflict between Kaukab and her children, when the extent of her cruelty is revealed, Mah-Jabin tries to negotiate between her younger brother Ujala and her mother.

The narrative reaches its climax when in the chapter entitled "A Thousand Broken Mirrors" the fate of the lost lovers is finally solved and Jugnu and Chanda's murderers are convicted for the honour killing. In this chapter the pieces of information and all the small actions of the various characters of Dasht-e-Tanhaii that eventually lead to the murder are brought together and it becomes clear that none of the inhabitants in the community is innocent. Thus, although the murderers had been arrested in the beginning of the novel, in the first part labelled "Winter", they are only put on trial in the last part that is called "Autumn", with the trial actually ending in December (cf. *MLL* 277), bringing the seasons, the year of story-time, and the complicity of the inhabitants of Dasht-e-Tanhaii round to a full circle. The tragedy of the narrative, the honour killing of the lovers who were not allowed to be together because Chandas' last of three husbands refused to divorce her, is shown to be a list of unfortunate coherences that all in themselves are tragic for the concerned individuals but add up to a catastrophe that overshadows everything else.

The conviction of Chanda and Jugnu's murderers is the only event in the narrative that brings Kaukab and Shamas' family together. The significance of this event is highlighted by Ujala's coming to the family gathering after not having seen his mother in eight years and Charag bringing his ex-wife Stella and his son to his parents' house. With the whole family gathered to find closure after a year of uncertainty about what had actually happened to Jugnu and his partner, it is particularly irritating that Kaukab,

who throughout the narrative has repeatedly doubted the honour killing (cf. *MLL* 102), does not give up on her hope for Jugnu's return:

> The food she is making is more than enough for six people, but, who knows, perhaps Allah has written in the Book of Fates that Jugnu and Chanda – safe and sound – are to walk in on the family just as it is sitting down to eat; in that case there won't be any leftovers for tomorrow or the day after. (*MLL* 292)

Her naïve belief in the possibility that, although Chanda's brothers Chotta and Barra have confessed having killed their sister and her lover upon their return from a holiday in Pakistan, where Chanda was molested by Mah-Jabin's ex-husband (cf. *MLL* 307), might safely return to the family, borders on losing any sense of reality. Kaukab appears to be torn between feeling guilty for the role she played in the honour killing and her believing that Chanda and Jugnu actually did deserve the punishment they got (cf. *MLL* 114). Yet, although absent from the story and lost to their families, Chanda and Jugnu are at the heart of the narrative in various ways and, bringing out the best and the worst in the characters, the sentencing of their murderers re-unites the broken home.

By the time of the trial, Shamas has recovered from the attack by the bounty hunters and he and his three children attend the court case. In keeping with her general refusal to leave her house, yet accounted for by womb pains that she needs to have surgery for (cf. *MLL* 278) but does not tell her children about, Kaukab stays at home. Although the plot of the womb pains has been established before this event, her not attending the sentencing of the murderers, keeping in mind her naïve hope that Jugnu and Chanda are not dead after all, appears to be her strategy to avoid certainty about the lovers' fate that would considerably affect her world-view. Instead, she stays at home preparing a meal for the family reunion, forgetting that it "might appear inappropriate so soon after the confirmation of Jugnu and Chanda's death" (*MLL* 305) until Ujala points it out to her. As Lemke (2008: 172) has pointedly remarked, "[t]he only characters who sincerely mourn their loss are those who are themselves on the margins and in the cross-fire." That Kaukab does not attend the trial is thus for the other family members an indication that she does not really mourn their deaths.

The family reunion turns into a disaster as in this chapter the narrator eventually, through the representation of the dialogue between the family members, gives Ujala a chance to present his experience of his family and voice his opinion. Bringing the members of the family together in the absence of the murdered Jugnu and Chanda, the chapter with the title "How Many Hands Do I Need to Declare My Love to You?" (*MLL* 289-333), which is an intertextual and intermedial reference to a 1994 work by

the painter Bhupen Khakhar,[181] is the climax the narrative proceeds towards. The various perspectives of the characters on their family consequently complement the information on the genealogical relations that so far have only fragmentarily been presented through internal focalization of single characters. The more extensive use of direct speech, in contrast to the use of indirect speech or speech report that is prevalent in other parts of the narrative, finally allows the characters to express their differing subjective world-views and belief systems (cf. Surkamp 2008: 424). Yet, it is again Kaukab's perspective that dominates the basic mood of the chapter and against which all value systems are contrasted. Her consciousness is, as in the other chapters in which either Kaukab, Shamas, or Suraya act as focalizer, represented in a mixture of psycho-narration and free indirect discourse filtered and mediated by the heterodiegetic narrator but often evoking the illusion of presenting the character's consciousness without mediation.

The chapter begins with a detailed description of Kaukab preparing the meal for her family. The portrayal of the almost meditative occupation shows Kaukab at ease with her housewifely task of preparing a meal for her family and through producing synaesthetic effects in the depiction of the spices, again highlights the seclusion of her house from the rest of the community and England in particular: "She inhales the scent of Pakistan's earth deep into her lungs" (*MLL* 290). Deeply satisfied that her children will be coming home for a day and occupied with the preparation, Kaukab lets her mind wander. Several times her thoughts are interrupted by memories of Jugnu, whose idiosyncratic descriptions of simple household items keep returning to Kaukab. At these points the otherwise rather covert narrator emerges in the representation of Kaukab's consciousness to present this information: "In a large pan the size of an elephant's footprint (as Jugnu used to refer to it), Kaukab soaks some basmati rice" (*MLL* 290). Inserting the reference to Jugnu in brackets into a description of Kaukab's action in which only the memory of the label "elephant's footprint" points towards the character's thoughts is an interference by the narrator that highlights the murdered

[181] Khakhar's paintings are exhibited in the Chemould Prescott Road Contemporary Art Gallery in Mumbai, India, resident in an old British colonial mansion. For further information on the gallery see <www.gallerychemould.com/gallery_info.html>. The watercolour "How Many Hands Do I Need to Declare My Love to You?" can be viewed at <http://www.gallerychemould.com/popups/artists/bhupen_05.html>. The painting shows two humanlike figures of unknown gender, one seemingly sitting on the lap of the other. The figure at the back is shown to have two arms holding on to the other figure with several more arms reaching out from his back. One extra arm is holding a flower and another a necklace. In the bottom left hand corner a shadow of what could be a men's shirt is hinted at. Although the figures are not depicted as struggling, it appears that the figure in the back is holding the second figure back from moving away.

Jugnu's presence in his sister-in-law's everyday life although she herself is not always aware of his importance for her life. The preparation of food thus functions as reassurance of her role as caretaking mother whose children return after a long absence reuniting the family.

Ujala arrives hours before his siblings, yet upon entering the house and meeting his estranged mother immediately retreats to his bedroom. A short conversation between mother and son about a jar full of coins that reminds Ujala of a story Kaukab told him about a man who committed suicide by drinking water he poisoned by boiling the coins in it (cf. *MLL* 298) foreshadows the end of the chapter in which Kaukab tries to commit suicide by drinking poisoned water but is stopped in time by her husband. Disappointed by Ujala's coldness towards her, Kaukab puts even more effort into the preparation of the food. In the process of cooking, interrupted by her prayers, not having heard the doorbell she only notices Mah-Jabin waiting on the front steps of her house when she tries to intercept a passer-by to fetch a cake for her so that she does not have to leave the house herself. Mah-Jabin is thus suspended on the threshold between entering the house and staying outside, hovering in a liminal space, where she has to await her mother to finish her prayers in order to be let in. Having waited outside in the December cold, not having been heard by her mother during her prayers, she even apologizes for possibly having disturbed her mother's concentration (cf. *MLL* 298). This shows not only Mah-Jabin's awareness of how much the prayers mean to her mother, but more importantly how she works at keeping the peace.

Despite Mah-Jabin's efforts at preserving a peaceful atmosphere, the first conflict breaks out even before Charag and his family arrive at the house that Mah-Jabin describes as "almost not a building but an emotion" (*MLL* 120). Helping to prepare the meal, Ujala confronts his mother with poisoning his food with a bromide when he was a teenager to make him compliant (cf. *MLL* 304). Kaukab however, with her lack of education and no sense of having done anything wrong, does not know what the term 'bromide' means and tries to defend her actions. In the verbal argument between mother and son his contempt for her religion, which he blames for everything, is presented in the form of a psycho-narration:

> For millions of people, religion was often another torture in addition to the fact that their lives were not what they should be. Their world is pitiless from womb to tomb, everything in it out of their control, almost as though the life-lines on the palms of their hands were live knife-cuts, a source of pain since birth. This world gives them terrible wounds and then the holy men and women make them put those wounds into bags of salt. (*MLL* 302)

The density and structure of this thought are signs of the mediation through the heterodiegetic narrator, yet, these thoughts are definitely Ujala's as the pronominal reference to his character in the previous sentence indicates. His critique of his mother's religiosity is not a critique of Islam per se, but the institutionalized version of the orthodox, fundamental Islam that his mother stands for. Not only do followers of this version cast themselves as martyrs and do not see any meaning in life beyond their belief; it is also made worse by "holy men and women" who exploit their followers' simplicity and lack of education.[182] Consistent with Ujala's opinion on and criticism of the form of Islam his mother represents, she actually does not comprehend what her son is accusing her of when he claims she put poison into his food and still believes it was only a salt over which verses of the Koran had been read.

While Mah-Jabin is sent to find her younger brother and bring him back to the parental home (cf. *MLL* 304) Kaukab finds the letter from Mah-Jabin's ex-husband, which her daughter had been hiding from her since its arrival during her visit in the spring of the same year. Reading the letter, Kaukab's initial reaction is not pity or the wish to apologize. She actually first considers whether this could be a plot "hatched by Mah-Jabin and Ujala and Charag and the white girl Stella and Shamas to humiliate her, to ridicule her faith" (*MLL* 308). For the first time revealing uncertainty and insecurity whether her actions, which she believed to be in accordance with what her religion demanded, were right, she nevertheless first of all blames others for her doubt. Yet, the self doubts that lead her to question herself, "wondering if that's who she is, if that's what her image looks in the mirror: a mother who feeds poisons to her son, and a mother who jumps to conclusions and holds her daughter responsible for the fact that her marriage ended disastrously" (*MLL* 308), do not have a long term effect on herself or her relation to her children.

When Mah-Jabin succeeds in bringing back Ujala, Charag and his family have arrived in the parental home. The atmosphere of Kaukab and her children working towards the dinner is described as tense, and the topic of the trial and the certainty it brought about the lost lover's fate, is avoided by all characters.[183] The tense atmosphere climaxes

[182] Another way of criticizing the position and power of the religious leaders in the community is presented by a minor story-line of a Muslim cleric who sexually abused children but who, due to the pressure the community puts on the parents of the children, is not even put to trial by British court of law (cf. *MLL* 245).

[183] Throughout the whole time Kaukab is extremely self-conscious about the impression she makes on Stella, constantly checking her breath when talking to her (cf. *MLL* 315) in order not to confirm the stereotype of the badly smelling Pakistanis (cf. *MLL* 297). This behaviour shows that her racism towards the white population, which has been promoted by Kaukab throughout the narrative, stems from an inferiority complex (cf. Lemke 2008: 175).

during dinner, Shamas having joined the family after work, when the family reunion is complete. The stumbling block of the conversation turns out to be Charag's work as an artist that was featured in a newspaper and shows a painting of the artist entitled "The Uncut Self-Portrait" (cf. *MLL* 320):

> Charag has painted himself without any clothes standing in a pale grove of small immaculate butterflies, fruit- and flower-heavy boughs, birds, hoopoes and parakeets and other insects and animals, the mist rising from a lake in the background – and he has an uncircumcised penis. (*MLL* 320)

This painting appears to have been produced after Charag's visit to Dasht-e-Tanhaii in the spring of that year, related in a chapter called "Like Being Born" (cf. MLL 122 ff.),[184] during which Charag meets Suraya, and is the artist's way of criticizing the religious system that Ujala was referring to earlier. He points at the circumcision as the "first act of violence […] in the name of a religious or social system" (*MLL* 320) that he believes has to be questioned. Beyond this ideological criticism, the setting of the lake in Dasht-e-Tanhaii and the butterflies and parakeets also function as a way to remember Jugnu and Chanda, who have been murdered in the name of the religious system dominating this community (cf. *MLL* 321).

For Kaukab, seeing the picture in a newspaper, which Stella brought so that Shamas and Kaukab would be proud of their son, is yet another humiliation she has to endure from her children. Not only does Charag question a traditional practice that his mother values, he does it openly and with an audience. Thus confronting "the most dangerous animal" (*MLL* 111), the brothers' perspective on their mother's value system turns into a fundamental debate between the generations. Not having been allowed by the narrative to voice their opinions thus far, the children's perspective is finally allowed representation in this chapter, illustrating the clashing world-views of the generations. The only character – besides Stella and their son – who tries to remain on the sidelines is Shamas, which supports his initial characterization as being inactive and somehow detached from what is going on in his family. The hoped for family gathering, that constitutes a central element in the family novel (cf. chapter 3.1.1), in *Maps for Lost Lovers* tuns into a family tragedy. At the same time the gathering corrects the so far limited perspective of Kaukab on why the family falls apart through the characters of Mah-Jabin, Charag, and Ujala.

[184] Interestingly, "Like Being Born" is also the title of a song by Marianne Faithfull from her 2003 album *Kissin' Time* in which the three stanzas are variations of the first: "My father promised me roses / My mother promised me storms / My father taught me to use my mind / My mother taught me scorn." The intertextual reference is, however, restricted to the paratext and thus can be argued to be rather coincidental.

The communication between the generations consists only of accusations and defences, circling around Kaukab's version of Islam and the harm it has done to the family. Approaching this central chapter, the narrative so far has only allowed isolated critique that has been silenced by the respective focalizer. With the conflict out in the open it becomes clear that actually no communication has taken place between the generations up until now, and that by now the gap between the generations cannot be bridged anymore. In the absence of the genealogical mediator Jugnu, the go-between amid the conflicting generations, whom they are supposed to grieve for together, their children are lost to Kaukab, while Shamas becomes a bystander in the catastrophe.

Shamas appears immobilized and speechless throughout the discussion between Kaukab and her children, "avoiding everyone's eyes, simply because he wants this episode to be over quickly" (*MLL* 324). Not commenting on any of the accusations brought forward against his wife, the only thing that actually gains his attentions is a photograph Charag and Stella give to Kaukab as a present (*MLL* 318). Charag had bought the photographs and negatives from a store in town that was closing down, which Shamas had discovered on his way to meet Suraya on the day he was attacked by the bounty hunters (cf. *MLL* 244). He wanted the town to buy the photographs for their archives to chronicle the migrants' early years in the town. Shamas thought they were lost because neither the British town nor any of the migrants had an interest in preserving the documents of the many families that went to have their picture taken and thus their existence in Dasht-e-Tanhaii confirmed. Believing the photographs to have been destroyed (cf. *MLL* 265) for Shamas mirrors his loss of Suraya and the unborn child he was going to meet on the day he found the pictures.

That Charag has bought the photographs and negatives to incorporate them into his art for Shamas signifies a new beginning in his relationship to his son:

> Shamas looks at Charag, a bird in his chest pipping proudly: *My son … My son …* He hasn't known how to read Charag's paintings in the past – they seem too personal to the boy to hold any interest for Shamas – but now, now that he has mentioned that he might do something with the photographs of immigrants, Shamas knows he is maturing as an artist, becoming aware of his responsibilities as an artist. (*MLL* 319)

A connection between father and son is established through the shared interest in representation of the migrants in Dasht-e-Tanhaii, the pictures signifying a common ground for both artists. Yet the interest in the family pictures from Shamas' perspective, himself being a Communist poet and the son a critic of religion, can be argued to be another form of intergenerational transmission of memory, maybe even a from of transgenerational memory (cf. Hirsch 2001; cf. Weigel 2002c). While Shamas wants to keep the memories of the immigrants alive, remembering the cultural traumas they

survived, Charag's concept of art – as illustrated by his self-portrait – appears to be driven by a critical involvement with representation of immigrant communities. Just as Shamas does not care to have a look at the picture of his own family, he does not ask his son what exactly he intends to do with the photographs. For him, all that matters is that the photographs and negatives are in "a safe place" (*MLL* 319). His indifference towards the present, only caring for things past to be preserved in the future, is another way of inhibiting the development or expression of his children's generationality. It can therefore be argued that similar to his wife's suppression of any kind of progression from her traditions and her values, his neglect of the present has the effect of inhibiting any manifestation of a distinct shared experience of the succeeding generation.

Besides his interest in the photographs Shamas remains silent throughout the whole argument. He neither defends his wife nor agrees with his children, just waiting for it all to be over. In the end it is Kaukab who ends the discussion by leaving the table, retreating to her bed, where she stays until her children have left the house. The family reunion thus ends with the old conflicts unresolved, Jugnu and Chanda unmourned, and the gap between the generations widening instead of closing. Yet in this chapter for the first and last time all characters have had and used the opportunity to give voice to their concerns and criticisms, and Kaukab had the chance to defend herself and reaffirm her good intentions. In a very short scene it even appears that her otherwise static character could be open for development and change, but it is made clear that this opportunity has passed at the end of this central chapter when Kaukab turns against Shamas: "'I hold you responsible for the fact that my children hate me'" (*MLL* 328). Bringing the conflicts into the open has not changed anything for any of the characters and in the humiliation, which Kaukab experiences at her children's criticism, she tries to commit suicide by boiling the coins she took from Ujala's room in water that she intends to drink.

Shamas, after having stopped his wife and having tossed the coins into the lake in the middle of the night, sees Suraya standing at the window of her new husband's home on his way back. In the middle of the night, he performs the ritual of greeting the first snow:

> A habit as old as his arrival in this country, he has always greeted the season's first snow in this manner, the flakes losing their whiteness on the palm of his hand to become clear wafers of ice before melting to water – crystals of snow transformed into a monsoon raindrop. (*MLL* 367)

The focalization on Shamas brings the narrative round to full circle. His death, which is reported by a young boy reading in the newspapers that they have found a Pakistani

man "dead in the snow by the lake – somebody quite prominent and respected" (*MLL* 368) is the only ending to a narrative in which all has already been lost.

5.4. Creation of a Postgeneration to Suspend Social Change

Reading *Maps for Lost Lovers* with a generation studies' perspective reveals the various mechanisms with which generationalities are prevented from developing a distinct generational identity and thus from participating in society. The description of the immigrant community and the portrayed domination of traditions and religious practices that have been translocated from Pakistan exemplify a suspension of social change that tries to reproduce a society as the characters remember it from the time of Partition. Not merely trying to slow down the acceleration of time, but actually bringing time to a total standstill and actively preventing change, the characters of *Maps for Lost Lovers* actually want to repeat history through their children. Continuing traditions that are inappropriate in a secularized country like Britain, such as inbreeding and polygamy, the first generation deprives their children of their possibilities for a better life.

These failing negotiations of modernity, that take their toll on the domestic level, "tearing families apart in the best of times, and in the worst of times resulting in suicide and murder" (cf. Waterman 2010: 27) have been shown to take place on both the story and the discourse level of the narrative. With the honour killing predating the narrative and many of the characters absent from the plot of the novel, the level of narrative transmission becomes the most important device to represent the conflicting generations. Yet, by marginalizing the voices of the second generation, allowing only Charag and Mah-Jabin to present their views before the central chapter of the family gathering, the heterodiegetic narrator discriminates against the second generation by not allowing them representation. They are thus pushed to the margins of the narrative as they are pushed to the margins of the community for not living in compliance with their parents' wishes. Furthermore, the narrative does not give any insight into the second generations' lives outside Dasht-e-Tanhaii, which makes their characterization only possible in contrast to the characters they interact with in the community. Any inference about their lifestyle outside the close-knit community of their parents becomes almost impossible, as only very little information on Mah-Jabin and Charag's lives are presented and Ujala's life story remains untold.

Although criticism of the prevalent version of Islam intersperses the narrative, the use of focalizers who represent this version of Islam, each to a certain extent, relativizes any criticism by favouring this particular world-view. To keep this world-view intact and to

preserve the value system that the inhabitants of Dasht-e-Tanhaii so desperately cling to, the event of the murder is presented in a separate chapter in which only the victims and the murderers are allowed perception. Thus, Kaukab, who does not attend the trial where details of the murder were revealed, is able to remain in her position of a righteous believer and is not confronted with the cruelties performed in the name of her religion. While her children and Shamas actually mourn their dead relative, Kaukab is safely trapped within her system of values in which Jugnu died for his choice to transgress Islamic law.

With the second generation marginalized and discriminated by the narrator and the genealogical go-between murdered before the narrative sets in, the novel bans and sanctions every form of diversity. Therefore, labelling the novel a post-9/11 negotiation of British Muslim identities, as it has been the focus of most articles and discussions of the novel so far, is actually misleading. As this chapter has argued, the values presented in this novel are the ones of the Partition-generation that came to England in the 1950s and 1960s. The following generation, in the figures of Mah-Jabin, Charag, and Ujala is only allowed to present their cultural identities in conflict to their parents'. Thus, actually the negotiation of British Muslim identities post-9/11 concentrates very much on contrasting the second generation with their parents without actually being able to characterize the second generation as it is not allowed to present itself.

This interpretation of *Maps for Lost Lovers* has shown the intersection of the failure of intergenerational communication and the inhibition of the formation of a generationality. Through a detailed analysis of the two main characters Kaukab and Shamas that has illustrated the gaps between the characters' self-perception and how others describe them, the double standards of both the orthodox version of Islam and the seemingly open-minded secularism of Great Britain have been revealed. Both Kaukab and Shamas, each at one end of the scale, portray themselves as well-meaning and caring parents who, however, each in their own way, participate in harming their children. It has further been analysed how their relationships with their children are influenced by their respective convictions. Here, the focus has lain on Kaukab, as her relations with her children are more pronounced and offer more insights, while Shamas is too preoccupied with his relation to Suraya to give information on his children and even in conversation with her "won't be drawn on the subject of them as young adults, or much on what they are doing now" (*MLL* 215). This analysis further supported the argument of the difference between self-perception and perception through others, as the children's accounts of their experiences of the family differ significantly from Kaukab's memories of events. That the communication between Kaukab and her

children is marked by silences and leaving things unsaid, as it is repeatedly commented upon in her conversations with Mah-Jabin, shows that communication does not actually take place. Instead, the generations accuse each other of defiance and cruelties respectively, in the end both figuring themselves the victims of the other generation's shortcomings. While this conflict could have been an origin for forming a social generation that protests against the preceding generation and contributes to social change, the narrative inhibits the second generation from the formation of a distinct generational identity that could lead to a generationality. In refusing this generation representation, the narrative actually shows how one generation prevents the potentiality of another in order to preserve a certain system of values and traditions. Forcing the cultural trauma of both Partition and migration onto the following generation, the characters of *Maps for Lost Lovers* are guilty of losing those absent from the narrative.

From a generation studies' perspective, the main theme of the novel, which has been established to be loss, has to be complemented by complicity and guilt on various levels. Focusing on the genealogical inhibition of a generationality, this interpretation necessarily had to disregard certain aspects such as gender and religious identities, development of parallel societies, or the matter of international terrorism in the aftermath of 9/11 and 7/7. However, the aim of this chapter was to elaborate on the intricate relationship between genealogical communication and generational identity with a regard for the key concepts developed in the theoretical considerations of this study. It has been shown that the oppressive transmission of memories, the disregard for the acceleration of time, the lack of peer groups, and the suspension of the role moratorium of youths further fuel the conflicts between the generations and that it is impossible for one generation to create a replica of itself in their children. In aiming to reproduce their own history, the community of Dasht-e-Tanhaii, and Shamas and Kaukab in particular, have lost more than a season and the loss is all the more tragic as it cannot be compensated by greeting the first snow all over again. The complexity of *Maps for Lost Lovers*, that thus far eludes a distinct genre attribution because of this complexity, has been proven in this interpretation to become accessible for interpretation through a generation studies' perspective.

6. The Formation of a Subcultural Generation in Gautam Malkani's *Londonstani* (2006)

Gautam Malkani's debut novel *Londonstani* (2006) raised great expectations when auctioned at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2005. Similar to the publishing and marketing strategy employed for Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000), it was reported that *Londonstani* was sold to the publishing company Fourth Estate for an advance of more than £ 300,000 (cf. Paxton 2006). Supporting Graham Huggan's (2001) argument that the publishing companies have discovered migration literature as a marketable commodity under "the sign of the exotic" (Graham 2008: n. pag.), the "bidding war" (Paxton 2006) at the book fair attracted a great deal of attention before the novel was actually available.[185] While the novel was acclaimed for its humour, the author's "fine ear for inventive expression" (Rahmin 2006), and judged to be "a welcome reflection of the everyday life of London's youth" (Young 2006: 37), critic Robert McCrum deems the novel a failure because of insufficient sales numbers:

> If it had been published, as its author once intended, as a teen novel, it might have found a secure place as a contemporary classroom cult. Alas, everything about its short life has been a disaster. Once Fourth Estate, hungry to cash in on the White Teeth and Brick Lane market, had paid an advance in excess of of [sic!] £300,000, the die was cast. Thereafter, Londonstani had to be 'the literary novel of the year'. […] In Borders or Waterstone's, Londonstani is already being airbrushed from history. (McCrum 2006: n. pag.)

McCrum's verdict on the novel's sales performance highlights an important criticism of the marketing strategy with which *Londonstani* (*L*) was launched. In contrast to the "documentary realism" (Graham 2008: n. pag.) of *White Teeth* and *Brick Lane* (2003), with which *Londonstani* is frequently compared, Malkani's debut novel can be classified as belonging "to a tradition of picaresque fiction where young characters use popular cultural forms for the *subcultural* performance, and potentially also the transformation, of given social identities" (ibid.). Therefore, comparisons to Zadie Smith and Monica Ali's novels aim at the authorial biography much more than at the

[185] For a comprehensive discussion of the publication and reception of South Asian Anglophone writing in the 20th century in Britain see Ranasinha (2007), who offers insights into publishers' considerations as well as the perceptions of risks, sales, and reviews. Most interestingly, *South Asian Writers in Twentieth-Century Britain* also includes a discussion of the perceptions of cultural differences and how they relate to "questions of marketing and literary history, such as the commercial implications of a book's title, content, and format" (Ranasinha 2007: 7).

narrative's form or content, which unjustly disregards the novel's achievements in reflecting "the everyday life of London's youth."[186]

Yet while a comparison with Smith and Ali can be argued to be unsuitable and the failed marketing strategy disregarded, the novel has been justly criticized for its simplistic plot, an exaggerated usage of colloquial slang and text-messaging language, and a static character conception. The "cartoonish element in the incessant chat, and a distinct lack of character development that makes the more serious threads hard to follow" (cf. Paxton 2006) in fact impact the novel's critical portrayal of a British Asian community in which themes like arranged marriages, religious diversity and multiculturalism, youth delinquency, and conflicting cultural, gender, collective, and personal identities are negotiated. However, recent sociolinguistic studies of *Londonstani* (cf. Paganoni/Pedretti 2010; Schotland 2010) have pointed out how the formerly criticized use of a distinct youth language highlights the identity formation processes addressed in the novel, thus pointing towards the functions that the exaggerated colloquial slang and text-message language perform.[187]

Employing a generation studies' perspective on *Londonstani*, the following analysis argues that Malkani's novel offers an insight into the making of a generationality by employing a narrator who is excluded from the generational identity because of his genealogical origin but still testifies to the process of formation. An intersection between genealogical and generational relations is created in which one form inhibits the participation in the other. Nevertheless, the narrator witnesses the formation of the generational identity and can therefore provide, albeit restricted, information on the process. While the subcultural generation presented is clearly based on the ethnic background of its members, it is not the mediated traumatic experience of migration the British born characters share. Instead, it is the participation in the production of symbolic representation (cf. Giesen 2003: 65) that establishes the necessary triumphant event needed for a collective identity and to devalue the experience of the previous generation (cf. Giesen 2004: 33). Through the use of youth language and a variety of status symbols, the youth group depicted in the novel establishes mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion that are not necessarily contingent upon the members' status as

[186] Compliant with such comparison are readings of *Londonstani* that argue the fictional text, which admittedly developed out of the author's undergraduate dissertation for Cambridge University supervised by an anthropologist and social science professor (cf. Malkani 2006), was a fictionalized version of this dissertation with the author equalling the protagonist (cf. Brouillette 2009).

[187] For one of the earliest but still seminal studies on the importance of language for youth culture as a cultural system see Schwartz/Merten (1967).

second-generation immigrants from South Asia. Thus Malkani manages to create an autodiegetic narrator who reports on the formation process of the generationality and the accompanying genealogical conflicts through an insider's perspective without sharing the most significant characteristic of the subcultural generation, namely the ethnic background.

It will therefore be argued that *Londonstani* contrasts the formation of the generationality with the autodiegetic narrator's perception of the subcultural generation. The unreliable narration of protagonist Jas, who believes that he is participating in the generationality, an assumption which is contradicted by the characteristics of the generational identity as well as the plot of the narrative, highlights the discrepancy between his conceptualization of the collective identity and the generational location of his friends. This analysis will consequently have to carefully distinguish between Jas' representation of the generational identity and the implicit characterization of the generationality through other members. This is of particular interest as the narrative transmission through the autodiegetic narrator, in which no significant disparity between the narrating and experiencing *I* is created through a temporal distance – the memories of the narrator reach only as far back as approximately a year before the story begins – and no process of self-reflection is presented. Most importantly, the narrator underreports on important facts about his own life in order to mislead the narratee into regarding him as a part of the generationality. The narrator-perspective on the story therefore has to be complemented by information deduced from other characters in order to evaluate the unreliability of the narrator and discuss reasons for it. Thus, after discussing the novel's structure and form, this chapter will first analyse the autodiegetic narrator's self-fashioning and his relationship to other characters to unveil the discrepancies between his perception and presentation of things and statements by other characters. These will become most evident through a closer analysis of his relationship with his parents. The narrator's account of his family relations will show how Jas' narration can be divided into a narrative that is directed at a narratee, who is imagined to be a peer, and a private rendering of his state of mind.

Following this analysis, it will be argued that Jas adopts the language and code of behaviour of the 'rudeboys' in order to disguise his own emotional, social, and genealogical insecurities. Both the language and the code of behaviour serve as a means of self-differentiation for the gang and give important information on the generationality's characteristics, which however will be distinguished from the rudeboys, who are conceptualized as a mere youth gang. Yet this analysis will show how the generationality is narratively produced through the self-description of the

rudeboy members who – except for Jas – are also members of the generationality labelled 'desis'.[188] It is therefore important to discuss the generationality in relation to the genealogical ties of the characters to argue that the narrator's genealogical background prevents him from being a member of the generationality in the same way as the other characters' backgrounds and world-views determine them to be desis. Due to the tripartite structure of the text, in which by the beginning of the third part the friendship between Jas and the rudeboys has come to an end, the focus of this interpretation will mainly lie on the first two parts. These function as an expository introduction of characters, setting, and theme, and enlarge upon the structure of the youth group in distinction to the generationality. The third part focuses on the catastrophic climax and presents little further information on the generationality.

6.1. Suburban Rudeboys

The plot of *Londonstani* revolves around the 19-year-old autodiegetic narrator Jas and his three friends Ravi, Amit, and Hardjit who live in the London Borough of Hounslow and run a small-scale illegal business unblocking mobile phones. Retaking their A-Levels at the Hounslow College of Higher Education, the friends are stuck in the outer borough of the metropolis that is "occupied by middle-class families whose livelihoods are tied to Heathrow Airport" (Brouillette 2009: 2) with little chance to escape the small-town atmosphere. Jas comments on the setting that reflects the middle-class multiculturalism characteristic for the novel:

> The world going by outside the window tells me that in the olden times, before the airport, Hounslow must've been one a them batty towns where people ponced around on cycles stead a drivin cars. Why else we got such narrow roads? […] If I was a cycle-riding, tree-huggin, skint hippie I might've given a shit bout the trees an all the posters pinned to them for some Bollywood film that'd been released two weeks ago, the new Punjabi MC single that came out a month ago or ads for a bhangra gig in Hammersmith that happened a year ago. But I in't, so stead I hope the skint people who work for the local council would just finish the fuckin job and chop em all down. Make room for more billboards, more fuckin road. (*L* 16 f.)

The references to the Bollywood films, Punjabi music, and bhangra events signal the predominantly South Asian origin of Hounslow's inhabitants that is linked to the narrator's observation that the suburb's narrow streets hint at a historical town centre

[188] Devyani Prabhat, in Richard T. Schaefer's *Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Society* (2008), offers valuable insights into the usage of the self-description 'desi' in the USA, which are also applicable to the British context. "The word *desi* in various South Asian languages means 'native' or 'belonging to a country'" (Prabhat 2008: 382). See also Mukhi (2000: 10 f.).

thus indirectly commenting on immigration to the British town. Furthermore, the different mentalities of the inhabitants of Hounslow are pointed out by Jas, who emphasizes his distinction from the "cycle-riding, tree-huggin, skint hippie", thus placing himself in a socially better off demographic group which he further characterizes by its ecological indifference. The repetition of the colloquial adjective "skint" highlights the importance of spending power as an imperative means to establish the social hierarchy and at the same time already hints at the narrator's use of youth language.

The development from a rural community to an industrial suburb has changed the atmosphere in Hounslow from a cycle-friendly small-town to a heavily trafficked thoroughfare:

> Only proper-sized roads round here were the Great West Road an London Road, both a them running along either side a this part a Hounslow like garden fences to an airport at the back where the garden shed should be (they called it Heathrow cos it's bang in the middle a Hounslow Heath or someshit). (*L* 17)

Hounslow has become a place of transit, which most people do not even travel through because of the narrow streets, but rather drive around on the two mentioned roads. The friends' failure to pass their A-Levels thus keeps them in this place that everybody else only passes on their way either to London or to the airport, "when [they] should've been at King's College or the London School a Economics or one a the other desi unis with nice halls a residence in central London" (*L* 9). The narrator and his friends appear to be striving to leave Hounslow to get to London while at the same time their attitude towards education holds them back.[189] However, when London eventually becomes the setting for events in the story, it is represented as a confusing maze in which Jas is overwhelmed by the task of having to drive through the city (cf. *L* 137 ff.).

From the very beginning it becomes clear that Jas undersells his educational potential: "This was probly a bit over the top but I think I'd got the tone just right an nobody laughed at me. At least I managed to stop short a sayin, Kill the pig, like the kids do in that film *Lord a the Flies*. It's also a book too, but I'm tryin to stop knowin shit like

[189] This invokes the postcolonial notion of centre and periphery in which the centre represents the colonial power from which the subjects at the margins are excluded. The irony of this notion is of course that the narrator, who desperately wants to get to the centre is not indeed marginalized because of his ethnicity and further needs the help of a British Asian character to get to London whereas his friends eventually rather defend their lead in Hounslow as the most feared gang than to try their luck in London.

that" (*L* 9).[190] The context for this report is the novel's *in medias res* opening scene in which Hardjit beats up a white boy named Daniel while his friends, including Jas, cheer him on. This intertextual reference, which the narrator brings up in this situation of abject violence, signifies Jas' intimate knowledge of the books read in school, but also creates a literary connection to William Golding's famous allegorical novel. The violence towards Daniel, a helpless boy who is wrongly accused of having insulted the friends as Pakis, is reminiscent of the violence towards Simon, one of the characters in *Lord of the Flies* (1954), a connection that is deliberately created by the narrator for whom it is more important to belong to the group and having nobody laugh about him than to help a former friend (cf. *L* 13).[191]

The narrator's insecurity about his standing in the group is thus established from the beginning of the narrative. He has only been part of the gang for about a year (cf. *L* 13), a time during which Jas has come under the protection of Hardjit (cf. *L* 27-30).[192] Especially at school, where other British born children of immigrants bullied Jas, the new friendship with Hardjit and his followers Ravi and Amit demands respect from his schoolmates. In order to be worthy of Hardjit's friendship, Jas imitates his behaviour, language, style, and attitude towards school.

Stuck in suburban Hounslow, the gang's way out and into the metropolitan centre London is introduced to them in the character Sanjay, selected by their gullible history teacher Mr Ashwood as a suitable role model for his students. Eventually, it turns out that Sanjay uses the boys for his own illegal business schemes, ensnaring them with his pomposity, status symbols, and life in the city. Sanjay's influence on Jas drives a wedge between the narrator and his friends and the narrative ends in Jas' burning down his father's warehouse as well as being severely beaten up by strangers that might have been either Hardjit, Ravi, and Amit or the brothers of a girl he had been seeing.[193]

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[190] Later on Jas' academic achievements are more specifically addressed when the friends stand in their teacher's office and look at the GCSE History certificates on Mr. Ashwood's wall and one of them is Jas' (cf. *L* 132 f.).

[191] The intertextual reference also alludes to the "tribal pressure to conform – identity as being identical – in group behaviour freed from institutional constraints" (Mitchell 2008: 333).

[192] Tellingly, Hardjit's real name is "Harjit" (cf. *L* 10) and the inserted 'd' is supposed to stress his physical appearance and violence.

[193] A crucial question that remains unanswered is why Jas actually agrees to break into his father's warehouse. By the time Sanjay starts blackmailing him with manipulated pictures showing him with his Muslim girlfriend Samira, Hardjit and his friends have already turned against him and are waiting for an opportunity to beat him up for interfering in family matters. Furthermore, Hardjit has already found out about Jas' betrayal of his code of behaviour and has informed Samira's brothers about Jas and their sister. Thus, Jas is already in danger of having the rudeboys and Samira's brothers attack him so that actually Sanjay's

Only at the very end of the novel, with Jas lying in hospital and his worrying parents at his bedside, does the extent of the narrator's underreporting and his failure to give information about his character to the narratee (cf. Phelan/Martin 1999: 92) become discernable: "– Look, he says. –It says your name here on your medical chart: Jason Bartholomew-Cliveden, aged nineteen, white, male" (*L* 340). Jas managed to hide his ethnic identity from the narratee as well as the reader, who in turn has to go back to the beginning of the novel in order to unravel the many clues hidden in the narrative that raise suspicion as to Jas' standing in the group of friends whose behaviour he imitates.

The narrator's underreporting of his ethnic identity is supported by the novel's overall structure as well as the paperback edition's layout.[194] The Harper Perennial edition of the novel shows a skyline at the top of the jacket that through the novel's title underneath supposedly refers to the London skyline. Underneath the author's name in capital letters, the jacket further depicts a young man of Asian descent dressed in a black leather jacket. This visual clue in combination with the autodiegetic narration that presents Jas as a member of the gang leads the reader to imagine the narrator to resemble the depicted young man. Further, the novel's tripartite structure that subdivides the narration into the parts "Paki" (*L* 3-133), "Sher" (*L* 137-270),[195] and "Desi" (*L* 273-342) invites the interpretation that the parts reflect on different stages of ethnic identity formation: "'Paki', a racial slur hinting at the submissive attitude of British Asian communities in the past, is followed by 'Sher', or 'tiger', for the phase of aggression and violence between gangs, while the third part 'Desi' should open a new phase of awareness" (Paganoni/Pedretti 2010: 435).[196] Yet the knowledge about the autodiegetic narrator's unreliability when it comes to his ethnic identity challenges this accepted interpretation of the structural organization of the novel and adds another level to the reading.

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blackmailing should not be working anymore. Why Jas still goes through with trying to steal from his own father, while allegedly fearing for his safety, seems to be one of the weaknesses of the plot.

[194] In contrast to the Harper Perennial paperback edition from 2007 previous editions featured either a drawing of a roaring tiger or the world-renowned London subway sign, the red circle on white background, with the novel's title in the middle, symbolizing a London underground station called Londonstani.

[195] "Sher" translates as "tiger" or "lion" as well as "manfully". Cf. the online Urdu dictionary iJunnoon (<http://www.ijunoon.net>).

[196] This interpretation is supported by Graham (2008: n. pag.) who argues that "this narrative allegorises a broader shift in British Asian identity from the experience of prejudice and victimhood (Paki), through aggressive self-segregation (Sher), to active participation in the re-constitution of Britishness (Desi – meaning 'countrymen')."

Reading the novel as a chronological, linear Bildungsroman (cf. Goh 2011: 340) it can be argued that the three parts allegorically reflect on Jas' personal development – or more precisely the lack thereof. While at the beginning of the story the narrator is in need of protection from other British born children of migrants at school – particularly a character named Davinder – and thus turns towards Hardjit and his gang, in the second part of the novel Jas' becomes more confident in dealing with other people and even manages to go out with the girl he fancies. The third part, entitled "Desi", a term which refers to second-generation immigrants from the Indian subcontinent and is a term of self-description of the group, shows that, although he has ruined his friendship with Hardjit and is blackmailed by Sanjay, he still does not understand that he is no longer – if indeed he ever was – part of the group that will be argued to be a generationality. This lack of self-reflection and understanding of his personal position in relation to his friends hints at Jas' failure of development, which eventually leads to a divergent reading of the novel as an anti-Bildungsroman in terms of the protagonist but as a 'collective Bildungsroman' (cf. Bohnenkamp 2011: 115 f.) for the rest of the characters.

Most significantly, "the distinct lack of character development" (Paxton 2006) that *Londonstani* has been accused of, and which can be argued to include the characters of Hardjit, Ravi, and Amit is grounded in the narrative transmission of information on these characters through Jas. He is the one who presents his friends as types rather than as characters and who refuses to report on the personal development of his friends, even after Amit's older brother Arun commits suicide.[197] Therefore, the lack of development in the protagonist's friends has to be viewed rather critically in respect of the narrative transmission. The fact that Hardjit, Ravi, and Amit are almost completely excluded from the story after Arun's funeral because they have broken off contact with Jas will consequently be interpreted as a sign for their personal development, which the narrator cannot comment upon because of his ignorance.

As the narrator of the story, Jas repeatedly turns to the narratee to convey specific information that he deems important for the narratee's understanding of the story. The implicit characterization that Jas provides through this technique offers insights into character traits that advance the interpretation of his underreporting. As the following example shows, the narrator's meta-commentary on the action of the story includes the

[197] Significantly, the suicide is not represented but only Arun's funeral at the beginning of the third part of the narrative. Furthermore, Arun is reported to have committed suicide by aspirin overdose (cf. *L* 281), which the U.S. Food and Drug Administration maintains to have a mortality rate of 1% (cf. <http://www.fda.gov/ohrms/dockets/ac/02/briefing/3882-B2_02_Mc-Neil-NSAID.htm>). This again might be read either as evidence of the narrator's unreliability or as a sign of his ignorance concerning his friends' lives.

narratee in an act of explanation of Indian culture: "His [Hardjit's] favourite martial art at that time was kalaripayat, which in case you don't know was one a the first kindsa martial arts ever to be invented. A big bonus point if you know where it was invented. China? Japan? Tibet? Fuck, no. It's from India, innit" (*L* 11). The narrator addresses the narratee as if in dialogue, displaying his insight knowledge of Asian culture and tradition as well as highlighting his close relationship with Hardjit. He presents himself as better informed than his audience, which gives the narrative an educational tone that can also be perceived as showing off.[198] He thus creates a tension between his presenting himself as a hip, unschooled gang member and as an ambitious learner when it comes to the Indian culture. The narrator cannot hide his eagerness to be part of Hardjit's clique and tries to present himself to his narratee as being in the know.

Jas appears to need to justify his narration to his narratee, proving his inside knowledge (cf. *L* 93), because he omits the most important information. Yet in the course of his account, Jas again and again gives clues about his outsider standing in the group based on his whiteness:

> – Hear wat my bedren b sayin, sala kutta? Come out wid dat shit again n I'ma knock u so hard u'll b shittin out yo mouth 4 real, innit, goes Hardjit, with an eloquence an conviction that made me green with envy. Amit always liked to point out that brown people don't actually go green: – We don't go red when we been shamed an we don't go blue when we dead, he'd said to me one time. – We don't even go purple wen we been bruised, jus a darker brown. An still goras got da front to call *us* coloured. (*L* 3)

In this reported speech, from the very first page of the novel on the narrator gives the first of many hints as to his outsider position. While he admits going "green with envy", though only a figurative use of language, he at the same time points out how Amit's tirade about not actually changing skin colour impresses him. Already in the beginning of the narrative he thus signals that he does not share his friends' skin colour. Concurrently, this quotation indicates the differences in language use, which will be discussed in detail later on, highlighting how Hardjit's and Amit's language differ from each other as reported by the narrator, who yet again uses a different level of youth language than his peers. The clues as to Jas' ethnic background accumulate over the course of the narrative and in the end climax in his transgression of one of Hardjit's rules regarding religious prejudices that he set out for Jas to follow in order to be a member of the gang.

Another significant discrepancy between Jas' self-presentation in relation to his new friends and his white, English, middle-class upbringing becomes evident in his

[198] For the functions of this educational tone cf. Reichl's (2002: 164) concept of functional didacticism, which she develops for her reading of Meera Syal's novel *Anita and Me*.

interaction with his parents, which is also accompanied by narrator-comments directed at the narratee. In reports of family interaction, addresses towards the narratee are, however, used with the aim of keeping up his indifferent and cool appearance. In contrast, in scenes in which he presents himself as the vulnerable adolescent who needs protection from bullies, the narrative does not feature this technique. An analysis of his family relations again highlights the discrepancy between the narrator's self-presentation in front of Hardjit, his friends, as well as the narratee and an implicit self-characterization that only emerges when he is not addressing the narratee. The narrator thus creates a subculturally located persona he presents to his peers, the narratee, and in confrontation with his family, and a private persona that appears in moments of utter helplessness, and which seems to sneak into the narrative in moments of weakness.

Especially his ambivalent relationship to his mother, whom the narrator describes as pretentious (cf. *L* 33) and domineering (cf. *L* 35), reveals Jas' inferiority complexes. The intergenerational communication between mother and son continuously fails, which leaves the narrator unable to relate to his parents or to express emotions. Notably, while in moments of image cultivation the narrator keeps emphasizing that his mother's presence makes him physically sick (cf. *L* 33), he is also emotionally dependent on her. The ambiguity of their relation is best shown in Jas' statement: "Something bout Mum's ponciness an the way she's sayin everything's absolutely delightfully fine fucks me off big time an I end up havin a proper chat with the woman" (*L* 200). Although describing his mother as a hypocrite who does not really care about his troubles, which in this particular case is a pair of trousers, he ends up having a conversation about being bullied at school because of his clothes and how he is nervous about going out with his friends. The paradoxical statement of being irritated by his mother and ending up in a conversation with her because he is annoyed reflects their difficult mother-son-relationship. At the same time, this statement indicates different levels of communication in one sentence at odds with each other: on the one side, Jas' accusations of his mother's "ponciness" are aimed at the narratee, in front of whom the narrator wants to create the impression of being in control of the situation, while on the other side, the narrator is opening his heart to his mother.

Yet while Jas' own relationship with his mother is difficult, he still does not want other people to find fault with her. During a visit of one of his father's friends, Uncle Bobby, who keeps joking about the narrator's putative homosexuality because he is a good cook, Jas becomes defensive as well as protective while at the same time harshly criticizing her:

> Fuck off, you wanker, an stop callin me a gaylord. I so wish I could say this out loud. You wanker, please fuck off. I request you to off out our house an cease referring to me as a homosexual, you wanker. I in't your son. […] Leave my mum alone, she's only laughin along with you cos she'll laugh along with anyone when they're puttin someone down. (*L* 34)

Jas wants his father's friend to stop calling him a homosexual, which he believes to be an implicit criticism of his mother as well as an insult to himself. Yet Jas does not manage to speak up for himself and only wishes he could say all these things to protect himself as well as his mother from other people's scorn. But in the presence of his mother Jas appears to be literally speechless:

> She is right. I should stand up for myself. I shouldn't leave it all to her. But she orders Dad around enough, why can't she just order Uncle Bobby to ease up? An anyway, it'd be pointless for me to tell Uncle Bobby anything cos I can't talk an I can't eat an it hurts so much. What's the point in feelin pain if you can't even tell your mama bout it? An it doesn't even matter that Mama is now on my side. Don't matter cos it's started bleedin again. An my cheeks swell up with the blood. Fill em up. Oh, ouch. Ow. Mama, Mama, my mouth hurts. Ouch. (*L* 35)

Jas' inability to defend himself verbally is metaphorically exaggerated by his imagining his mouth to be bleeding. He appears to be physically in pain, silently crying for his mother to help him with his speechlessness. In the passage following this quote, Jas drifts into a nightmarish scenario in which the situation completely derails with blood gushing out of his mouth, which he refers to as "*Shitesprecher*" (*L* 35, 36), all over the table and Uncle Bobby throwing the salad bowl at Jas. Failing to demand that Uncle Bobby shows some respect to himself and his mother, his dependence on his mother and inability to stand up for himself makes him imagine himself with a bloody and utterly useless mouth. He appears to be left inarticulate when confronted with his lacking masculinity that is indicated by Bobby's insulting him as a homosexual and his mother's challenge to stand up for himself.

This psychoanalytic reading of the bleeding mouth as a sign for a threatened masculine identity is supported by the significant absence of Jas' father from the narration. Although the narrator refers to him, he always does so in reference to the non-existent relationship between them, which is represented in their impersonal communication: "Only time my own dad ever talks to me bout women is if he's got an important female customer or supplier or whatever. An that's hardly ever seeing as how he mostly does business with businessmen" (*L* 58). Not talking to his son about women and keeping conversation to work related matters, his father does not have a close relationship with the narrator. Indicating that his father might find it difficult to deal with his son's allegedly effeminate manner, Jas further distances himself from him. With his mother being the more present and more communicative parent, Jas has difficulties establishing

his own role in the family against a withdrawn and absent father and a domineering mother:

> But if your dad can't be the bad motherfucker a the house then it's up to you, innit. You gotta be the man a the house by being harder than your mum stead a being like your dad. All this shit'd be a lot easier if your dad was harder than your mum cos it's gotta be easier to be like your dad than it is to try an not be like your mum. If you try an not be like something, you might try too much, innit. An if you try an be harder than something stead a being as hard as something, there in't no limit to how hard you gotta be. (*L* 324)

Blaming his father for failing as a role model, Jas overdoes his display of masculinity and, falling for Sanjay's tax fraud scheme through selling stolen mobile phones, ends up burning down his father's warehouse. The fact that his father, at the very end of the novel, decides to save Jas from getting a criminal record by giving a false statement to the police before eventually betraying his son's ethnic identity, which he still tries to conceal, might be partly due to his realization that he has let Jas down by being distant and wants to make up for that, while at the same it also attests to the narrator's subjective opinion of their relationship.

The symptomatic stammering, alluded to in his inability to speak up for himself, which the narrator believes to be an embarrassment for his mother (cf. *L* 330) and which his teacher Mr Ashwood, who acts as a father-figure for Jas, tries to help him with (cf. *L* 6), preoccupies Jas all the time. He constantly refers to his voice, signalling his insecurity.

> Every time when it's important to use this gob a mine I hear my voice, which never normly works proply an so I panic. It's as if there's some other voice a mine givin it, Don't say that, it'll make u look like a gimp. An so I'll go, Yeh, maybe so, but … Then I'll realise that the other person, the one I'm s'posed to be talkin to, can hear me. So I'll quickly shut my gob, only to hear the other voice go, You fuckin sap. Now you look like you can't even talk. Which you can't, you stammerin piece a wasted shit. For fuck's sake, just speak up.
> Fuck off, leave me alone. I've just got gunge an shit down my throat.
> Speak up, boy.
> Obviously this voice must know that actually it can't speak up, that it can't talk cos it's me, innit, it's my voice. But it keeps tryin anyway. An then another voice, I reckon that makes it three fuckin voices, will go, Boy? In't no fuckin boy. In't no girl either but in't no fuckin boy. (*L* 30)

The contesting voices, which the narrator reports on in this psycho-narration, attest to Jas' difficulties in dealing with the different roles he is supposed to play. The competing voices, which give him orders to speak up comment upon his failure to do so, evoke his social environment. The voice calling him a "sap" relates to Hardjit and his peers, the voice he tells about the "gunge an shit" reminds of the aforementioned episode with his mother, and the patronizing "boy" refers to Mr Ashwood who addresses the gang as 'boys' when in his office (cf. *L* 118 ff.). Thus torn between the demands these

authorities have on him, the narrator finds himself unable to speak for himself, and as a solution adopts the language of his peers, hiding behind their collective identity in order to be able to claim it for himself, too.

Significantly, in situations in which the narrator appears to be more confident, as for example when driving Sanjay's Porsche around London preparing for a date with Samira, the narrator changes the perspective and introduces a pronominal shift from the first person singular *I* to the second person singular *you*: "This is just the fourth time you've been driving this thing, which means Friday'll only be the fifth. Your fifth drive, your first date" (*L* 137). The narrator always uses the second person singular pronoun when he reports on spending time with Sanjay, who becomes his new role model and helps him to get what he wants. In contrast to Hardjit, whose strict rules for rudeboy behaviour and religious prejudices do not allow Jas to go out with the Muslim Samira, Sanjay provides Jas with the means to impress the girl. The pronominal change and the change in language use indicate an emotional distance the narrator creates between the persona that drives the Porsche and the persona who is a rudeboy, hinting at the protagonist's guilt for deceiving the rudeboys.[199] Therefore, the narrator continues to use the second person pronoun to refer to himself when he is going behind Hardjit's back and reports on his visits to Sanjay without the gang. The distance the narrator creates between the narrating *I* and the experiencing *I* through the pronominal change is thus an indicator of Jas' sense of guilt betraying the rudeboys for his own purposes. In return, this supports the initial argument that the *rudeboys* are a clique that an outsider can become a member of if he abides by the rules, whereas the *desis* constitute a subcultural generation to which Jas cannot gain access. Therefore, before turning towards the desis as a generationality, the rudeboys will be analysed in more detail to establish their characteristics as a group to then distinguish the mere clique from the generationality.

6.2. The Rudeboys' Mechanisms of Inclusion and Exclusion

From the beginning, the narrative foregrounds Jas' desperate wish to belong to Hardjit's gang, the rudeboys. Focusing on the rudeboys as a youth cultural clique, this part of the interpretation of *Londonstani* aims at a characterization of the rudeboys in order to be able to contrast the clique with the 'desis' later on, which is a subcultural generation. The distinction between these two forms of communal relationship is central to this

[199] For a comprehensive discussion of the second-person narrative cf. the 1994 issue of *Style* (28.3) dedicated to this topic and particularly the introduction by Fludernik (1994b).

chapter's argument, as the underreporting narrator is indeed a member of the rudeboys, for as long as he keeps to the code of behaviour, while he cannot be a member of the desis because he lacks the condition of the generational location, the South Asian background. Through the membership in the rudeboys the narrator tries to conceal the genealogical inhibition from participating in the generationality by underreporting his whiteness. Therefore, it is vital for the argument of this interpretation of *Londonstani* to establish the distinction between the youth group and the generationality.

The problematic labelling and the distinction between rudeboys and desis are pointed out by the narrator who, although he does not further comment on the implications his statement has, highlights the inclusiveness of the label 'rudeboys' in contrast to the exclusive 'desis'. Significantly, the narrator does not realize this crucial distinction between the labels and believes them to be partly synonymous while they actually function as a means of inclusion and exclusion:

> People're always tryin to stick a label on our scene. That's the problem with havin a fuckin scene. First we was rudeboys, then we be Indian niggas, then rajamuffins, then raggastanis, Britasians, fuckin Indobrits. These days we try an use our own word for homeboy an so we just call ourselves desis but I still remember when we were happy with the word rudeboy. (*L* 5)

The enumeration of different names for the "scene" Jas is referring to shows that he does not perceive himself as an outsider of the group and sees how some labels are more problematic than others. Yet although he lists all kinds of different names that imply an ethnic and cultural background to the youth group, he does not comment on his own 'otherness'. Strikingly, most of the terms, like 'rudeboys', 'niggas', and 'rajamuffins', establish a connection to a Black British youth culture, while only the labels 'Britasians', 'Indobrits', and 'desis' hint at the actual ethnic origins of the rudeboys. Mitchell (2008: 330) points out that the categories by which ethnic minorities became known have ceased to relate to "genuine or authentic objective characteristics", making a distinction between the different youth groups according to their ethnic background almost impossible. It is therefore significant that Jas uses the term 'rudeboys' throughout the novel to refer to the gang, and thus implies a connection to "Caribbean youngsters too tough to be molested by white racists and respected for their 'cool' behaviour and dangerous aura" (ibid.: 330), rather than to refer to the clique as 'desis'.[200] This is the narrator's way to include himself in a collective identity by

[200] Barbara Korte and Claudia Sternberg (1997: 28-34) comment on the cross-cultural protest culture towards white mainstream culture in British society and highlight the influence the Afro-Caribbean resistance movement had in the 1970s. The subsequent influence this movement had on Asian youths is argued by the authors to be a truly transcultural fusion in popular youth cultures.

'othering' the whole group as rudeboys, a scene to which none of them belongs because of their ethnicity but which still implies the most important characteristics of toughness, coolness, and a dangerous aura that is to be feared by white people. The narrator's refusal to call the group 'desis', although this is the self-chosen preferred name, "these days" suggests a tacit knowledge of this being excluded from this particular collective identity, which is why the narrator rather refers to the memory of the time "when we were happy" with the name 'rudeboys'. The formation of the subcultural generation represented by the desis must therefore take place in the indistinct and not explicitly narrated time span between the past referred to by Jas as "when we were happy" and the present "these days".

Even though – or maybe because – the narrator is not a member of the desis, his observations about the rudeboys and their generational location enable this narrative to report on the formation of a generationality. By first discussing the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion employed by the rudeboys, a number of important self-ascribed characteristics of the generationality become clear. These characteristics, however, are to a certain degree imitable, as the case of Jas exemplifies. As has already been hinted at in the analysis of the autodiegetic narrator, the main functions of being a member of the rudeboys is protection, on the one hand, and the formation of a masculine identity on the other. How both functions are accomplished will be discussed in this chapter.

The beginning of the novel, the *in medias res* opening, in which Hardjit violently attacks a white boy, a "gora" (*L* 3), for allegedly insulting him by calling him a Paki,[201] introduces the main issues for the rudeboys: physical violence that is motivated by racism, the religious diversity represented in the multicultural setting, and the performance of masculinity. These themes establish the basic framework for the plot in the first part of the novel, "Paki", in which the rudeboys are preoccupied with a fight between Hardjit, a Sikh, and Tariq, a Muslim, over the supposedly slighted honour of a girl. The second major issue of this part, preparing the development of the plot in the two following sections of the narrative, is the rudeboys business of reprogramming mobile phones, which they run in collaboration with Davinder, who can be characterized as desi but is not a member of the rudeboys. "Paki" provides the most important information about the rudeboys and functions as an exposition to the later two parts, "Sher" and "Desi" in which Jas transgresses the boundaries set by the gang. Most importantly, "Paki" gives an insight into how Jas actually became a member of the clique and establishes their code of behaviour.

[201] As Michael Mitchell observes (2008: 330), this can be read as a "reversal of the 1970s phenomenon of 'Paki-bashing'."

A short exchange between Jas and Daniel, the victim of the beating, at the beginning of the narrative makes specifically clear that Jas has experienced a dramatic change of attitude that went along his with association with the rudeboys. "– Why didn't you tell them I didn't say anything, Jas? What's happened to you over the last year? the gora says before havin another coughin an splutterin fit. – You've become like one of those gangsta types you used to hate" (*L* 13). Hence, the change in Jas' character that Daniel refers to started a year prior to the beginning of the narrative and since then Jas spent his time "tryin to get upgraded from my former state of dicklessness" (*L* 12). While Daniel appeals to their past friendship to prove his innocence, Jas only cares about the impression he makes on Hardjit and his friends. Reflecting on the beginning of his association with the rudeboys Jas, however, has to admit to Daniel's claims that he did not initially agree with the violence and illegal activities the gang is involved in.

> Even though I didn't agree with all a Hardjit's mafia rudeboy shit back then, suddenly I wanted to follow him, wanted to carry on talking to him. Don't matter that you can't actually talk cos if you hang around with sorted people then other people'll think you're safe yourself. (*L* 30)

Following Jas' way or argumentation, it is the protection which the association with Hardjit brings along that is mainly important to the narrator. Their friendship is a boost to Jas' social standing in the small, suburban community of Hounslow, which is why he prefers to accept their "mafia rudeboy shit" rather than remain the bullied kid at school. Nevertheless, while Jas appears to be the obvious beneficiary of their friendship, he is also useful for the rudeboys because apparently he is the one who can unlock and reprogram the mobile phones (cf. *L* 40), thus providing an essential skill for their business. It can therefore be concluded that Hardjit's association with Jas did not develop from a purely altruistic wish to protect Jas from bullies at school, but because he has a valuable skill that the rudeboys can use. This again indicates that the narrator's perception of events and his representation of these might indeed be at odds with the events he reports on.

The narrator's affiliation with the rudeboys is strictly dependent on Jas' following the rules Hardjit lays out for him: "Rudeboy Rule # 1: My dad always said that you shouldn't lie cos you'll have to tell another ten lies to back it up. However, Hardjit'd taught me that if the back-up lies are good enough, then so fuckin what?" (*L* 39) The "Rudeboy Rules" offer a code of behaviour for Jas to learn how to be a rudeboy. The rules, seven in all, cover all areas of life, and as long as Jas adheres to them his company is accepted. Conversely, as soon as he transgresses them his friends shun him. The rules are thus the first mechanism of inclusion and exclusion the rudeboys employ in order to synchronize their demeanour and to establish a coherent self-presentation to

outsiders. Including guidelines on having the most up-to-date mobile phone, on language use, clothing, and information to be gathered from Bollywood movies (cf. *L* 39-61) the rules describe – and for the narrator they prescribe – the cultural practices of the rudeboys and, because of the overlap in characters, the desi-generationality.

Besides the rudeboy's rules of conduct, Jas is secondly made to understand that his association with the Sikh Hardjit and his Hindu friends (cf. *L* 92) also means not being able to go out on dates with Muslim girls, like Samira, the girl Jas fancies. "Samira outta bounds for all a us bredrens an you know it. She Muslim, innit" (*L* 49). Amit points out to Jas, that being friends with Hardjit means following his code of conduct in all matters. This particular understanding of loyalty between the rudeboys is based on religious distinctions that go back to the Partition of India.

> If any a us ever got with Samira, her mum an dad'd probly kill her and then try an kill us. That's if our own mums an dads din't kill us first. An then that's if Hardjit din't kill us before they did. Mr Ashwood had taught us bout the bloody partition a India an Pakistan during History lessen. What we din't learn, though, was how some people who weren't even born when it happened or awake during History lessons remembered the bloodshed better than the people who were. (*L* 49)

Despite the novel's allusion to the Partition as the reason for the religiously motivated violence, there are no indications to the desis being a postgeneration (cf. Hirsch 2008). The cultural trauma that the Partition might have caused in their parents' generation cannot possibly have been transmitted to the desis, as the narrator relates his friend's having arguments about religion with their parents: "They don't know jack bout religion. I seen Hardjit win arguments with his dad by quoting bits a the Guru Granth Sahib that his dad din't even know – like them hardcore Muslim kids who keep tellin their parents what it says in the Koran" (*L* 81). Religion is thus not important for the rudeboys rules because of a transmitted cultural trauma, but because it offers a clear cut means of inclusion and exclusion that can be externalized by the use of religious artefacts: "Even though he was one a them Sardarjis who don't even wear a turban, Hardjit always wore a Karha round his wrist an something orange to show he was a Sikh" (*L* 9). Interpreting religion to function as a mechanism of exclusion for the rudeboys instead of presenting a postmemory of Partition is, on the one hand, supported by Hardjit's usage of his religious artefacts as weapons in fistfights (cf. *L* 10) and, on the other hand, by the parents' generation living peacefully next door to other religions (cf. *L* 17).

The third major device of inclusion and exclusion the rudeboys employ is their striking language use. All of the rudeboys, including Jas according to his own testimony (cf. *L* 69), are multilingual because it is one of Hardjit's convictions that "a proper rudeboy

shouldn't just know either Hindi or Panjabi to keep shit secret from goras but also a little Urdu slang to keep shit secret from mums and dads" (*L* 69). The different languages are reportedly used in different situations mainly with the function of establishing a linguistic community that can exclude non-members from communication. This way, not only English characters can be excluded from the rudeboys' activities and plans, but also the migrant parents, who are portrayed as being bilingual themselves, can be barred from communication. Intergenerational communication can thus readily be discontinued by the second generation's privilege of growing up in a multilingual environment.

In place of their parents, Mr Ashwood comments upon the problematized intergenerational communication:

> – No, you don't get it, do you, Ravi? I don't mind you using your mother tongue. In actual fact I've often thought it admirable the way you boys mix up Hindi with Urdu and Punjabi to create your own second-generation tongue. It's the English code words I can't stand. It's ironic, isn't it? The way your use of English makes you lot look like you're some kind of Asian mafia rather than your use of your mother tongue. (*L* 125)

Not only does the language mixture create linguistic communities that aim at exclusion, it also functions to perform a specific identity that the teacher identifies as an "Asian mafia". The associations of illegal mobile reprogramming, religiously motivated street fights, and racist aggression against white schoolmates that are produced by the language use as much as by physical demeanour all add up to this negatively stigmatized collective identity. Thus, when Hardjit "stick[s] in an exclamation mark by kickin the white kid in the face again. – Shudn't b callin us Pakis, innit, u dirrty gora" (*L* 3), the combination of physical violence and youth language characterizes the collective identity the rudeboys aim to create through their language and demeanour. The description of an "Asian mafia" is thus actually what the rudeboys are targeting as a characterization in their language use.

The rudeboys' linguistic usage is dominated by a "mixing together of hip-hop lexicon, rap, slang, short text messaging, acronyms used instead of words, 'rudeboy' and Brasian (i.e. British Asian) English" (Paganoni/Pedretti 2010: 428). As commented upon in the Rudeboy Rules number 4 (*L* 45) and 5 (*L* 54), Hardjit and his gang have developed their own youth language, an "urban creole" (Graham 2008: n. pag.), to define their membership in a subculture and to establish a group identity (cf. Schotland 2010: n. pag.). The mixture of American hip hop expressions, acronyms as used in text messaging, and interspersal of Punjabi words is developed into a code that Jas has to

learn in order to be accepted by the rudeboys:[202] "If I don't speak proply using the proper words then these guys'd say I was actin like a batty boy or a woman or a woman actin like a batty boy" (*L* 46). The rudeboy language is a code that the narrator can learn by using the socially accepted vocabulary. Although the narrator informs the narratee that he is not actually comfortable with the homophobic and misogynist language (cf. *L* 45) the merit of using the rudeboys' language overweighs his doubts: "One good thing though: now that I use all these proper words I'm hardly ever stuck for words" (*L* 46). Within the restricted code the inarticulateness Jas suffers from when around his parents is replaced by a specific set of phrases to use in different situations. This then adds up to what he believes to be the "rudeboy authenticity":

> Anyway, whatever the fuck we are, Ravi an the others are better at being it than I am. I swear I've watched as much MTV Base an Juggy D videos as they have, but I still can't attain the right level a rudeboy authenticity. If I could, I wouldn't be using poncey words like attain an authenticity, innit. I'd be sayin I couldn't keep it real or someshit. An if I said it that way, then there'd be no need for me to say it in the first place so I wouldn't say it anyway. (*L* 5 f.)

The language is used to display "rudeboy authenticity", making sure that the members of the rudeboys recognize each other as such and, although Jas does not yet master the whole demeanour as well as Ravi and the others, it does help him to find a place in the group. At the same time it also becomes clear in this passage that Jas experiences his being a rudeboy as a kind of role-play. Stating that the others are "better at being it" shows, on the one hand, that he views his membership in the gang like a competition in authenticity and, on the other hand, he is aware that he does not fully satisfy the requirements for sharing the collective identity of his friends. His usage of "authenticity", which suggests that authenticity can be acquired, achieved, or performed rather than being a characteristic that one either has or has not by force of circumstance, highlights the performative character of identity the narrative puts forth.

Concluding the analysis of linguistic usage in *Londonstani*, two functions have to be pointed out to underline the argument: "The first function is to erect an ethnic and generational boundary against outsiders, reinforcing cohesiveness and building a social identity within the group. The second one is to make further distinctions between

[202] A very similar composition of linguistic elements is represented in Nikesh Shukla's debut novel *Coconut Unlimited* (2010) in which the British Asian autodiegetic narrator revisits his childhood memories on the evening of his stag night. Narrating his life story from when he was a teenager, and he and his two best friends were obsessed about forming a band that would do rap-music, the characters employ a similar mix of American rap and hip-hop language mixed with Gujarati words to create a slang they call "Guj-glish" (cf. Shukla 2010: 55).

insiders within the same peer cohort" (Paganoni/Pedretti 2010: 431 f.). Both of these functions, the generational and ethnic in- and exclusion as well as the degree of integration in the group support the argument for a distinction between the rudeboys and the desis. While the narrator can imitate the language use of the rudeboys to a certain degree, as Paganoni and Pedretti (2010: 432) have illustrated in a detailed analysis of the vocabulary and morphosyntactic violations, and thus become accepted by the clique, his language use does not fulfil the first mentioned function to the same extent than his friends', but is rather utilized for performing an identity that he has fashioned for himself. Reconsidering the narrator's Britishness, the first function of including and excluding on ethnic grounds can only be achieved in its combination with generational discrimination. If Jas is able to adopt the rudeboy language by listening to his friends and watching MTV, the ethnic boundaries drawn linguistically are permeable, whereas the generational boundary against outsiders sustains the mechanism of inclusion and exclusion.

Whereas the narrative foregrounds the aforementioned characteristics concerning lifestyle, religious discrimination, and language use as mechanisms of exclusion employed by the rudeboys, the fact of the narrator's membership rather points towards these characteristics as being mechanisms of inclusion. These three areas of the youth culture, regulated by a set of rules spelt out by the narrator, facilitate a collective identity of the group that through adaptation and imitation can be acquired by a character who appears to be an unlikely match for the rudeboys. Through the strong regulations and descriptions of rudeboy demeanour, the collective identity becomes performatively appropriable. Gender identities – and in analogy ethnic identities – are not stable identities from which various acts proceed, but rather identities that are tenuously constituted in time through a stylized repetition of specific actions (cf. Butler 1988: 520; cf. Fischer-Lichte 2004). Thus, through the repetition of acts, such as the use of language and adhering to the Rudeboy Rules, different identities can be performed as is illustrated by the rudeboys' creation of a collective identity.

6.3. Desis as a Subcultural Generation

Substantiating this interpretation's hypothesis that *Londonstani* offers a unique insight into the formation of a generationality through a genealogically discriminated narrator, the following focus on the desis as a subcultural generation aims to distinguish the generationality from the youth culture of the rudeboys. Mirroring the structure of the

previous chapter, a study of the different labels that the generationality and the youth culture employ will be the starting point for the following argument.

While it has been argued previously that the narrator consciously chooses to refer to the youth culture as rudeboys, his statement about this decision clearly indicates the temporal development of the group that leads to its formation of the generationality: "These days we try an use our own word for homeboy an so we just call ourselves desis but I still remember when we were happy with the word rudeboy" (*L* 5). Most remarkably, the phrase "these days" indicates a lasting, longstanding membership of the narrator in the group. This is, however, contrasted by the novel's plot, which shows that by the beginning of the third part of the narrative Jas is no longer one of the rudeboys because of his betrayal and his alleged involvement in Arun's suicide. Furthermore, later on Jas comments upon his friendship with Hardjit, which started only about a year prior to the narrative and only a couple of months after their introduction to Sanjay he is shunned from the clique for dating Samira. Therefore, the time he "still remember[s]" indicates the shift from the youth culture, which was open to Jas, to the generationality that defines itself as desis that could only have taken a little longer than a year. During the indeterminate time span that elapses between the end of part two and the beginning of part three, during which Arun commits suicide and Jas is spotted with Samira, a change in the group dynamics has occurred, leading to the formation of the generationality. In this time, the rudeboys as a clique have realized their potentiality as a generationality and the story-time of the narrative covers this development. Thus, although the narrator is excluded from this particular development in the course of the story and is therefore unable to relate the exact circumstances of the development because of his outsider position, restricted knowledge and insights, he still is a witness to this process.

Choosing the name "desi" for the subcultural generation has several consequences for the generationality. The term refers to the "new second generation" (Prabhat 2008: 382) that shares several cultural practices to varying degrees, such as an interest in products of popular culture like Bollywood movies, South Asian music as played on MTV Desi, food, and religion, to make up for the lack of a common language (cf. ibid.: 382).[203] This creates a generational culture that is embodied in their cultural dispositions and the postures of the individual (cf. Eyerman/Turner 1998: 93). The label 'desis' suggests "a

[203] Prabhat's definition, while definitely applicable to the desis in the United Kingdom originally focused on the United States. A reference to the post-1965 immigrants, which relates to the 1965 Immigration Act that opened the United States to immigration from South Asia amongst many other countries, is therefore neglected for this definition.

unity between the diverse groupings of the Indian subcontinent" (Mitchell 2008: 331) that because of religious, ethnic, and national differences lack a common experience of migration and a common language, which the second generation, born in Great Britain, makes up for with symbolic representation such as music, style, and fashion (cf. Giesen 2003: 65).[204] The term 'desi', referring to "countrymen" (Graham 2008: n. pag.), is a self-labelling that is exclusive on the basis of migration from the South Asian subcontinent but does not highlight the migration as an experience, which the British born generation lacks. Instead, being born in Great Britain to migrant parents is the basic common ground for the generationality and creates social closure (cf. Eyerman/Turner 1998: 93). Positively stigmatized 'otherness' and a shared cultural background are the basis from which the subcultural generation comes into being. In contrast to this defining characteristic of the desis, the common ground for the rudeboys are their toughness and dangerous aura, the Asian mafia reputation, that is to be feared by Whites. While the rudeboys are automatically associated with violence and illegal activities, the associations of the desis as a generationality rather point towards the generational culture defined by a specific set of symbolic representations such as music and style.

This claim is supported by the general use of the term 'desi' as an appreciative moniker for all characters within a certain age range who appear to be of South Asian descent. Desi thus becomes a way of implicit characterization when it is used to describe other characters because it is only used for "countrymen": "Normly if you see some other desi bredren at a club or in the street or someplace an he's got bling clothes, nice trainers an a nice car, you don't automatically have to be impressed" (*L* 151). Jas' inclusive usage of desi, which is actually a self-description and therefore excludes the narrator from using it at as a moniker for other characters, is justifiable in this passage through the shift in pronominal usage, distancing himself from the narrating *I* emotionally, actually believing he himself could share the generational identity of the desis. Further, the name is not only used for characters who share the extraordinarily expensive life-style of brand-name clothing and expensive cars but is also applied for characters that deviate from the rudeboy style:

> This desi who pulled up in the lane next to us din't even look our way once even though we were givin enuff stares at him an his silver Peugot 305. You could tell from his long hair, grungy clothes, the poncey novel an newspaper on his dashboard an Coldplay album playin in his car that he was a muthafuckin coconut. So white he was inside his brown skin, the probably talked like those gorafied desis who read the news on TV. (*L* 21)

[204] For more information on desi music see Diethrich (2000) and especially Hyder (2004).

The derogatory words "coconut" and "gorafied desis" in the narrator's use refers to someone who has completely assimilated to British mainstream culture. Calling a character "coconut" is "a way of referring pejoratively to someone who is a traitor to his ethnic roots, someone who has assimilated to the white lifestyle of the former colonialist oppressors, who has 'sold out'" (Mitchell 2008: 331). Inferring from his own performance of an identity, the narrator insults the unknown character for betraying his potential to become a rudeboy, calling him a coconut for his choice of car and music. While these lifestyle choices indeed exclude him from performing a rudeboy identity, he is still included in the generationality as the address as desi proves. It is therefore more a matter of a social choice with the "coconut" being "someone who has made a decision about fashion contrary to the particular masculine self-image which Hardjit and his group have adopted as their performative norm" (Mitchell 2008: 331 f.). Thus, while the rudeboy identity is a performance, desiness is a generational identity built on a different ground and includes characters that do not adhere to the rudeboys' code of conduct.

This further supports the argument for the desis being a generationality as it coheres with Mannheim's definition of a generational location as "the common 'location'" (1997: 289) individuals hold in society comparable to social class. As with social class, the membership in a generational location is not chosen, as it is in a social group such as the rudeboys. Therefore, even the "gorafied desis" belong to the subcultural generation that establishes social closure on the principle of skin colour (cf. Eyerman/Turner 1998: 93), whether they acknowledge it or not. The fact of belonging to the same generational location predisposes and limits the individual to a specific range of potential experience, mode of thought, and a characteristic type of historically relevant action (cf. Mannheim 1997: 291). Thus, although the "coconut" or "gorafied desi" does not share a particular part of a lifestyle, his or her being born to parents who migrated from the Indian subcontinent to Great Britain, ascribes them to a generational location in Mannheim's sense, excluding the desi from a particular range of experiences that are not available to him or her but predisposing this particular character to other experiences, modes of thought and action.

The extent of the predisposition to specific but also limited modes of thoughts and actions of the desis is portrayed in Jas' reaction to Arun's family affairs concerning his impending wedding.[205] Arun's mother appears not to be satisfied with the amount of

[205] Arun, Amit's older brother, is not a member of the rudeboys because he does not fit into the pattern of accepted behaviour and style of dress the rudeboys demand of their members, which is why he is also called a "coconut" by Jas (cf. *L* 233).

respect shown to her family by the bride's family, which she constantly reminds her son of so that he has to mediate between the families.

> – C'mon, Jas, he goes, – you know it ain't that simple. The dowry won't make up for what Mum sees as a lack of respect. But Reena's Side are hardly gonna show her more respect now that she's been dissin them over the dowry. So now I've gotta get My Side to up the respect they show Reena's Side so that Reena's Side will then show them even more respect in return. I guess I could try and tell Mum that Reena's mum said something nice about her, that might work. (*L* 196)

As Arun's remarks show, he understands his mother's problem but can neither point it out exactly nor explain the situation to Jas. The actual source of the problem, namely that his wedding will be a love instead of an arranged marriage (cf. *L* 233) to a woman of a lower caste than his own (cf. *L* 239), is not spelled out by Arun. While he is aware that these problems are the source of his mother's disapproval and – inferring from the other rudeboys' reluctance to be dragged into Arun's problems – the desis have understood this as well, the implications these information have for Arun and Amit's family are unknown to the narrator. Jas' reaction and the advice he gives Arun show that the narrator does not fully grasp the situation and does not understand why the love marriage to a girl from a lower caste could be antagonizing the concerned families. Telling Samira about Arun's problems on a date, he reveals his ignorance of the importance of maintaining specific traditions when he actually blames soap operas for Arun's mother's behaviour:

> If you ask me, it's all those desi soap operas on Zee TV. Think how many times they show slow-motion action replays a people looking angry an offended. Makes desi mothers think all this izzat shit actually matters. I mean, think about it, Samira, they spend so long watching that crap no wonder they got to invent big dramas an insults an conflicts in their heads just to make their lives as interesting as the bullshit on TV. (*L* 222)

Jas does not comprehend the scope of Arun's problems and blames it all on a media produced craving for recognition when he actually does not understand the culturally significant background of "izzat" or family honour. Therefore, his naïve advice to Arun – with Samira, whom he wants to impress, standing nearby and listening – using intertextual and intermedial references to the film trilogy *The Matrix* (1999-2003),[206] is to "challenge traditions, defeat the system that allows our elders to exploit us" (*L* 236). Arun, however, is aware of the importance the wedding traditions have for his mother and answers: "Traditions are there to be honoured" (*L* 236). With Jas neither fully

[206] Interestingly, a similar reference to *The Matrix* is made in Niven Govinden's *Graffiti my Soul* (2008 [2006]: 19) by the autodiegetic narrator Verapeen when he relates how he becomes physically violent when somebody tries to ridicule his name.

understanding the problem nor comprehending Arun's difficult situation of trying to marry the woman he loves against his parents' wishes, Arun points out the mindset that stands behind his reasoning: "I'm just talking about simple traditions that make desis different to other people" (*L* 237). Jas' innocent belief that belonging to different castes should not matter and that traditions have to be adapted to modern society in combination with his wish to impress Samira shows that he does not realize the underlying problems. The fact that neither Amit nor Hardjit or Ravi try to intervene in the drama unfolding around the love wedding but rather stay supportive and do not comment on the "family-related shit" (*L* 233) shows the difference between their understanding of the situation and Jas' exclusion from their way of thinking. Arun's comment gets to the heart of the matter, pointing out that it is the adherence to traditions that make them desis, and that exactly because of this difference, Jas will never be able to understand these things.[207]

Besides establishing the desis as a generational location that predisposes its members to a certain world-view this plotline also highlights the importance of the desis as a peer group for British born children of immigrants from the Indian subcontinent. The emergence of a distinct and relatively stable peer group, which can develop into subcultural generations, is especially important for the children of immigrants because the peer group has to fulfil socializing functions that the immigrant family cannot perform in the new society (cf. Eisenstadt 1962: 36). In addition to a normative, a comparative, and an integrative function (cf. Rheinberg 2002: 69 f.) the peer group facilitates generational differences in immigrant families by creating generational cultures. *Londonstani* shows how the desis try to develop strategies of integrating their parents' traditions and customs into their everyday life in Great Britain. Although the story of Arun's eventual suicide shows an unsuccessful attempt to integrate traditions

[207] The extent to which Jas' interference with Arun's family affair is felt as an intrusion is portrayed in a scene in which Arun challenges his mother for all the pressure she puts on him and asks Jas to come over. While Arun tries to reason with his mother about being too sensitive when it comes to the family honour, everybody blames Jas for getting involved in their family matters. While the argument between Arun and his family as reported by Jas portrays Arun and Amit's mother as absolutely unreasonable, the intermittent reconciliation between mother and son shows that in spite of all the disagreements he is willing to accept her traditions for the sake of having a peaceful wedding. Jas' disbelieving witnessing of Arun giving in to his parents' customs, which is commented upon by Arun's mother as "You not know our ways" (*L* 261), shows that he does not share the same generational location as the desis do. While the fact that this part of the plot ends in Arun's suicide, for which Jas' is partly blamed for interfering in family affairs that he cannot understand, is to be interpreted as pointed criticism of immigrant families wilfully sticking to traditions that are redundant or have lost their significance in Great Britain, it also shows that the shared experiences of the desis exclude characters who do not participate in the generational location.

into a modern lifestyle and points to unbridgeable differences between the familial generations, the generational location of the desis is a support system of peers who have made or are making similar experiences. It is therefore not only of significance that the desis share an ethnic and cultural background, but at least as important is the notion of being of the same age. Only people of at least roughly the same age can share these experiences at a particular historical time in order to be predisposed to a specific mode of thinking and acting. Thus, in the case of the desis in *Londonstani*, Arun's peers have adopted the stance of complying with their parents' wishes in some respects in order to be able to contradict them in other. The most important function of the generational location is thus to support the members in some decisions that for the outsider Jas are inexplicable so that they can create their generational culture in opposition to their preceding generation in other aspects of lifestyle and world-view.

Because subcultural generations are closely connected to youth and adolescence, their generational identity, which is a combination of the individual and collective identity (cf. Niethammer 2003: 10), is not as strong as it is in a social or historical generation. Yet although the subcultural generation misses the traumatic experience of, for example, migration, it nevertheless is able to produce a collective identity through the participation in subcultural uses of symbolic structures. The unifying effect the subcultural generation has on the very diverse groupings of the Indian subcontinent, in marked contrast to the represented community in *Maps for Lost Lovers*, is based on devaluating the experiences of previous generations (cf. Giesen 2004: 33). This implies that the preceding generations' experience of Partition and migration are devalued not in a sense that they are not respected, but that they do not have an influence on the desis in form of postmemory.

Paradigmatically, religion is an excluding as well as an including element for the desis, yet it is not a discrimination based on the experience of Partition. As the setting of Hounslow proves, the neighbourhood is a peaceful coexistence of all religions:

> Some houses had got Om symbols stuck on the wooden front doors behind glass porches, some a them had Khanda Sahibs and an other had the Muslim crescent moon. All of the had satellite TV dishes next to the main bedroom window, stuck up there like framed dentists' diploma certificates. (*L* 17)

The parents' generation, in opposition to whom the desis create their generational identity, are not divided along religious lines, but rather present a unified middle-class mentality. Thus, for the desis religion must fulfil a different function. In opposition to the general claim that children of South Asian migrants are torn between the secularized British society and the religious and traditional world of their migrant parents (cf.

Hopkins 2006: 346), the desis' highlighting the importance of religion subverts the idea of an essentialized identity but portrays a cultural hybridity (cf. Stein 1998: xii) in combining religion with secular symbolic structures. That the various religions of the South Asian migrants find recognition in one subcultural generation again highlights the unifying function the generational location has. Instead of highlighting the differences between the characters that participate in the collective identity of the desis, the participation in the generational culture shows that the characters are not so much "caught between two cultures" (Hopkins 2006: 346) but try to create a bridge between them. With the subcultural generation of the desis, which is grounded in ethnicity as well as age and characterized by the creation of a distinct generational culture, *Londonstani* has illustrated how characters realize their potential to form a generationality that is part of British popular youth culture.

6.4. Narrating the Generational Formation from a Genealogically Excluded Perspective

The argument brought forward in this interpretation of *Londonstani* – that the narrative presents the rudeboys as a youth cultural group and the desis as a subcultural generation, which have to be distinguished from one another – has foregrounded the realization of the potentiality of a desi-generationality. While the rudeboys' mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion have shown that the autodiegetic narrator indeed can be described as a member of the rudeboys, he is, however, excluded from the subcultural generation of the desis. Even though the narrator conceals his whiteness, his exclusion from the generational location of the desis becomes obvious in various instances. This discrepancy raises questions about the functions of a genealogically discriminated autodiegetic narrator in a testimony to the formation of a generationality that he cannot possibly be a part of.

Jas' genealogical disqualification from the desi-generationality in combination with his membership in the rudeboys puts the narrator into the position of a participating observer (cf. Brouillette 2009: 13). While he participates in the usage of symbolic structures such as music, clothing, and language, he yet has to witness the subcultural generation and the identity performance of the rudeboys drifting apart. Because of his White Britishness, which is only openly commented upon at the end of the narrative, he cannot empathize with the specific feeling of otherness the desis share as a generational location, while he can indeed relate to the rudeboys' performance of a collective identity (cf. Malkani 2006: n. pag.). Therefore, his association with the rudeboys offers

Jas protection, a certain self-image, a boost to his gender identity – comments on and references to the narrator's alleged homosexuality and his femininity continuously hint at Jas' lack of a masculine gender identity –, and a very rigid code of behaviour and language which allows him to overcome his inferiority complexes. As has been elaborated on in the discussion of the desi generation, the generational location is, however, much more complicated than the functions the rudeboys fulfil for Jas.

Nevertheless, his membership in the clique puts him in a position from which he can comment on the characteristics of the generationality with an expert knowledge that he gains through his initiation into the gang. Therefore, while Jas has inherited his British cultural, social, class, and legal background, he has acquired the ability to comment on the formation of a generationality that is based on the South Asian heritage of its members. Only the narrator's outsider perspective allows for a detailed description of the characteristics of a subcultural generation as presented in *Londonstani*. Therefore, the genealogically discriminated narrator functions as an informant who can provide unique insights into the formation of the generationality.

While the criticisms levelled at the novel on amount of its simplistic plot, the monodimensional characters, and the sometimes excessive use of the rudeboy-language could not be completely refuted by the analysis, this interpretation of *Londonstani* nevertheless shows how the narrative manages to provide an exceptional testimony to the formation of a subcultural generation through the perspective of an outsider who is yet sufficiently knowledgeable to comment on the process. From a generation studies' perspective the unreliability of the underreporting narrator has therefore to be judged to be an ingenious use of a narrative technique as it not only prompts the reader to re-evaluate the quality of Jas' information but even more so makes him a participating observer in a fictional narrative of a generation in the making.

Throughout the narrative the protagonist remains a static character who even at the end of the narrative does not admit to his underreporting and, although his parents help him to avoid a criminal record for breaking into and burning down his father's warehouse, he still accuses them of being hypocritical (*L* 330). His lack of development, which influences the narrative insofar as he cannot comprehend and thus not report on maturation processes in other characters if there were any, is significantly portrayed in his attempt to flirt with a hospital nurse: "I wanna show her my good manners by sayin Thank you. But Jazzy Jas Man can do better than fuckin Thank you. I shoot her a look an give it, –Shukriya" (*L* 342). Jas remains the same insecure character who pretends to be something he is not without realizing the grief he is causing. Therefore, *Londonstani*, as has been initially argued, has to be read as a negative or anti-Bildungsroman in that

the protagonist achieves no coherent self-identity (cf. Schöneich 1999: 88) but is stuck in the performance of the rudeboy identity. Jas has still not found his position in society and is still detached from his family and consequently has failed in his quest. Nevertheless, while the protagonist and narrator of *Londonstani* has failed, the formation processes of the subcultural generation have been successful and the contrasting stories at the intersection of the generational location of the desis and the genealogical discrimination of the protagonist function as catalysts for each other. Concluding, *Londonstani* is arguably an anti-Bildungsroman for the individual character Jas, but a successful novel of transformation for the collective of desi-characters that have become a generationality.

7. Genealogical Research and Generational Location in British Asian Life Writing: Sathnam Sanghera's *The Boy with the Topknot* (2009)

Complementing the range of British Asian narratives and the intersections between genealogical and generational relations they display, the focus now shifts from fictional to non-fictional narratives. The decision to include a non-fictional narrative is based on the interpretative merit of autobiographical writing as generation narratives. As discussed in chapter 3.1.2 generatiographical writing is defined by its potential to performatively produce a generational identity (cf. Bohnenkamp 2011: 16), a claim that positions generatiographies in close vicinity to pop literature. Furthermore, its close relationship to the autobiography (cf. ibid.: 127) and its function to evoke a collective cultural memory in order to represent a generationality through an autodiegetic narrator who tells his or her own life story, thus at the same time presenting him- or herself in kinship organization, makes generatiographical writing an interesting case in point to analyse the intersections of the diachronic and synchronic manifestations of generations. In the following chapter it will therefore be argued that Sathnam Sanghera's *The Boy with the Topknot: A Memoir of Love, Secrets and Lies in Wolverhampton* (2009) presents a case of life writing that incorporates elements of generatiographical writing to highlight the intersections and interdependence of genealogy and generationality for the narrator of this life story to come to terms with opposing self-conceptions.

The opposing self-conceptions of the autodiegetic narrator are dramatized in the narrative's formal structure that is split into a frame and an embedded narrative that signal the generational and genealogical location of the narrator. The initial division of the narrative is further promoted by a split in the narrative transmission into a narrating *I* and an experiencing *I*, which in some cases mirrors the argument put forward by Basseler and Birke (2005) of a remembering and a remembered *I*, and between which the distance varies considerably due to the uses of anachronisms throughout the narrative. The divide between the location in a generationality and genealogical commitments is further highlighted by a separation of narrative setting into different spaces that cohere with either self-conception. Through the thematic foci on the different narrative levels which constantly cross, the narrator's wish not to be forced into an arranged marriage on the framing level and a mental illness that runs in the family on the embedded level, the memoir eventually succeeds in conciliating the narrator's opposing self-conceptions. The narrative can thus be read as both an anti-

Bildungsroman, in that the narrator has to admit to his familial origins and ensuing responsibilities in order to confirm his social achievements, and as a kind of Bildungsroman, as the memoir closes on a reconciliatory note with narrator embracing his now coherent personal identity that is deeply rooted in belonging to both a generational and a genealogical collective identity. The main obstacle that has to be overcome in the course of the narrative to enable the reconciliation of the individual with his familial origins is, however, the repeatedly failing communication between family members, on the one hand, and the family and society, on the other hand. With the narrator and the rest of his family moving in different linguistic contexts, not only communication between the family members is impeded. Even more importantly, the narrator points towards the drawbacks of his parents not speaking English, which equals a lack of agency. Thus, through telling the story of his family the narrator not only achieves his own coherent self-conception but also aims at drawing attention to the fate that his parents share with countless other migrants in Great Britain.

Following this line of argument, this chapter will therefore first identify the generic disposition of *The Boy with the Topknot* (*BT*) as generatiographical life writing recurring to the central genre definitions to point out the characteristics of the genre. The subsequent analysis of the formal aspects of the memoir will highlight the dichotomous structure of the narrative on different levels to support the argument that the intersections of generational and genealogical relations are mirrored in the interdependence of frame and embedded narrative, the transgression of spatial boundaries, and an re-evaluation of memories through the narrator. Finally, it will be argued that the narrator's construction of a coherent self-conception is achieved by his focus on a 'genealogical other' who helps him to bring together his chosen lifestyle with familial responsibilities by offering information on the family's past that influence the individual's future.

7.1. *The Boy with the Topknot* as Generatiographical Life Writing

Defined by Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (2010 [2001]: 4) as "a general term for writing that takes a life, one's own or another's, as its subject", life writing can be "biographical, novelistic, historical, or explicitly self-referential and therefore autobiographical." [208] It can therefore be argued that narratives, which address

[208] Smith and Watson further distinguish between life writing, which connotes autobiographical writing and the literary form of the memoir, and life narratives. Life narrative is a general term for "acts of self-presentation of all kinds and in diverse media that take the producer's

generations as genealogies, generationalities, or both are always a form of 'life writing'. As representations of generations in narratives are not possible if the life stories of individual or groups of characters are not taken into consideration every literary text that touches upon generations as a classification of relations can be considered as life writing. In return, each life writing also covers aspects of the concept of 'generation' because every narrating *I* can be located at least in either a genealogical or a generational relation to other characters, if not in both. Considering generation narratives as life writings and life writings as generation narratives allows this study to include non-fictional accounts of generational and genealogical.

This conceptualization of generation narratives as life writing allows this chapter to take up the notion of generatiographical writing. Through the close relation to pop literature and the shared function of representing the collective memory of a generationality, generatiographical writing is characterized by its ability to performatively bring a generationality into being. At the same time, however, the narrative transmission through autodiegetic narrators allows for an analysis of the genealogical relations the narrator belongs to, thus highlighting the intersections of the synchronic and diachronic dimensions the narrator positions him- or herself in. Characterizing the chosen non-fictional narrative as a generatiographical life writing will illustrate the contributions this genre can make to the study of representations of genealogies and generationalities in British Asian writing. Consequently, the following argument will concentrate on identifying *The Boy with the Topknot* by Sathnam Sanghera as generatiographical writing that through its form as a memoir combines the two genres which in return leads to an intersection of generational and genealogical aspects in the narrative.

The Boy with the Topknot: A Memoir of Love, Secrets and Lies in Wolverhampton was originally published in hardback with the title *If You Don't Know Me By Now* in 2008. After being shortlisted for the Costa Biography Award in the same year, the publishers decided to change the title for the paperback edition as they were under the impression that the original title was too vague and did not convey what the book was about.[209] That this decision to change the original title was unnecessary – if not even a mistake – from a generation studies' point of view will be shown in the course of the analysis. Both editions clearly mark the text as a memoir through the subtitles and are

life as their subject, whether written, performative, visual, filmic, or digital" (Smith/Watson 2010: 4). The distinction between life writing and life narrative therefore is strictly based on the medium that the presentation of the life uses: written forms are labelled life writing, all other forms are labelled life narrative.

[209] This information was obtained in private email correspondence with the author in January 2012.

additionally labelled as non-fiction. The narrative is further distinctly marked as migration literature through both the title *The Boy with the Topknot* and a matching picture on the front cover that indicate the author's – and as it is a memoir also the narrator's[210] – ethnic background.[211] This particular marking as migration literature with an Asian focus is contrasted by the subtitle's designation of Wolverhampton as the setting of the memoir, thus already advertising the narrative as belonging to the literary market of British Asian literature. This locating of the memoir in a specific literary context is further highlighted by visual allusions to the content of the life narrative: underneath the subtitle that promises the reader love, secrets, and lies as the major themes of this memoir a picture shows seven children of Asian descent and three adults who are presumably their mothers in front of a typically British line of houses. A picture of Sanghera as a child dominates the cover and is put into the forefront of this assembly of Asian migrants. The background of his picture is a street, presumably in Wolverhampton, in which the absence of a male adult further hints at the content of the memoir. Sanghera's style of clothing on the cover specifies the setting by depicting the author in the style of the 1980s.

As the combination of the visual clues and the subtitle already gives a very precise idea of the content of the narrative, it seems rather unnecessary to change the title of the text to specify the content. The original title *If You Don't Know Me By Now*, a song by the soul group Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes (cf. Whitburn 2000: 553) that became the best-known hit of the English pop band Simply Red in 1989 (cf. <www.simplyred.com>), in combination with the visual aids would have had the same effect of framing the narrative in a temporal and spatial location, yet with a slightly different focus. The pop cultural reference, which in this context refers to the Simply Red cover of the song, would have further positioned the narrative in the 1980s in addition to the strong reference to the location in Wolverhampton through the subtitle. This would have moved the focus from the ethnic background of the author / narrator to the temporal and spatial setting of the narrative, thus probably attracting a different readership. It can be argued that through the reference to the song the memoir probably would have addressed a wider audience in the same way as generatiographical writing

[210] In this chapter the usage of author and narrator, in contrast to the previous analyses, is interchangeable in the structural discussion of the text. Therefore, when both the actual author and his narrating *I* are meant the construction 'author / narrator' will be used. In the analysis of the narrative transmission of the text the author, who is situated outside the communicative system of the text, will be neglected in favour of the 'narrator'.

[211] The topknot is traditional Hindu hairdo that in the depicted family from the Punjab signals religiousness. The picture on the cover of the paperback is the same that was used for the hardback and shows that author wearing the topknot.

attracts a readership that finds references to their own lives in the narratives. In visually highlighting and through the title marking the memoir as a distinctly British Asian experience the publishing company focuses on the marketing of migration literature at the expense of a shared generational experience of growing up in the 1980s that could exceed different ethnic backgrounds and the experience of migration or lack thereof.

Yet, although the change of title for marketing reasons does not seem to have been necessary from a generation studies' perspective, the structure of the memoir and the chapter headings pick up on the cultural references that the new title lacks. Divided into twenty-one chapters that are followed by acknowledgements and a list of illustrations, which refers to the more than thirty photographs included in the narrative, the table of contents reads like the back of a music mix tape. The chapter titles are all song titles of bands and artists that were popular during the 1980s and 1990s but also include classics of pop music such as "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" by Ewan MacColl from 1957, which was most famously performed by Roberta Flack in 1973 and repeatedly covered ever since (cf. <www.allmusic.com>). Ranging from the Pet Shop Boys and U2 to Elton John and Joy Division the broad spectrum of titles referred to by the chapters – the chosen titles hint at the content of the respective chapter sometimes more specifically than others – call upon a cultural knowledge and memory that recognizes these titles and is aware of their popularity during the time the author / narrator was growing up.

Particularly interesting to note is that in contrast to for example *Londonstani* (2007 [2006]) or *Coconut Unlimited* (2010), which rather make use of references to a decidedly British Asian music culture, *The Boy with the Topknot* employs mainstream British and American artists to embed the narrative in a specific time and place. This usage of British and American song titles can be argued to be a case of multidirectional memory (cf. Rothberg 2009) in that the author, who belongs to a British Asian community in Wolverhampton, productively uses the cultural memory that the song titles invoke to inscribe his own childhood in the broader setting of the 1980s in Great Britain.[212] Although the author / narrator's childhood is characterized and shaped by his migratory background, the use of mainstream British and American music marks the cultural influence of Great Britain on his socialization and at the same time enables the narrator to participate in the collective memory of his generationality. This argument of

[212] It could also be claimed to be an international setting of the 1980s. Although admittedly a bold claim, it does not seem to be too far fetched as most of the song titles that are used for chapter headings were extremely popular and successful in many European countries such as for example Germany. Although a time lag might be detected, the popularity of the songs is a rather European phenomenon than a decidedly British experience.

The Boy with the Topknot as an example of multidirectional memory trying to be "disengaged from exclusive versions of cultural identity and acknowledg[ing] how remembrance both cuts across and binds together diverse spatial, temporal, and cultural sites" (Rothberg 2009: 11) is supported by its form of life writing: the memoir.

In the concise definition of 'memoir' Smith and Watson (2010) distinguish between the historical and the contemporary use of the memoir. Historically, the memoir was "a mode of life narrative that situated the subject in a social environment, as either observer or participant" in which the text directs the attention "more toward the lives and actions of others than to the narrator" (Smith/Watson 2010: 274). The contemporary memoir generally refers "to life writing that takes a segment of a life, not its entirety, and focusing on interconnected experiences" (ibid.: 274). As will become clear in the analysis, *The Boy with the Topknot* can be argued to combine features of both conceptualizations of the memoir. It places the narrator within a social and historical environment, focusing on the formative years of his life, but actually reflecting upon his own childhood via his parents' experience of migration, questions of arranged marriages, illnesses that presumably run in the family, and how his family managed to cope with all this. By focusing on his parents' story the author / narrator manages to highlight the interconnections of his own, his siblings', and his parents' experiences of his childhood and at the same time puts emphasis on British popular culture of the 1980s and 1990s.

Smith and Watson further highlight a number of characteristic features of the memoir that are informative for the reading of Sanghera's life story:

> In contemporary writing, the categorization of memoir often signals autobiographical works characterized by density of language and self-reflexivity about the writing process, yoking the author's standing as a professional writer with the work's status as an aesthetic object. […] The term *memoir*, then, seems more malleable than the term *autobiography*, foregrounding historical shifts and intersecting cultural formations; and so when a narrative emphasizes its mode as memoir […] readers are invited to think about the significance of that choice and the kind of reading it invites. For life narrators […] personal memories are the primary archival source. They may have recourse to other kinds of sources – letters, journals, photographs, conversations – and to their knowledge of a historical moment. But the usefulness of such evidence for their stories lies in the ways in which they employ that evidence to support, supplement, or offer commentary on their idiosyncratic acts of remembering. (Smith/Watson 2010: 4)

Specifically the self-reflexivity of the writing process and the uncovering of personal memories, which through their narrative verbalization become transmissible in intergenerational communication, characterize the memoir at hand. The narrator repeatedly points at problems and doubts concerning his writing of the family story, comments upon the actual process of writing (cf., e.g., *BT* 230) and thus lets the reader

participate in his quest for the story of his family and himself. His own capability of remembering certain episodes of his childhood but not others is regularly addressed in that quest. Numerous photographs included in the text, which are complemented by the narrator's reports on interviews with family members, add to his private, personal memory to complete the narrative. The photographs also help the reader to set the narrative in a temporal and spatial frame, which in combination with the narrative acts of remembering, that are often closely connected to pop cultural references such as music or television shows, offer the reader a point of reference to place the narrator in a specific generationality as well as understand his genealogical relations within the family. The processes of reflecting on memories further offer a reference to the reader that might trigger his or her own memories of similar situations. This opportunity for the reader to self-reflect is encouraged by the narrative's aesthetic status that is highlighted through the narrator's reflection of his role as author. The reader is thus repeatedly reminded of the fact that this narrative is written with a specific purpose in mind and considers the spheres of personal privacy of the family members depicted in the text.

The author / narrator's responsibility for the family, which is specifically directed at the future generations of his family, is addressed in the acknowledgements: "here's to the next generation, my adorable and adored nephews and nieces: […]. Know where you come from, but don't let it stop you become who you want to be" (*BT* 321). The memoir, which is a quest to find out more about the families' history, is dedicated to the future generations who, although they do not actually figure in the narrative and do not contribute to finding out the secrets and uncovering the lies, are part of the author / narrator's intended readership. This dedication to the future generations of the Sanghera family, included in the acknowledgements that close the narrative, does not stand in contrast to the author's dedication at the beginning of the text, which reads "For my family" (*BT* n. p.), but rather points at one of the functions of the text. This function can be argued to be a report on the author / narrator's experiences of living a double life, attesting to the impossibility of a fulfilling life if one's familial roots and standing in society are not connected to each other in one way or another. Pointing out that his nephews and nieces should be aware of their background but still become who they want to be directly relates the narrative to the claim that genealogical and generational relations have to be examined at their intersections. Therefore this piece of advice that stands at the end of the narrative can actually be read as the motto of the memoir and seems much more suitable for this study's focus than the epigraph of the narrative, the Wolverhampton motto: "Out of darkness cometh light" (*BT* n. p.).

This analysis of the paratextual features of the narrative in combination with the labelling as a memoir clearly designate *The Boy with the Topknot* as an example of generatiographical life writing with the function to attest to the importance of a reconciliation of opposing self-concepts that are based on conflicting generational and genealogical locations. In the following section the representation of the dichotomous and oppositional generational and genealogical relations will be analysed on the discourse and the story level of the narrative.

7.2. Creating Intersections of Genealogical Research and Generational Location

The narrative starts off with the narrating *I*'s reflection on his situation at the time of writing. The autodiegetic narrator at this point in time is thirty years old (*BT* 1) and staying at his parents' house in Wolverhampton. Pondering his current situation, how he got there and what he is going to do next, Sanghera frames the narrative of his family by admitting to his plan to disclose important information about his life:

> This isn't where I pictured myself as a thirty-year-old. But then very little of what has happened recently was planned, and I certainly didn't expect to do what I'm going to do next. You see, after a few more weeks behind this Argos flatpack desk, and a few more bottles of this Asda own-brand vodka, I'm going to type up a letter I've been drafting, in one way or another, for half a lifetime. When I'm done, I'm going to send it to someone in India who, for an almost unethically small fee, will translate it into a language I can speak and understand but cannot read or write, and when he is done, I'm going to get him to read it out over the phone. Finally, if satisfied with the diction and the tone, I will hand it over to the person I love more than any other and let the content break her heart … (*BT* 1)

The narrating *I* starts the memoir by telling the reader about his intentions to write a letter and have it translated into an unspecified language to break a beloved person's heart. Using the present progressive to convey his intentions signals an informal style in which the narrator confides in the narratee making him an accomplice. At the same time the use of the present progressive emphasizes that the decision to go through with the plan is already made. His own resolution surprises the narrator, who in the next paragraph describes himself in general as rather avoiding conflicts than provoking them. But the "opportunity for a better life" (*BT* 2) convinces him to go through with the plan of writing the letter. This opening of the narrative does neither convey the addressee of the letter nor the content or how this could be an opportunity for a better life, thereby embedding the quest narrative in a wider frame that aims at an emancipation of the narrator and his ambitions to attain what he understands to be a better life.

Only through the development of the second storyline, which takes the narrating *I* back to an experiencing *I* aged twenty-four, does it become clear that the addressee of the letter is the narrator's mother and that the letter will refer to the narrator's lifestyle, which he believes his mother will not approve of. However, the introduction of this second temporal level that is embedded in the narrator's reflection on his plans reveals the tensions which develop at the intersection of the responsibility for the family and the personal freedom of the individual.

> Things were different six years ago, when I was twenty-four. I worked for a newspaper then, a job in the media, writing about the media; I had a girlfriend – let's call her Laura, and let's say she was a TV producer – and I didn't split my time between London and my parents' home in Wolverhampton as I do now. In those days, coming to the West Midlands was a monthly, sometimes fortnightly occurrence. And the weekend it all began, I was due to come to see my parents after a guilty gap of nine weeks. (*BT* 2)

This analepsis reaches back six years to the weekend during which the narrator finds out about his father suffering from schizophrenia. This had been kept a secret from the narrator until he finds out about it by accident (cf. *BT* 19). Thus the main storyline of the narrator's finding out about the mental illness that not only his father but also one of his siblings suffers from unfolds through the spatial return to Wolverhampton from his place of residence in London.

The introduction of the second storyline further gives information on the lifestyle the narrator has in London when he is twenty-four years old, working as a journalist, in a relationship with a woman whose assumed name leads to the conclusion that she does not share the narrator's ethnic background, and irregular personal contact with his parents. That this style of living has – at least to a certain degree – changed sometime since the narrator first learned about the mental illness affecting two members of his family is implied at the beginning of the narrative when the narrating *I* admits that he his surprised to find himself sitting in his parents' house writing the memoir (cf. *BT* 1). The reasons for this change in lifestyle, which is closely related to the writing of the memoir and can be argued to be its catalyst, have to be analysed against the backdrop of the connections between the two storylines.

Before the change in lifestyle can be discussed in further detail, the narrative's status quo at the time before the change has to be considered as the narrating *I* uses this as the reference point from which to develop a picture of his situation. Thus, after introducing the elaboration with "the weekend it all began" the narrator ascribes himself to "middle-class London life: never confess to religiosity (you may as well confess to paedophilia); never admit to being impressed by a celebrity you've met (you may as well confess to paedophilia); and always moan about your job (it seems the price of a flash job in your

twenties is self-loathing)" (*BT* 2). The affiliation to this London middle-class incorporates a particular world-view and mindset of the members, which the narrator contrasts with his previous behaviour:

> In practice this meant suppressing the fact that there was once a time when I prayed for an hour every day, concealing the fact that I'd entered the number of every celebrity I'd ever interviewed into my mobile phone, and ignoring the voice of the Indian immigrant in my head which, during the Hebridean bricklaying fantasies, kept on muttering: *there's a lot to be said for an office job and an opportunity to contribute to a money purchase pension scheme.* (*BT* 2 f.)

It is clear from the beginning that the narrator is torn between the London middle-class and his Wolverhampton background. In its description the London middle-class is strongly reminding of Mannheim's 'generation location':

> [I]ndividuals sharing […] a common location in the social and historical process, and thereby limit them to a specific range of potential experience, predisposing them for a certain characteristic mode of thought and experience, and a characteristic type of historically relevant action. (Mannheim 1997: 291)

The most important characteristic of the generation location in this respect is that it always "excludes a large number of possible modes of thought, experience, feeling, and action, and restricts the range of self-expression open to the individual to certain circumscribed possibilities" (ibid.: 291). Belonging to the London middle-class thus means having to deny his previous attitudes in order to be fully accepted by the members of the location. The features the narrator lists as characteristics of the London middle-class are not strictly restricted to markers of a social class (cf. Berger 2002: 271-275) – especially because they do not highlight the group's economic situation – but are the characteristics of a generational location. The common mode of thought and experience expressed in this description of the generational location by the affiliated narrator can likewise be conceptualized as a generationality (cf. Reulecke 2008: 119) in that it is marked by its self-description as belonging in a particular historical point in time and space, in a "Zeitheimat" (Reulecke 2007: 43).

His belonging to the generationality in this particular *Zeitheimat*, on the one hand, is emphasized by the narrator's distinction between his mindset at the time of belonging to this generationality and his world-view of the time before, which is marked by the phrase "there was once a time", signalling that this time is over. On the other hand, the affiliation to this group is restricted to the temporal and spatial location of London, which stands in sharp contrast to the narrator's life in Wolverhampton. Only in the particular *Zeitheimat*, being twenty-four years old, living in London and pursuing a

specific career, is the narrator able to affiliate himself successfully with this generationality.

The quality of his affiliation with this group can, however, be questioned as he immediately sets himself apart from the London middle-class by admitting to his pride in knowing and having the phone numbers of famous people and his satisfaction with his rather secure job. That the narrator relates his personal work ethic with his Indian background attests to the importance of his socialization in the development of his value judgements. Therefore, from the beginning of the narrative the tensions that develop at the intersection of the narrator's ascription to a generationality, which is strongly connected to London, and his genealogical reliabilities towards his family, who he has to visit regularly and who has been formative in the development of his value system, are established as a major theme of the memoir.[213] Mentioning language difficulties in communication with his family, the girlfriend from a different ethnic background, the Indian socialization, and the role of religion indicate that these tensions are exacerbated through his migratory background.

It is this conflict between generational location or generationality and the responsibilities that arise out of his genealogical relations that establishes the interconnection between the two storylines, of which the second starts with the narrator's visit to his parents' home in Wolverhampton. The first description of the narrator's arrival in Wolverhampton reinforces the impression that the two lives the narrator conveys in the two storylines of his memoir are very much connected to the respective spatial settings. Wolverhampton is contrasted with London and both places are highly invested with meaning and stand in absolute opposition to each other.

Wolverhampton is the narrator's hometown where he spent his childhood and teenage years before leaving to first go to university in Cambridge (cf. *BT* 256) and then moving on to London: "I left the town for university as soon as I could and never came back" (*BT* 12). This statement is made by the narrator's experiencing *I* on a temporal level six years prior to the frame narrative. On this temporal and narrative level London stands in contrast to Wolverhampton as the narrator conceals his lifestyle and relationships from his family (cf. *BT* 38-49). London thus signifies personal freedom and likeminded peers, whereas Wolverhampton connotes the traditional Indian family and peer pressure "from siblings and contemporaries to marry someone from your own culture" (*BT* 44). Therefore in this analepsis the two settings do not have any points of contact, a situation

[213] The narrator's duty to regularly visit his family, meetings during which he is informed about the different family member's doings, supports Vera King's argument for a generational rivalry for time (cf. chapter 2.2.2).

that changes in the course of the narrative until in the end the aforementioned letter is handed over to the mother in the narrator's flat in London. The narrator thus eventually succeeds in his emancipation from the expectations of his family, especially his mother's, which is highlighted by the transgression of the strict borders between the two settings in London and Wolverhampton and the narrator dividing his time between the two places.

The second storyline, which as mentioned before starts with this visit to Wolverhampton, functions both as a foil and as a supplement to the first, a process the narrator explicitly comments upon: "Apart from being part of the strategy to explain myself to my family, I realized that my family story was important in itself. […] It was a way of bringing the various aspects of my life together" (*BT* 143). While the framing first storyline is concerned with the narrator's emancipation from his family the second highlights the importance of the genealogical ties that hold this family together. It is the quest to uncover the secrets and lies announced in the subtitle, which implicates the narrator's understanding of his father's and oldest sister's mental illness and the consequences the schizophrenia has for both the individuals and the family. Both storylines, which are at the same time levels of narrative transmission in that most of the events take place on the second level, the level of the experiencing *I*, are mediated by the narrating *I* on the first level: "So I didn't realize my father and eldest sister suffered from schizophrenia until my mid-twenties; I didn't start confronting what that means until my late twenties; and it is only now, at thirty, that I feel the need to talk about it" (*BT* 20). The narrator and other characters' memories, letters, and photographs complement the narrative.

However, the two levels of narration cannot be clearly distinguished from each other as the reasons for the emancipation process that dominates the narration of the narrating *I* aged thirty are included in the second temporal level. Both storylines are interspersed with memories and narrative comments that transgress the borders of the narrative levels, repeatedly breaking up the temporal structure of the memoir, thereby adding to the dynamics of the narrative and resembling the dynamics of memories.[214] This contentual interweaving of the structurally separate narratives allegorically represents the two distinct but not separate constituents of the concept of 'generation', namely the genealogical and the generational relations, that the narrator points out to be existential in the motto he dedicates to the next generation. The focus of the memoir and this

[214] According to Löschnigg (2008: 35) these dynamics of memory in combination with the selection and narrative structuring can be argued to provide the memoir with elements of fictionality providing room for interpretation of the narrated events and memories.

interpretation of it are shifted towards the second storyline as it informs the frame narrative. It introduces the necessary information on setting, characters and plot, thereby situating the "autobiographical act in a story, a story in time and place" (Smith/Watson 2010: 63).

Upon arrival in Wolverhampton the city is described as a "sight of rusty corrugated roofs and polluted land dissected by lines of poisoned, trolley-strewn canalways" in which the narrator is "related to at least a third of the cabbies" (*BT* 4). The setting is thus intricately connected to the narrator's family relations, a fact the narrator is aware of but does not act upon, which leads to cultural conflicts between the narrator's London lifestyle and Wolverhampton tradition:

> […] the cabbie, on seeing you are a relative, will feel honour-bound not to charge you; but you, knowing the cabbie will have been queuing for some time for a lucrative fare, will feel honour-bound to insist he takes payment. Like so many social interactions in the Sikh community, the encounter will end in a kind of wrestling match, with one person trying to thrust money on the other, the other refusing to accept, and both people ending up offended and possibly physically bruised by the other's persistence. (*BT* 4)

This description of an interaction between two related members of a Sikh community establishes the narrator's ironic and sometimes dismissive attitude towards the rules of social interaction as generally accepted by the community. The humorous tone in which the narrator depicts this situation is used to hide his discomfort, which becomes obvious in his trying to avoid such an encounter. However, even if the interaction is defused by the cab driver not being related to the narrator, he fails to establish a successful communication by not being able to answer the basic questions about his family's history – which he fails to recognize as a personal negligence that concerns all his family matters in interaction with cab drivers in both London and in Wolverhampton (cf. *BT* 5) – and ignoring the rules of social interaction: "I'd forgotten people don't tip in the West Midlands" (*BT* 7). While the failure of the communication is mainly based on the narrator's ignorance when it comes to basic rules of interaction within different social settings, it is intensified by his lacking Punjabi language skills (cf. *BT* 6).

These language difficulties, introduced in the beginning by the idea of having the letter translated in India and again highlighted in this situation with the cab driver, are repeatedly brought up and run through the narrative like a golden thread. The narrator's meta-commentary on his own language skills instead of questioning the authenticity of the memoir, especially his accounts of his parents' early marriage which he mainly gathers in interviews with Punjabi speaking relatives, are used as self-referential comment on the difficulties of writing a migration memoir. By returning to questions of understanding, voice, and translation processes the narrator makes an important point in

overcoming a form of speechlessness the family is subjected to in that it lacks the means to communicate its history. In this aspect Sanghera's narrative and its highlighting of overcoming language difficulties is a prime example of language being a means of power and knowledge that is constitutive to gain an agency (cf. Stein 1998: 93). In narrativizing the memories of his family and thus making them available inter- as well as intragenerationally the narrator at the same time uncovers his family history, which is dominated by his father's schizophrenia, and gives agency to a group stigmatized by the illness and its ramifications (cf. *BT* 293).[215]

While this stigmatized group is mainly Sanghera's close family, the narrator's search for information on his parents' respective migrations, their early years in Britain, the illness of his father and his sister lead him to interview members of his extended family in the course of the narrative. As his parents' memories fail on occasions only 'outsiders' can supplement the story. The focus of the embedded narrative thus lies on the narrator's father and his eldest sister Narinder, called Puli, and their mental illness and how it influenced his parents' marriage. The focus of the frame narrative, in which the narrator aims at explaining himself to his family, in particular to his mother, focuses on her and his siblings as they, in contrast to the narrator, lead a similar lifestyle to their parents. As both storylines focus on a set of characters that is restricted to the narrator's nuclear family – with the exception of very few members of the extended family and some minor, yet important characters in London – it is again impossible and not helpful to strictly separate the characters in analysis of the generational and genealogical relations they form. Instead, after having established that the intersections of the frame and the embedded narrative signal the intersections between generational and genealogical relations, the importance of the different relations will be highlighted in the analysis to be able to determine the functions the relations have and how they are narratively created.

[215] This point becomes particularly clear when the narrator interviews family members to uncover his family's past and after talking to his aunt and uncle, who still do not know about Cugi's (his father's) mental illness, remarks: "Despite having had to live with such trauma, not only did my uncle and aunt still not have the diagnosis of schizophrenia, they still didn't realize my father had a mental illness. I felt a deep well of pity for them and for my father and mother, brief astonishment at the incredible ability of families to not discuss things, and then a powerful surge of anger at the multiculturalists out there who argue that immigrants shouldn't be forced to learn English. This is the consequence of not understanding English. It means ethnic communities can't educate themselves, don't understand what is happening even when the most extreme things occur" (*BT* 222). This unmistakably political statement pinpoints the narrative's function of showing the importance of gaining agency through language and education.

From the second chapter onwards, years after finding out about his father's schizophrenia through a letter tucked away with medication in his mother's trunk for a trip to India, the narrator seems to take a step back from his family, actually looking at his parents differently from before. The chapter entitled "Vertigo" – a U2 song from the 2004 album *How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb* – offers an opportunity for Sanghera to revisit the characterization of his family. In the beginning of the memoir, first introducing the characters, the narrator seems to put on a condescending attitude towards his family when coming for a visit to Wolverhampton:

> Dad appeared first. Slouched and barefoot, he walked up to me slowly, shook my hand, patted me on the back and returned soundlessly to his armchair in the living room. Next, Mum came out of the kitchen smiling, looking broad in a *chuni*, a scarf and a shawl, and gave me a suffocating hug. She then took me to a sideboard in the kitchen, where she had laid out, waiting for me, a large cauldron full of birdseed, a tin of spinach, a packet of kidney beans, and a tin of plum tomatoes. First, I was instructed to wash my hands and run them through the birdseed. Then I was told to touch, in specific order, the packaged foodstuffs. Finally, she fetched a single large red chilli from the larder, squeezed it between her fingers, and, after circling it around my head five times, set it alight on the gas stove. Centuries of superstition have probably gone into each element of this ritual, none of which I understand fully […]. (*BT* 8 f.)

The narrator's account of this meeting his parents after nine weeks (*BT* 2) of not visiting them in Wolverhampton creates an atmosphere of sceptical distance. The welcome between father and son does not appear to be very cordial: a mere handshake and a pat on the back before Jagjit, Sanghera's father whose nickname is Cugi (cf. *BT* 147), wordlessly returns to his previous occupation. However, the narrator does not comment on this behaviour or describe it as odd or unusual, which creates the impression that this is the father's regular demeanour. His outward appearance is not described, a fact that highlights the mentioning of him being barefoot. Describing the character as "slouched" invokes an appearance of neglect and lacking physical activity. Reporting on his father's few belongings upon checking his parents' suitcases for the planned trip to India the narrator admits:

> It's astonishing how little my father owns – in the whole house, the only thing he uses for himself is one cupboard, which rarely contains more than a few jackets, trousers and jumpers. He owns no records, no books, no photos, no documents, no mementos. Anyone sifting through his things would think he didn't exist. And sometimes it is like he doesn't exist: while at five foot ten and fifteen and a half stone there's a lot of him to see, he pads around the house as soundlessly as a cat; he is as spare in his remarks as a monk, and more often than we'd probably admit, we forget he is there. (*BT* 16)

The lack of belongings indicates that Cugi is not a very active person. Without hobbies and no interest in the past there is nothing that physically proves the man's existence

and life in this house. That his own family on occasions forgets that he is in the house shows how little Sanghera's father participates in the family life.

In contrast to this notion of decay connected with his father, Sanghera describes his mother Surjit, whose nickname is Jito (cf. *BT* 147), as "looking broad", which indicates a robust build, and wearing traditional Indian clothing, a long scarf that covers the head and both shoulders. After this first encounter, in which the narrator mainly focuses on the differences between his parents and it appears that his mother bears her age better than his father, he notices that "[s]tanding next to me, she seemed smaller than before" (*BT* 15). Although his mother had been complaining about being old and tired even when she was only thirty years old, "she was now beginning to look it" (*BT* 15).

The account of the ritual his mother has the narrator perform upon entering the house to get rid of *nazar* (cf. *BT* 9), the evil eye, is rendered in the passive voice showing the narrator's lack of interest and participation in these superstitions as well as his helplessness in the face of his mother's wishes. Although he clearly does not believe in the ritual, and even mocks his mother for her superstition, he does not object to her: "While the chilli snapped and crackled, my mother, contrary to her nature, didn't utter a single word, and as she stood with her hands held up in prayer, I padded off to the living room" (*BT* 9). Instead of objecting to the ritual the narrator 'pads off', thus portraying himself as a seemingly indifferent and awkward bystander in his family.

This notion of the narrator being a bystander rather than a member of the family is reinforced by his initial introduction of his siblings:

> My siblings were all married to spouses of the correct race, religion and caste by the age of twenty-one, whereas I, at twenty-four, was secretly dating someone of the wrong race and religion and no caste whatsoever. And while they had two children apiece, I had … well, a rather large record collection, the highlight of which was every track ever recorded by George Michael. (*BT* 12)

In comparison with his three older siblings, his "eldest sister Narinder, known as Puli, followed by my elder sister Balbinder, known as Bindi, and my elder brother Jasmail, known as Rajah" (*BT* 12),[216] Sanghera again draws attention to his different choices in lifestyle and points out that of the four children he is the only one not following his parents' life plan. Unmarried and childless, "the family freak in most respects" (*BT* 12), the narrator is the only one of the four who has left Wolverhampton. In the following description of his siblings' arrival at the parental home it becomes clear that in contrast to Sanghera, who upon entering the house has to undergo spiritual rituals to save him

[216] Referring to his siblings the narrator consistently uses their nicknames. This custom of designation is taken over in this chapter.

from the evil eye against his will, the others are more intimately involved in their parents' lives.

> On arriving, Puli, a housewife, left her two kids and market-trader husband downstairs in the living room and went upstairs for a lie down. Bindi, also a housewife, left her taxi-driving husband and two kids downstairs in the living room and went to fix some food in the kitchen. My brother's wife, Ruky, who was then working as a bank cashier but is now a driving instructor, joined Bindi, while Rajah, a middle manager, took a seat with his two kids downstairs and did what he always does best: looked way too good for his age. (*BT* 12)

Puli, Bindi, and Rajah appear to be familiar with the ascribed gender roles they have to fulfil upon returning to their parents' household while the narrator stands by and watches the familial fabric falling into place.[217] Interestingly, Sanghera, with the exception of his brother's good looks, again does not comment on his siblings' outer appearance but rather characterizes them via their occupation. This leads to a direct comparison between Puli and Bindi's behaviour, as both of them are housewives with two children. Yet, Puli, upon entering the house goes to take a rest, whereas Bindi goes to help her mother in the kitchen. Sanghera's twenty-four year old experiencing *I* does not comment further on this behaviour, which he apparently does not consider strange. Reducing the sisters' husbands to their occupations, on the one hand, signifies their standing in the family as the breadwinners. On the other hand, the narrator employs the occupational stereotypes for his humorous tone of narration. The exception to this is Ruky, who although married with two children works outside the house and earns her own money. Although Ruky, judging from her occupation, is an emancipated wife to Rajah, upon entering the Sanghera household falls into the ascribed gender roles just as much as her sisters-in-law who are-stay-at-home mothers. Again, this behaviour is not further questioned or commented upon by the narrating *I* although it has already been established that it stands in contrast with his London middle-class attitude. Belonging to a generationality that defines itself via their members' occupation in the media and which is not gender biased, it is a significant character trait in both narrating and

[217] The gender differences in the family and the irritation they cause in the narrator are for example described in the memory of the narrator's eldest sister Puli's arranged marriage. When the prospective groom and his family come to visit the Sangheras in 1989 the narrator evaluates the memory as very vivid, "in part because it was so unusual to see men and women of my parents' generation sitting in the same room together" (*BT* 172). As on other occasions the "men segregated themselves into the front room, while the women drifted into the living room" (*BT* 172) the transgression of the usual gender divides sticks in the narrator's memory. Interestingly, in his account of the behaviour of male and female members of the Indian community of his parents' generation the narrator inserts a footnote in which he comments upon "[s]econd-generation couples" (*BT* 173) of his family who have inherited the habit.

experiencing *I* that he does not criticize the strict gender roles prevailing in his parents' house and concentrates on occupations to be able to locate himself in relation to his siblings and their spouses.

The apportionment of work, in which the women prepare the food in the kitchen while the men sit in the living room watching television as related by the narrator, for him is remarkable enough to mention, but again nothing he objects to. This way the narrator emphasizes his position of a detached observer rather than a member of this family who in order to navigate his way in this setting obeys a set of laws utterly contradictory to the laws of the London middle-class:

> never confess to religious doubt (you may as well confess to paedophilia); never get annoyed with repeatedly explaining what you do for a living (unless you're a doctor or an IT consultant, they won't understand); and never admit to a male relative that you don't want to drink. (*BT* 14)

Again a set of stereotypes is called upon in a humorous way that implies the narrator's latent condescension but also his lack of understanding and participation in his family life. His position within the family is thus comparable with his father's. Although Sanghera is not forgotten or ignored by the other family members, he is constantly teased with suggestions such as that his "hairstyle and jumper were 'gay'" (*BT* 13), with relatives laughing at him because of his language, and his aversion to going to the local pub with the male members of the family. Thus, his position as an outsider is comparable to his father's with the difference that the family tries to include the rather reluctant narrator in the family life whereas in his father's case everyone seems to have accepted the situation.

This initial characterization of the narrator's family is marked by its use of binary oppositions and the ambivalent attitude of the narrator himself. He offers observations on his father and mother that construct them as an oppositional pair that does not seem to have anything in common. He introduces his siblings in contrasting them with each other and their spouses, not really seeing himself as a member of this familial generation as he does not share his siblings' lifestyle. The narrator evokes the impression that the generational location he has found in London is more important for his self-conception than his genealogical location in his family. Therefore, his visit to Wolverhampton – before he finds out about the mental illness – is characterized by his incomprehension of the family structures at work.

In portraying his family the narrator has also described himself, how he sees himself in this family, and it has become clear that the generational location offers a more attractive potential for identification than his family does. In his description of the

evening before coming to Wolverhampton the importance not only of the social status but more so of the bearing of the characters involved shows how different the two lives of the narrator are:

> All the guests, like us, worked in the media, the menu consisted of recipes from Jamie Oliver's *The Naked Chef*, and discussion ranged from complaints about Tony Blair's religiosity, to complaints about the celebrities we'd respectively met, to extended moaning about how we wanted to quit our lousy highly paid jobs, which allowed us to meet our heroes, wangle backstage tickets and hold the high and mighty to account, in favour of less stressful, more meaningful lives as bricklayers in the Outer Hebrides. (*BT* 2)

The distance between the described situation in Wolverhampton and this last dinner in London before the visit, in which the narrator characterizes his friends and implicitly also his girlfriend Laura, could not be any greater. The close proximity to his contemporaries creates and widens the distance to his genealogical relation in form of the lineal ties to his parents as well as the collateral ties to his siblings (cf. Zerubavel 2011: 31).

This ratio of proximity and distance changes with the beginning of the chapter "Vertigo", at which the narrator figuratively tries to dismantle the atomic bomb of his discovery. Upon finding out that his father was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia as early as 1969 and additionally suffers from diabetes the narrator's reaction shows his absolute ignorance of this fact: "Blinking at the words, I thought: fuck. *Schizophrenia*. And then: *Christ*. That's what my sister Puli must have too" (*BT* 19). Although the narrator has described the strange behaviour of his father and his sister he has apparently never thought about where this behaviour comes from. Even more surprising as the opening paragraph of "Vertigo" states, the narrator did not act upon this information in any way until a couple of years later, raising questions that highlight his detachment from his family: "How can someone grow up with two members of their family suffering from a severe mental illness, the most severe mental illness around, without realizing it? How can someone discover this fact and then not try to find out more for another five years?" (*BT* 20) At this point it is hard to determine which character trait best describes the narrator's lacking motivation to find out more about the illness of his father and sister. Giving a list of eleven reasons why he did not try to find out more, "inertia" (*BT* 22) being one besides the narrator's own most important reason: "An aversion to delving into the past" (*BT* 22). The list is reminiscent of the stylistic device of list-making used in pop literature but does not serve the function of ordering or archiving but is rather an incoherent accumulation of reasons that functions as a

reassurance of the narrator's identity (cf. Nünning/Nünning 2009: 300; cf. *BT* 25 f.).[218] While this reflexion on memory will be returned to, from a generation studies' perspective on the list, the last entry is most interesting listing:

> Happiness. Despite the strain of having to keep my London life secret from my family, I was reasonably content. Loving my job, having interesting friends and being in a fulfilling relationship, the notion of going back to Wolverhampton, a town I was desperate to leave as a youth, to delve into my family's problems with schizophrenia wasn't appealing. (*BT* 23)

Although the narrator himself argues his unwillingness to revisit and re-evaluate his childhood memories to be the most important reason for not dealing with the knowledge of the mental illness, his personal happiness connected to his double life in London actually seems to be important, too.

This interpretation is supported by a second list, which the narrator uses to point out the "more profound differences" (*BT* 25) between his life in London and his family's life in Wolverhampton, eventually concluding that he had become "a coconut" (*BT* 26): "[W]hile almost everyone I dealt with in London was white, and while I sometimes forgot I was Asian […] almost everyone in my former Wolverhampton life was Asian" (*BT* 26). While the narrator highlights the racial difference between his two lives as an obstacle preventing reconciliation, it appears the aforementioned character trait of recoiling from conflicts is the actual reason:

> To go from this to actually dating an English girl, to go from being singled out as the perfect Sikh child – my brother and father didn't have long hair, but Mum found God before she had me and decided to raise me as a religious experiment – to being the one member of the family who wasn't doing the expected thing, was difficult to confront. It wasn't something I could get my head around or wanted to get my head around. (*BT* 27)

The narrator uses both his family members' characterization as well as the embedded storyline about the schizophrenia to point out the crucial questions of the frame narrative and characterizes himself implicitly. The reasons Sanghera gives for not dealing with his knowledge, for not delving into the past, for not caring more for his family are all his own character traits that lead to the fact of coming to terms with the tensions his generational and genealogical ties create in order to reconcile them. That the narrator mentions his upbringing as a "religious experiment" in addition to the

[218] The device of lists is further used for example to collect the symptoms of paranoid schizophrenia the narrator's father exhibits (*BT* 89) which leads the narrator to evaluate his own behaviour according to the catalogue of diagnostic symptoms and to reveal the narrator's preconceptions about the illness to be wrong (*BT* 92). Both lists also have a didactic function for the reader as well as for the narrator who again gains some reassurance of himself by listing symptoms and prejudices towards schizophrenia making sure that he in fact does not suffer from this mental illness running in his family.

aforementioned status as "family freak" (*BT* 12) further marks his position in the family as an outsider who for some reason does not fit in properly.

The eventual catalyst that triggers a process of reconciliation almost six years later is the narrator's break up with a girl that causes him to spend some time at his parents' house wallowing in self-pity (cf. *BT* 50 ff.). While staying with his parents he eventually realizes that the separation of his two lives is not working out and decides to write the letter to his mother, which is first mentioned at the very beginning of the narrative. As his emancipation from his families' expectations of him is intricately interconnected with knowing about his family, the narrator, after "six failed relationships and the prospect of an arranged marriage" (*BT* 61), finally decides to figure out how he got into the position he is in:

> I had to make sure I was sure, and to be sure, I had to make sense of how and why I had ended up in this position. I also had to find out about my parents' story. For if there was one thing I knew Mum would say, in the firestorm that followed a confrontation, it was: 'If you knew what your father and I had been through, you wouldn't do this.' (*BT* 61)

It is thus the argued intersection of the story levels that the narrator uses to insure himself against failure of the emancipation process that leads him to deal with his family's history, not even specifically focusing on the mental illness. For this narrative the hereditary component of the mental illness, which although paranoid schizophrenia is not a genetic illness increases the chance of several family members being affected by the illness (cf. *BT* 293), is not as strong a motivation as the narrator's need to legitimize his own actions. It can thus be argued that until the narrator starts to grapple with the consequences of his father's and sister's schizophrenia the only aim is to explain and emancipate himself. Until this point the narrative is self-involved with the narrator's understanding of his current predicament.

The self-referentiality of the narrative is, however, broken up when the so far chronological embedded narration is interrupted by multiple analepses in which the narrator revisits childhood memories. Of the five analepses in the chapter "Vertigo" four start with "… I remember […]" (*BT* 28, 29, 30, 31) and the last adding a quality judgment with "… My most detailed early memory […]" (*BT* 32). Pointing out that the narrator himself does not "entirely trust" (*BT* 28) his memories they finally give a much more detailed characterization of the family members than the explicit statements by the narrating *I*. The analepses each cover an important memory, such as the narrator's first memory of listening to pop music on the radio, a trip to India that leaves the narrator confused about where his home is, or the race riots in Birmingham in 1981. The last memory of this particular chapter is an interesting characterization of Puli, Bindi, and

Rajah and shows how the narrator always feels like an outsider because of the age difference to his siblings:

> They're all there now, milling. Rajah, already the best-looking boy in Park Village, who has my mother in a permanent frenzy of chilli-twirling, is carrying a leather schoolbag which I think is cool. Puli, in a skirt that has an extension sewn on to the hem for the two inches she has grown in the past year, is sporting a bright red badge on her hand-knitted cardigan, which I think is even cooler. Meanwhile, Bindi – thin and sniffly as she is in all my memories, wearing a uniform that she has, most likely, slept in, to give her an extra ten minutes in bed – is talking to Puli in English, which I think is the coolest thing in the world, the solar system, the galaxy, the universe. This is why, I think, the memory is unusually vivid. It's the only time I remember not being able to understand English, wanting to speak it, if only to be part of my siblings' club. (*BT* 33 f.)

This memory, according to the narrator, dates back to 1979 when Sanghera was three years old. With Rajah being three years older than the narrator, he is aged six in this memory. The characterization of Rajah, however, describes him as the best-looking boy at in Park Village, which is either a mingling of the narrator's subjective brotherly envy, or the memory actually mixes different situations in which the siblings are remembered older than they are at the time of the event. However trustworthy the narrator evaluates the memory to be, the main point is Sanghera's feeling of being left behind by his siblings who are all able to speak English while he has not yet learned the foreign language.

Similar to the earlier portrayal of his siblings, the narrator describes them as a set of characters that form a collateral kinship tie to which he appears not to belong. However, instead of characterizing them via their occupation or martial status as before, the characters now become alive in that they are ascribed character traits. These childhood memories thus characterize the siblings as individuals instead of just members of a family who all play their assigned social roles. Interestingly, it is the memory of not being able to speak English that reminds the narrator of this scene, of his siblings' club, when in the earlier characterization it was his inability to speak fluent Punjabi that made him the outsider. The importance of language and agency is thus reinforced through this memory.

That this particular memory is subjected to the narrator's interpretation of the remembered events is shown in the portrayal of his father in this situation. Although Sanghera's father at the time of this event had been unemployed for the last six years, unable to work due to his schizophrenia, he therefore must have been diagnosed as such around the time of Rajah's birth, the narrator thought that in his memory his father had left the house after his children to go to work.

> He glances at the electric wall clock, its wires feeding directly into the socket to save the cost of a plug, and then back at his watch, fastened upside down on his left wrist. He switches his gaze back and forth five or six times. Then he puts his hand into his trouser pocket and pulls out his keys and puts them back. He does this five or six times too. (*BT* 36)

The obsessive behaviour upon leaving the house, checking the time and the keys, in the memory again does not strike the narrator as odd. He does not even consider the fact that his father glances at a watch that he wears upside down on his wrist as odd. With the experiencing *I* only three years old, the detailed memory is remarkable and the detailed narration has the effect that the reader is inclined to trust his narration as a state of youthful naivety. Furthermore, the narrator's assumption that his father was going to work, although obviously his suspicion that he worked in a factory and went there "dressed in a suit and tie" (*BT* 35), is encouraged by his mother's response to the experiencing *I*'s question: "'Do you work in a factory?' Something makes me think that dads work in factories. As she does so often, Mum answers for him. 'Yes, son. Your Dedi's off to work'" (*BT* 37). This memory had dominated the narrator's view of his parents for more than twenty years (cf. *BT* 37) and the realization of what had actually been going on – "If anything, he was going to have his weekly injection of Modecate, otherwise known as fluphenazine decanoate, which belongs to a group of drugs known as phenothiazine antipsychotics and acts by blocking receptors in the brain" (*BT* 37) – forces the narrating *I* to re-evaluate all his family memories in order to be able to distinguish between how his family really is and how he imagined it (cf. *BT* 234 ff.).

Reassessing his relationship with his father with the knowledge of his illness does not, however, lead the narrator to any other conclusion but that his childhood memories were "generally warm" (*BT* 24). Pointing out that it is "fashionable nowadays to lay claim to a miserable youth, to confess to having been fed cat litter by your parents and posted off to Pakistan at thirteen to be forced into a marriage with a moustachioed sixty-four-year-old uncle" (*BT* 24) Sanghera mocks the chosen genre of his narrative as being typically dominated by misery stories of immigrants who do not have a chance to integrate into the host society (cf. *BT* 242). In contrasting his narrative with the mentioned confession stories Sanghera emphasizes the mode as memoir to invite the reader to think about the significance of that choice of genre (cf. Smith/Watson 2010: 4). The contrast to the confessional stories highlights the narrator's own integration into society which he points out from the beginning in the form of references to popular culture and his affiliation to the generationality of his peers in London. Thus, the memoir takes the form of a reverse Bildungsroman in which the narrator is looking to

find his place in his own family rather than in society. The mode of the memoir and the reading it invites thus aim at exactly this function: reintegration in the family.

Yet, the memories of his childhood, especially those in which his father plays an important role, are indeed memories of a "happy childhood" (*BT* 24). He thus dedicates a whole chapter, "Sign Your Name" (*BT* 67-82), to his father taking care of him, which included taking him to and picking him up from school several times a day, taking the children to "dentist's appointments, to the library" (*BT* 68) and during the holidays to the park. The traditional gender and caretaking roles, which were described in relation to the family's daughters, are partially reversed by the illness. Yet, the father fails at central points in the family life, which his older children have to make up for. Being asked in school what his last name was, the narrator – raised by his mother in the belief that it was 'Singh', translating as 'lion' (cf. *BT* 73), a "'name shared by every Sikh man and a name to be proud of'" (*BT* 73, cf. *BT* 147) – upon asking his father is referred to his mother because he does not know. In the end it is Puli who transcribes the family's last name for her youngest brother. With both parents unable to speak English and his father illiterate, it is Puli who takes the responsibility for her siblings, especially the narrator. That she develops the same mental illness as her father and early on shows specific symptoms like hearing voices is again something the narrator does not fully grasp, even when she is diagnosed and put on medication while she was studying for her O-levels (cf. *BT* 140 f.).

7.3. The Genealogical Other and Changing Self-Conception

With her husband suffering from paranoid schizophrenia and her eldest daughter falling ill with the same mental illness, the narrator's mother is left to provide for her family. In contrast to her initial characterization of being superstitious, overly religious, extremely conservative when it comes to interracial relationships (cf. *BT* 38-49), she is later on described as very protective of her children, caring, self-determined, and strong-minded. Jito, who the narrator only refers to as "mother" or "mum", indicating a close mother-son-relationship, functions as the narrator's "genealogical other" (Zerubavel 2011: 8): a foil against which the narrator designs his life-style and whom he needs as his point of reference in the process of developing a sense of selfhood. Jito becomes the 'genealogical other' as the revelations about her past change the way the narrator sees his mother as well as himself. The various facets of her identity, which so far have been reduced to her role as mother, are elaborated in the course of the narrative and extended beyond that narrow limit of one social role. The search for the family history creates a

different view of the character of Jito and offers ways to interpret her behaviour towards her youngest son and, more importantly, his behaviour and attitude towards her.

Jito's account of her immigration, her marriage, and how she eventually found out about her husband's mental illness, judged by the narrator to be "full of gaps and inconsistencies" (*BT* 189), has, on the one hand, to be complemented by the narrator's aunts and uncles. As Jito's family lives in India and does not know about her fate in England the narrator turns towards his father's elder sister and her husband for information (cf. *BT* 207 ff.). These accounts are full of memory gaps and contradictions as the narrator's attention to detail reveals.[219] On the other hand, the narrator, in a journalistic manner trying to collect as much information as possible in order to get at the truth, produces medical records, handwritten notes, newspaper information, and a letter written by himself to the office manager of the Wolverhampton Crown and County Court (cf. *BT* 264-280), interspersed with family pictures, in order to fully grasp the seriousness of his mother's story as well as to continuously highlight the importance of giving agency to a stigmatized group:

> The problem is that there is an array of obstacles, ranging from the fact that my parents come from an oral culture (which means little written evidence exists), to the fact that they do not speak English (which means that any written evidence that did come into existence as a result of dealings with British authorities tends to be full of holes), to the fact that my father is an illiterate, uneducated, unemployed mentally ill Asian man (which means that officials who might be able to share written evidence with me can't be bothered to). You see, I have reluctantly and bitterly concluded that unlike the entrepreneurs, politicians and writers I used to interview for newspapers, my father doesn't matter in the eyes of society: he is not worth producing background information on. (*BT* 277)

This summarizing statement on the unsuccessful process of researching a family's history shows the narrator's frustration with the social suppression of problems

[219] As the title of the memoir already indicates, the fact of the narrator having a topknot as a boy is an important issue in the narrative. Several times it is being pointed out that the narrator is the only male member of his nuclear family wearing the traditional religious hairdo (cf. *BT* 80). Visiting his father's elder sister in Grays, where Cugi lived with his family upon his immigration to England in 1968, his uncle tells the narrator that his father used to have a topknot when he came to England (cf. *BT* 213). This piece of information is however refuted by the narrator who has seen his father's passport picture upon his immigration. The quality of the information the narrator's uncle provides from memory is thus also inconsistent, a fact that the narrator comments upon: "But having been humbled by the enormous gaps and inconsistencies in my own memory, I overlooked the remark without qualification, gave my uncle total benefit of the doubt. These events happened a long time ago and this was possibly the first time he had discussed them" (*BT* 214). While the significant inconsistencies are dismissed as memory gaps that cannot be verified anymore the fact of the topknot, or rather the cutting off of the topknot, is devoted special attention in the chapters "Devil's Haircut" (*BT* 194 ff.) and "I Remember That" (*BT* 225 ff.).

mentally ill immigrants face in Britain and how the genealogical research contributes to a re-evaluation of his previous self-conception. The latter is a process set in motion by his interview with his mother.

The marriage between Jito and Cugi was arranged when Jito was fifteen or sixteen years old and both still lived with their respective families in India.[220] Jito's mother had voiced doubts as to her daughter's prospective husband (cf. *BT* 158) but her elder brother, who apparently enjoyed the company of Cugi's family, appreciating "a lively conversation with my father's boozy brothers" (*BT* 158), did not share her critical opinion. According to Jito, immigrating to England was not planned upon her engagement and eventually "[g]oing to Britain threw things out of kilter" (*BT* 158) for her. In Grays, her first place of residence in England, she found herself married to a man she had not met before and who on her wedding night proved to be violently aggressive towards her:

> 'To be honest, I don't remember what he looked like,' Mum said eventually. 'All I remember is that he came up to me and slapped me across the face. Your uncle Phuman came running into the room, shouting, "What do you think you're doing?" … Your dad didn't say anything at first. … But eventually he pointed at where I was sitting and said: "Look where she is sitting. That's Phuman's place on the settee. Doesn't she realize?" …' (*BT* 164)

At this point, no member of the family suspected Cugi to be mentally ill and a narrative of violent outbreaks directed against Jito ensues. From their wedding in either March or April 1969 it takes the family until July of that year to realize the extent of Cugi's increasingly violent behaviour. The final diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia is not made until 1975, a year before the narrator was born, when Cugi was arrested for an attack on a fourteen-year-old schoolgirl (cf. *BT* 268). After this incident and the following treatment of his schizophrenia Cugi did not relapse into this violent paranoid behaviour anymore and instead, through the medication, became almost lethargic as the initial characterization portrayed him to be.

This information, which until the writing of the memoir had been unknown to the narrator, changes his perspective on his family as much as on himself. The fragmented embedded storyline of the family history, which is repeatedly interconnected with the framing storyline, and has to be complemented by different accounts as well as other

[220] Both parents' dates of birth are unknown, proving the narrator's point of the actual impossibility of verifying certain information: "Not only do my parents have no date of birth – Mum's simply down as 1950 on her passport, while my father has three different dates of birth, all from 1950, in various official documents – they have no marriage date either" (*BT* 148).

sources of information such as medical records and letters, at the same time tells the story of how the mental illness affects both Cugi and his eldest daughter Puli, and how Jito struggles to keep her family together. This makes the narrator understand that his mother's "approach to relationships was different" (*BT* 250) from his own. Her love for her husband, which "may not be the romantic comedy variety" (*BT* 250) but is closely related to the notion of family honour (cf. *BT* 165) and the importance of marriage in the Punjabi community (cf. *BT* 216), makes him realize that his mother applies different moral values and for different reasons than he had previously expected.

Being the narrator's genealogical other, the reference point whose hitherto unknown past changes the way the narrator views himself, Jito's characterization changes completely from the initial description of superstitious, racially prejudiced, controlling, and dominant mother figure. Her keenness to arrange a marriage for her youngest son is accounted for by her own belief that a marriage is not only a romantic idea of spending a life together but a social contract that ensures mutual taking care as well as the foundation of a family, reminiscent of structural functionalist approaches to the family (cf. chapter 2.1.1). Thus, the narrator has to realize in the course of his research on his own family that he had a strangely biased image of his mother that he now has to adapt to his new knowledge. Furthermore, he also has to review his own role in the family, which he so far conceived of to be the role of the "perfect Sikh child" (*BT* 27) and a religious experiment with a saviour complex (cf. *BT* 104) because "Mum found God before she had me" (*BT* 27). Although this conception must not be entirely untrue, the narrator also has to come to terms with the fact that he is the one of the four siblings who did not have to witness the violence of his mentally ill father, which in return makes him feel guilty towards his siblings (cf. *BT* 288).

7.4. Reconciliation of Generational Location and Genealogical Ties

The genealogical research conducted in *The Boy with Topknot* does not stop at this realization that images of the self and others do change with revelations about a family's past. It also points out how a family is influenced by the concealment of genealogical information as the narrator in the course of his investigation finds out about a great-grandfather who might have also suffered from a mental illness (cf. *BT* 291), a fact that because of family honour and marriage politics is kept a secret. The narrator concludes from this finding that, had it been known that mental illnesses run in the family, both his father and his sister might have been diagnosed earlier:

> My point is simply this: maybe, if my great-grandfather's (possible) mental illness had been discussed and acknowledged within the family, then maybe, when my father started showing signs of psychosis, he would have got the treatment he needed sooner, and maybe my mother would have been spared the violent attacks she endured, and maybe she wouldn't have been blamed for the illness, and maybe the family would have made more of an effort to ensure my father stopped drinking, which might have meant he had fewer relapses and wouldn't have throttled that poor schoolgirl, and maybe, if these things had been understood and acknowledged, then maybe my sister would have been made aware of the extent of her illness sooner and maybe she wouldn't have stopped taking her medication and ended up in hospital. (*BT* 293 f.)

Thus summarizing his family's history the narrator has to conclude that "sometimes it's better to talk about difficult subjects rather than conceal them beneath a web of secrets and lies" (*BT* 294) and has to confront Jito with the letter he announced at the very beginning of the memoir. The letter written to his mother constitutes the last chapter entitled "If You Don't Know Me By Now", the initial title of the hardback edition. The letter is printed in its entirety and presents the narrator's arguments why he does not want to have an arranged marriage. It explains the reasons against a marriage to a Sikh girl in a detailed way. The letter is reproduced in English but is headed and closed by a Punjabi inscription to indicate the letter's translation from English into Jito's mother tongue.

Jito's reaction to the letter is utterly sympathetic although she cannot help reiterating some of her stereotypical views on English people, Indians of castes different from her family's, and the importance of marriage in general. But as her priority is her son's happiness she does not object to his plans for the future, as she had never done as the narrator has shown in the memoir. Thus a satisfactory ending concludes the narrative of genealogical research for the narrator. No longer compelled to conceal his London lifestyle from his family he is now able to reconcile his generational location with the genealogical responsibilities he faces. The letter is thus the device bringing together the frame and the embedded storyline that were divided by a temporal distance.

The temporal distance between the frame and embedded storyline is, however, not a strict delineation as both narrative levels kept interlocking through comments by the narrator. These comments break down the temporal distance by references to popular culture, a point that has been discussed in references to the structure of the memoir but also finds its way into the narrative by referring to the collective memory of the narrator's generationality. Continuous allusions to and mentioning of popular musicians (cf. e.g. *BT* 101, 106), television shows such as *Dallas* and *Knight Rider* (cf. *BT* 101, 112) but also to generationally connoted practices such as backing schoolbooks in floral wallpaper (cf. *BT* 174) or recording pop songs from the radio (cf. *BT* 102) and transcribing the lyrics from the songs recorded (cf. *BT* 102). The references, which can

be argued to be cultural practices of a generationality, in combination with the genealogical approach to the family history in which information on Punjabi family structures such as the different types of uncles and aunts are provided (cf. *BT* 146) and the support of the extended family is actually a matter of survival and security highlight the intersections between the two meanings of the concept of 'generation'.

The Boy with the Topknot combines both conceptualizations of generation on the discourse as well as the story level of the narrative. On a generic level it is notable how the family memoir uses features of generatiographical writing, thus addressing both genealogical investigation and generational positioning. It employs multiple storylines that can be sorted into a frame and an embedded storyline that continuously cross over and transgress their boundaries. Further, the narrative uses a character as a genealogical other whose mere existence, but even more so whose background, causes significant changes in the narrator's self-conception. The reliability of memories is discussed critically, not only because of the choice of genre of this narrative, but also on the personal level. Additionally, the narrator challenges institutionalized memories such as of medical records and law proceedings. His conclusion from unsuccessfully trying to gather information on his family's history is that his mentally ill, illiterate, and uneducated Indian father is not of importance to society and thus not worth documenting substantiates this chapter's initial claim that this memoir aims at giving a voice to a stigmatized group that has to fight prejudice from society as much as from their own family members. Succeeding in combining a family history with a personal emancipation, and highlighting the importance of language proficiencies, integration of immigrants as well as an awareness of tradition, the memoir *The Boy with the Topknot* exemplary portrays some of the key functions that the narrating of generations can fulfil.

8. Conclusion: The Concept of 'Generation' in Contemporary British Asian Literature

Having started out by sending 'generation' on to a journey into the field of contemporary British Asian narratives, this study wants to conclude by coming full circle returning to the metaphor of the travelling concept. The concept of 'generation' originates from an interdisciplinary context, and the field of research that is labelled generation studies is itself a composite of various disciplines, united by their interest in the potential of the concept. The present study has proven that the representation of generations illustrates the intricate and complex process of community building in contemporary British Asian literature and influences the interpretation of the narratives on various levels. Moving beyond the focus of the author's background, an approach that always only highlights the distinction between first- and second-generation immigrant, and refuting the assertion that analysing generations has to stop at diagnosing a generation conflict, this study has shown the potential of combining generation studies and literary and cultural studies in the interpretation of migration literature. Recapitulating the process of combining generation studies and literary and cultural studies will illustrate the varied possible applications the results of this study can find in other areas of research.

Highlighting the versatility of 'generation', this study started off with the basic assumption that in order to apply this concept to British Asian narratives, it is essential to differentiate 'generation' as conceptualized in generation studies from the everyday understanding of the term. In its prescientific usage by popular media, the concept of 'generation' has worn thin as a label for ever-new kinds of communal relationships such as, for example, the "Generation Facebook" (cf. Leistert/Röhle 2011) or the "Generation Bachelor" (cf. Maeck 2012). This labelling of generationalities, which different media employ to describe hypothetical shared experiences that tend to be perceived critically, is a tireless phenomenon. Even if a phase of oversaturation should be reached after the generation-boom of recent years, the performative writing into being of generations is not likely to come to an end (cf. Bohnenkamp 2011: 284). The communal relationship and sense of belonging which the generationality offers to the individual are too attractive to go out of fashion (cf. ibid.: 285). Especially the promise of a *Zeitheimat*, feeling related to others and belonging to a specific time in a particular place, will instead in all likelihood become even more attractive as the increasing acceleration of time and social changes create a greater need for this feeling of

belonging. Although this prescientific usage of 'generation' already highlights some of the central functions that the term fulfills in popular culture and the media, the unreflecting use of the term in the media has to be clearly distinguished from this study's conceptualization of 'generation'.

Although the body of research on 'generation' is growing and the concept is finding application in ever more diverse research contexts, comprehensive studies on the concept are still scarce and the research that is being done is predominantly written in German relating to a German cultural context. Apart from translations of Mannheim's (1928) seminal attempt at a coherent theory of generations, most of the basic research has been done by the research centres on generation studies in Göttingen and Berlin (cf. Weigel 2002a, 2003, 2006; Bohnenkamp 2009b, 2010, 2011; Parnes/Vedder/Willer 2008). The present study has demonstrated that 'generation' is a well-researched concept in its functions as a scientific category to describe life cycles in anthropology or genetics, as a concept of order in the history of sciences or literary history, as a category of difference between diachronic and synchronic relationships, as well as a point of reference for collective experiences and identities. However, the applications of the concept are not always very specific in their usage of terminology. Therefore, this study's first aim was to provide terminological precision, especially in the distinction between generationality and genealogy, in order to do justice to the versatility of the concept and to specify where the intersections of both manifestations are more productive than one aspect alone.

As the focus on central aspects in generation studies has shown, fields such as migration studies and memory studies at the same time benefit from and influence research on 'generation'. The strong connections between these fields of research attest to the significance of conducting trans- and interdisciplinary research as well as highlighting the importance of disciplinary clarity with regard to the usage of terminology. Furthermore, as the problematization of the experience of time and importance of youth in the formation of generationalities as well as youth cultures has proven, the focus on 'generation' as a marker and promoter of social change is still one of the central concerns of generation studies. Yet as the discussion of generations in migration studies and in the study of youth cultures has shown, critical points in the application need to be addressed. Especially the reference to Marcus Lee Hansen's theory of integration cycles in migrant communities, which although dating from 1937 is still one of the most influential theoretical approaches in this field, demonstrates the need for further conceptualization of 'generation' in migration studies. Additionally, the examination of generations in the research of youth cultures has revealed the influence and the

explanatory power that the concept has. Further research on integrating Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' as proposed by Eyerman and Turner (1998) could turn out to be particularly interesting for literary studies because both 'habitus' and 'generation' can be profitably employed in the analysis of literature. Furthermore, this integrating approach could prove to be compatible with the media's evocation of generationalities and help to distinguish the media's generation-boom from the formation of actual subcultural generations. Thus, the terminological disambiguation and the following clarification of the various disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to 'generation' as a scientific category have made clear that the issues highlighted by these approaches not only offer new perspectives for the study of culture but at the same time raise important questions for future research.

Most importantly, by emphasizing these vital issues in generation studies this study has proven that the diachronic genealogical relations and the synchronic generational relations cannot always be strictly delimited from each other. The theoretical examinations served to underline the study's assumption that especially the intersections of genealogy and generationality offer valuable insights into usages of the concept. The four areas of concern have shown how the continuous intersections of genealogical and generational approaches inform the research on topics such as multigenerational migration, intergenerational transmission of memory, generational memory, generational youth cultures, and the significance of the simultaneity of different generationalities as well as their generative relations. Thus, the interdisciplinary field of generation studies already works at the intersections of genealogy and generationality. The four key areas in which the study of culture and generation studies intersect demonstrate the interconnections of generationality and genealogy and show how they can be brought together productively. At the same time they reveal the difficulties involved in strictly separating the concept of 'generation' into its two components, highlighting how a strict delimitation cannot always be achieved in spite of terminological disambiguation and clarification. Lastly, they even raise the question whether such an exact delimitation is useful in all scientific areas.

Nevertheless, the literary analysis of British Asian narratives has demonstrated that a clear terminological distinction is indispensable for the discussion of literary texts because it opens not only productive, but arguably also new approaches for the interpretation of the texts. Furthermore, only a definition of genealogy and generationality as forms of communities allowed this study to examine where exactly these relations intersect and to discuss the intersection's functions. In contrast to the approaches drawn upon from generation studies, literary and cultural studies have so far

always only focused on either genealogy or generationality. This has become especially clear in the discussion of literary genres that by definition represent generations. Focusing on the genealogical novel and the family novel as presenting genealogical relations, and the Bildungsroman and generatiographical writing to focus on generational relations has shown how the discussions of these genres fail to consider the intersections of these forms of relationships. The strict differentiations of these genres establish boundaries between the different representations of generations that have to be transgressed for a comprehensive analysis of 'generation'. While the examination of these selected genres has underscored the importance of generations in literary studies, this discussion has to be concluded with the suggestion of summarizing literary representations of generations under the umbrella term 'generation narratives' in order to make room for a discussion of literature in which generational and genealogical relations interconnect.

However, although the genres under discussion have obviously failed to acknowledge the intersections of synchronic and diachronic relations, they have attested to the presentability of generations in narrative texts and at the same time offered a variety of categories through which they become accessible to analysis. While generation studies inform literary and cultural studies on the advantages of analysing the intersections of genealogical and generational approaches, literary studies in general and narratology in particular contribute to the study of generations in that they not only enable generations to be interpreted in hindsight but also to represent their coming into being. Whereas the categories on the story level focus mainly on the character constellations and plot structures, especially the focus on narrative transmission, focalization, and perspective structures has made a contribution to literary generation studies.

These findings are conducive to research on different kinds of literature and enhance the generation studies' perspective well beyond the classical analysis of generational conflicts and generation gaps as depicted in narrative texts. Furthermore, the narratological approach has ultimately proven that research on generations does not have to focus on the authorial background, especially not in migration literature. The narrative text provides manifold insights into the formation of generationalities and the development of genealogical relations, whereas a focus on the author only raises questions of the authenticity of representation (Mettler 2012: 164 ff.), which do not add to an interpretation of communal relationships from a generation studies' point of view. The focus on narrative transmission and perspective, which reveals crucial information on the world-view and value systems of generations and at the same time can narratively create these generations, has shown that the narratological toolbox in

connection with the generic forms of representations of generations are transferable to other migration literatures besides British Asian literature or other national literatures. Furthermore, the notion of migration is a particularly interesting aspect for the analysis of generations, the methodological approach this study has chosen is applicable to all narrative texts and not restricted to contemporary literature.

The specific focus on contemporary British Asian narratives has demonstrated that a generation studies' approach to the literary texts enhances existing interpretations by moving away from the oversimplification of a generation conflict between first- and second-generation immigrants, a labelling which in itself has proven to be problematic. Limiting the choice of primary texts to narratives that thematize migration from the former colonies of the Indian subcontinent allowed this study to focus not only on the process of migration but also on experiences and memories of the Partition, tensions between religious communities, a specific set of traditions imported to Great Britain, and how migrants and their descendants cope with these issues.

The notion of Partition and the transmission of memories are crucial issues especially in narratives in which genealogical relations have a very strong influence on generational identities. In both *Anita and Me* and *Maps for Lost Lovers* knowledge about the Partition is transmitted to succeeding generations in different ways and with opposite functions and is essential for the interpretation of both novels. While in *Anita and Me* the transmission of memories functions to provide a sense of origin and a cultural, historical, and social understanding for the characters, in *Maps for Lost Lovers* it functions as a means of oppression and creates a postgeneration. While the importance of a memory of Partition varies in these novels, the sense of origin, which can be created through the narrativization of memory, is highly important for the characters.

In narratives in which generational relations are focused upon, such as *Londonstani*, the subcultural generation necessarily has to devalue these memories and the experiences of the preceding generation to enable the formation of a generational identity in order to distinguish it from genealogical relations. In addition, the memoir *The Boy with the Topknot* highlights the importance of a sense of origin through an understanding of genealogical relations and a sense of belonging to a generationality by problematizing both aspects and illustrating a reconciliation between formerly conflicting relations. These findings, although specifically related to the context of British Asian literature, open up the field of generation studies to research on cultural trauma, as represented by both the experience of migration and the Partition of India, and could therefore be related to other literatures dealing with traumatic experiences. Especially the concept of 'postgeneration' in connection with postmemory (cf. Hirsch 2008) and the resulting

inhibition of generational identities establishes a field of research that could be particularly productive in comparative literatures.

Furthermore, the paradigmatic analyses and interpretations of British Asian narratives have shown that studies highlighting the popularity of specific genres in migration literatures often focus on certain elements at the expense of other important parts of the narratives. Thus, the generation studies' perspective employed in this study has succeeded in transgressing genre boundaries, eluding restrictive attributions of a work to one genre or another. Although genre theory offers many approaches to the representation of generations in narratives, the umbrella term 'generation narratives', which includes all narrative portrayals of generations and allows for the intersection of genealogical and generational relations in the narratives, appears to be an appropriate designation for the literature discussed in this study. Generatiographical writing is particularly interesting in the field of generation narratives because it aims at performatively 'doing' generations (cf. Bohnenkamp 2011). Whereas this study focused upon generatiographical life writing in British Asian literature, a wider trend in pop literature using generatiographies, as has been detected in contemporary German literature, might be also be found in English-speaking literatures. Specifically in migration literatures, in which different histories are confronted with each other, generatiographical writing might be able to negotiate marginalized memories and mainstream popular culture in which the minority group enters public discourse in processes resembling multidirectional memory (cf. Rothberg 2009).

The close readings and narratological analyses of the four narratives chosen for this study have further shown a number of formal characteristics such as prevalence of autodiegetic narrators who relate their own genealogical and generational stories. Surprisingly, even generation narratives in which the autodiegetic narrator is not part of the generational identity presented, such as in *Londonstani*, succeed in portraying the formation of a generationality. This general trend, which three out of four narratives display, is further substantiated by novels such as Nikesh Shukla's *Coconut Unlimited* (2010) and Niven Govinden's *Graffiti my Soul* (2006). Furthermore, the narratives share a suburban, even rural, setting in which the social integration of the youthful narrators is aggravated by a lack of peer group for the narrators, which has been argued to be of particular importance for the children of migrants (cf. Eisenstadt 1962, 1964). Interestingly, in the case of *Anita and Me* this lack of a peer group highlights Meena Kumar's failure at integration because the receiving society is socially, economically, and especially educationally far behind the migrant child's needs. *Londonstani* employs a white, British narrator who pretends to be of Asian descent for no discernable reason,

which is why he cannot be part of the chosen peer group that develops a generational identity. Both narrators turn out to be unreliable, though for different reasons and with different consequences for the interpretations. Deriving from these shared features is the question of the importance of autodiegetic narrators, to which present generation narratives are prone (cf. Bohnenkamp 2011: 121). Further research on the narrative transmission of generation narratives could reveal crucial insights into the presentability of generations and aim at a historical typology of narrative creation of generations.

The combination of a theory of generations and a narratological methodology to analyse British Asian literature has therefore proven to be a new and so far unprecedented approach to the representation of generationalities and genealogies in narrative texts. In return, this highlights literature's contribution to generation studies: This study has illustrated how an analysis of literary texts allows for new approaches to discuss the developments, formations, and functions of generations in a new context that only the engagement in literary studies can offer.

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