Cognitive Poetics, Conceptual Metaphors and Blending in German Travel Literature on India

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COGNITIVE POETICS, CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS AND BLENDING
IN GERMAN TRAVEL LITERATURE ON INDIA

by

Aditi S. Rayarikar

A Dissertation

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To my family, who believed in me and supported this endeavor.
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ABSTRACT

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In recent years there has been a growth in travel writing and its reception despite the effects of globalization that has brought the world closer than previous centuries. This trend can be further supported with the publication of recent anthologies and theoretical works that explore multi-dimensional approaches to travel writing, especially in the Anglo-American Literature and Cultural Studies.¹ But this trend is not just limited to Anglo-American Studies and is equally present in German literature where travel literature also encompasses what is termed as “literature of movement” highlighting migrant literature, transnational and transcultural literature.² The recently published Reiseliteratur der Moderne und Postmoderne (2017) can be seen as a path breaking study on the modern and postmodern German travel writing that calls for newer theoretical approaches to be relevant in the global context. My research contributes to this area by using the cognitive-scientific approach to the analysis of travel writing. My dissertation analyzes German travel narratives on India published from 1980 to the present, using concepts of cognitive-literary theory to study the linguistic and ideological aspects that represent the

² See Katelyn Petersen’s Literature of Movement: Trends, Developments, and Prospects in Transcultural Literature as Exemplified by Contemporary German-Language Texts (2013), in which she coins the term “Literature of movement” to incorporate new travel literature, migrant literature, transnational and transcultural literature resulting from rapid globalization.
identities of “Self” and the “Other” in these texts. I examine different genres including personal diaries, novels, and poems, and I also include Austrian and Swiss travel narratives. Through close readings of the texts, and through analysis of cognitive metaphors, conceptual blends, and narrative perspectives present in the chosen text corpus, I show how German authors construct their own spatiality vis-à-vis their image of India, and how they convey this to their readers. In addition, my analyses demonstrate how the cognitive-literary method adds a new dimension to intercultural understanding, enriches the aesthetic value of such writings, and enables fresh literary interpretations.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

There has been a renewed interest in exploring the different facets and theoretical discourses of travel writing in the recent years as seen in *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing* (2013); *Travel Narrative and the Ends of Modernity* (2014); *Travel Writing and the Transnational Author* (2014); *The Routledge Companion to Travel Writing* (2016) and *Reiseliteratur der Moderne und Postmoderne* (2017) to name a few. This should be seen as timely considering that travel today entails many features from tourism to migration and there has been an increase in the consumption of travel literature in recent years.\(^3\) Travel literature has always been a dynamic genre, and many would agree a genre that requires constant revisions, as it cannot be defined as a homogenous genre. It entails not only narratives in different literary forms, but thematically it ranges from mythical tales (Homer’s *Odyssey*), to adventure stories, imagined journeys to actual travelogues, travel memoirs to travel guides (Baedeker), and transnational and transcultural writings. The purpose of these writings vary, in that these can either be about adventure and exploration or about migration or even missionary journeys, or conceptualizing faraway places and its people and even constructing/educating oneself as seen in the *Bildungsroman*.\(^4\) Thus travel narratives present a rich tapestry of writing styles, intercultural and cross-cultural representations, and ideological conceptions along with specialized sociolinguistic features.

\(^3\) The published anthologies mentioned above prove the growing consumption and market for travel writing. Moreover, since 2015 the German Studies Association Conferences in the US has been organizing special seminars on Travel writing for three consecutive years so far and I have had the opportunity to present my papers in two of these seminars. The organizers of this seminar, distinguished professors in German, are even planning to create a German Travel Writing network, thus paving the way for young scholars to collaborate and discuss their research on travel writing on a platform that they can call their own. This goes to show the growing popularity of this genre as well as its need to bring it into the mainstream and attention of German Studies scholars.

\(^4\) Bildungsroman “schildert die psychologisch folgerichtige Entfaltung eines Menschen aus seinen Anlagen und Erfahrungen. Durch Auseinandersetzung mit seiner gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Umwelt reift der oft autobiographische Züge tragende Held des Entwicklungs- oder Bildungsroman zu einer harmonischen Persönlichkeit heran” (Rothmann 96).
On a more personal level, travel has been an integral part of my life since childhood. My summer vacations were spent traveling to different cities in India and recording my travel experiences in a journal. One of the most memorable impressions from these journeys has been meeting German travelers in India and exchanging each other’s views/understanding about India. Another vivid memory constitutes my journey to Kolkata (known as Calcutta before 2001) and how reading Günter Grass’s *Zunge Zeigen* prior to the journey introduced me to the images of this city. Interestingly few of my own experiences in the city reiterated Grass’s words: the heat for instance that he writes about was evident and different from my own city (Pune); I also witnessed the pavement-dwellers while on our way back to the hotel one day whose detailed descriptions and sketches form an integral part of his book. While these scenes weren’t completely foreign to me, the way these people lived off the streets intrigued me since there wasn’t any clear demarcation of the city. I was looking for the manifestation of a communist society that I hadn’t seen till then, but instead while traveling on the road Kolkata seemed like a chessboard to me: white and black blocks coexisting, side-by-side. This was slightly different from my experience of seeing other metropolitan cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai. In Delhi, for instance the old city presented the nostalgia of the Mughal era with its architecture, mosques and densely populated pockets, whereas New Delhi, resembled an urban city with wider roads that led to the impressive Indian Parliament buildings. Most of the cities had this division of old and new, and even Mumbai has this distinction to some extent, although perhaps not quite as clear as other cities. But in Kolkata, I still couldn’t tap into the essence of this city since it was so much more than this co-existence of rich and poor. There was a charm to this city, 

5 West Bengal and Kerala are the only two states governed by communist parties. See K. C. Suri and Hans Löfgren’s “The Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Left Government in West Bengal, 1977–2011: Strains of Governance and Socialist Imagination” (2016) that gives an overview of the ruling party CPI (M) in West Bengal since 1977 and how its policies have affected its capital Kolkata. It was this communist identity that compelled Grass to visit and stay in Kolkata and he mentions this in an interview with Martin Kämpchen published in *Ich will in das Herz Kalkuttas eindringen* (2005).
but also a mystery to it and I could only sense that it was quite different from my own city. Somehow, Grass’s portrayal lingered in my mind longer than the city’s first-hand impressions on me and I wondered if a longer-immersive stay would bring me closer to the city. In my first chapter I revisit this text by Grass for a closer reading and analysis of his text.

My personal experiences traveling in India and later my ten-month stay in the city of Hamburg conveyed the importance of travel and seeing a new culture, living and experiencing it from close quarters. While on a Purdue University exchange in Hamburg, I got mixed reactions from the locals. I was either received as an Indian by the locals or as an exchange student from the USA. While a few locals befriended me easily because of my Indian ethnicity, a few others were interested to know more about life in America and graduate studies at the US universities. Until then I wasn’t aware of this duality and could explain when needed. But this further posed questions about identity, how it is presented, represented and/or misrepresented especially in travel writing where it is hard to explain the intricacies of identity the way a simple, straightforward conversation otherwise would. Furthermore, travel narratives can create new stereotypes, promote and expand existing stereotypes, and even break some of these. The language of the travel narrative plays a significant role in defining the “Self” and the “Other,” defining the narrator’s sense of orientation and spatiality, his/her ideology and political views. The usage of language in travel narrative must therefore be analyzed closely, which is the primary goal of this dissertation.

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6 I studied German at the Hamburg University while on this Purdue exchange and taught English in at the English department at Hamburg University. My students always viewed me as an instructor from an American university and wanted to know more about the US culture and customs. On the other hand, in the German seminars that I attended as part of my course work, I was always considered an Indian first. I was intrigued by the way Germans approached me at this time and my questions about identities and how they get reflected started taking shape.

7 See Said’s explanation about how Orientalists use exterior measures to explain the Orient and its mysteries to the West. This exteriority lies in representation, rather than “natural depictions of the Orient” since the Orient is unable to speak for itself (Said 21).
Interestingly, it was the Sanskrit language, particularly the Sanskrit language literature that caught the attention of the nineteenth-century German authors, thinkers and philosophers to engage with India and the Indian thematic. In the anthology Sehnsucht nach Indien. Literarische Annährungen von Goethe bis Günter Grass (2006), author Veena Kade-Luthra writes: “Es waren Meisterwerke der altindischen Literatur wie Sakontala, Meghaduta, und das Gitagovinda, welche die erste Indien-Begeisterung auslösten und neue Kulturhorizonte zu eröffnen schienen. Goethe und die Romantiker lernten diese Texte als Übersetzungen aus dem Englischen kennen” (12). This initiated a movement to learn and understand the Sanskrit language and Indian culture in depth. The Schlegel brothers, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and Franz Bopp not only learned this language, they were also instrumental in setting up the first Department of Indology at the University of Bonn in 1808. Literary and philosophical texts set in the Indian context were widely published by authors and philosophers such as Goethe (Indische Dichtungen amongst others), Heine (Am Ganges duftets und leuchtets), Herder (Indostan), Arthur Schopenhauer (Einfluss der Sanskrit-Literatur), without leaving the German soil. In her anthology, Kade-Luthra categorizes such works in the section titled “Indien aus der Ferne” as opposed to actual travel narratives that she categorizes in the section titled “Erlebt, Erdacht, Erinnert.” Martin Kämpchen, a scholar on German-Indian literature and a long term resident of India, author and translator, and Kade-Luthra both characterize India in these authors’ works as a “gesehntes Land,” since it presented an almost diametrically opposite cultural value system and way of life than

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8 Originally published in 1991, this is its third revised and expanded edition and perhaps the only anthology of collected Indian works. This, however, still doesn’t include all the works published on India, but gives a brief overview of works published by about 35 authors and philosophers from Herder, Novalis, Paul Deussen to Stefan Zweig and Ilija Trojanow.
9 See Martin Kämpchen’s talk “Indien in der deutschen Literatur des 20. Jahrhunderts” published on his website http://www.martin-kaempchen.de/?page_id=286 for more details. Further references from this talk I shall cite as (Indien).
10 There is a different view shared by John J. White in his review of Kade-Luthra’s work. He argues that the chosen texts in this anthology do not necessarily point Hegel’s claims of India being the “Land der Sehnsucht” (White 358).
Europe. Kämpchen writes: “Die deutschen Romantiker sahen in Indien die ‘Wiege der Menschheit’ und die Inder als den Typus des naiven, kindlich-ursprünglichen Menschen” (Indien). Yet, it must be noted that many of the above mentioned authors and philosophers shared their aversion for the Indian religion and its practices, especially polytheism and idol-worship. This could have been one of the reasons why many authors were not inclined to make an actual journey to India despite the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, which provided access to the Asian subcontinent. Although practical reasons may have hindered some to not make this journey, aversion to the religious practices seems to dominate as Kade-Luthra also explains in case of Goethe and Friedrich Schlegel: “Die indische Dichter bewunderte Goethe, aber die indische Plastik lehnte er entschieden ab. ‘In Indien möchte ich selber leben, hätte es nur keine Steinhauer gegeben’” (18), refering to the blending of animal and human forms of the Hindu gods like Ganesha with his elephant head or Hanumana, the monkey-faced god. Similarly she writes: “Bei all seiner anfänglichen Begeisterung wendet sich Friedrich Schlegel doch bald von Indien ab; die indische Religion biete ihm persönlich keinen Halt. Er beklagt die ‘religiöse Exzesse’ der Hindu Sekten und bekehrt sich zum Katholizismus” (Kade-Luthra 20). It is thus ironic to see how a century and a half later, Grass is intrigued by the Hindu goddess Kali, and her outstretched tongue becomes a recurring image not only in his writing but also in his sketches of Calcutta in _Zunge Zeigen_, on which I elaborate in my first chapter.

It is also relevant to understand the relationship that Germany shared with India at the time when England’s imperialist policies were set in motion and its effects were felt in Europe. Todd Kontje sums up how German philosophers and thinkers responded to the notion of *Kultur*

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11 As a convention I am using the names of the cities the way these authors use in their texts when I analyze and write about them to be consistent with the texts. If the author chooses to write the colonial name of the city as in the case above with Calcutta, then I will use the same. But if the author chooses to write the original vernacular names of the city, then I do so too. At other times, when I am not analyzing texts, but only mentioning the cities in a generic sense, I will be using their original vernacular names, following the current norm in India.
and how Novalis stressed that Germany was not inclined to step in the shoes of imperialism set forth by the British empire (93). The ancient India was valued by thinkers like Herder and Schlegel but both were critical of European imperialism as well as about the passivity of Indians. Kontje sums up Herder’s frustration: “Time has passed India by. The culture that ancient Indians once inspired has returned to them in the form of European aggression and as a result, they cannot even enjoy the foreign fruit of a tree that first took root on its native soil” (80). Thus German thinkers and philosophers were critical of the European tendencies of colonization and were equally critical of India for not being able to respond to this new power in a manner conducive to its own growth. In the nineteenth century, however, as Manjapra predicts, Germany and India, albeit separately, began to work against the growing domination of the British empire. As Europe became increasingly “Anglocentric” (Manjapra 3), both these countries worked to challenge this world order, India with its “anticolonial nationalism” and Germany by reviving its own nationalism. Manjapra views this as an “age of entanglement” (11) amongst these two countries. He records the period between 1880-1945 as the most fruitful exchange between these two countries in terms of intellectual, artistic and manufacturing and goods exchange, and also the beginning of German imperial travel that suggests the visits of archdukes and crowned princes to India on the invitation of the British empire. The turn of the century saw journeys mapped by aristocrats and diplomats, many of whom even published their works on India: Franz Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria, Rupprecht, Prince of Bayern, and Marie von Bunsen to name a few. One of the other purposes of travel at the beginning of the twentieth century was the journey undertaken by the missionaries. One of the most prolific writers on the Indian thematic, Hermann Hesse, got introduced to India through conversations with his parents and grandfather who were Indian missionaries and worked in Kerala. Oddly, he traveled to Sri Lanka but never really set
foot in India, though he has a travel diary named *Aus Indien* (1913), that actually describes his journey to Sri Lanka and Indonesia and his other works about Indian themes, *Siddhartha* (1922) and *Morgenlandfahrt* (1932). Some of the notable works during this era came from authors such as Waldemar Bonsels, Stefan Zweig, Hans Heinz Ewers, and Hermann Keyserling. Kämpchen describes Bonsels work *Die Biene Maja* and his report *Indienfahrt* published in 1916 as works of “bleibendem Wert oder besonderem Einfluss” (Indien). In addition, he also regards Keyserling’s work to be relevant, especially, since he sought conversations with Indian intellectuals like Rabindranath Tagore. Kämpchen views this intercultural dialogue between German and Indian intellectuals as an important aspect that not many German authors considered.

Stefan Zweig, the Austrian author on this list, had a different experience than the others. He came back disillusioned from his trip. Although his two portraits of the city *Benares* und *Gwalior* described his personal journey and gave these cities a place in travel literature, Kämpchen writes: “Stefan Zweig ist befremdet und verunsichert aus Indien zurückgekehrt. Seine weltmännische Urbanität, sein Kosmopolitentum konnte sich mit dem Elend der ausgemergelten Gestalten, der Klassen- und Kastentrennung, der Monotonie einer unendlichen Landschaft nicht abfinden” (Indien). A few decades later another Austrian, Josef Winkler, whose work *Domra* features in my first chapter, was drawn to Benares more out of personal interests, and was well aware of Zweig’s previous work on India.

The great depression and the Second World War put a temporary halt to the influx of German travelers. While the early twentieth century writings still expanded the ideas of romanticism in defining India and its people, the effects of World War rendered these ideas inadequate and inept. Manjapra’s book also looks at how the relations between these two countries changed:

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See Kämpchen and Kade-Luthra for further references.
The period from 1945 until about 1960 gave rise to a new international dialogic order regulated by superpower rivalry. It was very different from what had existed in the period from about 1880 onward. The reconstruction of Europe, on one hand, and the rise of the Third World construct, on the other, confirmed the end of German–Indian entanglements in the political register they had once assumed. German–Indian interactions increasingly took the form of one-way donations of Western development aid to Third World peoples. The new normative paradigm was so powerful that it obscured the memory of the previous half-century of volatile entanglement and interdependence borne of late nineteenth-century transnational encounter, while also reconstructing the ideals of the Enlightenment, and the dialectics of Westernness as the engines of modern history. The West, now emblematized by the United States of America, asserted itself as a hegemonic aspirational category after 1945. (Manjapra 13)

The surge in Anglo-Saxon and American travel to India in the seventies popularized a new era in search of alternative modes of living: “die Hippie-Kultur, die Blumenkinder und die Sanyassins” (Kade-Luthra 13). Cities like Goa, Pondicherry, became hubs of such alternative living and Osho Ashram in Pune attracted many foreigners, predominantly westerners, who embraced the philosophy of Osho and put on red robes denying the conventional way of life. Interestingly, the fifties and sixties did not see any published German travel writing and it was only in the seventies and eighties that authors such as Ingeborg Drewitz, Günter Grass, and Hubert Fichte published their works. According to Kämpchen:

Nach dem Hitler-Regime war die Zeit der Romantisierung, der Idealisierung und Mythisierung Indiens vorüber. Solche Stilisierungen werden bis heute in der Literatur als suspekt empfunden. Also mußte ein realistisches Indienbild gezeichnet werden, das

It goes to show how the perception of India changed from a “gesehntes Land” to an “Entwicklungsland” and how colonial history and the World War shaped these identities. It was the lack of published travel narratives in the fifties and sixties that made the eighties works path-breaking, renewing the contact with India.\(^{13}\) The text corpus for this dissertation thus begins with the analyses of these works by Drewitz and Grass. Under this decade also falls the Swiss author Lukas Hartmann and his work *Mahabalipuram oder Als Schweizer in Indien* (1982). I discuss this text, however, in my last chapter, since thematically it fits that chapter more so than the first chapter.

As seen from the recent influx of theoretical works on travel writing, there is a surge in travel writings and its reception, which calls for newer theoretical approaches. Most of the Anglo-American theoretical works have argued to incorporate travel writings in the mainstream and made a case for “minor texts and alternative voices” (Kuehn 1) that distinguish themselves from bigger narratives and cannon. While the initial disagreement about the definition of travel literature as a homogenous genre has died down in the light of it being a diverse corpus of texts, there still exists a debate about the underlying criteria of travel writing with regards to real-time

\(^{13}\) Hubert Fichte’s *Wolli Indienfahrer* (1972) is another work on India published after the Second World War. However, this work does not feature in my analysis, since I adhere to Peter Brenner and Tim Young’s definition of travel literature that entails real travel experience for writing about it. Fichte’s account of travel is based on a journey he didn’t embark on.
travel. For instance, in *The Cambridge introduction to travel writing* (2013), author Tim Youngs urges that all travel writing must focus on “real rather than imagined journeys” (5) and echoes Peter Brenner’s assumptions of travel writing in his seminal work in German *Der Reisebericht* (1989). For my dissertation, I adhere to Peter Brenner’s definition of travel literature in his *Der Reisebericht* (1989):

Der Begriff (Reisebericht) kennzeichnet mit der gebotenen Neutralität den Sachverhalt, um den es geht: die sprachliche Darstellung authentischer Reisen. Über ästhetische Qualitäten und Ambitionen ist damit nichts ausgesagt; die Gattung vereinigt in dieser Beziehung die extremsten Gegensätze. Auch ist damit nichts präjudiziert über den Wahrheitsgehalt des Berichts. Er soll sich per definitionem nur auf wirkliche Reisen beziehen, aber den Verfassern liegt doch ein breiter Spielraum zwischen Authentizität und Fiktionalität der Beschreibung offen, der sowohl individuell wie auch epochenspezifisch ganz verschieden ausgefüllt wurde. (9)

Brenner’s work is important in considering theoretical aspects to travel writing and exploring the travel genre as a literary genre. Until very recently, this was the only comprehensive theoretical work in German. However, the most recent study, *Reiseliteratur der Moderne und Postmoderne* (2017) criticizes Brenner’s definition and the term “Reisebericht” for its stark factual understanding that restricts all possible genres and instead calls for the term “Reiseliteratur.” One of the coeditors Michaela Holdenried explains further:

Brenner’s definition has been replaced by this recent study that also includes imagined journey as part of German travel literature. Furthermore by using the term *Reiseliteratur* in place of *Reisebericht*, the editors of this anthology expand the term to incorporate all kinds of literature of movement as well as narratives about fictional journeys. This further shows to what extent changing theoretical approaches affect the scope of travel narratives. However, in this dissertation I have chosen my text corpus according to the theoretical approach that I am taking, which is based on Peter Brenner’s and Tim Young’s understanding of travel.

Looking back at the publications of German travel narratives, the nineties saw again a lull in travel narratives on India, and Josef Winkler’s *Domra*, is the only significant work that I analyze from this decade.\(^\text{14}\) At the beginning of twenty-first century, however, the picture changed drastically. It was not only independent authors who traveled to India, but even collaborations between German and Indian authors were on a rise. These specific efforts by the cultural institutions in both the countries such as the Goethe Institute and the Literary Academy in India paved way for contemporary authors to be part of exchange programs, writers-in-
residence programs that further enabled production of texts rich in transcultural and transnational ideas. Independent authors such as Ilija Trojanow and his two works feature in this dissertation. The other group of authors who traveled to India on an exchange and whose works were published in the anthology, *Ausblicke von meinem indischen Balkon* (2002) contribute a diverse text corpus for analysis. It must be stressed that both male and female contemporary authors presented their travel impressions in different literary genres, from poems to shorter travel sketches to excerpts from proposed novels. I analyze these different literary genres and works of eight authors (Thorsten Becker, Arnold Stadler, Gert Heidenreich, Ilija Trojanow, Ulrike Draesner, Felicitas Hoppe, Kathrin Schmidt and Alban Nikolai Herbst) barring only the works of Dieter Gräf from this anthology. Additionally, I have also included a travel diary by author Kristof Magnusson, published online on the Goethe Institut portal named “Akshar,” which was once again a collaborative initiative between German and Indian authors.

For all the diverse forms of German travel narratives, there is no dearth of existing scientific studies. While only one such study featured in the seventies, rest all of them have appeared in the twenty-first century, once again pointing to the relevance of travel literature in today’s day and age. The first one by an Indian German scholar, Vridhagiri Ganeshan, titled *Das Indienbild Deutscher Dichter Um 1900: Dauthendey, Bonsels, Mauthner, Gjellerup, Hermann Keyserling Und Stefan Zweig: Ein Kapitel Deutsch-Indischer Geistesbeziehungen Im Frühen 20. Jahrhundert* (1975), traces the beginnings of actual German travel narratives in the twentieth century. Ganeshan’s text situates the paucity of Indian Germanists and calls for their engagement in the Indian-German context. The other influential work on German travel writing, but which also includes analyses of Drewitz, Grass and Hartmann’s texts on India, is Ulla Biernat’s *Ich bin nicht der erste Fremde hier. Zur deutschsprachigen Reiseliteratur nach 1945* (2004). This work

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15 Gräf has primarily composed poems whose content is not accessible to most readers.
is commendable for categorizing each decade with specific characteristics commonly noticed in
tavel narratives, either as a result of changing socio-political outlooks or specific linguistic traits.
It problematizes the concept of mass tourism with respect to travel writing and the only
shortcoming of this work is its immense volume of primary texts that sometimes lacks in-depth
analysis. In the same year Ulrich Carmen’s *Sinn und Sinnlichkeit des Reisens,
Indienbeschreibungen von Hubert Fichte, Günter Grass und Josef Winkler* (2004) approaches
the analyses of these texts by using the post-colonial discourse as well as concepts from
ethnology. Carmen’s text further explains the homosexual imagery present in Winkler’s *Domra*
text in its historical context, which was absent in earlier analyses of his text.

The most recent study on German travel literature on India is Gokhale’s *Indien Erzählen*
(2011). This study looks at the travel literature published from 1945 to Present, but doesn’t
include either the Swiss author, Hartmann’s work, or Trojanow’s novel *Der Weltensammler*, or
Magnusson’s travel diary published online. This work though is seminal for categorizing the
common tropes in travel writing, especially, when it comes to India. Gokhale uses multiple
approaches in the analyses of this varied text corpus thus integrating post-colonial approach, with
ethnographic studies, especially “Writing-Culture” (Gokhale 16) debate by James Clifford.

While all the above-mentioned studies have established their analyses of German travel
literature on India either in post-colonial or ethnographic discourse, my dissertation looks
primarily at the cognitive literary approach to analyze these texts. I use concepts from cognitive
poetics proposed by Peter Stockwell, as well as conceptual metaphors by George Lakoff and
Mark Johnson and finally conceptual blending proposed by Mark Turner and Gilles Fauconnier.
As already mentioned above, travel literature cannot be defined as a homogenous genre, it would
thus be reductive to use only one single approach to deconstruct these texts and their meanings.
With the target culture being India, which was once one of the biggest colonies of British empire, it is inevitable to analyze these texts without the post-colonial approach. However, as my own research has shown, very few of these studies look deeply into the linguistic pointers that create the ideological distinctions or hegemonic relations. For instance, with the concepts of cognitive poetics such as deixis (Stockwell 52), and with the concepts from sociolinguistics, it is easy to locate the deictic center of a narrator, thereby clarifying the position of the narrator in the text. This is particularly essential and evident in the travel narratives since there is a constant confrontation and comparison of the target and source cultures. I show with concrete examples from the chosen texts how the deictic pattern conforms to colonial ways of portrayal or show the underlying Eurocentricism.

The other important concept from cognitive poetics is that of knowledge schemes and idealised cognitive models. Schemes can be understood as “contextual knowledge” (Stockwell 86), which was essentially used to develop computer programs in artificial intelligence. These schemes are most powerful forms of cognitive models and “are idealised and generalised patterns which find their manifestation or actualisation in a variety of linguistic expressions. Idealised cognitive models (ICMs) are the structures with which we organise our knowledge. Cognitive models consist of relations between categories, set up socially, culturally, and on the basis of individual experience, as our means of understanding and negotiating the world and our lives through it” (Stockwell 43). Thus idealised cognitive models can be understood as the narrator’s understanding of how a particular thing should function based on his/her upbringing and social conditioning. When these models come in contact with the target culture, there is conflict between what is perceived as opposed to one’s own ICM. Essentially, it is a conflict of two distinct idealised cognitive models. But humans are capable of realizing this conflict and
knowledge schemes and can even alter one’s knowledge schemes according to context, since “these knowledge structures are dynamic and experientially developing” (Stockwell 90). In many of the travel narratives this conflict of cognitive models is presented in different ways. While a few authors realize it and accept it, others may not admit it easily, which sometimes leads to being overly judgmental or critical of the other culture. By identifying these issues in the texts by deconstructing the language, I show how authors perceive the “Other.”

The third most important aspect of the cognitive literary approach that I use is the concept of conceptual metaphors and blending to look at how the authors describe their spatial surroundings and their embodied experiences. For instance, authors such as Drewitz, or Schmidt use container metaphors while conceptualizing borders or to define the foreign space. Furthermore, some authors are able to merge previous knowledge or imagery with the new and current experiences and imagery to create conceptual blends. Cognitive scientists Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner’s study about “basic mental operations” shows how conceptual blending works:

(The) basic mental operations are highly imaginative and produce our conscious awareness of identity, sameness and difference. Framing, analogy, metaphor, grammar and commonsense reasoning all play a role in this unconscious production of apparently simple recognitions, and they cut across divisions of discipline, age, social level, and degree of expertise. Conceptual integration, which we also call conceptual blending, is another basic mental operation, highly imaginative but crucial to even the simplest kinds of thought. It shows the expected properties of speed and invisibility. (Fauconnier 18)

Even though blending seems like a basic mental operation, it involves a few steps and since it occurs largely at an unconscious level it requires understanding the various steps involved in
creating a blend. Using the analogy of how “mental conception” (23) works while handling a computer, Fauconnier and Turner explain these “highly elaborate dynamic principles and governing constraints” (Fauconnier 37) that result in a conceptual blend. Fauconnier and Turner use diagrams with circles to map the “mental spaces” and lines to define the connections between these mental spaces.\(^\text{16}\) Thus the network of mental spaces and their connection results in the blend or as they explain: “Blends arise in network of […] four mental spaces: the two input spaces, the generic space and the blend. This is a minimal network. Conceptual integration networks can have several input spaces and even multiple blended spaces” (Fauconnier47),\(^\text{17}\) in other terms this refers to the mental capacity of advanced blending. Building on analogies is a common trick that humans use when conceptualizing other beings. This particular phenomenon is an integral part of travel literature since the “self” and the “other” are confronted with each other. Mark Turner expands on this in his book *The Origin of Ideas: Blending, Creativity and the Human Spark* (2014). In his chapter titled “The idea of you,” Turner writes: “Our ability to conceive of other minds is an application, a special case of our ability of advanced blending” (52). The analysis of compression and blending helps us understand whether authors adhere to strict categorical identities, or whether their writings reflect instances of blurred identities and how these narrations then deviate or conform to the norms of portraying and representing identities within travel writings. Moreover, I posit that some of the travel narratives have very dense imagery that cannot be accessed even through close readings. My analysis of the blend in Felicitas Hoppe’s text, for instance, helps clarify this imagery by making it more accessible and consequently more meaningful. The cognitive approach, thus, presents a novel way to analyze

\(^{16}\) “Mental spaces are small conceptual packets constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding and action” (Fauconnier 40).

\(^{17}\) See fig.1 on page 83 to understand the emergent structure of the blend.
travel literature and the intricacies of identity building, conceptualizing spatiality and understanding embodied travel experiences.

Keeping my primary approach as the guiding factor I have divided the chapters conceptually and not always chronologically. However, the progression of the dissertation is such that it feels chronological, except for Lukas Hartmann’s text published in the eighties, which appears in my last chapter due to its thematic significance. My first chapter analyzes works by Drewitz, Grass and Winkler, which were instrumental in reestablishing the contact between Germany/Austria and India, since these were the first few works published after the Second World War. These works break the image created by the Romantics and echo the subjective voices of these authors and with their material. The three works I discuss in this chapter are first person narrations and as I elaborate further in my chapter, the intention of the journey defines the narrative voice in these texts. It must be noted that Drewitz visited India as a part of a cultural-exchange, perhaps first of its kind in the eighties and which became popular and common in the twenty-first century.

While the Second World War affected the world view, it also left an impact on the how the authors conceived the new world order, especially since India became independent shortly after the war in 1947. India was still a newly independent state and struggling with its own set of political upheavals. While Drewitz and Grass mention some of these, it is not hard to see, how these authors elide these political events in their comments about the functioning government or rather the dysfunctional governance. Grass resided in the city of Calcutta, where the communist ruling party was still in its stage of infancy in 1980s, since the communist party came into power the first time in 1977 in West Bengal. Winkler, on the other hand, doesn’t indulge in political debates, in fact doesn’t even remotely discuss politics. I find the lack of engagement crucial in
these texts, especially because texts by Drewitz and Grass comment on dysfunctional governance without having complete knowledge of the local situation. Their writings thus suggest a preference for colonial governance, and the incapability of India to govern itself well.

From close readings and analysis of the deictic center and cognitive metaphors in the text, I argue how these texts inhabit the colonial way of portrayal. My arguments are further supported by studies from the postcolonial point of view.

In the second chapter I focus on texts by authors, Kathrin Schmidt, Felicitas Hoppe, and Ilija Trojanow. The texts by Schmidt and Hoppe are shorter narratives from the anthology *Ausblicke von meinem indischen Balkon*, while Trojanow’s work is a novel about the British officer, Sir Richard Francis Burton and his sojourn in India. I incorporate two texts by Schmidt, which can be termed as her travel sketches and they give readers an idea about her East German upbringing in addition to how she travels in India. This is an important factor in shaping her understanding of India as I elaborate in the chapter. Hoppe’s text, on the contrary, is dense with imagery and moves back and forth erratically from past to present, whereby it is hard to see her linear journey. This linguistic and intellectual experiment with which Hoppe challenges us makes it further interesting since the text creates conceptual metaphors and blends that require close analysis in order to understand the narrator’s identity crisis. There is a unique openness in Schmidt’s text, which makes it refreshing. The narrator in her text reveals how her ideas about India are shaped by her East German upbringing and how these ideas are challenged when she actually visits India. She becomes aware of changing her own approach from her previous one in order to understand her current circumstances. She portrays all this in a manner that is easy to follow and yet her text creates conceptual metaphors that shed light on how the narrator perceives her sense of spatiality and how she defines it. Hoppe’s text, on the other hand and as
noted earlier, is hard to follow but uses magical realism in creating original imagery that was not seen in earlier texts on India. These images would have been harder to deconstruct if not for blending, as I show with my analysis in this chapter.

Trojanow’s novel is a multi-layered novel with two or more narrative perspectives and set in the eighteenth century. It thus projects a very different world from the contemporary world portrayed by Schmidt and Hoppe. I explain how the narrator perspectives help in painting the fascinating character of Richard Burton. The analysis of the conceptual blend throws light on the complexity of identity, and the concept of advanced blending. As Turner suggests: “Modern human beings evolved the ability for advanced blending, which enabled them to be innovative in many ways, and in particular enabled them to blend the self with other people very fluidly and extensively, so as to understand people as intentional, mental beings like themselves” (53). This explanation befits the blend in Trojanow’s text since I argue about how the protagonist Burton’s English identity is transformed into a new identity, on which I elaborate in that chapter, by merging knowledge from the conscious and the subconscious. Thus this chapter attempts to understand the crux of identity: be it in the form of a traveler or a person looking to transform his identity.

The third chapter analyzes the travel narratives from the twenty-first century anthology *Ausblicke von meinem indischen Balkon* and includes most of the male authors (Becker, Stadler, Herbst, Trojanow and Heidenreich) and the other female author, Ulrike Draesner, whose works were not analyzed earlier. These texts are heterogeneous and range from short travel sketch, to excerpts from proposed novels to poetry. The common binding factor here is the analysis of narrator perspectives in these texts to understand how the chosen narrator perspective either influences the genre of the text, or adds meaning to the text or works to create a multi-narrative
voice. Most of these texts are first-person narrations, but a few of them incorporate multiple level narrations. The analysis of poetry adds an additional dimension to how the narrators create the poetic space. Using concepts from Stockwell’s *Cognitive Poetics*, I show how the narrator’s deictic pattern influences the dynamics of the text and either works to create a linear narrative style or create a haphazard narrative style. Furthermore, this chapter makes clear the significance of the narrative style in travel writing and how it shapes the narrative as well as the narrator’s position vis-à-vis the text.

My fourth and concluding chapter emphasizes the need to change the way we travel and narrate about it in this day and age. This is an appeal that is made even by contemporary authors like Trojanow as I show in this chapter and who call for a new way of writing travel that doesn’t mirror the imperialistic tone that has left a mark on the travel literature. Using three works by authors Lukas Hartmann, Kristof Magnusson and Ilija Trojanow, I exemplify how these authors narrated India in a different manner than witnessed in some of the earlier texts. Hartmann’s work from 1982 does not appear as the other texts from the eighties, which I analyzed in my first chapter. The narrative style reflects a flexible nature and despite the economic disparities between the two cultures, the text does not linger on portrayals of a poverty-ridden India. The way this narrator travels comes close to that of an explorer: in buses, trains and local modes of transport and in the jungles of Kerala. Moreover, it is not the traveler identity that he struggles with, but rather coming to terms with his national identity that forms the core of this journey and his text.

In Magnusson’s text, on the other hand, humor plays an important role in relieving the tensions of meeting the unfamiliar. In his online published diary, he narrates examples of everyday instances as he grapples with questions about the right conduct while meeting the
locals. He is both open and closed to experiences: thus he hops on to the motorbike as his acquaintance drives him around the city of Pune, but he shuts himself in his room from the loud noise and celebration of the Ganesh-festival. Yet he writes about both these experiences. Although this is a very short narrative, Magnusson uses humor as a tool and creates a vibrant picture of the city in an amusing way, a stylistic feature almost absent in the previous travel narratives.

It is however Trojanow who comes closest to his idea of presenting a new narrative style. In his book *An den inneren Ufern Indiens* he traces the path of the river Ganga traveling an extent of 1800 km, through various cities and states and by various means of transport. His mostly first-person narrator also uses mythological tales to narrate about the river’s significance in the Indian culture. The narrative perspective takes turns as the course of the river, at times sympathizing with the environmentalists and other people working for a cleaner Ganga, at other times being critical of the locals like the river herself who floods the regions every now and then and renders people homeless.

Each chapter in this dissertation is designed in such a way that it gives insight into how the texts originated and what propelled the journey making the intent of the journey clear. With the close readings and my analysis of the texts from the cognitive literary perspective, I aim to give readers new ways to approach these primary texts and further establish the role of cognitive scientific approach in the analysis of literature to draw attention to the aesthetic value of these texts as well as to pave a way for cognitive studies in the mainstream theoretical approach to study literature.
CHAPTER 2. REMNANTS OF COLONIALISM IN THE WORKS OF DREWITZ, GRASS AND WINKLER

In the early twentieth century, while India was still colonized by the British, the journeys undertaken by Germans to India often entailed political visits by German officials on an invitation from British officials. Apart from these, there were journeys undertaken by German missionaries, but very few travelogues written either by German officials or missionaries were published as literary works. Writers such as Waldemar Bonsels, Max Dauthendey, and Stefan Zweig published their travel memoirs and explored the India that was still subsumed under British rule. After India’s independence from British colonial rule in 1947, a new wave of writers appeared whose interest in India was spurred either out of their own curiosity to explore and study India and its culture, or whose visits can be categorized as cultural exchanges directed under political interests to improve the diplomatic relations between the two countries. There was a rise in authors visiting India and writing about their experiences. Authors such as Günter Grass and Austrian author Josef Winkler visited India more than once and published their writings. Amongst this group were also female authors such as Margaret Boveri and Ingeborg Drewitz. The works of Grass, Winkler, and Drewitz have received critical scholarly attention and not only do their visits to India take place within a similar time frame (80s and 90s), but also their works reflect a similar way of objectifying India and consequently display their own colonial ways of looking at that India. Moreover, the writings of all the three authors also convey their embodied experience of travel that I closely analyze in the later sections in this chapter.

18 Perry Meyers (2013) mentions travel reports written by the Lutheran pastor Hermann Dalton, as well as by Indologists Julius Jolly, Paul Deussen and Richard Garbe in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. His article gives the readers an idea about how these travel reports noted mostly the influence and work of the British Empire in changing the landscape of its colony: India.
Drewitz, Grass, and Winkler were motivated by different factors for traveling to India. Drewitz came to India on a cultural exchange that was funded by the Goethe Institute. Grass’s 1986 visit to India was his third visit and can be seen as both a desire to visit and stay longer in Calcutta after his initial stint in the city in 1975, as well as a way of coming to terms with the political and cultural upheaval in Germany at that time and fleeing the critical reception of his novel Die Rättin. Winkler, on the other hand, doesn’t explicitly mention his reason for visiting the city of Varanasi, but the subtext of death in his work explains the motivation of his travel and his chosen destination, as I will discuss later in the chapter. Their works (Mein indisches Tagebuch, Zunge Zeigen, and Domra: Am Ufer des Ganges respectively) reveal recurring images of poverty and decadence that emphasize the “Third-World” factor in their writings. Moreover, all three works follow similar patterns of writing that depict their colonial ways of thinking.

Drewitz presents a survey of the seven metropolitan cities of India that she visits. Her work, like its title Mein indisches Tagebuch indicates, is written in a personal diary format that records her observations as she travels through these seven cities. Her work gives readers a slice of India when she slips into occasional touristic descriptions of the places that she visits. It is only in these instances that the diary appears like a travel guide, despite its very subjective nature. But the cities in Drewitz’s diary hardly represent any individuality, since these are attributed with only one thing: all-encompassing images of poverty. One must also take into consideration her destinations, which are not chosen by her, but rather already predetermined. Her visit to India

19 The European Goethe Institute has been instrumental in nurturing the German culture and language and propagating it around the world since 1980s. There are over five different branches of the Goethe Institute in India and the exchange among Germany and India is getting stronger with each year.
20 Both Monika Shafi (1997) and Martin Kämpchen (2015) cite these reasons for Grass’s travel to Calcutta in their works.
21 It is interesting to note that Drewitz alludes to brief descriptions of historic sites that she visits (Taj Mahal, Red Fort in Delhi, Gateway of India and Elephanta caves in Mumbai, Charminar and in Hyderabad) when she first so vehemently denies taking up the role of a tourist: “Das Tagebuch ersetzt keinen Reiseführer, wir hatten ja Arbeit zu leisten, nicht dem Kulturtourismus zu frönen” (5), and yet by mentioning these monuments and its effect on her, she draws on an important aspect of touristic and journalistic writing.
results from a cultural exchange program between Germany and India, as part of a group of German female authors, artists, and sociologists invited by the Goethe Institute to promote cultural exchange between these two countries. Her diary does not inform us about her own interest in India prior to her trip, however, it is clear that as part of this exchange, the participants are required to document their experiences. At the very beginning of her book she writes,

Das Tagebuch ersetzt keinen Reiseführer, wir hatten ja Arbeit zu leisten, nicht dem Kulturtourismus zu frönen. Das Tagebuch ersetzt auch keine politische Analyse. Ich habe die Aufzeichnungen, die ich von Tag zu Tag, von Nacht zu Nacht gemacht habe, bewusst unverändert gelassen, um meine zögernde Annäherung an ein sehr fremdes Land mit seiner sehr fremden Kultur nicht zu verwischen. (Drewitz 5)

Thus Drewitz’s writings are motivated by a sense of responsibility to document her experiences along with her traveling companions. Her engagement with the Indian theme is limited to her observations, especially since she chooses to write extensively on her perceptions resulting from her observations, and doesn’t write about the interpersonal contact and the interaction that she has with her hosts. Furthermore, she doesn’t share her views or interact with her fellow travelers, in order to keep her impressions of India as pure as possible:

[…] wir reisten in einer Gruppe von Frauen, wenn auch mit unterschiedlichen Veranstaltungen, eine Komponistin, eine Filmemacherin, eine Malerin, eine Journalisten, eine Soziologin und ich, die Schriftstellerin. Ich nenne die Namen der einzelnen nicht (bekannte Namen in der Bundesrepublik), weil sie im Tagebuch nicht vorkommen, weil sie für mein Indienerlebnis ohne Bedeutung waren. (Und ich glaube, den anderen ist

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22 "Ich lasse die Gastfreundschaft aus, die uns die bundesdeutschen Institutsleiter und ihre Mitarbeiter gewährt haben, die Sorgfalt ihrer vorbereitenden Arbeit, die Freundschaften, die entstanden sind, die Lebensgeschichten, die sich gesammelt haben, denn ich möchte mich nicht in europäischen Lebensläufen verlieren, zumindest in diesem Tagebuch nicht" (Drewitz 6). Here she refers to the host Goethe Institute and moreover her German and European companions, and not the local people.
This kind of approach is commendable for two reasons: first, by not interacting with others, she doesn’t get influenced by other people’s views on India, and second, by doing so she gives herself time and space to perceive her “foreign” surroundings on her own. However, it still must be emphasized that most of the impressions of the local people and places that she writes about are restricted to the destinations and her interactions with the host families or guides that are chosen by the Goethe Institute. Thus she follows the itinerary designed for her by the host institute and is unable to overcome the role of a cultural bearer that she adopts due to the exchange program. She shies away from indulging in very raw or intense interactions and experiences – or at least chooses to not write about them - unlike both Grass and Winkler. Moreover, the narrator in her text is consumed with the poverty and its depiction to such an extent that she sticks to her packed itinerary, giving the readers a glimpse of India rather than detailed engagement with the land and its people. Often her narrative tone is judgmental and condescending, and this can be seen in the recurring images of poverty and apathy in India followed by her critiquing the attitudes of the locals. The narrative tone in these passages is tinted by emotional outbursts rather than a pragmatic consideration, which results in a not very accurate understanding of the locals and their circumstances. She offers European solutions to native problems, thereby overlooking the history, nature, and vastness of a country as diverse as India. Contrary to this attitude, we see some of the more contemporary authors such as Kathrin Schmidt and Felicitas Hoppe articulating the name changes of the metropolitan cities to Indian names in their works published in the early twenty-first century, changes which can be seen as a gesture of decolonization on the Indian government’s part as well as a sense of growing national
pride in India. It is therefore fascinating to follow the trajectory of the German authors that
visited India shortly after India’s independence and the more contemporary authors’ visit to this
country and its depiction.

Grass, on the other hand, is not a first-time visitor to India. His previous brief visit to the
city of Calcutta in 1975 leaves a lingering impression on him and this time he intends to stay
longer. His wife Ute accompanies him on this journey and they stay in a rented house in
Baruipur area of the city. Although he travels and visits some other parts of the country, and
even Bangladesh, his prolonged stay in Calcutta and some of the local motifs shape his work.
However, one can certainly speculate whether this was the material that Grass sought for his new
book.23

Just as Grass, one can also trace some similarities in Winkler’s journey and contact with
India. First, both these authors’ birthplaces play an important role in many of their works -
Danzig for Grass or Kärnten (Carinthia) for Winkler. In case of their Indian narrations, both
choose their own destination and describe the Alltag or everyday life in these cities in first-
person narrations. Second, the prolonged stay at one place gives them an opportunity to indulge
in more detailed descriptions of their spatial surroundings and their personal accounts waver
from rustic to voyeuristic descriptions of everyday life. For both these authors details are
important; for Grass it is evident even in his sketches, but from Winkler’s detailed descriptions
one can literally paint a picture of the scene. And yet, all three authors write about India in a way
that essentially emphasizes the “Third World” factor and highlights their own Euro-centric
outlook on India. All three authors concentrate on describing the lasting colonial character of

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23 In the episode of “Das literarische Quartett” from 30 September 1988, some of the prominent literary critics like
Marcel Reich Ranicki, Jürgen Busche, Sigrid Löffler and Hellmuth Karasek criticize the lack of material in Grass’s
work. They consider this work as his Nebenwerk. It might be considered a “minor work” in Grass’s oeuvre, but it
stands a solid base for Grass’s relationship with India as well as for transcultural understanding. Thus scholars
working in comparative literatures, post-colonial studies as well as intercultural and transcultural studies view
Grass’s work as a topic for further analysis.
India, which is obvious due to its long history of colonization, but somehow do not indulge the same way in portraying the changing face of post-independent India.

All three authors write in first-person narration. Winkler’s work concentrates more on the everyday scenes that he witnesses on the banks of the river Ganga. These images are interlaced with his own childhood memories, thus forming an interesting interplay with the outside world that is being observed vis-à-vis his own personal influences. Grass, on the other hand, displays a kind of love-hate relationship with India, having visited it a few times and having settled in the city of Calcutta to write the book *Zunge Zeigen*, only to leave abruptly before the stipulated departure to return once again. His writing also conveys the repeated images of poverty and slums that take predominance in both Winkler’s and Drewitz’s works, and thus all three works have this underlying common theme. In this chapter, I look closely at each of these three works, analyzing their common linguistic patterns in order to understand their colonial ways of portrayal. So as to understand how these three authors reflect on their encounters with the “Other,” I have divided my analysis into two aspects, the first one called the spatial “Other,” whereby I see how the three authors perceive their own spatiality and how they conceptualize the foreign environment, or the space of the “Other.” Here the stress is on how the narrator talks about the space he or she is in by relying on spatial-metaphorical language. In this aspect I also follow the authors’ intentions to portray India as a “Third-World” entity, thereby stressing their colonially oriented portrayal. Thus this part focuses on the socio-political nature of these works. The second aspect concentrates on the depiction of the interpersonal encounters that the authors have with the locals and how they narrate their interactions with the “Other.”
2.1 The Spatial “Other”

Like most travelers, these authors’ arrival in India is marked by their heightened sensitivity to everything foreign: be it the first look of cities, or the smells, sounds, and color, which then gives shape to their narrations of the new place. Many times, they offer descriptive narrations about the place to give their readers an idea of their locations and surroundings. This technique provides many opportunities to analyze the different narrative perspectives and metaphors deployed by the author and to examine linguistic patterns for their descriptions of spatiality. I look at these descriptions based on the linguistic-literary analysis of their texts using cognitive studies methods and then focus on the text’s projection of India as a “Third-World” country, analyzing descriptions of poverty and slums in the three texts.

2.1.1 Spatial Metaphors and Deictic Center

One of the fundamental aspects of travel literature is not so much the exploration of new places, but rather the exploration of the self in the new place. In the works of all three authors, and especially in Grass’s and Winkler’s works, this can be seen explicitly. Drewitz’s journey to India is motivated by a cultural exchange conducted by the Goethe Institute. She documents her journey in the form of a first-person narrative situating herself as the central figure surrounded by the foreign environment. Although a personal diary does showcase personal experiences, the narrative style can be either focused towards the narrator or towards what is narrated. But Drewitz’s narrative style is always projected from the narrator’s perspective, from the inside to the outside surroundings. Her linguistic style also stresses this deictic center. At the very beginning of her diary the narrator conveys her fear of the foreign country, or of the unknown, “Ich habe Angst vor dem Unbekannten, das mich erwartet” (Drewitz 9). She writes this while she is still standing on the familiar grounds of Berlin, before boarding the flight to India. The
anticipation is obvious, but this fear of the unknown also shapes some of her preconceptions about India. She is well convinced of her discomfort with the poverty that will confront her in this country, “Das Elend dort unten aus solcher Entfernung auch nur zu denken, macht schwindelig!” (Drewitz 9). This sentence clearly states the narrator’s aversion to even the thought of poverty as well as her disorientation with the word “schwindelig.” By using the word ‘dort unten’ she makes the distinction of the place below from her current location, which is up in the air literally, and also her location as the deictic center quite clear. She is in a better position as a mere observer for the time being at least, but the thought of the anticipated arrival in that part of the world below makes her uneasy. The sentence also confirms her doubt of coming in direct contact with the “Other” and moreover, the hint of aversion present in her narrative tone confirms her dislike for the country that she is visiting. From the beginning the descriptions of dirt and poverty dominate her portrayals of India. In her descriptions she even attributes various epithets to the poverty that she witnesses, thereby intensifying the gap between her roots and the place she is visiting. Early on she writes, “Ich muss mich an das südliche Elend gewöhnen” (Drewitz 10). The word südlich denotes the spatial deixis and how the narrator distances herself from the southern region that she is visiting. Furthermore the word play of südlich and unten can be linked together to explain the conceptual metaphor of hierarchical structures suggested by George Lakoff (The contemporary theory of Metaphor, 1992), whereby the words used by the narrator display how India fares lowest in terms of power and stature when compared to the narrator’s native place and origin. Dort unten can also mean down south, even in sociolinguistics and is opposite to the narrator’s central European background. She not only makes a distinction between herself and the people of India based on the East and West divide, but also makes a distinction between North and South. By using these deictic words she makes the distinctions
between her and the locals clear and heightens the gap between the so-called “First” and “Third” Worlds.

In her diary the focal point of the narrator and the deictic center can be observed on several occasions when her descriptions come across as snapshot-like, for instance in Delhi she writes: “Die Fahrt in die Stadt. Sehr breite Straßen, rechts und links Elend und Reichtum, große Parks, Slumzelte” (Drewitz 10). These sentences omit the verb, thereby deviating from the usual linguistic features and appearing more like the commentary of a person behind a camera. The narrator uses this snapshot technique quite often to describe the scenes she sees around her; however, this technique limits itself to static images and sometimes we as readers need the author’s commentary. Furthermore, this linguistic technique highlights the distant attitude of the author toward her surroundings. In some cases, Drewitz resorts to reflecting on the strangeness of her spatial settings, as in “Ein Ort wie geträumt. Beklemmend ortlos. Noch” (Drewitz 10). Here the dreamt vision and the reality come into conflict. Whereas in the dream the place or the country she is visiting has a specific location, in reality the lines get blurred and it becomes almost impossible to see the locative. It also reflects the narrator’s mental state, where a certain place is being imagined, but at the same time the narrator’s fear and anticipation interrupt the realization of this foreign space. With the use of the word noch the narrator tries to give herself hope and courage to sustain her immediate contact with the “Other.” For most of the diary the narrator maintains an authoritative tone, commenting and criticizing, sometimes also reflecting about what memories she will have forever from this trip and how feeling claustrophobic is one such memory for her.

Die (andere) Erfahrung, die ich nicht vergessen werde, ist die Enge, das Gewimmel, die Unmöglichkeit, irgendwo in der Stadt auch nur einen Augenblick inne zu halten, ohne
umdrängt zu werden, und dabei doch die große Geduld aller, der Wunsch, gegen das Chaos an Ordnung zu halten. (15)

Thus, in this instance the narrator articulates about how she misses the freedom that she enjoys otherwise, as well as how chaos reigns in this foreign land. She chooses to clearly describe her state of mind here, but there are also moments, when confusion prevails, that she delves into words like “ortlos” or uses metaphors to describe her lost and disoriented feeling, or to define her loss of familiar space. In the city of Calcutta, for instance, she writes, “Ein Hotel im Kolonialstil. Ort noch: Nirgendort. Bewußtsein noch: Niemand zu sein, von allen Verbindungen zum eigenen Leben abgetrennt. Treibend. Verletzlich” (Drewitz 44). Here with the use of the container metaphor *Nirgendort*, Drewitz conceptualizes a space that is essentially very unfamiliar for the narrator, but also a space that doesn’t need more description or depth according to the narrator. Lakoff and Johnson explain the container metaphor with regard to the human body as well as to other physical and non-physical objects, which can be defined by boundaries. By calling it an Ort, she gives it an ontological dimension. One cannot deny the contradictory nature of this term as space/non-space and yet conceptually it is bounded. Thus a *Nirgendort* is a personified place, which implies empty space and yet with certain physical boundaries, in which the narrator finds herself trapped. So, on the one hand, the container metaphor helps us understand that the narrator visualizes a space, in which she finds herself, but on the other hand, this space means a loss of connection and identity with respect to the foreign surrounding. But it is not only in this one instance that the narrator feels this way. While in Hyderabad city, she describes the university and Goethe Institute’s premises and then quickly comments, “Wieder einmal an einem Nirgendort” (Drewitz 49). Thus the repeated use of this container metaphor is seen whenever the narrator is utterly dejected while dealing with the “Other,” as well as when she conceptualizes
her own loss of words in describing her foreign surroundings. Moreover, with this metaphor she strips off any other identity that these cities of India might have, reducing them to a space that in her view need not require any description or may not be worth describing.

For both Drewitz and Grass, the preparation for the journey is important. While for Drewitz, it is predetermined with a planned itinerary across different cities, Grass comes with an intention of staying in Calcutta for at least six months. Thus his place of residence is already arranged, and the initial descriptions of his commute by public transportation and adjusting to the new surroundings constitute his portrayal of the foreign space. The one thing that differentiates Grass’s engagement with his surroundings from that of Drewitz is his preparedness to stay there longer. His daily routine life is spent much more at leisure than that of Drewitz, who has her day filled with appointments and lectures. The same sense of leisure is also seen in Winkler’s novel, where he spends most of his time on the Ghâts of Benares watching the everyday life of the locals that unfolds before him. Thus both works, Zunge Zeigen and Domra, comprise lengthy descriptions of mundane life; sometimes with such detailed precision that one may be able to paint a picture from these descriptions. Grass, in fact, articulates trivial and minute details, and writes about how he would sketch these scenes and motifs. His work contains more than fifty charcoal sketches that range from depictions of humans and animals, amongst them crows and cows, mostly, as well as several sketches of Goddess Kali with her “outstretched tongue,” which then also becomes the leitmotiv of his text besides inspiring the title of his book. This style of narration of both these authors makes us deliberate over the role of privileged travelers and how their works are received.

Grass travels with his wife Ute, and she plays an important part in his narrative. For most part, the entire text is narrated in the first person. However, occasionally there is a presence of an
omniscient narrator who narrates about Grass and his wife in the third person. With this narrator position Grass is able to establish a more objective outlook, but another feature of this shift in the perspective makes us realize how the couple come to terms with their local realities. Despite wanting to stay in Calcutta for some time and making it their temporary home, Grass and his wife have to rely on certain factors to get through their time there. For the most part their struggle involves getting acclimatized to the weather conditions and the local environment. Their sense of spatiality is embodied as they perceive the foreign space through nearly all of their senses, and it is in these moments that they question their intentions of this journey and their stay. Thus for example, in the commuter train from Baruipur to Ballygunge, he writes about his disposition, “Wie ausgeliefert, allem und jedem zu nah, weil Haut sich an Haut reibt, Schweiß sich mit Schweiß mischt. Und bleiben dennoch überall fremd, so abtastend wir begafft werden; Ferne und Nähe verlieren ihren Begriff” (Grass 16). In this comment, the first-person narrator shows his location in the tropics by hinting at its warm weather and also criticizes one of the stigmas associated with most tropics: overpopulation. It is the overpopulated wagon, which constricts the movements and confines the space of those traveling in it by forcing people to come close physically but still maintaining the differences on intellectual levels. Thus the daily commute in the wagon blurs the lines of what is familiar and foreign. The couple’s irritation of the new space is manifested in physical discomfort, and the daily commute seems like a punishment, as expressed when he writes later, “Erschöpft aus Calcutta zurück. (Katholisch gezählt, müßte sich jede Bahnfahrt wie Sündennachlass verrechnen). Utes Ekel vor allem, was sie anfassen, riechen muss. Sie duscht lange. Ich sitze in meinem Schweiß, trinke abgekochtes Eiswasser, rauche ein Zigarillo” (Grass 31). Thus the two react differently to the circumstances, but this remark is particularly illuminating in regard to how the author/narrator perceives the
foreign space, especially because throughout the text we witness Grass’s love-hate relationship with the city. The physical circumstances are demanding for someone who is used to a temperate climate and soon enough in the text we find his longing to travel somewhere else, “Weg von Calcutta: Luftholen” (Grass 40). Later after having traveled away from Calcutta, he views visiting other cities a burden when he writes, “Kaum in Madras angekommen, vermissen ich Calcutta” (Grass 92). Thus it is clear that the narrator develops an affinity toward Calcutta gradually over the course of his stay. Although Grass makes an acute observation of Indian society, there is also a sense of pragmatism that motivates the way he deals with his circumstances. This is seen particularly when he writes, “Wir werden diese Strecke oft fahren und uns gewöhnen. Schon überlege ich Techniken des Ein- und Aussteigens” (Grass 16). Thus Calcutta goes from being the foreign city to a temporary home for the couple, and the narrator is willing to make an effort to come to terms with the practicality of everyday life in this city. Grass’s reputation as an author works mostly in his favor, since he is able to live in a Gartenhaus in South Calcutta and later can change his accommodation during the floods of 1986. Thus one cannot deny the comforts that come with his status as a privileged traveler.

Another important aspect of Grass’s work that connects it with Drewitz’s work is the reference to the deictic center that depicts the European identity of the narrator. There is a tendency to juxtapose the noise and chaos of the foreign culture with the calm and quiet of Europe. Thus during his initial stay while he is still getting used to the hustle and bustle that surrounds him, he writes, “Des Nachbars Ente, der unermüdliche Lachsack. Unterm surrendern Fan, beim Mittagsschlaf träume ich nördlich” (Grass 20). He finds comfort and peace in dreaming about home whenever the foreign environment becomes overwhelming. So while Drewitz shows her aversion to the “südlich(e) Elend,” Grass finds solace in dreaming about his
“nördlich(e Heimat).” By using these spatial deictic indicators, both authors stress the advantage of their European roots. But for Grass this is not just limited to his dreams. In his everyday life in Calcutta, he regularly flees his spatial reality by immersing himself in reading German and European authors. He refers to the authors that he and Ute read, and several passages in the text comprise his analysis as well as critical review of works of authors such as Theodor Fontane, Lichtenberg, Joachim Schädlich, and Gustav Freitag. In fact, Fontane assumes an important role in this narrative since even prior to landing in India, Ute reads Fontane, while Grass is preparing by reading about India. At a later stage, Fontane also takes on the role of an additional figure who observes India. Grass portrays him as one of the characters of his book, when he writes,

Je länger ich hingehe, wir hingehe – und Fontane ist ein süchtiger Beobachter -, kommt uns Indien, jenes Land also, in dessen Elend so viel Geheimnis hineingeredet wird, das als unergründlich, undeutbar gilt, geheimnisloser (sagt er) als Dänemark: ein abgeschmackter Aberglaube, die Religion. (Grass 25)

Thus Fontane is used as a Leitfigur of European ideals and also becomes an influential character for Grass when he is recording his perspective about India. With Fontane, Grass also finds a validation point to project his own Eurocentric thoughts. Throughout the text the first person narrator engages in discussing and reviewing European authors and their ideas, and these intellectual pursuits can be seen as an escape from his real spatial surroundings. Thus on one occasion while the couple is traveling back from Vishnupur, he writes, “In Gedanken, nicht abzustellen, bin ich bei Schädlichs ‘Tallhover’” (Grass 38). Thus these frequent escapades and mental flights towards German authors and thinkers stress his need to substantiate his European roots amidst the foreign space. It is quite striking to note that the narrator contemplates on this
act of “fleeing” in this very book, when earlier he cites his reasons for fleeing Germany to visit Calcutta,

Wovon ich wegfliege: von Wiederholungen die sich als Neuigkeiten ausgeben; von Deutschland und Deutschland, wie schwerbewaffnete Todfeinde einander immer ähnlicher werden; von Einsichten, aus zu näher Distanz gewonnen; von meiner nur halblaut eingestandenen Ratlosigkeit, die mitfliegt. Auch weg vom Gequatsche, von den Verlautbarungen weg, raus aus der Ausgewogenheit, den Befindlichkeiten, den ellbogenspitzen Selbstverwirklichungsspielen, Tausende Kilometer weit weg von subtilen Flachsinn einst linker, jetzt nur noch smarter Feuilletonisten, und weg, weg von mir als Teil oder Gegenstand dieser Öffentlichkeit. (Grass 17)

Thus this passage illustrates his intentions for leaving Germany and yet the new country poses equally distressing questions to ponder, and with its familiar yet foreign environment pushes the narrator to occasionally indulge in European authors and ideas. Grass’s indulgence in these readings serves as an escape from his present life. It also reflects the disappointment of not finding that which he is seeking in India, and the very act of fleeing forms the core of his existence in Calcutta.

His sketches are another aspect of Grass’s works that show the way he perceives his spatiality. If one looks at the sketches, one often finds very dark, miserable, and hard-hitting pictures of mostly people living in poverty and misery. Several sketches of squatting pavement-dwellers as well as crows and cows fill in the scenery and one wonders if this is all of what Grass witnessed during his entire stay. In his interview with Grass in 2003, Martin Kämpchen questions Grass for portraying only the darker side, despite having witnessed what Grass himself calls a “Überlebenswille” and “Vitalität” (Kämpchen 182) amongst the poor. Grass deviates
from answering this question directly but points out how the different stages of poverty and slums fascinated him and prompted him to sketch. He categorizes slums based on whatever meager means they possess and is compelled to sketch the “pavement dwellers” occasionally. However, these sketches also signify his Western European deictic center in addition to his privileged position. There is a sense of leisure that he displays during sketching, when he writes, “Den Nachmittag über zeichne ich Menschen im Müll” (Grass 59). This sentence signifies how Grass spends hours sketching and how he objectifies the people and poverty that surround him. It seems that by spending time on his sketches, he wants to aestheticize the pathetic conditions of slum dwellers. His vision as a painter is reflected in his descriptions at times, and again his position as a mere observer is heightened when he writes, “Bei Dämmerung mit Vollmond streicht vom Fluss her der Rauch der Verbrennungsstätten und verpinselt die Schwärze der Innenhöfe. Meine ungerufene Liebe zu dieser Stadt, die verflucht ist, jedem menschlichen Elend Quartier zu bieten. Ich will wiederkommen und zeichnen: vom Dach herab” (Grass 63). Thus once again in a single statement Grass manages to show his love-hate relationship toward Calcutta, whereby he talks of his immense love for the city, but also alienates it by objectifying it. His interest in sketching each and every poverty-struck corner and show it to the world shows his indulgence in aestheticizing poverty.24 Furthermore, his desire to sketch the city from above shows how he observes things from a distance, making them the objects of his projections. It is the privileged status that Grass enjoys that makes it apparently easy for him to distance himself from the problems and ethos of the locals and concretize the misery of the marginalized population in words and sketches. It is also in this instance that one can accuse Grass of following in the footsteps of typically colonial style portrayals of alterity.

24 I have translated this term from Grass, who introduces the term “Ästhetik der Armut” in this text, and I talk more about it in the next section.
Both Grass and Winkler have written extensively about their own hometowns, Danzig and Kärnten respectively, in their previous works, and despite having chosen different cities in India, both can be held responsible for portraying a voyeuristic image of India. Winkler’s *Domra: Am Ufer des Ganges* claims to be a novel dedicated to the city of Varanasi, however, its narrative style and technique deviate from everything that would make it a novel in the conventional sense. Annakutty Findeis sums it up this way,

> Das von Winkler als Roman ausgewiesene Prosawerk *Domra* sprengt die Gattung Roman, wenn man sich an die Definition “Großform der fiktionalen Erzählung in Prosa” hält. An die Stelle der Fiktionalität tritt die Beschreibung von Realitäten (mit Fotos) auf der Basis von Notizen, die vor Ort gemacht wurden. Der Text bleibt nahe der Dokumentarliteratur. Der Roman stellt sich als eine Sammlung von Einzelerzählungen, als Aneinanderreihung und Verschränkung von einzelnen Episoden und Wahrnehmungen dar, mit eingestreuten Erinnerungen, Träumen, kurzen Zwischengedanken und wiederholten zitierten Leitsätzen, Motiven, Bildern und Handlungen, Geschehnisabfolgen. (Findeis 244)

Thus Winkler’s work does not conform to the traditional concept of novel and comprises observations of the new space interlaced with memories of childhood, accompanied by the visual medium of photographs taken by his wife, Christina Schwichtenberg. Most of these pictures portray the banks of Harishchandra ghāt, one of the prime sites for cremation, which happens to be Winkler’s primary muse for this work. Other pictures depict the river Ganga or the esoteric Sadhus or naked Fakirs. Like Drewitz and Grass’s work, this one is also narrated in the first person, and initially it is very focused on the narrator and his past, but gradually the narrative tone resembles a documentary-style narration. Although Winkler doesn’t explicitly disclose his intentions of visiting Varanasi like Grass does, the childhood memories mentioned in the initial

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25 The book is subtitled as *Roman.*
pages of what is termed a novel shed light on the mysticism attached to concepts such as death. In fact, death is the leitmotiv and forms the backdrop of his work, since a lot of his narrative revolves around the burning pyres and cremation sites on the banks of the river Ganga. Having been brought up in a conservative, Catholic home and being exposed to some of the relics and remains of his grandmother as a child, death seems to have a permanent influence on Winkler’s outlook on life. At the outset of the book, while Winkler is on his way to India and notices “einen hellgrauen Filztrachtenhut mit dunkelgrauen Flecken und einem aufgesteckten Blechedelweiß” (Winkler 12) on a German in-flight magazine, he is reminded of his deceased childhood friend Jakob’s father, who always wore such a felt hat. He recalls how his father cursed Winkler at his grave, “Mit dem Winkler wird es noch einmal schlimm enden…Die Geschichte ist noch nicht zuende, ist noch nicht ausgestanden” (Winkler 12). Jakob’s suicide and his father’s comment loom large in Winkler’s mind and the repeated use of the sentence “Die Geschichte ist noch nicht zuende, ist noch nicht ausgestanden” build up a tension as well as mystery for the reader. Thus his friend’s death and the association with the relics from the past build the backdrop for his quest of understanding the meaning of death in the foreign place and culture. Shortly thereafter, the narrator’s realization of being in the new place becomes evident when he has his first Indian meal and he reminisces about his childhood days in Kärnten, Austria. While he is observing the new surroundings, he is guided by the words of Hans Henny Jahnn, a playwright from Hamburg, who has been a big influence on Winkler: “Ich verlasse dich jetzt. Du musst alleine weitergehen. Du sollst diese Stadt, die du nicht kennst, erforschen” (Winkler 15).

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26 In many of his interviews, Winkler has been criticized for repeatedly using the topic of death in his works. Jean-Yves Masson sees “Die Erbe des österreichischen Barock” in him because of death playing a predominant role in his works. In this interview (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKjbSn5OKDM) published in May 2012, Winkler talks of his childhood when he was exposed to the “toten Antlitz der Oma” at the age of three, and how that particular room smelled of decomposed flowers, “(riecht nach) Verwesung.” This instance as well as the “Kinderunglücke” that he witnessed, are deeply etched in his memory, to the extent that he admits to also have thought about committing suicide when he was young and talks about death as “immer gut zu schreiben, guter, idealer Stoff.”
These lines are often repeated in the text and the use of the word “erforschen” here must be particularly addressed, since it is not just “erfahren,” experiencing something, but more about having a scholarly or academic understanding of the culture, which in itself is a western way of thinking. This is also a colonial way of portrayal since the observations are recorded in a distinctly theoretical manner that may even fall into the category of ethnographic study. Winkler adheres to this advice and his observations remain quite scientific in nature, dissecting each and every detail of the object that he is observing, be it the burning corpse or the boys playing on the banks of the river or the stray dogs strolling around. Until a few pages into the text, the narrator comes across as cautious yet empathetic, but then a few pages later, his narrative style changes and becomes more descriptive and report-like. Thus his narrative does not stick to the experiential; rather it tries to establish a sort of a research study of the banks of Ganga. So while outwardly, the narrator is observing the “Other,” inwardly he is being guided by a voice, on which he can easily rely, and which reassures him of his European existence.

Winkler’s descriptions of his surroundings as well as his understanding of his spatial dimensions are mostly restricted to the ghāts (banks) of the river Ganga and the descriptions of the cremation sites. His imagery highlights the simultaneity of life and death, and he describes both these aspects in great detail. The following quote illustrates precisely how he captures the life within death in one frame:

In dem Augenblick, als ich mich von den verschwommen hinter der flirrenden Hitze der Flammen des Scheiterhaufens in der Flußmitte badenden, schwarzen indischen Knaben abwandte und meinen Blick auf den wenige Meter unter mir brennenden Scheiterhaufen senkte, bogen sich die Beine des brennenden Toten in die Höhe, lösten sich vom Körper und rutschten vom Scheiterhaufen auf den Sandboden. (Winkler 119)
While this depiction can completely disgust readers with the minute details of the burning corpse, it clearly shows Winkler’s penchant for details as well as his love for longer, complex sentences. But he also integrates life within this portrayal of death, in the way he describes the physical body of the deceased, which once signified life, and how it loses its essence as an existential entity in the process of cremation. Similarly if we follow the quote closely we are able to imagine the scope of the riverbank, which is full of life on the one end, (descriptions of children playing in the river, daily chores of the people) and set on the backdrop of the cremation sites, on the other end. The river Ganga is considered sacred in the Hindu scriptures and the waters of Ganga are holy both to the living and the dead. Pilgrims travel to the banks of this river to take a dip in the holy water and absolve themselves from their sins, and the water of Ganga or Gangajal is used in the cremation rituals of a deceased Hindu. Thus the river and its waters embody the sacred, the holy for Hindus.

In Winkler’s work, the narrator’s spatial presence is limited to his visits to the banks of the river and their surroundings and occasional descriptions of his hotel stays, and in his interactions with the people around him. And although he is part of the canvas that he is painting, the onus lies much more on what is being observed. The other aspect of Winkler’s writing is the absence of metaphors, which one occasionally finds in Drewitz’s and Grass’s writings. However, his portrayal of Varanasi also emphasizes not only the poor conditions of the local people, but also the other social factors that make up this city.

2.1.2 Cities as Embodiment of Poverty

Drewitz, Grass, and Winkler describe the effects of their surroundings using spatial metaphors in some cases as seen previously, and then they describe the cities as an embodiment of poverty and dirt thus stressing the so-called “Third-World” status of the country they are
visiting. The three authors are already aware of the socio-economic condition of this former colony, and yet all three elevate this fact in such a manner that these cities get caught up in their poverty-ridden descriptions and lose their unique identities. This is seen more clearly in Drewitz’s diary, since she explores the seven major cities in India, but none of these cities stand out for anything more than the slums and impoverishment that the author encounters. While preparing for this journey, Drewitz admits to reading history and art books about India, which already instill in her a fear of the economic deficiency, and her journey is characterized by this fear and repulsion of the poverty that she is about to confront. Thus several passages mention this fear, starting from the foreword of the book where the narrator articulates her fear when she writes, “Ich hatte Angst vor dem Elend. Dennoch versuchte ich, mich den Erfahrungen unbefangen zu stellen, täglich Buch zu führen” (Drewitz 5) and then later at several points in the book, e.g. “Ich bin mit dem Erschrecken vor dem Massenelend so wenig fertig wie mit dem Erstaunen vor so viel Geduld. Ich möchte den vielen danken, die noch im Elend Menschen geblieben sind. Ich möchte die Menschen anklagen, die das Elend für selbstverständlich nehmen” (Drewitz 6). She also relates how this malaise rises by experiencing more about the situations and conditions, “Ich hatte Angst vor dem Elend. Die Angst ist gewachsen, weil ich gesehen, begriffen habe, wie groß unser aller Versagen vor diesem Elend ist” (Drewitz 7). It is in these passages that she blames the local people and the government for these conditions, and also expresses her attitude of helplessness in bringing about a change. The narrator appeals the western world to take heed of these conditions and help in any way they can. However, despite her willingness to represent things the way they are, her writing style has a biased undertone to it and her preoccupation with the portrayal of the slums and poverty in India can be seen manifold. It is not a memory of any beautiful temple or architecture she has seen, or the memory of
conversations with the local people that will be etched in her mind forever, but the sight of begging hands, “[…] die Hände wie Blumenknospen, die sich gerade öffnen, magere junge Hände – die indische Geste, die ich am wenigsten vergessen werde” (Drewitz 15). She attributes this poverty by personifying it, like in this instance, “Die Armut hat viele Gesichter. Und viele Inder sind für Gesichter der Armut blind. Der Touristenbus stoppt, hitzegerötete Europäer und Amerikaner fangen mit einem Schnappschuß das Elend ein” (Drewitz 38). Perhaps it takes an outsider to realize this, but then she differentiates herself from the other western tourists who seem to capture this poverty in their cameras, whereas she actually perceives it. Even with the cities, Drewitz uses metaphors of sickness to describe them. Bombay, for instance, is portrayed as a “Stadt, die von Slums wie von Geschwüren überzogen ist. Ich habe es wohl gewußt, davon gelesen, Bilder, Filme gesehen. Doch das Elend unmittelbar zu sehen, zu riechen, zu fühlen, übersteigt die Phantasie” (Drewitz 27) and it is here that she talks of how all her senses perceive this poverty. Thus, on the one hand, she tries to show her involvement with the conditions of these cities by experiencing things perceptually, unlike other western tourists, and on the other hand she attributes the cities with sickly epithets such that there is no solution for cities like Mumbai with their “kranken Wirklichkeit” (Drewitz 43) or “Calcutta, eine Stadt wie eine tiefe, eiternde Wunde, die nicht heilen kann” (Drewitz 45). Thus she judges these cities by only one parameter of economic standards set by the western countries, and each of these cities fails to meet these standards. But her exposing of the underbelly of these cities doesn’t stop here. There is a slum-visit planned in most of the cities that she visits. Thus about being in Chennai, she writes, “Heute früh Besuch der Slums Kilpauk und Perambur” (Drewitz 63) and then goes on to compare the different huts, housing or bastees in Calcutta, Mumbai, and Madras. This

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27 Monika Shafi also observes this trait in Drewitz’s writing and calls it Drewitz’s use of “[…] medical terminology in order to interpret Indian realities. Her daily exposure to slums and squalor-viewing shape her perception of India as ‘sick’ country” (Gazing11). Shafi attributes Drewitz’s solutions to the local problems to this outlook.
phenomenon of visiting the slums resemble with what is today known as “slum tourism”\textsuperscript{28} and although this is a twenty-first century phenomenon, the slum-visits are part of the itinerary for these authors and artists on the exchange. The same is seen even in case of Grass despite him being the sole organizer and planner of his trip. In fact, Grass even categorizes slums based on their conditions. In one such slum he comes across a relatively cleaner house and writes, “Ich will behaupten, daß diese armeseligen Zufluchten, Calcuttas Millionen Slumhütten, reinlicher sind als der chaotisch gewürfelte Rest der Stadt: von verzweifelter, dem Elend abgetrotzter Reinlichkeit” (Grass 51).

But for Grass these categorizations and distinctions of poverty serve another purpose. They are material for him to sketch. Thus one comes across passages like these,


The accurate depiction of poverty becomes one of his indulgent pastimes. It is in these passages, when he views the surroundings as an artist more than an author that he coins the term “Ästhetik der Armut,”

Nach Skizzen von Vortag zeichne ich bis spät einen wie über Nacht entstandenen Slum, einzeilig an eine Fabrikmauer gelehnt. Wieder erschreckt mich die (ungeschriebene) Ästhetik der Armut: wie jedes Detail der aus Lumpen, Plastikplanen, Pappe und Jutesäcken errichteten Hütten entsetzlich gegenständlich ist und benannt werden will.

\textsuperscript{28} Eric Weiner (2008) writes about this new phenomenon adopted by the tourism industry. He quotes David Fennel, a professor of tourism and environment at Brock University in Ontario, “Slum tourism is just another example of tourism’s finding a new niche to exploit. The real purpose, he believes, is to make Westerners feel better about their station in life. It affirms in my mind how lucky I am — or how unlucky they are” (2).
Kein Zweifel, diese letztmögliche Schönheit stellt alles, was anerkannt als schön gilt, in Frage. (Grass 71)

These sketches resemble expressionist paintings\(^{29}\) whereby all the observed motifs are blended together with written words and script in the background. Heinz calls the writing “[...] eine Art Rahmen. Als Rahmen fungieren sie auch im Gesamttext”(Heinz 204) and also analyzes his intention to sketch “die Sepia-Zeichnungen mit Pinsel, Kohle oder Feder” (Heinz 204) with limited means in order to draw attention to how,

Auch in der bildlichen Darstellung ist damit die “Ästhetik der Armut” vollendet: Einfache Darstellungsmittel (Farbe wäre undenkbar); ärmlchste Darstellungsgegenstände, in ihrer Materialität, Gebrochenheit und Veränderlichkeit; Vertrautheit erzeugen durch dichtes Herangehen an die Gegenstände; aber gleichzeitig Fremdheit erhalten, die ganze Furchtbarkeit in ihrer Schönheit und ihrem Schrecken. (Heinz 205)

The time and effort exerted by Grass to sketch these images reflect his artistic trait, but once again reinforce his disposition to look at these things as subjects for his sketches. His obsession to justify his “Ästhetik der Armut” is restricted to his own understanding of poverty, which is gleaned by merely looking at it and not really having to experience it. He seems content with producing sketches with utmost precision of what is being observed, and even praises his own attention to detail when he writes,

Bevor wir nach Bangladesh reisen - dort erwarten uns Dauds vierzehn Brüder und Schwestern -, will ich Gesichter aufnehmen: den Ausdruck klagloser Sorge, den konzentrierten Ernst jener Hocker, die, weil nicht mehr auf Arbeit, auf nirgendwas

\(^{29}\) Jutta Heinz discusses this feature: “Wenn man kunstgeschichtlich kategorisieren will, kann man die Bilder sicherlich als expressionistisch bezeichnen (zumal es in der expressionistischen Grafik eine vergleichbare Darstellungstradition der ‘Ästhetik der Armut’ gibt)” (204).
warten. Wie gesichtslos und früh verfettet der Mittelstand ist. Alles, was ich habe und vorweise, kann nur Beleg meiner Aufmerksamkeit sein, mehr nicht. (Grass 72)

Thus, the squatting locals become the face of Calcutta, but do they really represent the middle-class? Grass seems misinformed, while full of self-praise. The pavement-dwellers that he so often sketches represent part of the city, but not the other half that comprises the middle-class and upper-class. But the dominance of these sketches in Grass’s work gives the readers an inaccurate picture of the city and its local residents. Heinz talks about how this term and the depiction of poverty was received negatively,

Allgemeine Vorwürfe gegen eine solche “Ästhetik der Armut” lassen sich leicht abrufen: Sie verschleiere reales Leiden und rede eine Wirklichkeit schön, die in der Erfahrung der Betroffenen alles andere als schön sei. Schlimmer noch: Wer das Elend für ästhetisch wertvoll erkläre, beute es damit für seine eigenen Zwecke aus – anstatt zu helfen. (Heinz 201)

While Heinz makes a valid point here, she supports Grass’s take on it later, justifying it on moral grounds and looking at Grass as a responsible artist, “Das ist nicht Künstler-Tourismus oder ästhetischer Kolonialismus, sondern steht, wenn man so will, durchaus in einer aufklärerischen Tradition fern modernen Ästhetiszistentums, für die Moral und Ästhetik einander nicht ausschließen, sondern sogar gegenseitig bedingen” (Heinz 201). However, yet again Heinz bases her arguments on the European philosophy of Enlightenment while neglecting how these sketches and Grass’s descriptions constitute a generic identity of the local people based merely on economic grounds, even though Grass is aware of the class differences. Thus these sketches

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30 The Indian middle-class of the 70s and 80s was most definitely one of most aware class and in fact finds its voice in the contemporary theatre and film culture as well as literature of Calcutta.
or descriptions in both Grass’s and Drewitz’s works show the hegemonic divide from the colonial perspective.

Winkler’s portrayal of the city of Varanasi varies to some extent since his narrative is restricted to the happenings on the banks of the river and his hotel rooms. Yet the passages that describe the cremation process tend to focus on sights that are repulsive to the general audience. The sights of the burning corpses with a detailed description of how the corpse actually gives way, one body part after the other, can seem almost violent in nature and trigger the stereotypical oriental images that Edward Said talks of in his book *Orientalism*. These scenes are then contrasted by depicting the stray dogs, or the children (in their loincloths) playing around the banks and taking dips in the river water, and representing how the living and the dead flow simultaneously in the waters of this holy river Ganga. These images have the ability to disturb the readers, and their repetition invokes more negative feelings and repulsion. While Winkler engages closely with these topics, his literary expression is as complex as the topics. Thus the recurrence of this imagery might seem necessary for Winkler’s expression, however, their receptive effects are far more negative and detrimental to India’s global image

2.2  Encounter with “The Other”

In this part of the analysis, I concentrate on the interpersonal contact between the authors and the locals. While Drewitz purposely skips describing her interactions with the hosts and the local people she visits, in actuality she mentions few of her interactions with the locals. However, most of the interactions she chooses to include are limited to those people who are critical of India, in other words, locals who mirror Drewitz’s views of India. She recalls meeting a student in Delhi and visiting his family for *Diwali* festival. Her conversations with his parents about “Ohnmacht der Einsichtigen, vom Schlendrian und der Korruption in der Beamtenhierarchie, die
1947 von den Briten übernommen worden ist” (Drewitz 17) fits her own critical image of India and she is full of praise for this Indian family, especially after her conversation with his Professor father:

Ich hätte ihm stundenlang zugehört, mit ihm sprechen können. Sein Sohn und seine Tochter - sie studiert Medizin - beteiligen sich am Gespräch. Auch seine Frau ist kritisch und wach für die Umwelt, in der sie lebt. Eine ungewöhnliche indische Familie. Stunden, die mir geholfen haben, später nicht völlig zu verzweifeln. (18)

Thus she uses such interactions to validate her perceptions. Renate Bürner-Kotzam also mentions this passage in her article to criticize this tendency, when she writes,

Der wahrnehmungs- und urteilsbestimmende universalistische Anspruch strukturiert die Reise als Suche nach einheitsstiftender Übereinstimmung, so dass die Erfahrung des Fremden nicht herausgesondert, sondern bestätigt wird. Die gewünschte versichernde Gemeinsamkeit stellt sich ein, wenn die indischen Gesprächspartner den eigenen gesellschaftskritischen Erwartungen entsprechen, sich somit in den Horizont der westlichen Erfahrungswelt einfügen lassen. […] Dass gerade diese Familie als eine “ungewöhnliche” indische Familie bezeichnet wird, zeigt wohl auch, wie schwierig die Einheitsstiftung angesichts der irritierenden fremden Vielfalt ist. (275)

A similar instance is seen in Calcutta, during her visit to sculptor Meera Mukherjee’s house, where Drewitz strikes a conversation with the sculptor’s husband and is full of praise for him, “denn ihr Mann redet von der schlimmen Situation Indiens speziell Bengalens, geißelt die Planungsfehler der Zentralregierung, insbesondere die gewaltigen Ausgaben für die Asiade”

(48). Earlier in the text she is critical of the Indian government for their expenditure on the Asian games, when instead they should be providing basic facilities to all its citizens and in this

31 Asiade are the Asian games that were hosted by India in 1982 and coincided with Drewitz’s visit to India.
instance she finds someone local questioning the same things, and that is apparently the reason why she includes this interaction.

In another instance, in Pune, she writes about her experience visiting a Brahmin family and writes about the casteism, where she even distinguishes the appearance of these family members, “sie haben auffallend geprägte Gesichter und ungewöhnlich hellbraune Augen” (Drewitz 100), thus treading on a contentious topic in the Indian society. She applauds the family’s social awareness as well as worldly wisdom (She is pleased to get silverware to eat her rice) and gets to know the other reality:

Zum ersten Mal erfahre ich von der absurd Situation, in der sich die Brahmanen in Indien befinden. Weil sie über Jahrtausende die Oberschicht gewesen sind, die Kaste der Denker, der Lehrenden, der Berater der Herrschenden, ist ihnen von der Kongreßregierung der Zugang zur Regierungsarbeit, zur Beamtenschaft und damit auch weitgehend zu den Universitäten verwehrt (eine Überlegung, wie sie auch in den UdSSR und der DDR praktiziert worden ist). (100)

Here Drewitz gets an insight into the contemporary issues of the middle-class in India and by comparing it with the GDR, she criticizes both the societies.

Another important aspect of her intercultural experience is reflected in the way she portrays women in India. As part of this exchange, Drewitz comes in contact with local artists and authors in roundtable discussions or speeches that she delivers and yet all these encounters with the local people are also partly planned as is the rest of her itinerary. Thus there is a gap between her conversations with her local peers and her judgment of the middle-class women as seen in this instance, after one film screening:

32 It is a common public perception that Brahmins are fair-skinned, and with lighter eyes than the rest of the castes in India. However, this is a general perception and certainly debatable.

This passage comes quite abruptly and it leaves a lot of loopholes. First, it is unclear if she is referring to the fellow authors or to some of the women in the audience. Second, she generalizes the state of middle-class women in India by showing their economic dependency, and finally, she judges their outer appearance as a sign of their inability to bring about any change. Thus this entire passage presents a skewed view of the middle-class women in India. It is also noteworthy that she talks of the jam-packed local trains in Mumbai in passing and criticizes the lack of proper city planning and lack of infrastructure, but fails to notice the middle-class women commuting daily to maintain their family finances. Thus the narrator’s view of the middle-class women in India is based on incomplete knowledge and understanding of the local circumstances and she seems unaware of this ignorance.33

33 The depiction of the middle-class women as seen in these passages in Drewitz’s work mirrors some of the analysis made by Chandra Mohanty in “Under western eyes: feminist scholarship and colonial discourse” where she puts forth “three analytical presuppositions” seen commonly in western feminist (but not limited to) writings of the “Third-World women.” From her analysis Mohanty derives an image of an ‘average third-world woman’ created by the western feminist in their writings and “this average third-world woman leads an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender (read: sexually constrained) and being ‘third world’ (read: ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, religious, domesticated, family-oriented, victimized, etc.). This, I suggest, is in contrast to the (implicit), self-representation of western women as educated, modern, as having control over their own bodies and sexualities, and freedom to make their own decisions” (Mohanty 65). This quote exemplifies what the narrator in Drewitz’s work represents about the Indian middle-class woman, especially her view about Indian women’s primitive sexual tendencies, or how their dependency on their husband’s income and their inability to bring about change in their lives.
Her interactions with the local female authors, be it in *All India Women’s Conference* (23) or with the *Writers Association* (23, 24) or the NGO *Jigyasa* run by an all-women crew, highlight the work done by women, yet she always presents these with a critical tone of underachievement when compared to her own contribution in the *Frauenbewegung*. Thus once again European values reign supreme and are seen as a solution to the local Indian problems. She is also particularly disappointed with the young authors she meets,

Ich werde fragen, warum die Autoren in Indien so selten den Mut haben, die wahre Situation der Menschen im Land zu beschreiben, einzuklagen. Ich werde fragen, warum die heutige indische Literatur sich so fest an die traditionellen Formen klammert, wo doch die tägliche Wirklichkeit nach Entdeckung schreit. Ich werde die jüngeren Autoren ermutigen, die es anders versucht. (Drewitz 26)

Once again Drewitz passes this judgement based on her interactions with a few selected authors, who write mostly in English. She is not aware of authors writing in vernacular languages until Prof. Dr. Vridhagiri Ganeshan informs her “dass in vielen indischen Sprachen eine neue indische Literatur entsteht, die sich des heutigen Indien annimmt, ohne die orale Überlieferung zu verachten” (Drewitz 75). Thus the tendency to judge and generalize something without complete knowledge is a trait that is repeated throughout the text. Bürner-Kotzam also addresses this tendency: “Sie basiert auf der Pauschalisierung ihres nicht angewiesenen Kenntnisstandes der indischen Literatur, der sich – vermutlich – auf den für viele Inder literarisch nicht repräsentativen kleinen Teil der auf Englisch geschriebenen Literatur bezieht” (275). I would further argue that this tendency of generalizing is present not only while judging the literature but also while portraying the women in India, especially the middle-class women. In Bangalore, she is fascinated by the Saree, a common attire for women in India: “Ich kenne kein
Kleidungsstück, dem eine solche erotische Verführung eigen ist wie dem Sari, so als müsse alle die Enge, in die die Frauen durch die indischen Heiratsbräuche eingezwängt sind, überwunden werden” (Drewitz 85). While Renate Dampe-Jarosz criticizes this approach as an awakening of the “Orient-image” in the eyes of the Europeans in her article “Die Indienerfahrung in Mein indisches Tagebuch von Ingeborg Drewitz,” I find it debatable. There are some obvious word choices like “erotische Verführung” in the above quotation, that are used in that tradition of describing the Orient as Edward Said has articulated in his book Orientalism, and Drewitz also describes a few Indian customs as primitive. However, her writing style does not get trapped in that oriental mode, where everything is exotic, wild, or feminine. Rather, her critical stance is firmly rooted in the socio-economic awareness of the twentieth century. For someone known to produce feminist writing though, Drewitz expresses surprisingly little on Indian women and their conditions. Thus Drewitz’s writing is rooted mostly in the so-called “Third World” discourse and despite her attempt to stay away from political commentary, her work is influenced largely by geopolitical and socio-economical distinctions.

Grass’s longer stay in Calcutta makes more human connection possible. Unlike the narrator in Drewitz’s text, he mentions the local people who in fact become resources enabling him to traverse and access some parts of the Indian culture that otherwise may have remained inaccessible to foreigners. Thus Shuva, the artist or Daud Haider, the Bangladeshi immigrant and Mr. and Mrs. Karlekar, the social workers who run the Calcutta Social Project become an

integral part of not only the narrative, but also of lasting friendship and association with Grass. Interestingly, he portrays a wide range of people: from the working or servant class, to affluent people (whom he mentions only briefly), to artists and intellectuals. Even the most celebrated icons of Calcutta, be it the freedom fighter Subhashchandra Bose, or poet Rabindranath Tagore, or the most revered Hindu goddess, Kali, all are discussed critically in his work. Thus there is an attempt to understand and reflect on influences that shape the local culture, like the religious symbolism with Kali or the already deceased cultural icons like Bose and Tagore, and their place in the local culture. Consequently, on a trip to Shantiniketan, a boarding school established by the poet, visionary, and intellectual Rabindranath Tagore, the couple is able to visit some otherwise restricted areas with the help of Shuva, the painter, who is a strong local contact for Grass. In the museum dedicated in Tagore’s honor, Grass is critical of the glorification of such icons and criticizes the pretentious local people who are blinded by the virtues of Tagore. He wants to expose this godly image, when he writes,

Warum wird Personen durch Museen, die sie ausstellen, so befliessen Gewalt angetan? […] Alle, auch der Universitätsdirektor, sprechen, wenn sie von Rabindranath Tagore sprechen, feierlich. Erst später, abseits der Ausstellung, während der Direktor von der Verheiratung des zweiundzwanzigjährigen Dichters mit einem Kind und Tagores unglücklicher Liebe zu Indira Devi, der Frau seines Bruders, erzählt, wird das Ausstellungssubject menschlich. (65)

Thus he attacks the local peoples’ tendency to worship such icons by putting them on the highest pedestal. He treats Tagore as the “Austellungssubject” and humanizes him by means of his shortcomings and weakness. Just like his portrayal of the slums and poverty in India, Grass is guided by his own “Ästhetik der Armut” principle even while portraying the local people, and
thereby he looks beyond Tagore’s virtues and questions the reasons for such admiration and respect in the local peoples’ minds. This aspect preoccupies him even in his sketches, when he captures goddess Kali in her wrath and her demonic stance several times in the book. Moreover, he personifies these cultural icons and famous personalities in his narrative as characters that are critical of India just as he is. So, on one occasion the Hindu goddess Kali and Einstein are seen having a conversation in the middle of a garbage dump in Dhapa, where the Karlekar couple work with the slum children. Similarly, he is puzzled with Subhashchandra Bose’s alliance with Hitler to fight the British. On several occasions in the book, Bose appears as a living figure in the narrative, just like Fontane, due to his celebrated status and Grass even refers to him as “verehrte(r) Führer” (15), using wordplay to show the respect of the local people, but also to mock his ties with Hitler, who was famously referred to as the “Führer.” Thus once again, Grass uses this word play to show the local admiration for Bose and also forewarns by reminding readers of the negative connotations attached to the word “Führer,” thereby bringing his own critical perspective.

In Grass’s portrayal of the local people the readers are often indirectly made aware of the celebrated, privileged status that Grass enjoyed. Thus he expresses his gratitude to Daud Haider, and in the same breath criticizes the nature of Bengalis when he writes,

Wie viele Bengalen keine Scheu haben, uns auf den Leib zu rücken, alles sehnen, anfassen wollen und Berührungsangst nur innerhalb ihres Kastensystems kennen, so lassen sie sich beim Baden, bei der Massage, beim Verbrennen ihrer Leichen zuschauen. Doch ohne

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35 He compares the popular image of the Hindu goddess Kali with her outstretched tongue to Einstein’s famous photo.
36 Subhashchandra Bose was the founder of Indian National Army (INA), a group of Indian nationalists that sought help of Japan and Germany in its freedom struggle from the British. Due to Bose’s alliance with Hitler and Nazi Germany, his achievements have been viewed with dismay and anger all over the world, except in India and especially Calcutta, where he is fondly referred to as Netaji, meaning respected leader. Grass plays with this term in German by calling him “verehrte(r) Führer.”
A few pages later, he expresses his struggle to get a visa in order to visit Bangladesh, and the rest of the Haider family with their failed attempts to seek refuge in India. But later he also narrates about his own struggles in speaking with the German government in order to seek asylum for Daud in Germany (104). Similarly, while we get a glimpse of the painter Shuva’s struggle to make a living, we also get information on Grass’s support in opening Shuva’s exhibit in Arts Acre that also features his own sketch/painting (102). Thus, Grass’s celebrated status works in multiple ways. It gives him opportunities to interact with local intellectuals and artists, gives him access to some otherwise restricted cultural places and gives him the opportunity to engage in intellectual debates as well as conduct readings of his books and plays. Due to his political affiliations, the local people like Shuva and Daud Haider appreciate his opinions and willingness to support their causes. Even his author status is celebrated when a young, local theatre enthusiast, Amitav Ray, stages his 1966 play “Die Plebejer proben den Aufstand” in the local theatres and invites Grass even for rehearsals. Hence Grass enjoys the perks of his celebrated status, reacts as an artist to the pitiable conditions of the poor and yet comes out a winner of lasting bonds due to his solidarity.

While Grass interacts with the locals and represents them in his work as he interacts with them, Winkler portrays the locals clinically. By that I mean that his interaction with the locals doesn’t necessarily alter the way he sees them. They are merely a part of a scene he captures in writing and they just fill this canvas. He portrays the living people just like he portrays the dead on the banks of Ganga: with the minutest details possible. Thus there are numerous passages with long and detailed descriptions of locals, comprised of men, boys, women as well as stray
dogs and other pet animals that he sees on the banks. The descriptions range from appearances to activities or work they carry out. One gets a glimpse of the mundane life on the ghāts of Ganga, but nothing of the local people beyond that. He also has a tendency to portray a few scenes repeatedly in practically voyeuristic fashion, for instance the depiction of children running around the ghāts with almost transparent loincloths, or the relatives of the deceased who take a dip in Ganga, “Deutlich konnte man die Konturen ihrer Geschlechtsteile unter den nassen, dünnen Badetücher sehen” (Winkler 23). In most of his descriptions of the ghāts that involve people, there are a few words like “Lendenschurz,” “Glied,” “Schamhaar,” which reappear on every alternate page and are narrated in a matter-of-fact way, although the readers may find these unpleasant and out of place. There are several portrayals, in which young boys tease the narrator by showing him their “Geschlechtsteile” (58, 63, 70) and ask for “Bakshisch” (58), for money to get photographed. The narrator also relates a homosexual encounter he has with a young boy in a hotel room (70). This scene certainly takes the readers by surprise and one is unable to unravel the connection between this scene and the narrator’s perspective on India. These depictions also suggest that the narrator treats these people less like thinking people and more like objects who know nothing else than stripping down for him. Why is the narrator obsessed with such descriptions and what do they tell the readers of the local people? At the beginning of Winkler’s book Domra, he quotes André du Bouchet’s motto: “Mein Bericht wird der schwarze Ast sein, der ein Knie bildet am Himmel” (5). In her work, Sinn und Sinnlichkeit des Reisens, Carmin Ulrich explains this sentence in order to clarify the motive surrounding Winkler’s repeated voyeuristic descriptions:

Dieser Satz markiert den Stil und die Herangehensweise eines Autors, der sich in seiner dinglich orientierten Wahrnehmung als Zeuge eines Geschehens und zugleich als
Visionär zu erkennen gibt, der den Raum zwischen Himmel und Erde, zwischen Leben und Tod ausmißt.

Der schwarze Ast hat eine sexuelle Bedeutung: Der Begriff, ‘einen Ast abbrechen’ steht in der Homosexuelleszene für Analverkehr; ‘ein abgebrochener’ Ast ist eine Metapher für das männliche Glied […] Der schwarze Ast, bei der Bouchet ein Knie am Himmel bildet, ist vermutlich schon ein geknickter oder abgebrochener Ast. […] Und dieser Bericht, der im Grunde kein Bericht (im Sinne einer Deskription) ist, wird ein Stück Wirklichkeit bilden, nicht nur abbilden. (211)

Ulrich’s analysis of Winkler’s motto may explain his tendency to portray the repeated images of loincloths, penises and pubic hair, or when he particularly mentions a “Transvestit” (Winkler 48) selling sandalwood and incense sticks. However, terming these descriptions as a reality that he encounters in Varanasi constantly portrays an incomplete picture. These portrayals represent the narrator’s subjective choice in highlighting only certain aspects. Moreover, these descriptions tell more about the narrator and his outlook, rather than the reality of his surroundings. One can also argue that this kind of portrayal suggests that the narrator is taking notes through the kind of detailed observation that may be required by a painter if he were to draw these everyday scenes. Thus, to the painter these details will inevitably fill up his canvas, but once it is filled he will not have any use for this detailed observation. Nevertheless, for a narrator to engage in such detailed recurrences of people who do not seem to have any other occupation than bathing near the river banks seems trivial. Moreover, the narrator incorporates descriptions of various animals like dogs, goats, sheep, and monkeys that he sees loitering around and who complete the canvass. Most of these dogs are strays that wander along the banks in search of food. The other animals, however, do form a part of livelihood to several farmers/agricultural laborers residing nearby,
who may come in search of fodder for their goats and sheep near the banks of the river. Interestingly, the descriptions of dogs also follow a particular pattern. Thus we read on several occasions of “Die Zitzen der Hündin” (Winkler 68, 84), which catch the attention of the narrator, and he uses these descriptions to highlight the contrast of life and death: “Die rosaroten Zitzen der schlafenden und heftig schnaufenden Hündin berührten die weißgraue Asche, die schwarzen Holzkohlestücke und die feinlöchrigen, weißen, verkohlten Knochenteilchen der Toten” (54). In this particular scene, he is intrigued by the proximity of life on the one hand, and death, on the other. However, it must be again noted that the descriptions of the dog are almost always accompanied by the word “Zitzen,” which again displays the narrator’s voyeuristic vision that is seen when he describes the young boys or men. By describing such scenes regularly, the narrator gives a pejorative impression of the people of India, since the readers are able to experience only part of their existence through this writing. The narrator doesn’t provide descriptions of these people beyond the ghāts. Despite the fact that the narrator intends to show the simultaneous existence of life and death on these banks, and also his fascination about this coexistence of life and death on the same level, the narrator ends up portraying an otherwise extremely ordinary way of life of the local people. Also, the narrator’s inability to understand this coexistence of life and death according to the Hindu philosophy shows his limitations in understanding the culture of the native people. Thus he engages in displaying a very mundane way of life of the native people who belong to the economically weaker sections of the society. This brings to fore a colonial way of looking at India and its people.

2.3 Conclusion

Looking at the way these three authors perceive their foreign surroundings, it is clear that most of these portrayals depict embodied experiences when it comes to adjusting in the foreign
space. While Drewitz and Grass deploy metaphors and linguistic markers to describe their feelings and emotions about how they perceive these foreign spaces, Winkler uses detailed descriptions and complex syntax to convey the same. Most of these epithets used to describe the Indian reality range from metaphors of sickness, to shocking and voyeuristic imagery. These literary techniques heighten the gap between the source culture, intensifying the so-called “Third world” associations. Even the authors’ interactions with the local people highlight this aspect and give us an impression of an underprivileged society. Examples of learned and socially vigilant local people appear sparingly in these narratives, and thus they can be placed in the tradition of colonial discourse whereby all the distinctions between the cultures signify stereotypical imagery of the “First World” versus “Third World” and are based on mainly the socio-economic parameters set by the western countries.
CHAPTER 3. CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS AND BLENDS IN NARRATING INDIA IN THE 21ST-CENTURY

Looking at the trajectory of travel narratives on India, one sees a shift in the writings of the early twenty-first century. While works discussed in the previous chapter are personal accounts and for the most part mired in the colonial discourse, works published in the anthology, *Ausblicke von meinem indischen Balkon* (2002) as well as Illija Trojanow’s novel *Der Weltensammler* (2006) project the “Other” through literary means. Trojanow’s novel is based on the life of Sir Richard Frances Burton, a lieutenant in the East India Company, and his experiences in the colonized “Britisch India.” It is a novel and not a biography, as Trojanow claims in the foreword of *Der Weltensammler*:

> Obwohl einige Äußerungen und Formulierungen von Burton in den Text eingeflochten wurden, sind die Romanfiguren sowie die Handlung überwiegend ein Produkt der Phantasie des Autors und erheben keinen Anspruch, an den biographischen Realitäten gemessen zu werden. Jeder Mensch ist ein Geheimnis; dies gilt um so mehr für einen Menschen, dem man nie begegnet ist. Dieser Roman ist eine persönliche Annäherung an ein Geheimnis, ohne es lüften zu wollen. (7)

Thus the part of the novel that concentrates on India\(^{37}\) has tremendous potential for literary analysis and is unquestionably a case study for understanding how different narrative perspectives shape the “Other.” I have included this novel specifically in my analysis unlike some previous scholarly works\(^{38}\), since it presents multiple narrative voices and conceptual metaphors and blending that make for an interpretation of the “Self” and the “Other” that

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\(^{37}\) The five hundred-page novel traces Richard Burton’s life in British India, Arabia and East Africa but I concentrate only on the Indian part of it.

\(^{38}\) Works like Anushka Gokhale’s *Indien Erzählen* (2011) that is dedicated to the study of German travel narratives on India spanning the post Second World War era to the early twenty-first century considers Trojanow’s other works on India but not this particular one.
challenges previous ones. Trojanow, who has had a multicultural upbringing, lived in Mumbai, India, for five years to research and collect material for this book and has published some other works on India, which are relevant to this dissertation and will be analyzed in the subsequent chapters. In this particular novel he chooses to write about the colonial era using historical references, and it is interesting to see how the multi-narrative perspective or polyphony (Bakhtin 1984) works in depicting the colonial time. At the same time, I explore to what extent the author’s understanding of contemporary Indian society is apparent in the narrative. The primary reason for including this literary work in my realm of analysis is its protagonist’s historical significance and connection with respect to India, as well as the core theme about traveling and living in a foreign country and integrating oneself into the foreign society. In this chapter I concentrate on the conceptual metaphors and blending in Trojanow’s novel *Der Weltensammler* and analyze the different narrative perspectives more closely in the next chapter.

The anthology *Ausblicke von meinem indischen Balkon* (2002) is a collection of smaller travel narratives and specifically literary texts on India by a group of contemporary German authors. This anthology was published after the 2000-2001 exchange between German and Indian authors as part of the “Deutsche Festspiele in Indien” organized by the Goethe Institute. Travel narratives by authors such as Arnold Stadler, Alban Nikolai Herbst, Ilija Trojanow, Thorsten Becker, Kathrin Schmidt, Felicitas Hoppe and Ulrike Dräsner feature in this anthology and it not only explores the idea of integrating literary texts as part of travel literature, but also experiments with literary genres that range from poems to short travel sketches, to chapters from proposed novels on the Indian experience. This cultural exchange was not the first of its kind.  

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39 Trojanow was born in Bulgaria but raised in Kenya and Germany. He has travelled and lived in India and Cape Town and has been raised a polyglot. Currently he resides in Vienna.
40 Ingeborg Drewitz’s diary *Mein indisches Tagebuch* was also a result of a similar exchange between Germany and India, albeit almost two decades earlier.
and yet it gave the authors freedom to choose their travel destinations within India and these travels were organized and supported by the Goethe Institute. Thus emerges a text corpus with common destinations discussed by various authors, and yet each author brings to the table new ways of seeing and experiencing them.

The editors of this anthology, Martha Stukenberg and Martin Kämpchen, stress these authors’ ability to ‘literalize’ their Indian experience, especially since these writers have some common binding factors, and a wide and varied exposure to “Indian images” owing to the Internet and the rapidly globalized world. But the other binding factors are, first, all of these authors are more or less in the same age bracket, and are well aware of the works of their forerunners. Hence, they already come well prepared for the circumstances that they might encounter. Second, these authors neither belong to the category of authors who come here in search of an alternative world nor do they seek the ‘spiritual India’ and hence they do not have a naïve approach to what they experience, and how they reflect on it. This certainly presents a challenge for them to bring their experiences onto paper without relying on the prevalent images about India. The introduction of this anthology drives this point home:

Alle Autoren sind fast 40, um sich dem ganz Anderen der Fremde auszusetzen. Sie sind keine Teenager mehr, die unbefangen und kopfüber in ihr indisches Abenteuer stürzen und auch heil oder lachend über ihre Blessuren daraus wieder auftauchen. Nein, die sind komplizierter, sie bringen ein Gepäck an Gelesenem, Gehörtem und virtuell Gesehenem, an Vorverständniss und Vorbehalten, an Fragen, Ängsten und Sensibilitäten mit. Sie sind erfahrene, nachdenkliche Reisende. (Stukenberg 9)

Most of these authors have an understanding of the German view on India due to previous scholarship and also have answers to the simplest question only a click away, giving them a

41 With the exception of Felicitas Hoppe, who also visits Pakistan.
virtual tour of India even before they arrive there. This paves the way for experimenting with the material or already established motifs and stereotypes about India. This background makes their works fascinating, since they are able to experiment with language and other literary tools. The anthology is divided into two parts, with the first part concentrating on the factual aspects of their journey, whereby these authors note their daily experiences in a diary-like format, and the second part concentrates on fictional or literary aspects. Some of the writings by female authors, especially Felicitas Hoppe and Kathrin Schmidt blur the lines of fiction and non-fiction by interlacing their real-time journey to India with their fantasies and prior perceptions that create conceptual blends and evoke conceptual metaphors. I analyze their texts with the approach proposed by the cognitive scientist Mark Turner to explore how the concepts of cognitive science can be applied in learning about the language and culture in an intercultural exchange, and how these in effect shape the perceptions of Germans about India.

Most of the travel narratives on India so far have painted a lopsided image of India, in that the texts are either extremely critical of India and its people, or the texts present the country and its culture as a completely opposite world or as an alternative “other” world to the Western world. However, in this anthology, Hoppe and Schmidt compose texts, which question this either/or spectrum of existence. Sometimes there isn’t a clear marked distinction between the “I” and the “You” or the “Self” and the “Other” and both these differences of identity merge into one another to create new metaphors and blends. In Mark Turner’s words,

(a) blend is a mental space [which] results from the mental act of blending other mental spaces in a mental web. A blend is a new mental space that contains some elements from different mental spaces in a mental web but that develops new meaning of its own that is not drawn from those spaces. This new meaning emerges in the blend. (Turner 6)
Previously existent ideas are imperative in the formation of conceptual blends. Since these authors already come with the baggage of previous knowledge, they do not come with a blank slate, and their writing styles expose how these already engrained ideas merge with other, new ideas. The blends and conceptual metaphors foregrounded in this narrative style present a new way of looking at the idea of the “Self” and the “Other,” and in particular how the “Self” construes itself in the unfamiliar surroundings. Moreover, the texts by Hoppe and Schmidt do not get caught up in the same old description of poverty and slums in spite of mentioning these aspects, but rather focus more on the problems of existence and the way the narrator confronts her foreign environment.

3.1 Container Metaphor in Kathrin Schmidt’s Text “Rundflug Mit Offenen Augen”

Schmidt summarizes her journey to India in this short text and focuses on the narrator’s physical existence as well as the personal contacts that she makes throughout her journey. Her itinerary includes the metro-cities Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata and the second-tier cities Varanasi and Lucknow. Among the two texts by Schmidt, “Rundflug mit offenen Augen” gives an overview of her entire journey while describing not just the foreign places, but also the effect of the trip on the narrator. Her sense of time and space derive a new meaning in this new environment. The physical existence of the narrator as well as her spatial perceptions are illustrated with the use of container metaphors. Upon her arrival in Mumbai in the monsoon season, late at night, Schmidt’s first impression of the city is expressed this way: “Es ist zwei Uhr nachts, als ich aus dem Flugzeug in die Waschküche Bombay umsteige” (100). Schmidt describes her surroundings and their effects on her in a way that shows how she is able to capture the dynamic nature of the city of Mumbai, even when she is probably grappling with different

42 These cities have already been introduced in the works of Drewitz, Grass, and Winkler in the previous chapters.
time zones. She writes: “Bombay benebelt. Erschlägt. Schreckt auf, Schläfert ein. Ein Wechselbad” (Schmidt 100). She uses metaphors of fluidity to describe the nature and the spirit of the city. But she also uses these terms to talk of an entity in which she enters. With terms like Waschküche and Wechselbad, the city acquires another ontological metaphorically of containment, a bounded space within the city limits. This idea of containment is explained by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in Metaphors we live by,

There are a few human instincts more basic than territoriality. And such defining of a territory, putting a boundary around it, is an act of quantification. Bounded objects, whether human beings, rocks, or land areas have sizes. This allows them to be quantified in terms of the amount of substance they contain. Kansas, for example, is a bounded area – a container – which is why we can say, ‘There’s a lot of land in Kansas.’ (29-30)

A container metaphor enables conceptualizing borders even when there aren’t any physical boundaries. Here the narrator creates a bounded space within the border of a city by using the metaphors of containment for this entity. The containment can be both positive and negative depending on the way the narrator perceives it—either as comforting or as restrictive. With the metaphors of fluidity one can also associate the heavy monsoons of Mumbai, which are a very special feature of this city. During monsoons, the city of Mumbai receives heavy rains that often result in long traffic jams and water logging along the roads. Similarly, the metaphor “Waschküche” could also be a reference to the big open-air laundromats, or Dhobighats, as they are known in the local language, which have been an attraction especially for western tourists. Further, the author’s usage of the verbs benebeln and einschläfern on the one hand, and

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43 The open-air laundromats are open spaces with huge flat stones, on which even five-star hotels’ linen is handwashed in this day and age. It is a perfect example of the dichotomy present in this city, where there are plush high-rise buildings with western interiors and infrastructure on one side and the more traditional lifestyle on the other side. These are also mentioned in Arnold Stadler’s text “Bombay Rhapsodie.”
erschlagen and aufschrecken on the other hand, make us aware of the city’s changing nature. Sometimes the city comes forth as a haze, one does know what to expect, and sometimes it can be very brutal, especially to outsiders or migrants who are trying to make a living here. The narrator is a particular type of outsider since she is only visiting the city, but not staying here to make a living. Thus the narrator’s metaphors help us understand how she perceives these different elements of the city and how it affects her understanding of this new place. Even so, she feels a sense of belonging after spending a few days in this city. This feeling that the narrator expresses is certainly a result of familiarizing herself with the other culture but she is, at the same time, aware that this quickly acquired sense of belonging could also be “ein(e) arrogant(e) Illusion.” She credits this sense of belonging to her curious nature, her willingness to learn more, when she writes, “Zum Glück ist die Neugier groß und lässt mich mit augesperrten Augen durch die Stadt gehen” (100). Thus, one sees a different attempt in the narrator’s ways of coming to terms with the “Other,” an openness in her approach and encounter with the foreign culture, as she manages to understand it despite the language barrier, or more precisely the “Verständnisbarriere” (100) as she calls it. This is seen for instance when she is not sure whether her English is worse or stranger than her taxi-driver’s English, or when she talks about how she is received and accompanied in the different cities, thus giving her existence in India numerous identities.

One can attribute this refreshing quality in Schmidt’s writings to her attempt to go beyond the usual descriptions of noise, traffic, and slums by actually exploring the places by

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44 Mumbai, being the financial capital of India, attracts a lot of migrants throughout India. Thus Mumbai can be seen as a melting pot, a metaphor that is often used to describe America.

45 When I claim Schmidt’s approach to be different than some of the authors, I am pointing out her openness in dealing with the cultural barrier. She is aware that a few experiences make her feel at home at once, but she also admits that this may be a quick judgment on her part.
herself on foot. When she takes her morning walk through the surroundings near her, she is focusing outwards as well as inward, describing the effect of the walk on her:

Ich stehe stets gegen fünf Uhr auf und mache bis zum Frühstück eine ausgedehnte Wanderung durch die sich aufrappelnde Stadt. Wenn ich loslaufe, erscheint es mir unmöglich, aber ich schaffe es jedes Mal. Was ich dabei erfinde, hätte mir niemand zeigen oder erzählen können. Ich bin froh, dass ich den Fotoapparat vergessen habe. (100)

This passage conveys the narrator’s capacity to overcome her fears, as well as an apparent unpreparedness to walk into the city. Furthermore, it distinguishes her from the regular tourists who are more interested in capturing everything on their cameras rather than actually seeing and experiencing things. This narrator shows a willingness to rely on herself to experience the other culture as much as possible on her own terms and avoids a companion or a taxi driver, to have an unmediated experience.

Her interactions with the local people also show her openness to varied experiences, whether it is in the company of fellow Indian authors or the more common folk like her taxi-drivers. There is a sense of comfort when she writes of one such interaction with the playwright, Kiran Nagarkar “Das Gefühl, mit einem Kollegen zu sprechen, tut ausgesprochen wohl. Wir verstehen uns jenseits üblicher Höflichkeitsfloskeln” (100) and there is also a sense of finding a common ground despite foreign cultures. Similarly, in Bangalore, she understands her driver’s intentions of earning extra income when he suggests adding Mysore to her itinerary, but doesn’t overtly criticize him, when she writes,

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46 I am referring to a prototype of typical tourists who are interested in documenting all that they see in their cameras and adhere strictly to exploring famous tourist attractions rather than venturing into unknown parts of the cities they are visiting. For most of these tourists, visiting monuments and clicking pictures makes up for seeing a new place. Such tourists have been ridiculed before in Winkler’s work for instance, which I talk about in my first chapter.

47 The Goethe institute organizes either local guides and/or drivers for the authors’ convenience.
Und (er) haut mich übers Ohr, als er mir eine Tagestour in Richtung Mysore organisiert.


Und beim Abschied hätte ich gern gehabt, er hätte mitkommen können, er spricht gut Englisch und hat ein Gefühl für die Wünsche seiner Kunden. (101)

Thus the narrator is able to communicate with people from different socio-economic levels and tries to understand their motives, as in the above instance. She is able to rely on her gut instincts and is able to view local circumstances from different aspects, and this sets her apart from some of the other authors.

This text also briefly mentions some key points in the narrator’s trips to the cities of Chennai, Varanasi, and Calcutta, e.g.: “Kalkutta in seinen letzten Wochen – ab kommenden Januar wird es Kolkata heißen [...]” (101). This transition of the city’s name, as mentioned in Hoppe’s text as well, was an act of decolonization by the Indian government. As part of the new millennium project, several of the city names in India were renamed by their Indian names (Bombay becoming Mumbai, Madras becoming Chennai and Calcutta becoming Kolkata to a name a few) to take a step away from India’s colonized past. Schmidt is one of the authors to mention this change and thereby makes this process a common knowledge for the readers.

The narrator in Schmidt’s text also undergoes various transformations and the narrator’s perceptions about herself are not constant throughout the journey, but instead change according to circumstances. As she travels from one place to another, she is intrigued by the various experiences and at one point says, “Indien hat mich gepackt” (101). In the next paragraph she uses the same verb “packen” in a more active sense:

The use of the word “packen” here suggests that she is actively taking something with her as well as leaving some of her influence here--unlike the earlier use of the term “gepackt,” in which the surroundings had more influence on her, almost like they were gripping her. Furthermore, the word “packen” also signifies a container metaphor: packing something implies neat physical boundaries. She wants to “pack up” her experience as if it were a concrete object. This particular passage also establishes her desire to travel solo, an “alleinreisende Frau” who does not like to be accompanied by travel guides or take an arranged tour. She prefers traveling in smaller villages where she can have access to the local people rather than taking the city-bus tours: “Ich ertrotze Touren aufs Land in abgelegene Dörfer, lerne Bauerfamilien und Seidenwerber kennen und ertappe mich dabei, mich als Insider zu fühlen, wenn ich mit den viel zu kleinen Kindern rede, die viel zu schwere Arbeit leisten” (102). Here we see a stereotypical portrayal of child-laborers that is frequently commented upon by western writers, and even by Grass. However, here the narrator is prepared to shed her “outsider” skin and pursue her adventurous spirit in order to learn more and explore more, to feel like an insider: “[…], so viel möglich zu sehen, zu erleben, zu erlaufen. Staune über mich und die notgedrungene Frechheit, mit der ich mich verschiedener Zudringlichkeiten erwehre. Es beginnt mir Spaß zu machen, mich zu behaupten und inzwischen hinter die Kulissen schauen zu können” (102). Thus the narrator is ready to challenge herself, to discover not only places, but also learn more about herself and her potential to integrate in the
foreign surroundings. The fear to walk freely in the foreign space, which has gripped authors like Drewitz before, seems to vanish in case of Schmidt as she tries different modes of traveling: “Ich bin glücklich und freue mich auf zehn Tage Delhi und die Zugfahrt dorthin” (102). The different travel modes as well as the experience of traveling as a solo female enable her to introspect and discover her own unknown, hidden characteristics. One of the main topoi of travel literature is the exchange of ideas and experiences that shape and change something in the traveler, leading her to discover aspects that she is not necessarily aware of in her home and usual surroundings. Even with her earlier usage of the term “packen” she exemplifies the different layers of existence and how by reflecting on this journey she discovers these layers.

In addition to witnessing the narrator’s internal transformations and self-realizations, we as readers also experience her inherently humane side when she expresses her desire to adopt an orphan girl she meets in Delhi. Even though this adoption doesn’t materialize due to legal hurdles, the narrator learns Hindi to be able to communicate with her “Patenkind” (102). This engagement with the local people irrespective of class or other differences as well as her attempts at solidarity stem from her East-German upbringing and past experience with India, which on the one hand, shape some of her perceptions as I show later in the text, but on the other hand, also present a fresh and optimistic outlook in the Indo-German context.

In her second literary piece, she touches upon this topic. I use the concept of conceptual blending to analyze her text closely with the aim of understanding how Schmidt’s previous perceptions about India shape her current relations with it.

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48 Schmidt’s attempt to adopt the Indian girl may be also viewed as colonial, or self-righteous savior mentality in the light of the controversy that international adoptions presents. However, in the context of her text, I see it as her humane side. See also *International Adoption: Thoughts on the human rights issues* by Elizabeth Bartholet (2007) that gives a detailed account of the controversy surrounding international adoptions.
3.2 Conceptual Blending in Kathrin Schmidt’s “Schon Das Dreundvierzigste Jahr, Einfach Erledigt”

In this text Schmidt gives a glimpse of how the narrator’s perceptions of India were formed early in her school years when she took social studies classes in her school in East Germany. For the eight-year-old narrator everything about countries and the world was based on a system of reference, a “Bezugssystem” as her social studies teacher taught it,


(Schmidt 103)

The narrator’s experience of world politics as a child and her worldview as an adult is based on her Marxist upbringing in East Germany. Thus, after seeing an Indian movie on television one day, in which she sees two orphan kids in Bombay, living in poverty and begging for pennies for survival, she packs “eine Rolle Vollmilchdrops. Unterwäsche, Bleistifte, Hefte, Radiergummi. Lineal. Ein Regencape […]” (103) and sends it to the ABC newspaper’s office and calls for a

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49 Indira Gandhi was the first female Prime Minister of India and served two terms from 1966-77 and later from 1980-84 (till her assassination).
“DDR-weiten Hilfsaktion” (103). Her ambitious plan soon crumbles when her parents come to
know of it and receive her package back with a letter, “Der an mich gerichtete Brief sprach
davon, daß es sehr gut sei, wenn wir Kinder uns um andere Kinder auf der Welt sorgten. In
Indien aber wären genügend verantwortungsvolle Menschen damit beschäftigt, eine bessere
indische Welt aufzubauen. Darauf könnte ich mich verlassen. Und solch eine Hilfsaktion wäre da
gar nicht mehr nötig” (104). This letter definitely dampens the narrator’s spirits as a child and
after thirty-five years, she—instead of her care package—lands in Mumbai.

In the next passages the narrator talks about her uncertainties after landing in Mumbai
because she doesn’t have an address and has problems communicating with her driver. Unlike
the very curious and optimistic tone of her earlier text, Schmidt evokes images and memories
about her insecurities in this text. When she is unable to communicate well with her driver she
says, “Ich weiß es nicht, fühle mich wie eine um vierzig Jahre verspätete Postsendung, deren
Empfänger unbekannt verzogen ist, was wiederum er nicht wissen kann” (104). Thus in this text
we are able to get a closer look at the narrator’s inhibitions and insecurities, and we see how she
realizes how naïve her understanding of India was when she was eight. After her arrival the
narrator finds many things incomprehensible, and discovers that her own frame of reference
would not work here, that one needs a new framework in the present scenario. She understands
now that one cannot claim so easily that one completely understands this country within a short
span of time.

In between the narrator’s attempts to go out into the city and interact with its people,
there are times when she longs to be in her balcony, a contained space that separates her from the
world she encounters but at the same time provides her a view of what she may encounter, once
on the ground:


The editors of this anthology, Martin Kämpchen and Marla Stukenberg, take this metaphor of the Indian Balcony created by Schmidt and adopt it for the title of this anthology, *Ausblicken von meinem indischen Balkon*. They write in the preface,

Um die rechte Distanz zur Wirklichkeit Indiens, also ein Gleichgewicht von Nähe und Ferne, zu finden, besucht sie ihren »Indischen Balkon«. Das ist weder ein Versteck in den vier Wänden ihres Hotelzimmers, noch die offene Straße mit ihren Gassenjungen, Bettlern, Kloaken und verführerischen Gefahren; es ist ein Zwischending mit Rückzugsmöglichkeit. Dort oben kann man auch die eigene Angst »in Schach« halten. Überall in Indien fand Kathrin Schmidt daraufhin ihren »Indischen Balkon«, von dem aus sie mit sicherem Abstand beobachten und schreiben konnte. (9)

This explains how the metaphorical Indian balcony provides a safe space for the author. However, this metaphor can be also understood as a cognitive blend of the “Bezugssystem” that the narrator talks about while explaining her frame of reference since childhood and how it has changed since then.
The Figure 1 shows how the “Bezugssystem” or frame of reference and the balcony that the narrator talks about have the framework in common. Thus the framework becomes the generic space and the balcony with its structural frame, and the frame of reference become Input 1 and Input 2 respectively. Both these inputs merge into the blend, which is the new frame of reference that the narrator needs for the Indian context. While the structural frame of the balcony acts like a protection for the narrator, it still allows her a view of the outside world as well as provides her a space to reflect on her encounters. So the balcony becomes a space of reflection and reconceptualizing, and as a blend it represents the new framework she is building for understanding the world or at least her immediate surroundings. Thus she realizes how concepts may have different meanings in different cultures:

Mir fehlt das Bezugssystem, ich kann nicht einordnen, was sich mir zeigt. Das Wort wohnen ist kein Wort festgelegter Bedeutung. Das blaue Meer ist nicht wirklich blau und nicht wirklich Meer. Wirklich? Das Wort wirklich rutscht zum Wort wohnen hinunter.
At first glance, these words show disappointment and disillusionment, and one can even analyze them as sarcastic and condescending remarks, however, they also present a possibility of changing the frame of reference. The blend makes this interpretation possible and creates a new space to understand and perceive certain facts about the narrator’s immediate surroundings in India, rather than understanding them through the western concepts and references. The narrator has to step off the balcony to meet people in the real sense and also has to forget her own frame of reference in order to be receptive to what is happening around her. Whenever she goes to her balcony, she is shielded from the outside world, there is no direct contact with the people surrounding her as she sheds her old framework and builds a new one. Thus this approach presents an optimistic attitude towards understanding one’s own culture vis-à-vis the other culture.

The writings of both Schmidt and Hoppe are rich in conceptual metaphors and yet Schmidt’s writing is linear, and it gives the readers an idea about her physical as well emotional journey. It is grounded, quite literally, since walking is her preferred mode of meeting the “Other,” whereas Hoppe’s text takes flight with traces of magical realism, and doesn’t necessarily provide an idea about the whereabouts of the narrator.

3.3 Conceptual Blend in Hoppe’s “Fakire Und Flöisten”

Hoppe’s text begins with the narrator telling her readers about what she thinks of this journey, “dieses überstürzte Aufbrechen zwei Tage vor Weihnachten” (92), and how she prepares for it. As the quote suggests, the journey starts suddenly just before Christmas and does not indicate much time for preparation or even the narrator’s enthusiasm to travel. Without
mentioning the destination of this journey, the narrator informs the readers that she finds a mosquito net in a garage to take along with her in her suitcase, thus implying a journey to a tropical landscape and the narrator’s distaste for distant destinations: “Ich reise nicht gern und schon gar nicht in ferne und fremde Länder, und dieses Land hier ist fern und fremd. Und, da dürfen Sie sicher sein, nicht nur mir” (92). The narrator addresses her readers directly, but also takes on various other identities further in the text, making it confusing to follow, quite like the narrator’s state of mind.

The first encounter of the narrator with the people of this country takes place at the airport where she is asked to open her bag by the luggage controller. In the process, the mosquito net gets torn and the narrator is left both without the net and without her own suitcase. The suitcase represents her identity as a traveler in this foreign place, and she confesses, “Denn ohne Koffer zu reisen, das ist, unter uns gesagt, mir unmöglich. Einen Koffer braucht der Reisende, sonst ist er ein Nichts, was er sowie schon ist, aber ein sichtbares Nichts, und das darf nicht sein” (92). Thus her suitcase becomes her most important traveling companion, something that gives her an identity of a traveler and to correspond with that idea, she grabs the first suitcase that she notices: “Für wenige Augenblicke stand ich verlassen am Straßenrand im warmen Nebel der Stadt, dann griff ich zu, nach dem erstbesten Koffer, der heimatlos zwischen zwei Kühen stand” (92). The suitcase standing between two cows is an image that is hard to comprehend in the context of the airport scenario that the narrator mentions earlier. The sight of cows or homeless dogs on the streets along with the regular traffic is a recurring image of India, not only in Western literature, but also in Hollywood and European films that have India as a backdrop or that are based on Indian themes. While it is neither entirely false nor entirely a Western imagination about India, such instances are more common in smaller towns or in the outskirts of
metro cities, but almost unlikely in urban spaces with airport facilities and other modern infrastructure. Contrary to the stereotype propagated by the imagery here, there are no cows at airports in India. Here the author uses conceptual blending to create this new imagery, which may stem from her prior readings about the country, from her preconceived notions about India, or from the pictures that she might have seen either in books or films. By using this imagery, however, she straddles a fine line, where the intended effect differs significantly from the potential actual effect that this image creates, since it inadvertently reinforces one of the stereotypical perceptions of India in the Western world. With the use of the cow, the narrator hints at something Indian once again without really mentioning the destination of her travel, just as she does previously in the text with the image of a mosquito net. Even if we consider the use of this imagery in this context as original or the author’s way to poke fun at the stereotypical usage of this image in the media, it is likely to be misinterpreted. Those readers who have seen such images earlier in films or on paper are likely to miss this random connection of images, but for those readers, who read it without prior knowledge about the country, this image can be powerful, creating and expanding further the stereotypes about India. Many readers who have not been to India will rely on Hoppe’s imagery for understanding India better. This adds an ethical dimension to the issue of the role of the writer and his/her relationship to reader. Conceptual blending is a natural cognitive process that writers tend to play on creatively but they need to also include explicit critique in a case like this in order to balance things out, and not promote stereotypes. In this particular case, it is possible to disorient the readers, and therefore deconstructing this conceptual blend helps us understand how the author uses her creativity to blend some of the common images of India.

Besides describing the scenes upon her arrival, the narrator is also occupied in perceiving
her foreign surroundings. She has specific notions about an ideal traveler. On the one hand, she is adventurous and wants to explore things on her own terms, but on the other hand she often feels lost and confused: “Alles verwechsele ich, wie ich auch die Straßen der Städte verwechsele, die Stadtpläne falsch herumhalte, nicht weiß wo Osten und Westen ist, wo Norden und Süden. Mir fehlt einfach das Unterscheidungsvermögen, und ganz ohne Sinn für die Vereinbarungen kann ich immer noch eine Kirche nicht von einer Moschee unterscheiden” (93). Here the narrator attempts to understand her own self in this location where all the spatial details get blurred and she is not able to distinguish one from the other. This sense of confusion is common among many travelers who are overwhelmed or disoriented by the different world they encounter, but part of it can also be caused by one’s indifference towards the new culture. The use of some ontological verbs in the text like “verschwinden, verwechseln, verlassen or fehlen,” essentially verbs that express loss of something or confusion, give us a sense of the narrator’s state of mind and how she feels restricted or even isolated at times. However, she gets philosophical about this feeling of loss: “Jemand schrieb, das sei gut, dieses Fehlen der Dinge, eine Herausforderung sozusagen oder etwas wie: Jetzt bist du ganz auf dich selbst angewiesen, das ist die wahre Natur des Reisens” (93). Thus one notices a resilient narrator in this text. The loss of her own baggage sets her apart from the other travelers: “Alle außer mir sind nämlich ausgerüstet als zögen sie in die Schlacht mit Schießeisen, Thermosflaschen und Weihnachtsbäumen, und dann die Bibeln, der Grosse Baedeker. Ich dagegen, der mit nichts unterwegs bin, mache ihrem ausgerüsteten Herzen Freude und ihren festen Gedanken den fliehenden Clown” (93). While she takes pride in being adventurous in the foreign country, occasionally she refers herself as “der dumme unbewaffnete Fremdling” (93). Baggage defines her journey, her existence as a traveler.

50 In German verbs with the prefix ‘ver’ suggest an intensifying effect. So if lassen means to leave, verlassen means to quit or leave something behind completely, similarly verschwimmen suggests blurred images, not being able to distinguish something.
Thus as soon as she gets her hands on the suitcase, which now replaces her lost suitcase, she is thrilled to possess it and find its contents once she settles in a hotel room: “Ich, sage ich laut und vernehmlich, bin der alleinige Finder, für eine Nacht gehört mir jetzt alles” (93). The sense of finding this suitcase instills in her the confidence that a traveler or explorer witnesses when he is seeking new destinations, and discovering something firsthand. But there is also a fear, an anxiousness to open this “second-hand” suitcase. The narrator romanticizes the idea of opening and discovering the contents of the suitcase and compares it with the anxiety of a bride waiting for nuptial bliss:


This entire passage presents a parallel story and symbolism that can explain the narrator’s expectations from the journey as well as her anticipation. By using Mark Turner and Gilles Fauconnier’s notion of conceptual blending, the above scenario and the narrator’s expectations can be better explained. The first input space is the container that the narrator finds and treats like a “Geschenk” or a treasure chest. But it is clear in the quote above that this gift is not something material but something more abstract, like her wedding night, and the second input space is the bride’s anticipation of losing her virginity on the wedding night. Both these inputs

51 Second-hand, since it is not her original suitcase.
evolve from the generic space of the “unknown”; “unknown contents” in the form of the suitcase contents and “expectations and anticipation” of the bride from her wedding night. Thus the blend suitcase can be interpreted as the groom on the honeymoon night. The bride is waiting for her groom, just as the narrator is waiting to open the suitcase to find its hidden contents. Due to the connection of the container’s content and the honeymoon night the readers’ expectations are heightened from the text. They expect the suitcase to bring in a pleasant surprise and for a moment the narrator also is pleased with the choice of the suitcase when she admits that she had made “einen fantastischen Tausch.”

But then the expectations of the readers as well as that of the narrator are not met and the contents of the suitcase become more like Pandora’s box, because the suitcase contains a bed of nails, “Vor mir im Koffer lag ein handliches Nagelbrett, nagelneu und zusammenklappbar. Und als hätte ich nie etwas anderes getan, als sei dies mein Beruf, der ich nie im Leben berufen war, hob ich das Brett aus dem Koffer und legte es auf den fahl gemusterten Teppich” (93). The image of the bed of nails is both enticing as well as frightening to the narrator because she
personifies this bed of nails, which calls out to her to come and lay on it. Thus the blend breaks
the romanticized notion of travel, and the suitcase with its bed of nails becomes a conceptual
metaphor for the narrator’s journey to India. Anushka Gokhale defines this as a metaphor too
when she writes, “Hoppe scheint hier das Nagelbrett-Asketen-Motiv als Metapher für das
Unbehagen an der Fremde und für die Konfrontationen mit dem eigenen Körper in der Fremde
tzu gebrauchen” (161). I further stress that the bed of nails is a conceptual metaphor for the
author’s journey to the foreign place and it instills fear as well as curiosity in her. She perceives
the “Verführung,” the seductive call of the bed of nails, and her initial reaction to it is to run
away from it and as she says, “ich bin dem Ruf nicht gewachsen” (94) and shuts out its
persuasive call by stuffing cotton in her ears. However, the “Ruf” can be interpreted as a call that
the “Other” makes to her or also mean something of a higher instance, since the narrator
associates the bed of nails with an ascetic or a Fakir, someone who has renounced worldly
possessions and relations, not a small feat or a common thing to do. It is interesting to note that
the author uses this association for the Fakir or the ascetic, but the bed of nails creates an
aversion or an antipathy in the minds of the readers instantaneously and perhaps also for the
narrator, who then tries to hide herself with “sämtliche Decken über mich und den Körper” (93).
The connection of the Fakir and his bed of nails and the disconnection of the narrator’s mind and
body here is worth analyzing. If we look at the concept of the Fakir in the Indian tradition, it can
be understood that this term is used not only in Islam but also in Hinduism for a person who has
given up worldly pleasures in pursuit of knowledge and to seek the higher truth. In both the
religions and in the Indian context, these ascetics wander and sustain themselves on alms and
food provided by others, but these ascetics are also known to control their minds in a way that is
not possible for common people. They have a heightened sense of mind that allows them not to
feel the discomfort of physical surroundings on their bodies, like in the case of the bed of nails, on which as ascetic can lay with much ease than a common man. Thus the Fakir’s mind and body become one, what the mind feels or doesn’t feel is also felt or not felt by the body, and vice-versa. But the narrator deliberately makes this disconnect between herself and her body, which contrasts the association she makes with the fakir and the bed of nails. She separates her mind from her body and thus further complicates the question of her existence in the foreign country. She uses many container metaphors, where the body is devoid of something or is hollow, when she says, “ein leeres Gefäß in der Fremde” or “dieses Nichts aus Fleisch und Blut” (93). There is a disconnect between her physical and mental body and she cannot rely on her mental capacities to comfort herself in the foreign surroundings. She expresses this chaos as: “(Und) Langsam macht der Zweifel in meinem Kopf dem Fakir in meinem Körper Platz, der sich in mir ausbreitet und wächst und größer wird, bis er die Hülle meines unzuverlässigen Leibes sprengt und sich bis unter die Zimmerdecke hin ausdehnt” (93). Her body can be understood as the container that can contain the ascetic or the Fakir in itself who is not a physical entity anymore but more like an intangible object that can travel boundlessly. This way the Fakir can also easily come out of her body and observe from the outside, since the outside and the inside are still separate entities for her, but not for him. As with the Fakir, she is also confused about the bed of nails, and demonstrates how she is unable to define it when she says,

… weil niemand versteht, was es ist, Möbelstück oder schlafendes Tier, das plötzlich gefährlich erwachen kann. Besser, man macht sich auf Zehenspitzen davon. Und so bin ich in die Fremde geraten, die so heißt, nicht weil sie uns fremd ist, sondern weil sie uns fremd macht, weil wir uns selber verloren gehen in der Mitte des Traums, geographisch und mathematisch gesprochen auf halbem Weg zwischen Kalkutta und Bombay. (94)
The bed of nails is associated here with fear. This fear comes from the idea that the bed of nails is a sleeping animal and that it could awaken suddenly. Moreover, the bed of nails sits inside the suitcase, which was a comfort initially and by opening the case the comfort turns into fear. This is the first instance where the narrator expresses fear clearly with no sign of curiosity. Thus these multiple layers of containers are symbolic of how the narrator unravels her own existence and identity in the foreign culture. The mysterious attribute that was for so long associated with the bed of nails gets broken here and the narrator also mentions the places that she visits explicitly.

From here the text moves onto a different level of magical realism, where the author blends the scenarios from the narrator’s native place and the foreign place, and the narrator’s garage becomes the starting point for the journey and also a place to contemplate about taking up this journey or choosing other options. There also appear temporal shifts in the text: an analeptic moment at one point when the narrator talks about a woman waiting outside her garage while she is busy packing her mosquito net to prepare for this journey. At another point the same woman is watching the bed of nails the narrator has brought along with her suggesting the end of the journey for the narrator and her return. This woman is neither interested in seeing the Fakir nor the bed of nails to the narrator’s surprise: “Der Fakir beeindruckte sie nicht im Geringsten. Als wäre sie immer schon hier gewesen, beinahe als wäre sie hier zuhause, klappte sie entschlossen das Brett zusammen und legte es in den Koffer zurück, zwischen das Moskitonetz und die Flöte […] und sagte: Du wolltest mir doch wilde Tiere zeigen!” (97). Once again with the motifs of the mosquito net, flute and wild animals like snakes (96-97), Hoppe elicits oriental motifs and stereotypical imagery that equates the oriental with the wild and the exotic. However, I posit

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52 Said clarifies how the Orient “had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences” (1). While I do not see Hoppe to be an orientalist, she certainly uses oriental exotic motifs that Said talks about in his book and actually also creates these haunting memories with the bed of nails metaphor.
that this woman is the narrator’s alter ego and by portraying these oriental stereotypes Hoppe contemplates on what it means to travel in a foreign land. The loss of her own baggage, finding the other suitcase and it’s hidden contents give rise to existential questions and she recalls a memory from her childhood, where a simple trip to the city zoo gave her access to wild animals, even tropical animals like tigers:

Deshalb sind wir ja früher, anstatt wirklich zu reisen, von der Garage aus nur bis zum Zoo gekommen, immer nur in den Zoo, dorthin, wo an unserer Stelle das Tier in der Fremde hockt, in seinem vergitterten Haus, hinter witzlosen Mauern, in Burgen und auf kleinen künstlichen Inseln von lauwarmen Wassergräben umgeben, die man jederzeit durchwaten kann. (97)

By using the container metaphor of a zoo and its caged animals she flips the scenarios: Here in Germany, she is at home whereas the animals are trapped in the foreign land. She can view the wild tropical beasts from the comfort of her own home and their interaction is restricted to merely viewing the “Other.” In India however, it works both ways: She is being viewed as an outsider and at the same time she is interacting with the “Other.” Here she is no more in her comfort zone and she has to be proactive: She has to get the next best suitcase when she loses her own in order to identify herself as the traveler, the outsider. The conceptual blend in the bed of nails and the container metaphors show how she understands the dynamics of confronting the “Self” with the “Other.”

Schmidt and Hoppe’s narrative styles as seen above, vary from some of the other authors’ works published in this anthology and enable the readers to understand not only these authors’ prior knowledge and references about India, but also their inhibitions and ways of coping with the foreign environment and culture. The use of metaphors and blends facilitates the
understanding of how they perceive some finer components of the culture and, more importantly, these literary means do not paint a one-sided picture of India, since the readers get to see both the cultures operating in this exchange. The cognitive approach helps in careful consideration of the stylistic features, which provide an insight into the narrator’s mindsets and cultural conceptualizations. In the next section, I do a close reading of Ilija Trojanow’s novel *Der Weltensammler* to further reestablish the ability of cognitive literary analysis to decode metaphors and blending in his novel that give new meaning to the novel’s characters and their interpretation.

3.4 Narrative Perspective and Conceptual Blending in Trojanow’s *Der Weltensammler*

Trojanow’s novel, based on the historical figure of Richard Francis Burton, is not merely a biographical account of the latter’s life. The author takes liberty while creating the figure of Richard Burton for the readers and leaves room for interpretation, since the author doesn’t merely portray the facts based on his own research on Burton as a historical figure, but also relies on his own imagination to build some aspects of the British era to create an accurate milieu of that time period. The descriptions and depictions of British India and their role in governing India are well etched in the book. Similarly the customs and traditions of the locals resemble this period accurately. In the following I examine the role of the narrator perspectives in building an image of India, and also look at how conceptual blending helps us analyze the protagonist’s attitude towards India.

Burton, the protagonist of the book, served in the East India Company and lived in Mumbai, Baroda and Sindh (now a province in Pakistan) roughly from 1843 to 1850. To begin with, his work consisted mostly of writing reports and managing a fleet of sepoys, leaving him free time to pursue his other interests, one of which was learning the local language and getting
access to the local culture. He was particularly famous amongst his peers for his ability to change his appearances in order to immerse himself in the “Other” culture. For this very reason he was often ridiculed by his British colleagues. Trojanow writes about these aspects in his chapter novels and focuses on Burton’s ability to assimilate in new cultures, which is also pivotal for my analysis of conceptual blends.

The text begins in the present time with Burton’s death and from the subsequent chapters the narrative moves in flashback beginning with Burton’s arrival in India. The first chapter is titled “Letzte Verwandlung” referring to the final transformation that Burton undergoes. Since the book does contain the word Verwandlung multiple times to show Burton’s fascination for changing his appearances in order to assimilate with the locals, the last transformation does suggest the finality of his changing, adventurous self. This chapter also gives us a glimpse of how other people perceive Burton; for instance, both the doctor who treats him and the priest who performs the final rites know Burton to be a complex person. Burton’s strange lifestyle and his eccentric personality were reflected in his works and diaries (some of which were destroyed by his wife after his death), and as a result drew many of his close associates away from him. But the destruction of his works alone did not stop the curiosity of many people who wanted to know about Burton’s life; author Trojanow being one of them who was intrigued by his journeys in the East to a large extent. Thus some, like Swati Acharya, interpret the title of this section “Letzte Verwandlung” not as a final departure, but rather as reincarnation according to the Hindu philosophy, when she writes, “Schon der Titel des Prologs weist auf eine Begegnung und Bekanntschaft des Protagonisten mit einer fremden Kultur hin. Nach der Reinkarnationslehre des Hinduismus nimmt der Körper nach dem Tod nur eine andere äußere Gestalt an, indem die unsterbliche Seele ihre ewige Reise fortsetzt” (Acharya 23). One can follow this interpretation
from the point of view of Richard Burton, who embraced a few Hindu ideologies and adapted them to his way of thinking. Thus, while Acharya’s reference to the reincarnation may suggest giving a new meaning to Burton’s works and ideas after his death, Burton’s own disposition towards the Hindu philosophy allows the adoption of the reincarnation philosophy. Within this framework, I agree with Acharya’s interpretation and see an optimistic ending, even in his death.

After this initial chapter the book is structured into numbered chapters, which begin with two small chapters numbered 0 and titled Die Geschichte des Schreibers des Dieners des Herren. These chapters contain the descriptive versions of the two excerpts from the essay “Mit der Landung wurde die Täuschung ruchbar,” published in the anthology Ausblicke von meinem indischen Balkon (2002). This chapter 0 begins with the British officials landing in Bombay. There is anticipation not only of landing in a foreign country, but also of entering the “Feindesland” (20). Thus India is viewed in a completely different way than in the previous texts. Although well prepared for their stay in this foreign land, the officials’ heightened senses of smell and sight make the illusion of landing there stronger, since all that they experience through “ein mit Nelkenöl eingeriebenes Fernglas” turns to deception: “Mit der Landung wurde die Täuschung des Fernglases ruchbar” (20). Thus the initial chapters make it clear to the readers that Richard Burton comes in the capacity of an official working in India and his loyalties lie with the British. However, the last chapter also numbered 0 and titled “Kalte Rückkehr” takes place in England where Burton doesn’t receive a warm welcome in his homeland, and the readers learn that his disloyalty to the queen results in his dismissal from the East India Company. Thus the story comes full circle and by the end the readers see this transformation in Burton that probably comes as a surprise to many readers.
The initial chapters give the readers a brief idea about the cultural differences between India and Britain, which are reflected in different social encounters, for example Burton’s comparison of the hotels in India to those in England, or the way people dress and the general everyday life and commotion that he witnesses in the streets of Bombay. He is intrigued by the Hindu rituals, especially the funerals, and wants to witness one, but is immediately warned by one of his colleagues to refrain from mingling with the locals. Thus the lines between the locals and the British are clearly demarcated. However, Burton takes an unconventional path compared to his other associates and at the end of the first section, the readers witness Burton being dismissed from the East India Company on the basis of not being entirely loyal to the British Raj.

Consequent to the introductory chapters, the next section is divided into 64 chapters. Most of these chapters have titles based on the narrator, and Trojanow uses two main characters as his narrators. The first chapter, titled “Der Diener,” introduces the character Naukaram who is looking for a writer or “Lahiya” in the local language, commissioned to write Burton’s story in India. The subsequent chapters are a juxtaposition of two or more narrative perspectives, which run almost parallel, the first in the perspective of the servant Naukaram who looks after the household chores and accompanies Burton starting from Bombay to Baroda to Sindh and finally to England. He narrates his experiences with Burton and Lahiya, the writer, weaves a story out of it. The other perspective is that of the omniscient narrator, portraying Burton and his explorations through third-person narration. Trojanow structures all odd numbered chapters in Naukaram’s perspective and hence these are titled “Naukaram.” All even numbered chapters are written in the third-person omniscient narrator perspective and have unique titles that play with readers’ expectations. While most of the chapter titles give the readers some clue of what to expect in terms of content, there are a few chapter titles that do not do so. A fitting example would be for
instance the two chapters, 40 and 41, titled “Ohne Vergleich” and “Ohne Hindernisse,” which do not give the readers any idea about what they mean in the context of other chapter titles that make sense and also reveal the plot. In fact, the forty-first chapter “Ohne Hindernisse,” which deals with the issues missionaries face while trying to convert Hindus into Christians, depicts the argument between Burton, Lieutenant Ambrose, and Reverend Walter. The chapter doesn’t give a solution to the problem these three discuss, since all three have a different suggestion of solving this problem. Thus this title seems ironic since only suggestions are discussed without any concrete solution to the problem of conversions. On the other hand, the chapters titled “Naukaram” give the readers an insight into the perspective of Naukaram, who witnesses the adventures of Burton very closely and gives the readers a chance to see not only how the British view Indians or the locals, but also how the locals react to the invasion of the British. More importantly, these chapters do not alone give Naukaram’s perspective; they also include Lahiya’s reflections of Naukaram’s perspective. Thus within these chapters the readers get an idea about how the educated and the servant classes view the same things differently. By doing so, Trojanow taps into the different class and caste divides, which have always intrigued many foreigners who are unable to make sense of these different entities within India. Several German authors have also commented about the caste system in their works, either by simply mentioning these demographic distinctions within India or by providing their own commentary on these differences. Ingeborg Drewitz, for instance, in her work Mein indisches Tagebuch mentions the “fair-skinned, light-eyed Brahmin family” (100). Trojanow, on the other hand, avoids such commentary and if he does resort to it, then it is to describe the dynamics amongst his characters. There are several references to the castes defined more so by the profession each caste is pertained to perform, but the readers can sense the dynamics within these castes in their
interactions. Thus Naukaram’s fixed ideas about Brahmins are visible. He doesn’t explicitly call the Brahmins ‘upper caste’ but he describes, “Diese Leute sind überheblich und stolz” (53) and distinguishes them from people like him. Thus the term ‘higher or upper caste’ isn’t stated clearly in the text, although the term “Aussätziger” is often mentioned when talking about the British or untouchables. Furthermore, Trojanow also attributes religious identity to each of his characters to define the different religious entities in India. Thus the chapters titled ‘Naukaram’ always begin with a small prayer to Lord Ganesha, the Elephant-faced God, highlighting Naukaram’s Hindu identity and ideology in practice. Moreover, it also stresses Naukaram’s religious identity, as opposed to the Muslims that he comes in contact with while accompanying his master in the Sindh province.

The journey that Naukaram and Burton both embark on begins in Bombay (Mumbai) and takes them to a few cities together. It is here in Bombay that Naukaram insists on serving Burton and is entrusted the job only after thorough examination and tests even though he has experience serving British people. Soon he taps into Burton’s personality and realizes Burton’s unique way of approaching and living amongst the “Other,” unlike many of his other colleagues. Burton’s interests in the local culture go beyond his work sphere and he is keen to experience even the so-called taboo topics of the Indian culture. Thus in his early days in Bombay, Burton gets to experience the underbelly of Mumbai, and the dark corners of the city rampant with drugs and prostitution. The exotic beauty of the local women entices him and his foreignness essentially proves to be of an advantage to get quicker access to different kinds of women and

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53 This is also a classic example to show how Trojanow integrates his understanding of the Hindu culture with the novel’s thematic. In the Hindu tradition, Lord Ganesha is worshipped when starting a new project or any new job. Trojanow reminds the readers of this cultural aspect and uses it effectively to mark the beginning of each chapter narrated by the devout Hindu Naukaram.
54 Mumbai was called Bombay in British India
courtesans as well as to exotic drugs and intoxicating experiences. Naukaram, apart from serving his master, plays the role of a provider: he not only brings Burton the most learned teachers to learn from, but also courtesans like Kundalini (a key character in the novel) to satisfy Burton’s physical needs. Soon Naukaram becomes Burton’s confidante and gets promoted to being a house manager.

Another influential character in the novel is that of Burton’s teacher, Guru Upanitsche, who opens up new avenues for him. In relation to Naukaram, Burton still maintains a commanding position of a master, but in the company of Upanitsche, he feels a sense of inferiority, since the teacher is so self-assured: “Dieser Mann war der erste Einheimische, der ihm (Burton) gegenüber nicht duckmäuserisch auftrat” (54). Through their interactions, the readers learn about their different viewpoints. Upanitsche is a learned scholar, a Brahmin, who remains true to his profession and believes in the Hindu philosophy of “Guru-Shishya Parampara,” whereby knowledge is imparted to the student or Shishya by living with the teacher and learning on day-to-day basis, devoid of any financial expectations on either sides. On the other hand, Burton sees learning a language as a practical tool: “Sprachen waren Waffen. Mit ihnen würde er sich von den Fesseln der Langeweile befreien, seine Karriere anspornen, anspruchsvolleren Aufgaben entgegensehen” (47). Thus Burton’s attitude toward language acquisition is utilitarian and focused on exchange values. He is ambitious and wants to learn things as quickly as possible, while Upanitsche is willing to teach him only when he is completely sure of his student’s capacities and his readiness to learn. It is perhaps this quality of the Guru that Burton later tends to lean on and which also instills respect for his Guru.

55 “Taking it upon himself to introduce to the West the sexual wisdom of the ancient Eastern manuals on the art of love, he (Burton) risked prosecution and imprisonment to translate and print secretly the Kama Sutra of Vatsyayana (1883), Ananga Ranga (1885), and The Perfumed Garden of the Cheikh Nefzaoui” (1886) https://www.britannica.com/biography/Richard-Burton-British-scholar-and-explorer.
addition to this, the Guru doesn’t treat Burton as an “Aussätziger” (55), as was the convention in that era, when the Brahmins or the locals considered the British as “outsiders,” people who do not belong to the same religion and culture and therefore best avoided. In one such instance, Upanitsche invites Burton for lunch and advises him to come in the disguise of a Kashmiri Pandit, so as not to let the other Hindus know of his real identity. He is quick to assimilate in this disguise and defend the locals in their conversations about the British, gaining their confidence by despising their common enemy, and successfully deceiving them into believing that he is an Indian. This instance is particularly relevant for understanding the conceptual blend that I discuss later in this chapter. It also assures Burton to take such chances and disguise himself to assimilate with the locals. He soon starts collecting “Kleidungstück für jede Kaste” (91) and as Naukaram notes, “Bald bildete er sich ein, er könne denken, sehen, fühlen wie einer von uns. Er begann zu glauben, er verkleide sich nicht, sondern verwandle sich. Er nahm sie sehr ernst, diese Verwandlung” (92). Thus, the idea of disguising oneself as a local is ingrained in Burton by his Guru and he enjoys these transformations so much that later he takes on the role of a spy in the East India Company.

Burton’s drive and hunger to learn more about the local ideals and customs is not just limited to the scope of his Guruji. From Naukaram, for instance, he learns about “Kleinigkeiten oder Einzelheiten” (92) that Naukaram would never have believed to be different, for example, chores like how the locals cut their nails, or how they shake their heads. In Baroda, Naukaram also introduces Kundalini, a courtesan, to Burton. Kundalini embodies the exotic, mysterious woman since she reveals less of her personal life. She possesses an irresistible sexual appeal that captures Burton completely. She teaches him the art of lovemaking, which initiates his interest in

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56 One of the attributes of Burton that resonates with the title of Der Weltensammler.

57 A city in the state of Gujarat
understanding the *Kamasutra*. Their lovemaking scenes are always interlaced with Kundalini’s mystical and historical tales about love and lust, and before he can learn and discuss further, she abandons him - thus keeping her mystic and charm intact. Her name means awakening or enlightenment through deep meditation and awareness. She awakens love and lust in Burton, but this love never develops into a relationship. Kundalini also becomes the source of conflict between Naukaram and Burton, which is revealed much later in this section. Naukaram is aware of her past, as a ‘Devadasi’ or God’s maid, a woman who devotes her life in service of God, and how she escapes from the hands of the treacherous priests who mistreat her. Burton, however, isn’t aware of her past and comes to know her true identity only when she becomes severely ill and asks Burton to marry her in the *Gandharva* style of wedding that entails just the consent of those who are marrying. Due to their common interest in Kundalini, the friendship between Burton and Naukaram is altered but it is also the same interest in her that brings them together to carry her body for cremation on day she dies. Thus, Kundalini assumes a pivotal role in shaping the relationship between Burton and Naukaram and especially the transformation Burton goes through later.

Their next station is Sindh,\(^\text{58}\) which has a majority of Muslim population. While Naukaram feels out of place amongst the Muslim locals and refers to them as the “Beschnittenen,” almost in a derogatory manner, Burton finds a new comfort in this place and in the Islamic teachings. His faith in the Hindu ideology is on the verge of decline, especially after witnessing the lack of empathy amongst the Hindu priests and their refusal to perform last rites on Kundalini. Burton quickly takes to the Sufi and Islamic way of life. His Guru is replaced by a Derwisch (a Muslim ascetic and teacher), “Hinduismus ist passé, mon cher ami, ich wende mich nun dem Islam zu” (114). While Naukaram can sense this change in his master, he is still not aware of

\(^{58}\) A province now in Pakistan.
them to that extent until Burton resorts to not only changing his dressing style and growing a mustache, but also changing his body by getting circumcised, in order to become a true Muslim. Soon he also takes up a dual identity of Mirza Abdullah, a shopkeeper to understand the local nuances. As a spy, disguised in the body of Mirza Abdullah, he is exposed to the politics of neighboring countries like Baluchistan and the involvement of the locals with these countries. He reports this information to General Napier every now and then, but besides that he gains native friends and builds their trust as Mirza Abdullah. His ideas differ from his colleagues when it comes to political issues like conversions by the Christian missionaries. In all these conversations, he stands out and the British officials do not agree with his ways. The highpoint, however, is when he reports the homosexual brothel that is frequented by many British officials and refuses to name these as well as his trusted informants. He is even held captive by the British, who resort to third degree treatment and are unable to see his true identity as a Brit, since they see him as a “Beschnittenen” and one of their enemies. By choosing not to disclose his identity as a British official, Burton takes the transformation extremely seriously.

Several scholars in the past have viewed this transformation as a metaphor. Julian Preece explores this aspect in his book on Trojanow and explores Burton’s “body as a space for metaphor and identity” (Preece 120). Changes to his physicality, going to the extreme of circumcising himself, make it possible for him to travel to forbidden places, for instance his journey to Mecca in the second section of the book. But throughout his journey he never really settles down in one place and continues with his several transformations. He also doesn’t build any permanent or long-lasting relationship with those he meets. Thus Preece sees Burton as a failed role model for the interaction between East and West since he is unable to “transcend

59 The Britannica encyclopedia refers to this disguise of Burton as a Muslim merchant under the Commander Sir Charles James Napier.
cultural barriers” (Preece 120), and he doesn’t celebrate the intercultural hybridity that was so often talked about in the reception of *Der Weltensammler*.

While Preece focuses more on the role of Richard Burton as a facilitator who can bridge the divide between the East and West, he portrays his body to be the source for this transition and limits this change only to his physicality. Thus this metaphor can be seen as one-dimensional. However, with the conceptual blending framework, the process of transformation can be understood more clearly. This transformation is not just a physical metamorphosis, but also an inner transformation that makes him stay loyal to his current identity, thereby losing the trust of the British. The emergent structure of a conceptual blend can illustrate what causes this transformation as well explain the re-transition from the outer body to the inner self more clearly.

In order to understand this blend, I must refer to the previous transformation: Burton’s disguise as the Kashmiri Pandit, whereby his outer appearance and clothes help this character come alive. Through Guru Upanitsche, Burton learns how he can disguise himself by changing his physical appearance, by changing his clothes for instance, which thus becomes Input Space 1. Later as he makes a surgical change in his body through circumcision, and changes his physicality to become the Muslim as Mirza Abdullah, which then can be seen as Input space 2. While the Kashmiri Pandit is more a change in the appearance without actually using the medium of the body, but rather just the clothes, in Mirza Abdullah, this transformation happens internally. A change in the physical body through surgical and cosmetic changes is definitely powerful for him. Yet, these two actions are restricted to the physical body. However, the real inner transformation happens when Burton internalizes the Advaita philosophy.
In chapter 48, titled “Sohn des Shivas,” Burton learns and practices the Advaita (“Ohne zweites” 166) philosophy taught to him by Upanitsche: “Das wahre Selbst, das Eine Tat tvam asi, sagt Advaita, du bist das! Deswegen mein Shishya […] ist jeder Gedanke, der entzweit, ein Verstoß gegen die höchste Ordnung. Deswegen gilt es schon als Gewalt, wenn wir uns als Fremde ansehen, wenn wir uns als andere betrachten” (167). Burton’s Guru refers to the Advaita philosophy, the path of monism. P.J. Mazumdar explains in his article: “[…] Advaita means non-dual. Here, the reality of the world is denied and the Absolute is said to be the only reality. The world is said to have only relative reality, its reality is ambiguous and it is only Brahman, which is the root of the world which has reality” (1). Burton embodies this philosophy and as Mirza Abdullah, he takes his transformation very seriously. This embodiment forces him to be loyal to his identity Mirza Abdullah, even though it means that he is expelled from his services and excluded by his British compatriots. Thus he blends the Hindu Advaita philosophy by adopting it and internalizing it to give himself the identity of a true Muslim. In this Muslim physicality and mentality, he chooses not to mix his British ideals. He maintains a pure identity and accepts the

http://www.advaitayoga.org/advaitayogaarticles/philosophyadvaita.html
consequences thus losing his job and his career in the service of the British Raj. Turner talks about how identity formation and reformation always involves blending and compression:

   Given that we are always constructing selves dynamically in vast blending webs, it is natural to see one action as connected to the other, one event as flowing out of another and into another, across great expanses of time, space, causation, and agency. We blend over moment to construct a self, an identity, a single idea that we can carry with us, and we expand that blended self to help us handle the next moment. (Origin 77)

Burton uses this concept starting from disguising as the locals to his identity as Mirza Abdullah. Turner’s conceptual blend helps us understand how Burton stands by his transformed identity while bringing the Advaita philosophy into practice, thus merging the Hindu philosophy with his previous British identity and the newly transformed Muslim identity. The blend reveals the multiple compressions that Burton goes through during his stay in India, which definitely adds more depth in understanding Burton’s character and his relationship with the “Other.”

3.5 Conclusion

   The above analysis of the texts shows their ability to throw light on various aspects of travel literature and their analysis is not restricted to any one kind of perception about India. In Kathrin Schmidt’s text there is an open attitude toward understanding how her childhood perception of India differs from the present one after traveling to India. There is a need to reach out and understand the “Other” while also accepting that she needs to change her frame of reference. Hoppe’s text meanwhile, uses a few stereotypical motifs and repackages them in a novel manner by employing fantasy and metaphors to also highlight the insecurities and fear of traveling in the unknown. At the same time, it also dwells on the nature of traveling. There is an exchange between the Eastern and Western world in her work when she uses motifs of both these
worlds interchangeably in order to highlight the cultural exchange and to stress what is at stake while traveling and getting to know the “Other.” With Trojanow’s work, the issues of different identities while traveling, as well as the role of a multi-narrative plot to understand the intricacies of the target culture take precedence. His text exemplifies how not only the local and the foreign perceive each other, but also how the locals respond to their own class differences. In all these three works, metaphors and conceptual blends help us understand the author’s position in relation to, and perception of, the “Other.” By analyzing these blends I show how authors such as Hoppe and Schmidt incorporate their preconceived notions unwittingly to create imagery that may not be easily comprehensible in the first reading. My analysis of blends sheds light on this imagery to help us understand it better as well as to understand its probable intended effect. This creative use of imagery opens room for newer understandings of the other culture and people, rather than sticking solely with a singular way of portrayal, like some of the works discussed in the earlier chapter. These texts also, to an extent, represent the postmodern approach to travel literature in the globalized age of the twenty-first century and hence are pivotal in shaping the travel literature discourse.
In travel literature, narrative perspectives play an important role in depicting the journey of the traveler, and in defining the author’s position vis-à-vis the place he or she is visiting. While the author’s impressions and understanding of India may shape his/her narrative perspective, sometimes the narrative perspective adopted by the author may add another dimension to the author’s perception of India. My close readings of the travel narratives on India show authors’ preference of first-person narrator in most cases, especially when the narratives are categorized as personal diaries, novels or travel sketches. For instance, in Drewitz’s work *Mein indisches Tagebuch*, the genre of the personal diary dictates and directs the first-person narration as well as the “deictic pattern” (Stockwell 41)\(^6\) of the text, which stresses the narrator’s deictic center. Thus, in Drewitz’ case the genre chosen by the author dictates the narrative perspective. But this certainly doesn’t eliminate the creative use of different types of narrators and points of views, as exemplified by some of the contemporary authors that I discuss later in this chapter. Ilija Trojanow’s novel *Der Weltensammler*, for example, presents multiple narrators who trace the adventures of the protagonist Richard Francis Burton while also casting light on the narrated time period of colonized India and the existent Indian society. These diverse narrative voices and shifts in the perspective shape the plot of the novel in such a manner that readers get insight into the social fabric of India during the colonial times and how these experiences affect the protagonist’s physical as well as conceptual journey. Moreover, I argue that the author’s impressions of the Indian society that he gathers during his stay in India structure the framework for this part of the novel, and this knowledge is deployed very

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\(^6\) Peter Stockwell uses this term in his work *Cognitive Poetics* when defining the concept of deixis “meaning ‘pointing,’” which he posits as “the capacity that language has for anchoring meaning to a context” (41).
effectively even when naming his narrators and characters\textsuperscript{62} and displaying the dynamics of the characters. In my second chapter I mentioned these narrators: Lahiya, the writer sanctioned to record the protagonist Burton’s journey, and the other narrator Naukaram, his servant. Trojanow chooses this Indian name Lahiya, since semantically in the Indian context it distinguishes an author from a writer,\textsuperscript{63} and this act of recording Burton’s journey in a factual and pragmatic manner is reflected in the parts of the novel when the narrator Lahiya takes over. Thus Lahiya is essentially a note-taker who merely records the facts without any trace of fiction or other input from his side. Naukaram, on the contrary, contributes a more intimate approach to narrating Burton’s adventures and journey, since he doesn’t just remain Burton’s servant, but also becomes a close confidant. His name also displays this connection since semantically in the Hindi language, Nauka means a ship and the suffix –‘Ram’ is derived from the mythological figure of Lord Rama, whose dutiful nature has been his most appreciated virtue. This is a common suffix in a lot of Hindu names. Thus, with the prefix ‘Nauka’ and the suffix ‘Ram,’ Trojanow attributes the servant’s loyalty towards his master, and sees him as bridging the gap between the source and target cultures. In the novel these narrators also possess a different voice depending on their relationship with the protagonist, thus creating a layered narrative. Trojanow relies on relational deixis\textsuperscript{64} in this text to showcase the protagonist’s different dimensions. The

\textsuperscript{62} The two important character names, Guru Upanitsche, and Burton’s lover, Kundalini, are cleverly thought out. Upanitsche is derived from the word Upanishadas, which are the Hindu philosophical texts. Burton’s Brahmin teacher or Guru is someone who is a master of these texts and by naming him Upanitsche, Trojanow presents an enlightened master. Kundalini refers to the energy chakras that can be awakened through Yoga and meditation. In Sanskrit language, it means ‘coiled one.’ See http://people.eecs.berkeley.edu/~keutzer/kundalini/kundalini-faq.html#1a for detailed description of Kundalini as a Yoga practice. Thus this meaning adds a mysticism that Trojanow taps into through this female figure in his novel.

\textsuperscript{63} The term Lahtiya in the local language is associated with factual writing almost like a record-keeper and must be distinguished from the term Lekhak or author who composes a literary work using fiction, imagination and fantasy. Here Trojanow also adheres to these derivations and therefore Lahiya’s text records the factual information about Burton’s journey.

\textsuperscript{64} Stockwell’s concept of relational deixis works very well here since each of these narrators describe the protagonist in different ways according to the relation they share with him as well as their role as characters in the novel. Stockwell defines this term as “expressions that encode the social viewpoint and relative situations of authors,
names of the narrators represent more than meets the eye, and I posit that Trojanow’s perception and understanding of the Indian culture play an important role in designing this collage of the Indian society in a more meaningful way, since his portrayal comes across as more authentic compared to some of the other authors’ portrayal of India, especially to Indian readers or readers having extensive Indian experience. This is naturally possible due to his longer stay in India, which enabled him to engage with the Indian culture and interact with its people more closely, as opposed to other authors whose duration of stay in India lasted from a few weeks to a few months.

The travel-writing corpus that I include in this dissertation highlights how shorter narratives are more experimental in their narrative approaches. Travel narratives written in the late twentieth century by authors such as Drewitz, Grass, and Winkler are mostly first-person narrations and adopt a linear narrative style. On the contrary, the most recent works, such as the ones in the anthology Ausblicke von meinem indischen Balkon (2002) present shorter texts and yet experiment with narrative perspectives. The effects are twofold: the creative use of narrative perspective increases the potential for literary analysis and even though the authors’ destinations may overlap with each other, every common city/destination gets different identities in these authors’ works depending on how the narrator perceives this place. In this chapter I analyze the narrator perspectives deployed by the authors in the anthology Ausblicke von meinem indischen Balkon (2002) and how these shape their perception of India.
The travel narratives documented by the male authors (Thorsten Becker, Arnold Stadler, Ilija Trojanow, Gert Heidenreich and Dieter Gräf) in this anthology vary from those of the women authors, since most of these are brief sketches or chapters from their proposed novels on India. While Heidenreich and Gräf incorporate their Indian impressions in poetry, Becker, Stadler and Trojanow write shorter texts to eventually develop these into a novel or a longer text. Thus the anthology features a chapter from the novel “Die Besänftigung” (2003) by Becker, which is based on real events that he experiences in the state of Kerala. The editors of this anthology, Martin Kämpchen and Marla Stukenberg, write:

Thorsten Becker verarbeitet seine Indienerfahrungen schon in Indien mit einem phantasievollen Elefantenroman “Die Besänftigung” der wie im Genre der Fabel die große und mächtige Welt der Menschen aus der Tierperspektive ironisch verzerrend darstellt. Aus ihr läßt er einige bedeutende Kapitel alter indischer Geschichte Revue passieren und skizziert nebenbei noch ein kritisches Sozialgemälde des gegenwärtigen Kerala. (13)

The use of phantasy and the animal perspective in Becker’s work is certainly a unique way of approaching the Indian thematic that hasn’t been done before. However, as I explain later in this chapter, his fragment isn’t easily accessible to readers due to various factors. Similarly, the text by Ilija Trojanow, “Mit der Landung wurde die Täuschung ruchbar” is a fragment from his novel Der Weltensammler that gives a glimpse into nineteenth-century India. His other text, “Segnungen eines verunglückten Augenblicks,” contrasts this time period by depicting the contemporary Indian society that Trojanow witnesses close up. Alban Nikolai Herbst proposes a novel-in-making in his text “Bombay Rhapsodie,” and Arnold Stadler, who discontinued his

65 Heidenreich collaborates with the Indian poet Dilip Chitre to write about Indian motifs that he witnesses.
66 While Becker and Trojanow actually used some of their text content to publish their novels, Stadler hasn’t yet published a novel on this material.
journey and returned to his homeland after an injury, revises one of his talks in the form of an essay in the text, “Reisen heißt Weiterreisen und Schreiben heißt Weiterschreiben.” Most of the narratives by these authors seem fragmented and vary significantly in their treatment of India since they are to be read as part of a whole, rather than as complete texts in themselves. But despite their fragmentary nature, their treatment of the text and its contents are worthy of literary analysis. In this list of prose texts, I also include my analysis of the two poems by Heidenreich from his collection “Von außen” and a few poems by Ulrike Draesner from her collection “itinerar durch koloniale (k)erbenfeld,” as well as her two prose texts.

4.1 Animal Perspective in Becker’s “Die Elefantenfrage, Elephantisch Betrachtet”

Becker’s text is situated in Guruvayur in Kerala, and uses the local context, history and motifs that may not be necessarily familiar to the reader and therefore contribute to very blurred ideas of that particular place in the readers’ minds. Moreover, the place-specific history does very little for the reader to connect with it, if he is not aware of this history. In his introductory passage about his text, Thorsten Becker writes,


Thus the entire setting of this chapter focuses on describing the annual temple festival of Guruvayur that features an elaborate procession of elephants decked out in finest caparisons and
garlands. However, Becker takes up a mammoth’s task literally and this particular text does not create the panoramic view of the Indian kingdom that he promises in the above quotation, and he is unable to clarify his own perspective on India to that effect. In fact, he ends up writing a chapter that not only loses itself in the numerous ornate descriptions of Ezhunnalippu, the festival procession, but also fails to make a connection with the readers, due to reasons ranging from the narrator’s position to the fragmentary quality of the narrative. Despite the unique narrative perspective of an elephant, the text also lacks the imagination that one might have anticipated from its fable-like quality.

The plot revolves around the events of a mishap during the temple festival, and the staging of the background story and the current events give a blurred sense of the plot development. Thus the premise of how the mahut (person who tends and works with an elephant) Subrata gets attacked and trampled by the elephant Pushpadanta while his mahut abandons him for a short smoke break during the temple procession gets overly complicated with the elephant narrator’s shifting perspective. The narrator springs back and forth, focusing at times on the mishap details and at other times the elephant-circumstances of how these creatures deal in crowds and how they react to the constant monotonous clanking sounds of the instruments played during the temple processions. Thus there are extensive details of this procession and the attack on the mahut Subrata, describing not only Pushpadanta’s rage but also the reactions of the bystanders. While describing these events, the narrator relies heavily on the local Malayalam language to describe the intricacies of this festival: names of elephants that have a mythological connection like Airavatam, the mythological white elephant of Lord Indra (The king of Gods) or the terms Nettipattam, the gold plated caparisons for elephants that is used to decorate them during the temple festival – all these terms are used to give the readers an impression that the
narrator is one of the locals. By using these details, the narrator tries to delve into the history and mythology of India by mixing it with some contemporary realities about the local politics. For instance, a passage talks about how the communist government of Kerala profits from the *mahuts’* alcohol consumption, although on paper, alcohol consumption during workhours is prohibited. Similarly, the question of who caused Subrata’s death unfolds the caste and class differences as well as the local political issues surrounding these topics, especially since the culprit Pushpadanta, the mighty elephant, can only be punished by being put to sleep.

Thus despite deploying a creative narrative perspective, this fragment feels haphazard and lacks in imagination. The use of the elephant as a narrator is original and enhances the fable-like quality of the narrative, but it also limits his exploration of the intercultural interference since the narrative is confined to a specific place, and his animal existence is not able to break through the boundaries of the human-animal relation. The other hindrance is the narrator’s insistence on using terms from the local language to prove his relatability and comfort with the Indian culture. The use of these very regionally specific terms not only make the text appear difficult and somewhat inaccessible to the global readers, but also to Indian readers who do not come from that part of India. While the language relies on local terms for authenticity, the lack of the explanation of this terminology proves it difficult for the reader to follow the text. Becker himself spent a few months in Kerala in order to research his story and to familiarize himself with the local culture, tradition and customs, but the text does not do justice to translate this experience to that effect besides showing command of the local terms. The plot as well as the development of the narrative are fragmented and at times incomprehensible. Manfred Durzak criticizes this aspect of Becker’s writing in his essay when he writes:
“Indianness” erscheint bei Becker in dem Missverständnis, die Konkretheit und Nähe zur indischen Wirklichkeit und indischen Geschichte lasse sich dadurch erreichen, dass man in dem eigenen Text möglichst viele sprachlichen und historischen Details des indischen Sujets ungefiltert aufnimmt, den eigenen Text geradezu mit entliehenen punktuellen indischen Momenten aufschwemmt, um zu dokumentieren, wie sehr man mit Indien und dem indischen Thema vertraut ist. Statt Anschaulichkeit und Einsicht in die indische Geschichte entsteht so ein verwirrender sprachlicher und historischer Flickenteppich, mit einem Wort: erzählerische Konfusion. (138)

Although the above commentary by Durzak is based on Becker’s entire novel, the chapter in this anthology also generates the same response in the reader’s mind. It becomes specifically problematic if the readers base their judgment about Kerala only by looking at this one aspect of the story and try to extrapolate the same for the entire country. Furthermore, the animal perspective restricts the narrative more than setting it free, since the entire plot is viewed more or less from the elephant’s perspective, watching everything from above. The narrative style is more impressionistic in nature and the elephant’s deictic center is not one that a human reader can easily assume. This perspective also allows only one way of observing the occurrences and cannot throw enough light on the interpersonal dynamics of the characters involved in this story. Due to these reasons, the text remains incomprehensible at many places and it is unclear if the text justifies the author’s intentions.

4.2 The ‘White’ Narrator in Ilija Trojanow’s “Mit Der Landung Wurde Die Täuschung Ruchbar” and “Segnungen Eines Verunglückten Augenblicks”

Trojanow did not travel to India as part of the authors’ exchange, yet his texts feature in this anthology since he had been living in India for a few years to research and write his novel
Der Weltensammler (2006). He was familiar with the Indian milieu and participated in the literary readings and workshops with the other authors. In both the texts that he includes in this anthology, the racial identity of the narrator takes precedence, since that becomes the defining characteristic for the narrator.

In “Mit der Landung wurde die Täuschung ruchbar” he introduces the character of Richard Francis Burton, the English officer in the East India Company and the short excerpt is narrated in the third person. In this text the lines between the Brits and Indians are clearly etched, and the narrated time depicts Burton’s arrival in India in the 19th century. This text essentially makes the distinctions between the whites and non-whites clear by citing various examples of the way the locals dress, talk and live. There is a “them” and “us” demarcation, but even amongst the locals, Burton is unable to identify a single image defining Indians. Making his way through the crowd, trying to make sense of this new place is overwhelming: “Burton versuchte zwischen Topis, Käppis, Turbanen und Glatzen ein Gesicht, zwischen Gehstöcken und Gebetsketten ein Bild zu sehen” (66). This highlights the diversity present in the Indian society and the protagonist’s failed attempts at creating a homogenous reference point for the “Other.” Thus the protagonist relies on making his identity clear by recognizing the distinctions between the two cultures. Several examples show this demarcation between the two: “Ein Hotel in Bath gleicht nicht einem Hotel in Bombay” (67) or words such as “Hindu” vs. “Goras” and phrases such as “die Grenze zwischen dem Gehirn des Imperiums und seinem Darm” (67) explain these distinctions together with the attitudes of the local people and the colonizers. In this text his identity as a white person gains more meaning and his inability to decipher the differences

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67 It was customary in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century India to cover one’s head while going out. Every region had a different kind of headgear and consequently different names. The names “Topis, Käppis, Turbanen” used in the above quotation reflects this diversity.

68 Local terms for whites.
amongst the locals marks a beginning of Burton’s quest to understand the other culture in depth, which is then explored in detail by the author in his novel *Der Weltensammler*.

Trojanow’s other contribution in this anthology, “Segnungen eines verunglückten Augenblicks,” depicts the narrator’s contemporary Indian experience and interestingly reestablishes the existence and relevance of the white narrator in that context. Making use of Claudia Benthien’s “boundary metaphor,” with which she exemplifies the important meanings associated with the skin, I explore the role of the narrator’s skin in defining himself and his boundaries. The text revolves around his involvement in a road accident and what unfolds thereafter. The incident gives the narrator an insight into the daily nitty gritties of city life among common people, and the scene eventually ends on a positive note, as already suggested in the title. This unpleasant experience reveals the role that the narrator’s white skin plays in getting him out of trouble, despite being responsible for this collision. After the accident, a group of local people in a wedding procession rush to help the narrator out of his car: “Unzählige Hände ziehen mich heraus […]. Sie ziehen mich wie ein Neugeborenes heraus, dass sich im Mutterleib schräg gelegt hat. Sie betasten mich, ob noch alles an mir daran ist. Sie lassen es nicht zu, daß ich auf den Asphalt lande. Sie tragen mich mit dem besorgten Stolz der Hebamme zur Straßenseite” (60). Right after the collision the narrator is helped by the locals. He is offered water, asked if he has been hurt and suddenly among all these people, he senses his foreignness, “Meine labbrigen Bermudas und käsigen Beine in Gegenwart sari-verhüllter Damen” (60) and yet he is astonished by the care and concern shown to him, especially since he feels guilty for the accident: “Obwohl ich den Unfall verschuldet habe, scheinen sie mich als Schutzbefohlenen

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69 Kathrin Schmidt also narrates a similar experience of an accident that she is met with on the roads of Chennai (100). I believe that these experiences give them a firsthand impression of how different road ethics are in the western and the Indian contexts. Such excruciating circumstances are something that a traveler would rather avoid, but at the same time these moments create spaces for observing and understanding the other culture more closely.
anzusehen. Sie widersprechen dem Taxifahrer” (61). He is puzzled by the attention he receives from the surrounding people and is equally intrigued by their hostility towards the local taxi driver. It is the local people’s admiration for his white skin that he is able to get out of trouble with police and local authorities, but this entire episode also sheds light on various aspects of daily life in India that could have gone unnoticed had the narrator not ended up in this accident. As a result, the readers get a glimpse of corrupt practices, apathy in traffic violation cases, and how the narrator’s skin color works in his advantage to stay away from trouble, and even fetch him friendly lunch invitations from the victim’s family. One of the conversations between the narrator and the taxidriver highlights the effects of befriending a white foreigner. When the narrator expresses his relief about escaping this accident without injuries on either side, calling it “Glück im Unglück” (62), the taxidriver retorts:


This shows not only the opportunistic trait of locals to befriend white guests and show off these connections in public spaces, but also the narrator’s criticism of the local people’s fascination with white skin. In Skin: On the Cultural Border between Self and the World, Benthien looks at “conceptions and rhetorical patterns that see skin as boundary and contact surface [...] and investigates the question as the place where identity is formed and assigned” (1). By defining the surface of the skin as a boundary, Benthien explores identity-formations and how they affect discourses in art, literature and media. In her chapter titled “Boundary Metaphor,” she focuses on the usage of skin as well as skin-related phrases in literature and gives two main meanings of skin:
First there is the idea that the skin encloses the self: skin is imagined as a protective and sheltering cover but in some expressions also as a concealing and deceptive one. What is authentic lies beneath the skin, is hidden inside the body. It escapes our gaze, and its decipherment requires skills of reading and interpretation. [...] A second group of sayings equates the skin with the subject, the person: here the essence does not lie beneath the skin, hidden inside. Rather it is the skin itself, which stands metonymically for the whole human being. (17)

In the instance where the narrator is pulled out by numerous hands, the skin is the contact point and the narrator even distinguishes his “käsigen Beine in Gegenwart sari-verhüllter Damen” to realize the after-effects of the accident. The white skin becomes the narrator’s most prominent characteristic and distinguishes him from the locals. But the white skin also becomes the point of admiration for the local people. As a result he escapes the aftermath, and matters are settled amicably without police intervention. For most of the text the narrator’s identity conforms to the second meaning derived from Benthien’s quotation and it is the superficial surface that the locals respond to with friendly smiles even when commuting in unknown and foreign spaces. Thus the locals go by only the superficial identity, the “border metaphor” that Benthien posits, and they do not take the first meaning of skin into consideration. The narrator is critical of this attitude towards white-skinned people. In a way he criticizes this colonial hangover from which the local people suffer and which shows the colonial influence present even today in the Indian

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70 I call it the colonial hangover because of Indian people’s constant desire for fair skin that can be traced back to the contact the locals had with the British. But even after Independence, Indians still view the fair skin to be privileged skin. White skin is associated with privilege, with upper caste and opportunities in the public discourse and is advocated by the media too. Until very recently fairness products were highly promoted in India, and the advertisement industry profited largely by luring Indians, especially Indian women into using skin treatments and fairness creams in order to change their natural skin tones and aspire for fairer skin. Most of these advertisements equated achieving success with fairer skin. This success ranged from getting jobs to finding a suitable groom/bride. This constant appeal for fair skin can thus be linked to the colonial past of India and the colonial influence that is still present.
society. The taxi driver, instead of accusing the narrator for causing the accident, refers to him as “Sahib” or “Sir” while driving him in his taxi. This form of address highlights not only the class divide but also the term’s association with the colonial times when the oppressed called the British officials “Sir” or “Sahib.” Ironically as they both are listening to the radio in the taxi, the news report and the dialogue between the narrator and the taxidriver goes like this:

Stolz wurde bekanntgegeben, daß die UN Indien einen ständigen Sitz im Weltsicherheitsrat zugebilligt habe.

Was bedeutet das, Sahib?

Es bedeutet, daß ich Sie nun auch Sahib nennen muß. (64)

The narrator is quick-witted and although he is cynical about the UN seat enabling India to stand at par with its western counterparts, he tries to break the hegemonic association and connotation of the term “Sahib.” The narrator’s awareness of his white identity at this point of time and in this cultural context makes it possible for him to see these circumstances critically. He also points out the contradiction of the current Indian mindset, which tries to break free from its colonial past on the one hand, but is still equally in awe and biased about white skin on the other hand. Thus in these two texts, the narrator’s white skin and his keen awareness of it enables him to trace the lasting influences of the British Raj in India from its existence as a British colony to an independent democratic country and shows how the fact of having white skin affects his interactions with the locals.

4.3 Polyphonic Narrative in Alban Nikolai Herbst’s “Bombay Rhapsodie”

As Herbst’s title rightly points out, this text is set in Bombay and uses multiple narrative voices to describe this dynamic city. I use the term “polyphonic” proposed by Bakhtin (1984) to explain how the different narrative perspectives employed by the author point readers toward
both a synchronic as well as a diachronic understanding of this city. Interestingly both Bakhtin and Herbst borrow music-related terms to describe their concept and title respectively and ironically both these terms are related to western musical tradition. Like a rhapsody, the multiple voices interfere with each other and do not necessarily exist as separate entities. Furthermore, the prose incorporates poetry that flows seamlessly within the text and highlights the postmodern quality of the text. Thus by mixing narrative voices as well as narrative styles, the author reveals the diverse aspects of city.

The first level of narration is dialogical in nature. The Hindu goddess Lakshmi speaks with the foreign guest, explaining the inception of the city of Mumbai. Here the text relies on the Hindu mythological tale of Samudra Manthan or churning of the ocean. The first-person narrator Lakshmi recalls this entire episode about her birth: In the war between devas and asuras or gods against demons, the gods became immortal by drinking the amrit or divine nectar by churning the ocean. This churning produced the divine nectar and other celestial objects, and also gave birth to goddess Lakshmi, the Hindu goddess of wealth, fortune, and prosperity. Lakshmi, thus, has a divine quality and is aspirational. By citing this story at the very beginning of this text, Herbst gives this tale a new spin by portraying the goddess of wealth to be the most important source of the city, when in fact at one point he also mentions that the city’s name is derived from the name Mumbadevi or mother goddess in the regional Marathi language. By using goddess Lakshmi as his narrator, however, his narrative emphasizes common knowledge about this city: people migrating to this city with the dream of making money and fortune.71 Thus he taps into the nerve of the local people and their aspirations, and this narrator’s perspective gives the

71 In his tale of gods and demons, he ends it with goddess Lakshmi hiding her statue in the sands of Mumbai, which he later incorporates into his narrative. He also talks about how people throng the famous Mahalakshmi temple in Mumbai. Roughly translated in English, Maha means greater, thus once again the narrator escalates the role of Lakshmi, associated with wealth and prosperity.
readers a diachronic view of the city and how it evolved from its inception to the current times. Furthermore, in his text the passages from Lakshmi’s point of view are italicized to give the effect of a higher power speaking to the foreigner, creating a metanarrative level. This style of writing also epitomizes the role of religion in Indian society since Lakshmi’s voice takes over every now and then to narrate more mythological tales or give insight into the religious teaching, for instance at one point she says: “Die gesamte materielle Substanz, Brahman genannt, ist die Quelle der Geburt” (113). At another point, as the guide shows the foreign guest Malabar Hills in Mumbai, Lakshmi’s voice interrupts to relate the mythological relevance of that place: “Es begab sich aber, daß Rama hierher kam auf seiner Suche nach der entführten Frau” (115). Lakshmi’s voice fills in the gaps between the guide narrator and foreigner narrator and embeds the religious significance associated with each historic place that the foreigner visits.

The other narrative perspective, that of the foreigner, is intrigued by syncretism and how religious faith dominates the daily lives of the local people: “Die Menschen sind unfaßbar gläubig. Nein, nein, nicht nur die einfachen Leute, sondern auch die Gelehrten, Wissenschaftler, Ärzte” (118). The narrator of course falls back on his own culture of enlightenment and is unable to grasp the deep impact of religious practices that affect even the modern and so-called enlightened\textsuperscript{72} individuals. To him the existence of several religions simultaneously is in itself overwhelming, let alone the daily practice of religion: “In meinem Reich ist Synkretismus göttlich” (118). He pens a poem that depicts this syncretism:

\begin{quote}
Dieses verdammte Meer!

Dieses arabische Meer!

Nie bekommen wir diesen Damm! 22 hat er unter sich in der See begraben!
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{72} I call this “so-called enlightened” since I see it through the perspective of the European narrator.
Ein einziger Griff der Wogen...
Ein einziger Schlag mit der Sturmfaust...
Ihr da! Macht zu, daß ihr an eure Arbeit kommt! Na los doch!
Faules Kroppzeugs!
Inshallah..!
Ob das oder was anderes... Ist doch egal...
Dann eben Karma...
Ihr müßt graben!!!
Graben?
Ich hatte einen Traum...
(Grabe nach mir und errichte mir einen Altar!)
Zu mir hat Lakshmi gesprochen.
Scher dich an deine Arbeit. Hund!
(Sie verstehen dich nicht.)

In this poem the narrator mixes voices and perspectives as he also puts down his lasting impressions of the city. Through the sheer mixture of voices in the poem, it reflects the rhapsodic nature as well as depicts the coexistence of different religions and types of people in this city. Drawing attention to the omnipresent sea at the beginning of the poem he not only reiterates the importance of the sea, which gives Mumbai its most stable geographical identity and which gives this port city enormous business opportunities, but also ties it back to the mythological tale of the churning of ocean in the beginning. The religious symbolism with words like Inshallah for Islam and Karma for Hinduism explains the syncretic characteristic of the city, but the narrator is equally skeptical about the local people’s attitudes towards religion, “Keine Religion gibt es hier
nicht. Glaubenstoleranz in der Verfassung geankert. […] Jeden Monat legen religiöse Festivitäten die halbe Geschäftswelt lahm” (117). Likewise, he comments on the religious excuses that hinder work and attributes people’s work culture to their naïve religious faith when he continues the mythical story of Lakshmi after his interlude from poetry:

Dann grab ich allein! – Und sie gruben eine Statue Lakshmis aus, die hatte die Göttin dort verborgen zum Zeichen, daß Bombay ihre Stadt würde: die Stadt des Glücks und derer, die nach ihm suchen. Nun war sie gefunden und eine Stätte ihr geweiht am Meer erstrecken... unter der Schirmherrschaft Lakshmis und ihres elefantenköpfigen Freundes, Beseitigers der Hindernisse, Bereiters unseres Glücks. Wann immer du etwas begehst, so geh zu Ganesha zuvor und erst dann zum Gott deines Weges. (119)

By connecting the mythological tale and once again reinforcing the connection of wealth and prosperity with Mumbai city, the narrator gives credit to the divine intervention rather than the local people’s industrious and hard working nature. To him the syncretic society’s dependence on religion is enormous, and sometimes even replaces work: “Wann immer du etwas begehst, so geh zu Ganesha zuvor und erst dann zum Gott deines Weges” (119), as though problem solving means praying to gods. Here, we see the narrator’s wonder for syncretism being replaced by skepticism for this blind faith in religious practices and local people’s complete dependence on religion. We thus see a shift in the narrative perspective, whereby the meta-narrative authoritative voice of Lakshmi is countered by the voice of the foreign guest or the foreigner traveling to Mumbai.

This narrator is a keen observer and describes the daily scenes of filth, stink, pollution and the continuously crowded streets: “Alle müssen sie sich teilen, die indischen Straßen: Lastwagen Personenwagen die hunderttausend schwarzgelben Miniaturtaxis Ambassadors
Fahradfahrer Mopedfahrer Fußgänger Hühner Hunde Kühe Bettler-kinder heilige Pilger, genannt Sadhus, der Businessmann im Einreiher…” (113). The narrator gives us a contemporary view of everything that can be encountered on the streets of Mumbai. This view captures not only the stereotypical image of the harmony between people and animals but also gives a glimpse of the modern and progressive India. He lists these things in one breath, without separating these entities through punctuation and shows how overwhelming it is to a visitor. He captures the paradox that portrays the contemporary metropolitan city in India: “Zuckerrohrpressen” (113) and the “Dhobi Ghat” (115) on the one hand and “RollsRoyce” (121) and the new apartments, which are “teurer als in Tokio” (121) on the other. However, one of the distinctive characteristics of this narrator is his attention towards various cultural aspects of Mumbai that show its cultural diversity along with its cosmopolitan nature. He acknowledges the diverse religious communities and their worship places—*der parsische Schweige Tempel* (114), *der Mahalakshmitempel* (119), *das Haji Ali Gebäude* (120), and also depicts the minor communities like the Koli or Fisher community. So far, many German authors have depicted the religious diversity of this metropolitan city, however, none of these depictions talk about the existing minor communities like the Fisher community, which is an integral part of Mumbai. Herbst’s attention to these smaller details makes for a comprehensive picture of the city of Mumbai.

In addition to identifying the ethnographic distinctions of this city, this narrator tries to uncover the colonial past and seems interested to find this colonial connection in 21st century Mumbai. On several occasions he distinguishes the colonial Bombay from the Indian Mumbai. 73

While he marvels at the several colonial architectural wonders and enjoys a tryst with history, he

73 In one of the passages, the narrator actually mixes these two distinct identities: “[…] ausgerechnet hier zu landen! Im indischen Bombay, dem nicht kolonialen” (114), since he is critical of changing the city names from colonial times to their original local language. And yet he is able to distinguish these two and favors the colonial Bombay, as also seen in the above quote. Unquestionably it is the proximity to the colonial style architecture that he can relate to, due to his European roots.
romanticizes the poverty in India when he talks about “Die Poesie der Armut” (114) and echoes many of his predecessors whose texts displayed a strong Eurocentric undercurrent. One passage illustrates this in particular when the narrator is advised not to drink local water—“Wasser ist das gefährlichste… (Europäers Verdauung…)” (114)—which again highlights the stigma associated with developing nations. The foreigner as narrator, thus, portrays a synchronic picture of the city, a counterview to that of Lakshmi, but which resonates an already established travel perspective among European, in particular German, authors on India.

The third perspective that of a guide, complements the foreigner’s perspective. He shows the narrator the tourist attractions and provides him local information. Thus, as readers we realize that there are these two voices going back and forth, even though the text doesn’t explicitly make this distinction. Furthermore, throughout the text the goddess Lakshmi also accompanies the foreigner and gives him insights and suggestions about all that the narrator encounters. While the guide addresses the foreign guest with Sie, the goddess Lakshmi addresses him with du and most of the first-person narration is the observation and commentary made by this foreign guest.

The text creates a mishmash of several voices that comment, question, and state all that the narrator witnesses. Through the different voices and perspectives, the narrators try to capture the true nature and spirit of this city and provide much information condensed in this smaller text. The text also ends by describing the different sounds, especially of the sea and the waves, an integral part of Mumbai, as well as with sounds of laughter and traffic, and of the people who give the city its unique identity. Through the sounds and voices of different narrative perspectives, the author does complete justice to the title of the text and also conveys the essence of this dynamic city.
4.4 The Conscious Narrator in Arnold Stadler’s “Reisen Heißt Weiterreisen Und Schreiben Heißt Weiterschreiben”

Stadler’s text presents a conscious narrator in the text. I call this narrator a conscious narrator since throughout his text he talks about situations that reinstate his European identity and awareness about his position in the foreign country. As a consequence, all his observations are underlined by this consciousness. Stadler’s writing doesn’t dwell on imagination, but rather is pragmatic in nature. His subtitle, “Ein Monolog,” highlights the very subjective nature of his text. The narrative style resembles a monologue since the narrator engages in conversations with himself whenever he encounters and observes the Other. The monologue portrays everything that the narrator experiences, and his own ideas and perceptions of what he observes. Due to the conscious narrative style, the narrator also reflects on his thoughts that may be a result of a dialogue between the narrator and his Indian counterparts, but the subtitle puts more emphasis on the subjectivity, and deflects the explicit dialogue that he has with his Indian counterparts.

The narrator’s first impression of India is based on a stereotypical image of the spiritual and mystical India that is prevalent not only in the German-speaking world, but also in the typical western perception of India. He writes, “Von Indien erwartete ich heilige Kühe und Menschen, und ich bin vor Ort auch auf solche gestoßen. Nur, daß sich bei Kühe in Indien das Wort heilig erübrigte. Es wäre wie weißer Schimmel gewesen, nichts als Tautologie” (34). The reference to “heilige Kühe” appeared in some earlier German narratives about India and by referring to this sacred connection, the narrator reverts to the portrayal of spiritual India.

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74 Narrative theory has addressed the concept of a self-reflexive narrator as well as a self-conscious narrator: see Categories of self-conscious narrator in Wolfram, Dante and Chaucer (1984) by Nan Arbuckle, which discusses four different categories of an intrusive self-conscious narrator. However, in Stadler’s text, the narrator is not an intrusive narrator, but constantly aware of his identity to such an extent that it affects his behavior when he is surrounded by the Indian people. I also talk of these instances where the narrator’s self-conscious behavior affects his encounters. Thus, the term conscious narrator is a term that I use to define this particular characteristic trait in the narrator that shapes his writing.

75 In the anthology Ausblicke von meinem indischen Balkon, travel narratives of Kathrin Schmidt and Felicitas Hoppe also mention cows.
However, the narrator does two things at once when he terms the “holy cow” as nothing but an example of tautology: he not only calls attention to the stereotype but he also demystifies this portrayal. Later in the text he provides more evidence that helps demystify this connection of the holy cow with India.

In the Indian context, cows are considered sacred not only because of the religious connotation attached to them in the Hindu philosophy, but also because they are closely connected to the livelihood of many people in this predominantly agrarian country. Since cows and cattle hold a significant position in the agricultural sector, they are also revered and worshipped by segments of the population that are dependent on this sector. Furthermore, the cow has mythological relevance in the stories of Lord Krishna. The narrator seems to be aware of this association and therefore a news piece about the BSE infected cows in a German newspaper initiate a different feeling in him while he is in the Indian surroundings. The news report mentions the condition known colloquially as “Rinderwahnsinn” and how the German ministry sees a solution to this problem by slaughtering 400,000 cattle in Germany, terming it the “Kälbervernichtungsprogram” (34). Since the narrator is in a different setting from his native country, he reflects on the language used to describe this piece of news in his native language by the German media. We see here a narrator who is conscious of his own surroundings and contexts, and of how they shape or alter meanings of the words to describe certain aspects. The contrasting word association with respect to cows in these two cultures startles him and he finds the use of words in his own native language harsher when he writes, “Und ich schämte mich in einer Sprache zu leben und zu schreiben, in der solche Wörter und Dinge möglich sind, vor allem von Indien her” (34). The use of compound nouns in German to describe the BSE affected cows not only extend words in German, but also make them sound harsh to the ear especially in the
context of the narrator’s current circumstances. On the other hand the adjective “holy” used in
the Indian context to describe these creatures varies significantly from the German nouns and the
narrator is able to view this difference because he gains an outsider perspective on himself from
within the Indian context. He even conveys the deictic shift here “von Indien her” thus
emphasizing how the Indian context nudges him to think critically and reflect on things that he
might have taken for granted otherwise. He is able to look at his own country and language from
another lens that might not have been possible had he not traveled. He also comes to know how
Indians resolve this issue without slaughtering the cows. Hence he sees a more humane solution
in India keeping its notion of the sacred cow intact. The narrator also breaks this association of
exclusivity of the Indians considering cows holy by narrating his own experience with these
creatures. One important reason for this narrator to dwell on this topic is his childhood
experience of growing up on a farmhouse amongst cows and calves. He recalls a fond memory
from his past about these creatures: “Ich habe lang genug unter einem großen Dach gelebt, unter
dem auch Kühe zuhause waren und zusammen mit Kälbern bin ich aufgewachsen. Sie sind mir
auch heilig” (34). With this association, he breaks the myth that only Indians consider cows holy.
His sympathy towards these creatures also shows the same respect and feelings as displayed by
any Indian who worships the cow. Thus the narrator does not restrict the notion of the holy cow
to India alone and gets rid of this negatively connotated exclusivity by demystifying this notion.

One of the prime reasons for arguing for the consciousness of this narrator is his
willingness to be open to experiences and constantly questioning even though this is not his first
trip to India. In the course of exploring and questioning, he mentions that he doesn’t agree with
the American philosopher Quine, who talks about deleting the question mark key from his
typewriter. Thus a sense of curiosity is noticeable in his approach to understanding his
surroundings and yet he is equally aware of his identity as a German and is consumed by how Indians perceive him and his people. He is disappointed to read very little about Germany in the Indian media and through his conversations with Indians he also comes to learn of Indians’ lack of interest in the German news. Despite his disappointment, in one instance he is relieved to find that Indians are unaware of the ongoing anti-immigration campaign led by the CDU minister Jürgen Rüttgers, which directly concerns India. He writes: “Geschämt habe ich mich in Indien schon, wenn mir die Kampagne Kinder statt Inder einfiel. Ich traf zum Glück vor Ort keinen Menschen, der von dieser Unsäglichkeit gewußt hätte” (35). The author is relieved about the Indian media’s neglect of this aspect of the news. The campaign that he writes about is associated with the right-wing CDU minister, whose anti-immigration statements made news when he suggested teaching German children computers and soft skills rather than hiring Indian Software engineers in Germany. His anti-immigration stance caused a stir in the German media, which then coined the phrase “Kinder statt Inder.” The narrator’s apparent relief about the absence of this news coverage in the Indian media shows his desire to avoid any controversy and embarrassment during his stay in India and reinforces his roots in the foreign country.

Like previous narrators he is also critical about some of his experiences in India. But these come forth in the form of reflections than outright critique and mostly put forward subtly. For instance, he is intrigued by the richness of the languages in this country, but he is reduced to communicating in English: “In diesem Land der Sprachen und Menschen war ich ganz auf das Englische angewiesen” (35). The English newspapers becomes his source of information about the current affairs in India and the world. From his daily readings he becomes aware of the corruption plaguing India and he is quick enough to add another tautology to his list, namely that of the corrupt politician: “Ein ‘korrupter Politiker’ ist in Indien eine Binsenwahrheit, ja eine
Tautologie, so wie ‘heilige Kühe’ oder ‘weißer Schimmel’ (35). Thus without much explanation or lingering on that topic, he subtly critiques the political picture in India.

The narrator’s conscious nature is also closely associated with his physical existence. During the course of his journey, he experiences some physical difficulties and mentions a head injury in his introductory text. As many foreigners would be, he is also anxious of the medical treatment he would receive in this foreign country and prefers to carry his own medicines with him: “Ich habe immer die neuesten Schmerzmittel bei mir; in Delhi bekam ich sogenannte SOS-Pills und die Reise ging weiter” (37). Thus he takes care of minor physical discomforts but even this head injury doesn’t deter him from travelling further and continuing his journey.\(^{76}\) To this narrator, being injured is a sign of being alive and he relies on a pastiche of another of Stadler’s works: *Mein Hund, meine Sau, mein Leben* (1994). Stuart Taberner articulates in an essay how the perception of home is portrayed by Stadler in many of his works in the age of globalisation. Taberner cites examples of Stadler’s novels *Ich war einmal* (1989), *Feuerland* (1992), *Mein Hund, meine Sau, mein Leben* (1994) and *Der Tod und ich, wir zwei* (1996) to address the recurring themes of “conflicting desires of Fernweh and Heimweh” (Taberner 96) as well as how Stadler associates pain with existence, particularly in his novel *Mein Hund, meine Sau, mein Leben*. Taberner writes about this central theme in the novel by associating it with Heidegger’s philosophy:

> Throughout, the Heideggerian ideas of ‘being in the world’ (‘In-der-Welt-Sein’, *Mein Hund, meine Sau, mein Leben*), and ‘pain as the foundational experience’ („Schmerz als

\(^{76}\) Though he continues his journey after this injury, he leaves India before his planned departure. This is also similar to Grass, who planned to stay for a year or more in India but left within six months of his stay in 1987.
Grundriß’, MH, 13), are central, as is the notion of pain as proof of authentic existence:


I use this thread to connect Stadler’s work on India because the physical discomforts heighten the existence of the narrator and in some way also strengthen his desire to carry on further. Precisely this notion of “I felt pain and therefore I existed” is at play in his Indian surroundings after his head injury. The recurring theme of pain in his previous works applies here perfectly since he feels that his existence needs to be reinstated in this foreign place. The injury becomes the source for reinforcing and becoming conscious of this existence in the foreign space. The connection to pain adds another dimension to the consciousness of the narrator; even the title of this text reflects on what the narrator might have told himself subconsciously -- “Reisen heißt Weiterreisen” -- even after his injury.

Like his forerunners, this narrator also describes the contrasts that he encounters in India. However, he believes in only noting these observations and does not let his prejudices shape his perception:


Und ich dachte nur, daß manche Probleme keine Lösung haben, sondern nur eine Geschichte.

In derselben Stadt sah ich auch Ferraris vorbeifahren. Das ist kein Vorurteil, sondern eine Erinnerung. Und ich selbst war ja auch ein Luxusreisender, der über der Stadtpromenade

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77 Taberner uses the abbreviation MH for Stadler’s novel Mein Hund, meine Sau und mein Leben.
78 The Heidegerrian philosophy of “Being in the world” is also explored in context of traveling by the anthropologist Christopher Howard in “Out of Practice: Foreign Travel as the Productive Disruption of Embodied Knowledge Schemes.” I talk about this more in my fourth chapter.

The above quote is dense and multiple meanings can be derived from it. While I regard this narrator to be one who is conscious of his own status and who doesn’t want to be associated as a privileged traveler, his comments on the encounter with beggars heightens his privileged position. Particularly his remark about poverty being deeply rooted in history is equally an affirmation of his privileged existence as a European and is embedded in a very negative and hopeless space, since he does not see a solution to this poverty. When he looks at the people below from the promenade of plush hotels, this narrator reiterates a similar feeling of dominance that the narrator in Drewitz’s texts invoked with her remark “Das Elend dort unten aus solcher Entfernung auch nur zu denken, macht schwindelig!” (Drewitz 9). The narrator stresses the deictic center here in the above quote just like Drewitz, yet he goes further to disassociate himself from this “Luxusreisender” status as a result of his conscious, self-reflexive nature. A similar instance follows when he reflects on the huge crowds and people around him, while he takes a picture of himself, all alone, before the TajMahal, as opposed to the Indian tourists who flock in groups: “Indien: diese Menschen waren nie allein. Immer hatten sie jemanden bei sich, so viele ich sah, selbst die Bettler hatten ihre Menschen, vielleicht sogar Freunde” (36). As a traveler he constantly feels watched or observed, especially when he is in public spaces and writing his notes and gets interrupted by people who peer over his notes. While other works also mention this loss of private space, in this narrator’s case it interferes with his thought process while he is taking down notes and writing his impressions. This affects even his choice of words, thus influencing his behavior and making him conscious; he narrates an experience where he is forced
to think of words that will not offend any Indian who just might look at his notes while he
scribbles it down on the paper, “Ich mußte in Indien keine Angst haben, daß ein Mensch deutsch
versteht, aber das Wort ‘Slum’ gehört heute zu den Internationalisten, wie ‘Problem’ und
‘Architekt,’ und ich wollte meinen indischen Nachbarn nicht kränken” (38). The narrator’s
approach to not offend Indians is a repetitive theme throughout his writing. Hence even his
criticism is laced by this idea of not wanting to hurt those around him. One wonders if this
approach may result in a milder depiction of his experiences, and this approach is very different
from some of the narrators in previous works by Drewitz and Grass, for instance. His stance
becomes particularly problematic because on the one hand his consciousness shapes his
depiction of the country and its people, and he preemptively defends himself of criticism by his
claims of not being prejudiced; but on the other hand he writes about how the role of an author is
to be socially vigilant and critical, thus eliding an objective, observational standpoint that he
consciously aims for:

Schreiben ist Vorbereitung auf den Tod. Und Reisen sind Ausflüge ins Leben.
Ausfluchten vielleicht. [...] Ein Schriftsteller ist nicht zuständig fürs Paradies. Dafür gibt
es Theologen und die Reisebranche. Früher ausschließlich Theologen. Heute eher die
Reisebranche. (39)

He juxtaposes traveling with life and writing with death, thus viewing writing as a responsible
act, whereby the writer is responsible for portraying the stark reality, and not the paradise, as he
calls it. However, his own stance as a conscious narrator doesn’t allow him to project his ideas of
an ideal author that he aims for in the above quotation. While the narrator succeeds in comparing
some aspects of contemporary Germany with the Indian context that he witnesses on this journey,
the conscious narrator is unable to justify his stance and in the process of being less judgmental,
he in fact reveals his prejudices about India. Thus, these two roles, the conscious narrator and the ideal writer come into conflict with each other and the narrator’s claims of an objective travel account remain unaccomplished.

4.5 The Poetic Expressions of Ulrike Draesner and Gert Heidenreich

The poetry and short prose sections by the authors Draesner and Heidenreich present a slightly different conceptualization of their foreign environments since they compose mostly poems about their experiences. While for Draesner it means experimenting with English and German languages, for Heidenreich, it is the collaboration with the Marathi poet Dilip Chitre that shapes some of his perceptions and understanding of some of the places he visits. The poems do follow neither strict meter patterns nor formal poetic style, rather most of the poems are composed in free verse.

4.5.1 Ambivalent Narrator in Draesner’s “Itinerar Durch Koloniale (K)Erbenfeld,” “Hey Man Calm Down,” and “Frage, Versteckt In Einem Bild”

Draesner’s collection of poems “itinerar durch koloniale (k)erbenfeld” and her two prose texts show the ambivalence of the narrator. While the narrator expresses openness to experiencing the foreign world, her writing portrays feelings of estrangement and alienation on the one hand, and pays homage to the colonial memory on the other. She even uses the word “kolonial” in the title of her collection, depicting the colonial remnants of the Indian society. She ascribes the “Denglish” collection of poems to her current surroundings: “deutsch und english, weil die luft in Indien davon widerklingt und anstoß gibt”\(^79\) (79). The English language becomes the mode of communication for this German in India and she writes most of her poems in English, a few others in both English and German, and the rest in German. One of her poems

\(^{79}\) Draesner avoids capitalization of nouns in her poetry as well as in the above quotation.
titled *indian paradox* brings to life her critical take on the paradox that exists in India and which has often been reflected upon previously by other authors in this anthology. She writes this in English thus further stressing the paradox:

1. who knows what it means to go
   or
   walk knows a cows\textsuperscript{80} lilacs
eating intestines
knowing
who knows
shiva’s nose going
as sound
2. there are no cows

At first reading the narrator seems to oversimplify the paradox by acknowledging the existence of the cow in the first poem and then contradicting it in the second one. In this way, she creates a visible paradox through language. However, she points out even the paradoxical nature of the two cultural outlooks. She mixes the imagery of what she sees with words that derive different meanings in different cultural contexts. Even common intransitive verbs like “to walk” and “to go” mean different things. Perhaps she refers to the chaotic pedestrian crossings she sees in India

\textsuperscript{80} It is hard to say if Draesner drops the apostrophe here with intention, since she uses it in shiva’s case or if this was a typographical error
and the disregard for traffic lights and road ethics in general. But she also reflects on philosophical concepts, like the verb “to know.” Just as the narrator in Kathrin Schmidt’s text -- “…schon das dreiundvierzigste Jahr erledigt” -- who becomes aware of using a different frame of reference to look at the Indian culture in order to understand it and write about it, the narrator in this poem tries to analyze her own set of cultural values in order to define her foreign surroundings. This basic instinct of building a frame of reference to perceive the new culture or shifting her own deictic center is reflected also in her short prose text “Frage, versteckt in einem Bild.” The text portrays the narrator’s irritation in coming to terms with the unfamiliarity of a new place in the city of Calcutta. This slight annoyance hinders this narrator from fully exploring this city. Moreover, the city’s colonial past, its mix of old and new, make it harder to view and understand the everyday life in India. She sees the city of Calcutta as an embodiment of icons and myths:

Ihre (Calcuttas) gesammelte Kraft, ihren ganzen Stolz schien die Stadt allein darin zu setzen, sich mit Ikonen und Mythen zu schmücken. Mutter-Theresa-Abzeichen, unübertroffenes Elend, die indische Hauptstadt der Literatur, der Wissenschaften, des (ernsthaften) Films, der Revolution, der Dichtung, der Führerschaft. (147)

By bringing these different elements together and grouping them into icons and myths, the narrator distances herself from them and highlights the alienating factors. Moreover, at the beginning of the text she admits to having come with the baggage of preconceived notions: “Während des Herumreisens bislang war ich froh gewesen, wie schnell einige der Bilder über Indien, die ich mitgebracht hatte, fadenscheinig wurden. Zwar noch vorhanden, aber an einigen Stellen so dünn gescheuert, daß der Untergrund eigener Erfahrungen sichtbar wurde” (147). Her firsthand experience with the Indian realities enables her to see some different images, and she
attributes this to her ability to change some of her preprogrammed thought processes. Quite like the narrator in Schmidt’s text she realizes:


As readers, we sense how the narrator is aware of her changing surroundings. She is able to understand the need to shift her deictic center according to her circumstances and admits to experiencing a fundamental change in herself. The ideas “fremd zu sein” vs. “fremd zu werden” give us an insight into the narrator’s capacity to conceptualize the idea of being a foreigner. As readers, we appreciate the way the narrator thinks about traveling and perceiving herself in foreign settings and how both outer and inner circumstances influence her perception of being at home or feeling alienated. However, in this narrator’s case, this realization only aggravates the problem of relatability further. So once again we see an uncertain position in the narrator. For instance, she lingers on the lack of knowledge about the daily life of the locals to such an extent that it leaves her feeling irritable and overwhelmed. This in turn results into an overpowering ambivalent experience:

Es war eine ambivalente Erfahrung, so unwissend zu sein – fast keine der Früchte im Markt bennen zu können, nicht einmal zu wissen, wie sie schmeckten – ja, nicht einmal
The above quotation highlights the problem of interference with the narrator’s “idealised cognitive model” or ICM of the narrator as explained by Peter Stockwell:

Idealised cognitive models (ICMs) are the structures with which we organize our knowledge. Cognitive models consist of relations between categories, set up socially, culturally, and on the basis of individual experience, as our means of understanding and negotiating the worlds and our lives through it (33).

When the narrator sees unfamiliar fruits in the market and is unable to place them in a familiar template, she becomes exasperated and even this small incident triggers a sense of estrangement. Interestingly, she depicts these very Indian fruits in one of her poems that she composes in Calcutta:

baan jamrul
chikoo oder kul in
häuten aus pergament
die rote tinte des druckers
das tins tins der hammer
am blech die langen schnüre
des banjan baums rot
lichthäuser, mittags,
im schattigen
nichts als rücken
With this impressionistic poem, rich in imagery, the narrator, in one way reconciles with information that is previously unknown and foreign to her. By depicting these fruits (baan, jamrul, chikoo) and other everyday images, she creates an everlasting memory for the things that initially caused irritation. I posit that in this particular depiction, the narrator is self-assured and is able to come to terms with the “Other,” once again showing a more open and positive outlook towards understanding the other culture. But such impressions are again contradicted by conflicting cognitive models. This is specifically noticeable in her depictions of the city of Calcutta. She builds onto the previous portrayals of Calcutta with its icons and mythical nature, which only further intensify this problem:

Calcutta brachte mir bei, daß manchmal eine Frage nur versteckt in einem Bild erscheint. Die Krähe fragt: was bedeutet eine Grenze? Was heißt es, verbunden zu sein abgeschnitten, nahe, getrennt? Keine Antwort, nur die Frage. Ich bin mir selbst ein Stück fremder geworden. Die Frage wird mich weiterbegleiten. (149)

The unanswered questions accompany this narrator, and the fractured idea of the self leaves her position ambiguous. While previously we see her contemplating about the concepts that define and shape the existence of a foreigner, here we see her clearly attributing the outside circumstances to shape her own feelings of estrangement. I see her usage of the English language to express herself in her poems as something tangible that she can hold onto in this foreign country. The fact that India was colonized by the English and has traces of this past further elevates this need of the narrator to express herself in English. Remarkably, in her other short prose section titled “Hey man calm down,” she relies on the depiction of Calcutta’s colonial past. She writes about the evolution of Calcutta in “Hey man calm down”: 

Clearly the narrator amplifies the role of the colonizers in transforming Calcutta from a village to a city and lists products of the colonial times like the English language, architecture, and even the governing structures, which are modeled after the British. In this way she conveys how the city of Calcutta owes its development to the British empire. Anushka Gokhale writes how Draesner attributes the city’s glory under the efficient British rule, as opposed to its current state of apathy after India’s independence. She even criticizes the narrator’s indifference to acknowledge the role of the Indian freedom struggle in freeing the country from the imperialist rule:

Die Ich-Erzählerin scheint den Untergang imperialer Macht nicht als einen Prozess darzustellen, der durch menschliches Tun in Gang gesetzt wird. Der Verfall des Imperialismus scheint eher ein natürlicher zu sein ... Draesner scheint im Vergleich zu Grass und Drewitz eine distanzierte Perspektive auf die koloniale Vergangenheit anzunehmen. Weder sucht sie einen emotionalen Zugang zur kolonialen Vergangenheit,
noch zieht sie in Grassscher Manier die aufklärerischen Intellektuellen zur Rechenschaft. Sie scheint viel eher den Moment des Verfalls feststellen zu wollen, den organischen Prozess beschreiben zu wollen. (Gokhale 139)

Although I agree with Gokhale’s interpretation about Draesner depicting the city’s progression as an organic one while completely ignoring details of the freedom struggle, I assert that the narrator aligns her thoughts with the colonial past in order to come to terms with her own identity. These British monuments as well as the colonial products that are still present are important elements that complete the contemporary image of India in the eyes of the narrator. Furthermore, these colonial remnants remind her of her own roots to some extent. She finds a piece of home and in fact recalls a very vivid memory about her grandfather in the poem “He”:

was already walking with a stick when I got to know him
i don’t know why he comes to mind now my grandfather
remote as he was. he would have liked that word i
wasn’t born to write in English licking
rolling my hippotatamus german tongue to a
lola-imitation of zigzagsound – and here in india
of all places! he never saw it but what might
he have heard about it on horses riding through
poland autum 39 under a weary helmet
heavy on the head of a bald 50 year old
slim meagre he returned 10 years
later what might
he have heard from his fellow soldiers
about hunting tigers in rajasthan
the huzzbuzz of unimaginable oriental bazaars
or were these the dreams of the other
side? my grandfather in poland (when
they shot some) years after a hunched tiny man
in a siberian camp. i remember his big
belly and wild yellow rose bush growing
on the wall of my parents’ rented minihome
planes rushing alone, above. His walking
stick lay in the grass a dry root. He
was cutting the rose (it felt so intimate
something i had long known – the pair
of scissors hurt me) his old joints
creaking under the effort of doing
his best sweating the old man i never knew.
no idea why it now comes to my mind
amongst the rich fields of india some
white magnolia buds walking
walking the air.

The narrator blends several images from her past that not only move across time but also through
different countries. It is not so much the Indianness that reminds the narrator of her grandfather
but rather the colonial presence, be it in the form of architecture or language that acts as a
catalyst to these reflections about the past. Perhaps it is her visit to the British soldiers’ cemetery
in Calcutta that triggers this image of her grandfather who also served as a soldier in the second World War. In the poem, the time reference of “autumn of 39” exemplifies the narrated time period. Interestingly, although India was never directly involved in World War II, Indian soldiers were deployed in the British army to serve in the war. Here, however, the narrator talks about how her grandfather, who served as a soldier in Poland, may have heard about India, through “his fellow soldiers” who talk about “tiger hunting in Rajasthan” and the “oriental bazaars.” Although her grandfather served the opposing side, he heard from his “fellow soldiers” meaning the British soldiers, about their leisure activities in India: “tiger hunting in Rajasthan” and “oriental bazaars” clearly refer to India. Even though the context addresses the world war, in this particular image the narrator doesn’t see the British as the opposing force but rather calls them her grandfather’s “fellow soldiers.” This rhetorical strategy enables a blended imagery of all these three national identities coming together as a result of direct and indirect forces as well as the narrator’s imagination.\(^{81}\) The poem portrays how the narrator associates her past with her present and how her reliance on the colonial presence helps her to come to terms with her Indian surroundings as well as vent some of the compressed memories of her past. The close reading of her texts and poems above has shown that the narrator alternates between feeling alienated at times and relying on colonial depictions at other times, thereby extending her ambiguous and ambivalent narrator position.

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\(^{81}\) This imagery can be understood as a conceptual blend on which I have already elaborated in my second chapter. Input space 1 is the cemetery of British soldiers that triggers the memory of her grandfather, who also served as the soldier. Input space 2 is the contact that the grandfather might have had with the English soldiers, as well as the imagery of tiger-hunting and oriental bazaars. The generic space is the English language as well as the colonial architecture that the narrator encounters in India. The emergent structure of the blend thus shows the connection between the narrator and her grandfather and the blending of the three national identities.
4.5.2 Explorer in Gert Heidenreich’s “Von Außen”

In the anthology’s concluding text, “Über Grenzen schreiten,” co-editor Martin Kämpchen praises Heidenreich for achieving what other authors aspire to: “durch Begegnungen mit den schöpferischen Menschen Indiens diesem fremden Land nahe zu kommen” (165). Due to his collaboration and friendship with the bilingual poet Dilip Chitre, who wrote both in Marathi and English, Heidenreich travels in and around the Pune city and gets to know its culture from close quarters. Most of Chitre’s poems are an ode to the places he visits with his poet friend, and thus he is acts as facilitator in bridging the gaps between the two cultures. Heidenreich speaks about Chitre’s role in one of the poems: “So also werden wir: er wird mir zeigen, ich werde lernen” (43). Of his several poems, two stand out particularly for their narrative perspective, since one of them addresses his arrival and first impressions after landing in India, and the other one is about concluding his journey. While the first poem stresses firsthand experiences of the narrator, the second poem mentions poet Dilip Chitre’s presence, articulating the latter’s role as a guide for the narrator. In his afterword to the anthology, Kämpchen explains Heidenreich’s stance in India: “Hinschauen, offen bleiben, erleben, aber zunächst weder analysieren und schon gar nicht urteilen, heißt die Regel, die sich Gert Heidenreich aufstellte” (165). In order to see how far the narrator in Heidenreich’s poems corresponds with his approach as an author as mentioned in the above quotation, we must first consider the narrator as taking an explorer stance, as I elaborate in the following analysis.

In his first poem “Einflug,” which consists of four stanzas, the narrator portrays different aspects of the traveling topos. While the first stanza of the poem depicts his outsider identity and his beginning of the journey with the use of container metaphors and personification, the second
stanza relies on the narrator’s senses to perceive the foreign space and to compare it with his roots. The third stanza portrays images of India as he sees it, and finally, the fourth stanza determines the narrator’s stance as an observer and explorer:

Von außen kommst du, mach dir nichts vor, von außen
Schwebst du ein ins unbekannte Gebiet. Nichts wird dir
Vertraut sein. Schneide die Filme aus Deiner Kindheit.
Laß das Dschungel Buch zu. Zeig deinen Paß.
Die Hitze stempelt sich dir auf den Nacken.
In Bombays Nacht empfing mich Indien wie
Ein schweres, müdes Weib aus Staub.

Wie fern das schon liegt: nun hocke ich wieder
In der mürrischen Prosperität meines Landes unter
Unzufriedenen Mienen: blind für den, der ich war, versperrt mir selbst.
Höre Sitar und Tablas, und langsam öffnet Musik die Kavernen,
Hell beginnen die Bilder zwischen den Schläfen zu fließen. Rinnsal
Der indischen Tage. Der Morgen in Mumbai, die Füße im Indischen Ozean,
Juhu Beach, wo mir der Sand unter den Fersen schwindet, mein weißes
Versinken vor denen, die im schwarzen Glanz ihrer Haut kopfgeneigt
Gehen, den Blick vergraben im Müllsaum der Dünung.

Der Himmel fraß Rauch vom Land. Wind kam weich und
Übermütig vom Meer, die Palmen lehnten sich gegen die See,
Satt war ich unter den Knochensilhouetten, schwärzer noch
Standen sie gegen die flirrenden Blitze des Wassers.
Wer hatte am Strand den Lingam geformt, hatte hier Shiva verehrt,
Blüten gestreut, Zuckerperlen auf die sandige Kuppe des Phallus? Wie
Lange wird er sich halten? Auch Shiva unterlag Ebbe und Flut.
Mir fiel deutscher Strand ein mit Burgen.

Als was kam ich her, überfüttert, nutzniederender Moralist? Die
Aktie der linken Unschuld ist abgeschmiert an der Börse von Bombay
Glaub bloß nicht, du wuwest noch etwas von einem Körper, der
Erwacht mit beißender Leere im Bauch. Du, der du alles
Besser weißt durch den Erfolg deines Geburtstorts,
Wirst lernen, wie wenig gewiß ist. (42 Heidenreich)

The narrator engages in a self-dialogue that reflects not only his position but also his
preconceptions as opposed to the reality. Thus the outsider “von außen kommst du” warns of
shedding his idyllic, exotic and aspiring image of the “Dschungel Buch” and of accepting the
stark reality: “Hitze” and “Staub.” The paradox between the imagined and the real is broken here
by acknowledging one is entering an “unbekannte[s] Gebiet” -- a container metaphor -- where he
is received by India as “ein schweres, müdes Weib aus Staub” in the city of Bombay, contrary to
the vibrant image of the city created in the works of Drewitz (Chapter 2) or the cacophonous
nature of the city in Herbst’s text discussed earlier.

In his second stanza, he talks of a facet of his own identity and personality he is unaware
of), and which he is able to explore when he is India: “nun hocke ich wieder // In der mürrischen
Prosperität meines Landes // unter unzufriedenen Mienen: blind für den, der ich war, versperrt mir selbst. // Höre Sitar und Tablas, und langsam öffnet Musik die Kavernen” (42. It takes the foreign instruments and music to open the doors to this aspect of his personality. In Draesner’s text, the foreign element and the irritation and annoyance of not being able to identify and categorize certain fruits, for instance, overshadow her experiences and leaves her alienated. The narrator in this poem, on the contrary, sees this foreignness as an instrument for tapping into one’s own self that opens hidden or unknown aspects of one’s identity.

The third stanza gives an impression about how the narrator views the different scenarios: the geographical location and tropical characteristics (“Meer,” “Palmen”), but more importantly the naïve, religious beliefs and practices of the local people, and how these differ from his own people: forming sand “Lingam” on the beach as opposed to sand castles in Germany, which get washed away by the waves and tides, subtly questioning concepts of faith and practice.

The last stanza shows how the narrator stops himself from judging the poverty and the people living in poverty by relying on his privileged status. It also warns him, just as in the first stanza, not to be quick to judge experiences that he hasn’t been exposed to: “Glaub bloß nicht, du wüßtest noch etwas von einem Körper, der // Erwacht mit beißender Leere im Bauch.” Thus he stays in the state of exploring and doesn’t try to justify the reasons for this poverty based on his western existence. In this self-dialogue he also appeals to himself to be open to experiences.

In his concluding poem “nach außen” the narrator completes the circle of experiences and leaves the readers with his parting Indian images, be it the “Koal-Vögel” (47), the local Koel bird, or the stone temples, or “Betteljungen” (48). As he listens to the sitar playing in the background he also conveys the various emotions and sensations he experiences, that of “Nähe” and “Verzweiflung” (47) and just as in his first poem, he again warns himself: “Vorsicht, weißer
Idiot: Wenn du dich einläßt // Auf diese Musik: dein Gehirn würde dunkel vor Sehnsucht und käme // Nicht mehr zurück” (47). The wordplay of “weiß” and “dunkel” inhabits the two different cultures but once again the narrator appeals to himself to explore rather than indulging in experiences that lead to analysis and judgement. The titles he uses, “von außen” and “nach außen,” show the cyclical process of arriving, exploring, experiencing, and departing. The spatial-deictic conceptualizations trace the narrator’s physical journey while keeping his identity-reinforcing exploratory position intact.

4.6 Conclusion

The above analysis shows how different narrative perspectives bring to fore diverse ways of approaching the “Self” and the “Other,” as well as creating new identities of an already familiar place. The city of Mumbai, for instance, explored in the texts by Herbst, and Heidenreich, produce different metaphors and identities, thus encouraging multiple ways of seeing the same city, giving them their unique characteristics and breaking a stereotypical image of the city. In addition, for some texts the chosen narrative perspective helps enhance the text’s quality and the author’s intentions, in other cases the chosen narrative perspective causes fragmentary text structures and possible confusion for the reader. The role of the elephant narrator in Becker’s text contributes to confusion rather than clarity. The emphasis on the white skin of the narrator in Trojanow’s works not only heightens the gap between the source and target cultures, but also casts light on the lasting colonial impressions in the contemporary Indian society. The multiple narrative perspective in Herbst’s “Bombay Rhapsodie” show us how the author creatively uses this voice to give readers not just a superficial view of the city of Mumbai but also to familiarize them with its intricacies. Through the conscious narrative perspective, Stadler exemplifies how the foreign surroundings constantly remind the traveler of his own
origin and are likely to make him more aware of his roots and their impact on his behavior. The medium of poetry utilized by authors Draesner and Heidenreich exposes how experimenting with the genre creates new imagery of the same country. While in the case of Draesner, the ambivalent position of the narrator is the crux of her journey and depiction of India, and it also adds another dimension of self-discovery for the narrator, whether by recalling memories from the past or by using English to narrate about India. Heidenreich, on the other hand, comes with certain rules and sticks to them while narrating about India. He explores and experiences, doesn’t analyze or judge, and then actually keeps his word in his depictions. Thus, the narrative perspective shows its capacity to dominate and overpower a narrative, or to underplay and meet newer realities. This versatility allows the narrative perspective to influence or change the previously existing perceptions, and to fill in the gap between the two entities at work: the traveler and his subject.
CHAPTER 5. ON NARRATING TRAVEL: HOW DO CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS TRAVEL AND NARRATE TRAVEL EXPERIENCES ABOUT INDIA?

The growing interest in travel literature as I have already elaborated on with specific examples in my introduction, reveals how the journey as a trope has gained in importance in today’s age of a globalized world. While detailed information and images about a new place are just a click away, the growing demand for travel literature assures the need for intercultural understanding on the one hand, and encourages on the other hand newer ways of writing travel. The German interest in the Orient, and in India particularly, has been reflected upon in literature since the eighteenth century, but the travel narratives, as per Peter Brenner’s definition, have been a later development, beginning in the late nineteenth century. Most of the German travel narratives on India that appeared especially within the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were set in an imperialist mode of writing or in a colonial framework. With the beginning of mass tourism in the fifties and sixties, travel writing was often recognized in the touristic discourse. In my chosen travel corpus, I focus on the works that have appeared since the eighties and have already discussed the works of Drewitz, Grass and Winkler in my first chapter. Their narrative style, I have argued, is still largely embedded in the colonial ways of portrayal. In this chapter I give a brief synopsis of Lukas Hartmann’s *Mahabalipuram oder als Schweizer in*...

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83 See Sehnsucht nach Indien for an overview of German writings on India.
84 In Der Reisebericht, one of the pioneering works on German travel literature, Brenner considers authentic travel experience as a pre-requisite for travel writing: “Der Begriff kennzeichnet mit der gebotenen Neutralität den Sachverhalt, um den es geht: die sprachliche Darstellung authentischer Reise” (9), thus eliding couch travel or virtual travel.
85 In works of Edward Said and Mary Louise Pratt, they both have attributed imperialism to be the source of travel writing, which focuses mainly on writing about “Non-European spaces.” See Christina Kraenzle’s “Writing Travel in the Global Age: Transnationalism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Reworking of Generic Conventions of Travel Literature in Ilija Trojanow’s An den inneren Ufern Indiens and Nomade auf vier Kontinenten” for calling travel writing as a “tainted” genre. (126)
86 See Ulla Biernat’s study on how travel writing as a genre was affected by mass tourism in “Ich bin nicht der erste Fremde hier. Zur deutschsprachigen Reiseliteratur nach 1945” (2004). She categorizes the decades with specific developments as a result of the changing socio-political scenarios in Germany and how these affected travel writing.
*Indien* (1982), published in the same decade, albeit disregarding the imperialist mode of writing to which the above-mentioned authors resorted in the eighties. On the other end of the spectrum I analyze two works from the twenty-first century: Kristof Magnusson’s *Tagebucheindrücke* (2006) about Pune, published on the Goethe Institut portal, as well as Ilija Trojanow’s travelogue *An den inneren Ufern Indiens* (2008). My analysis here covers more than just a broader time frame; it also includes a web-published diary as one of the important sources of publication that must be addressed while researching about the changing travel writing conventions in today’s world. Thus my analysis yields the outcome of showing how the contemporary authors view travel in this overload of information and imagery. Further, with the availability of self-publication platforms, it is important to note to what extent they elide the touristic discourse while still engaging in travel writing in novel ways that assures wider reception.

Many contemporary authors are adapting to the changing literary scene and using media and social platforms, online portals, etc. to showcase their works. In recent years many European countries as well as American universities have introduced writers-in-residence programs, which make for a rich collection of intercultural, transcultural, and transnational writings. Magnusson’s diary on the city of Pune is an outcome of “Akshar,” a German-Indian initiative in collaboration with the Goethe Institutes (in Germany and India) and *Deutsche Literaturhäuser*. Similarly, a lot of the contemporary authors also choose to self-publish their collection of works on their own professional websites and blogs. Ilija Trojanow, whose oeuvre is largely based on the travel theme, has self-published a collection of his articles and essays on his website. Similarly, present-day authors such as, Gert Heidenreich, Ulrike Draesner, whose works feature

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87 This book was originally published in 2003 and I am using its fourth edition. This goes to show the wide reception and popularity of Trojanow’s works. It was also translated in English by Ranjit Hoskote as Along the Ganges in 2005.

88 “Akshar – ein deutsch-indisches Stadtschreiberprojekt der Deutschen Literaturhäuser und der Goethe-Institute in Deutschland und Indien” (Magnusson 1).
earlier in my dissertation and Kristof Magnusson and Lukas Hartmann, whose works I discuss in this chapter,\textsuperscript{89} have embraced the changing times by using the internet and personal websites to advertise their works, publish articles, essays and shorter texts or list of their upcoming readings and/or projects in addition to YouTube interviews, thus catering to a wider audience. These websites and blogs serve to create further professional contacts as well as create direct accessibility, which works both ways: readers can directly get in touch with these authors and authors’ works get more reception. This can be seen as another dimension of the professional lives of the authors, which couldn’t have been possible in the previous century.

In one such recent essay published by Trojanow on his official website, he talks of the challenges of traveling in the twenty-first century, when traveling needs to be distinguished from touristic expeditions. His essay serves as a guide for his own writing on India, as I later show in this chapter. Tracing the idea of what travel actually meant in the eighties with Hartmann’s text, I take Trojanow’s essay as my point of departure, and look at how the contemporary authors view travel, specifically traveling in India and further expand it in the realm of travel writing discourse by citing concrete examples from the travel narratives by these three authors to look closely at how they write about travel. More importantly, my aim is to show how far these authors still stick to the imperialist mode of travel writing or how they devise new ways of writing travel. This chapter closes the gap of how authors have historically written about India in the past and how that has changed over the years, moving towards my concluding remarks at the end of this chapter.

Trojanow’s essay is aptly titled “Richtig Reisen” and gives a brief overview of travel from historical past to present times, and three commandments for traveling:

\textsuperscript{89} This Swiss author is perhaps the only senior author in this list who still actively writes and publishes at the age 73.

By admitting the relevance of traveling in all religions and citing particularly the Hindu scriptures that present a beautiful metaphor for the traveler, Trojanow digs deeper to unearth various connotations of traveling. He views traveling as an active and conscious endeavor by using very fitting semantic connections: “der aufbrach, die Fremde kennenlernen, verändert nach Hause zurückkehrt,” whereby *aufbrechen* suggests an active and conscious breaking away from something that is routine, and can roughly be translated as setting out to do something (presumably different). Similarly, the verb *verändern* shows a cause and effect relationship and can be seen as both an active and passive process. Outer circumstances may result in changing the current state, be it physical or emotional state of mind, but it also requires some flexibility to let go of some of the previous conditioning that one is brought up with, thus suggesting an active conscious mental process. This line of thought is congruent with that of a *Bildungsroman*90 in German, as “verändert nach Hause zurückkehrt” has been promoted by German authors and

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90 See introduction and footnote number 4 for the definition of *Bildungsroman*. 
thinkers as early as the medieval times. Trojanow is able to blend eastern and western thought processes here to show the changing implications of traveling today.

Expanding on these three commandments, Trojanow further cites examples for each one of them. “Reise ohne Gepäck” is for Trojanow both: the mental baggage as well as the physical, material, baggage: “Inhalt der geistigen Koffer und Taschen, all jene Vorurteile und Besserwissereien,” in addition to “die Kleidungsstücke, die man mitschleppt, stören in der Fremde.” To him, clothes shape the outer appearance of the person and give away the traveler, the outsider identity. It makes the demarcations clear and blending the outsider/insider image then becomes even more challenging. It seems that not all authors think this way, and as Felicitas Hoppe articulates in her text “Fakire und Flötisten,” it was exactly this baggage, her own suitcase, which she could hold onto in the foreign land where every single thing appears new and strange at the beginning. Her suitcase was a possession of her own that defined and reinforced her existence. I elaborated in the second chapter how this suitcase and its contents also refer to the mental baggage she carries with her in the form of her preconceived notions of India and how this suitcase presents a conceptual blend. This blend illustrates how Hoppe attaches importance to the paraphernalia that makes the traveler identity visible, as opposed to Trojanow, who wants to dissociate himself from all the things that easily reveal his foreigner-identity. The other two commandments that Trojanow writes about seem to have culminated from his own experiences traveling in Asia and Africa. In the essay he exemplifies how a tourist group disrupted the serenity of the landscape that he was enjoying in Mopti, on the banks of Niger, in Mali. These tourists were loud, clicked pictures and did not care about maintaining the sanctity of that place.

91 Wolfram von Eschenbach’s medieval epic Parzival can be cited as a Bildungsroman, although a more typically cited example of this genre is Goethe’s Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre (1795-6).
92 “Denn ohne Koffer zu reisen, das ist, unter uns gesagt, mir unmöglich. Einen Koffer braucht der Reisende, sonst ist er ein Nichts, was er sowie schon ist, aber ein sichtbares Nichts, und das darf nicht sein” (Hoppe 92). Thus Hoppe sees the suitcase as an essential accessory of the traveler that gives him this specific identity.
Trojanow thus distinguishes tourists from travelers—“Gefährlich ist das Reisen in der Gruppe” (Reisen 2)—criticizing the concept of group traveling propagated by the tourism industry. While it may have its benefits in contributing to the economics of a country, he views solo traveling and exploring from a philosophical approach rather than commercial. He follows this rule to a large extent while traveling along the course of the river Ganga, and writing about it in *An den inneren Ufern Indiens*. In this journey, Trojanow travels with the local modes of transport and completes a leg of this journey on foot, thus bringing into practice his third travel commandment:

> Am wichtigsten ist vielleicht das Reisen zu Fuß, eine Erkenntnis, die sich erst nach ausgiebigen eigenen Erfahrungen eingestellt hat. Der Fußmarsch ermöglicht eine Wachheit, die einen wie eine Bogensehne spannt [...] Wer mit dem Auto, dem Bus, dem Zug oder dem Motorrad durch die Landschaft fährt, sieht mit den Augen, mehr oder weniger. Wer sie aber zu Fuß durchstreift, der sieht mit dem ganzen Körper. Und er ist den Einheimischen gleichgestellt, er fällt in die tradierte Kategorie des müden Wanderers, dem Menschen weltweit mit den Mitteln der vertrauten Gastfreundschaft begegnen können. Aus dem Auto heraus schaut die Fremde immer so aus, als sei sie schlecht in die eigene Sprache übersetzt. (Richtig Reisen 2)

Trojanow romanticizes the concept of traveling on foot, which can also be connected back to the pilgrimages and the sacred walks of faith propagated in different religions. Interestingly, his journey along the Ganga river also pays tribute to this popular pilgrimage route in India. But he is able to transcend this connotation and sees walking as a leveler: where the foreigner versus local identities dissolve and both entities view each other at the same level. Furthermore, by means of walking he aims to see, “mit dem ganzen Körper” thus encouraging an embodied
experience. In her text “schon das dreundvierzigste Jahr, einfach erledigt” Kathrin Schmidt alludes to both these phenomena: She travels alone and takes morning walks in the city, which allow her a perspective of her own: something a travel guide wouldn’t have made possible. We thus see a mixture of authors who, as in the case of Schmidt, either follow one of the rules proposed by Trojanow, or who, like Hoppe, follow their own set of rules while traveling. In the following passage I analyze Hartmann’s text, which appeared before Trojanow’s essay, but which in essence still adheres to some of the ideas of traveling proposed by Trojanow.

5.1 The Subjective Nature of Hartmann’s *Mahabalipuram Oder Als Schweizer in Indien*

Hartmann’s travel diary is a personal account written in the form of a travel diary like that of Drewitz, which was a popular and common form of travel writing in the eighties and the title of this diary further explains the subjective nature of the text. His journey from Mumbai to the state of Kerala and Tamil Nadu exposes him to different geographical locales and modes of transport, in addition to encountering people and new adventures. This diary doesn’t contain long descriptive passages of what he encounters, rather these are described in quick successions. The first few pages juxtapose the familiar with the unfamiliar and reveal the author’s lack of knowledge about this country. However, as the diary progresses, it deals more with the author’s understanding of his Swiss identity, his thoughts about traveling, which he instills in a touristic

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93 See Christopher Howard’s article “Out of Practice: Foreign Travel as the Productive Disruption of Embodied Knowledge Schemes,” which from anthropological perspective, beautifully integrates phenomenological studies of Husserl and Heidegger and cognitive studies in understanding the “embodied practice and form of learning” (1) during the travels of Westerners into the Himalayan region of India and Nepal. He gives a few concrete examples that show us how an “idealised cognitive model” (Stockwell 33) of European travelers interfere with the local knowledge schemes. Using the concept of “light breaks” from Husserl he shows how embodied practice and form of learning help overcome these differences.

94 “Ich stehe stets gegen fünf Uhr auf und mache bis zum Frühstück eine ausgedehnte Wanderung durch die sich aufprallende Stadt. Wenn ich loslaufe, erscheint es mir unmöglich, aber ich schaffe es jedes Mal. Was ich dabei erfahre, hätte mir niemand zeigen oder erzählen können” (Schmidt 100)

95 While characterizing travel writings of the eighties, Biernat writes how “Viele Autoren bedienen sich des Tagebuchs” mentioning Drewitz and Hartmann in this list of authors. (Biernat 144)
discourse and his disappointment when reality meets his childhood memory of this country: “Indien war das Märchenland meiner Kindheit” (9). He tends to idealize some imagery to fit his own childhood memory, as seen when he encounters life in a village: “Gewiß, vom Standpunkt des zivilisationsmüden Europäers aus mag ich dazu neigen, das friedliche Dorflleben, wie sich’s mir darbot, zu idealisieren und in ein Bild äußerer Harmonie und Schönheit meine Sehnsüchte, die die Allgegenwart des Betons erzeugt hat, zu projizieren” (19), but he is well aware that it is his projection and not the reality, and that the “Verlockungen des Westens” is in fact driving the younger generation away from villages into cities for better prospects. Hartmann is also aware of what thwarts his “Verklärungsbereitschaft” (19), namely his European roots and upbringing that act as a barrier rather than his hegemonic privilege as seen in few previous works: “Klischees kann man belächeln. Aber was wissen wir sonst über die Grunderfahrungen der Menschen in der Dritten Welt? Und in welchem Maß versperrt meine Herkunft den Zugang zu ihnen?” (Hartmann 9-10). Quotations and text passages such as these (9, 19) show us Hartmann’s attempt to not take his European existence for granted while portraying the locals in India. This view can also be understood in light of the ambivalent relationship he shares with his native country, which further gets emphasized in India. For instance, he is often asked questions about his origin while he travels in India, and it is here that the deictic center is problematized:

This quotation marks only the tip of his realization and while Hartmann criticizes the local people’s lack of knowledge about his native country, he also questions his own understanding of his country. In further passages, Hartmann narrates about some fellow Swiss travelers (39) and contemplates the meaning of patriotism (50), takes a polemic stance against Swiss history, and acknowledges:

[…] kritische Historiker, die Schweizer Geschichte entrümpeln. Sie räumen mit unhaltbar gewordenen Legenden auf; sie holen Vergessenes und Verdrängtes ins Bewußtsein zurück; sie verlagern das Hauptgewicht ihrer Forschungen von der Kriegs- auf die Sozialgeschichte, und sie beleuchten auch die jüngste Vergangenheit mit solcher Schärfe, daß die dunklen Stellen sichtbar werden. (82)

For Hartmann, therefore, it is more about coming to terms with one’s own national identity rather than with the “Other.” He is skeptical of Switzerland’s image as “Das Wohlstandsparadies” (102) and calls himself “Der Nestbeschmutzer” (184).

It is perhaps this conflict in him that drives his focus and attention to understanding his own circumstances rather than exploring and writing about India. Furthermore, his writing is influenced from his journalistic outlook and his previous travel experiences in South America and Africa. Interestingly, earlier, he contemplates on the meaning of travel in the same template as Trojanow in his essay “Richtig Reisen,” “Reisen als Aufbruch. Zu Unvertrautem? Zu sich selbst? Die Sehnsucht, Grenzen zu sprengen (innere? äußere?) Unterwegs sein, wochenlang; sich nicht festlegen lassen (und die Schwierigkeit, sich nicht festlegen zu wollen)” (Hartmann 11). The usage of the same noun Aufbruch as also used by Trojanow in his essay implies a conscious move of developing into something new, of changing one’s earlier self in a formative sense. As noted, this journey is fruitful for Hartmann in shaping his national identity and expressing his
views, and debunking some of the myths about his own country. I see the non-preachy, non-descriptive style of narration in Hartmann’s work differently from some of the other works published in the eighties. Ironically though, he even debunks his own philosophical take on traveling when he says: “[…] ein Tourist aus der Schweiz. Was sind wir anderes?” (42). I posit that Hartmann wrongly identifies himself as a tourist and perhaps implied Reisender, in a nomadic sense, who travels, learns, and moves from one place to another. There are certainly some touristic traits: he mentions his camera and how he takes pictures of places and people, but his wandering soul is more that of a traveler than a tourist. The trip to India presents him an opportunity to introspect about his own national identity, thereby stressing the quality of “coming back a changed individual” as Trojanow explains.

5.2 Humor in Kristof Magnusson’s Tagebucheindrücke

Seven German and Indian authors took part from July to October 2006 in a unique writers-in-residence exchange program and published their diaries on the online portal provided by AKSHAR. These authors, nominated by Literaturhäuser (Germany) and Sahitya Akademy (Government funded literature academy in India) in collaboration with the Goethe Institutes in both these countries, traveled to seven German cities and Indian cities respectively and published their online diaries. Kristof Magnusson, who visited Pune, ("früher Poona") as he repeatedly reminds us in his diary every time, presented excerpts from his novel Zuhause (2005) and also read some of his diary entries (about which he also narrates in his diary entry the next day) in a reading session at the Max Mueller Bhavan, Pune (12). As a first year MA student then, I sat as

96 “Über die Internet-Tagebücher von AKSHAR sollen Portraits entstehen, die mittels subjektiver Eindrücke einen neuen Blick auf die Welt des jeweiligen Gegenübers eröffnen. Darüber hinaus will AKSHAR dazu beitragen, die literarischen Begegnungen zwischen Deutschland und Indien zu intensivieren” (1)
http://www.literaturhaus-hamburg.de/programm/veranstaltungen/2006-09-01/stadtschreiber-akshar-projekt
97 In India, Goethe Institutes are known as Max Mueller Bhavan.
one of the members of his audience at that time. During my Ph.D. years at Purdue, I again had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Magnusson and this time around had the opportunity to interview him as well as gained access to his diary, which was not retrievable online anymore. During my discussion with him, he talked about his stance as the reluctant traveler, especially to India, and about how the idea of poverty was romanticized in the travel narratives of Ingeborg Drewitz and Günter Grass. He mentions these aspects even in his diary entries, but I posit that he uses humor to bridge the gap between these cultures, an important aspect and literary device that hasn’t been used before while narrating about India, but that has been a signature characteristic in his own works.

His diary is reminiscent of earlier works: his reluctance to travel—“Ich mag Timmendorf, eigentlich bin ich gar nicht so der Travellertyp” (1)—or ticking his items on the travel checklist (“Impfpass,” “Moskitonetz,” “Notfallantibiotikum für Penicillinallergiker,” “Malarianotfallmedikament,”) and his anxiety about his luggage: “Was, wenn der Koffer das nicht schafft? Während ich im Zug nach Rostock darüber nachdenke, ertappe ich mich dabei, schon wieder mit den Beinen Thrombose-prohylaxeübungen zu machen. Dabei habe ich vor Thrombose eigentlich gar keine Angst. Ich bin ja schließlich kein Hypochonder. Ich bin einfach nur hysterisch,” (1) all remind us of a similar anxiety expressed by Felicitas Hoppe in her text “Fakire und Flötisten.” But Magnusson instills a light, humorous way of conveying his anxiety. In addition to this, he also mentions the literary works that he is taking along to prepare him for this journey: “der John-Irving-Roman, der in Bombay spielt, das jetzt Mumbai heißt; ein Buch von V.S. Naipaul” and mentions even one of his predecessors: “In Rostock ist gerade Hanse-Sail, in der Hotel-

98 Prof. Jen William (German) had invited Kristof Magnusson to Purdue and organized the reading of his play Sushi für alle in Spring 2014.
99 The Moskitonetz and the losing of her suitcase are elements that I discuss in detail in my second chapter on Hoppe.
Lobby läuft ein Fernseher ohne Ton, ich sehe einen deutschsprachigen Nobelpreisträger, der auch mal in Indien war. Bestimmt hat er wieder mal einen Preis gewonnen oder ein Bild gemalt, denke ich.” (1) However, the news is actually not so positive, as it turns out later: “Am Morgen nach der Lesung, im Taxi zum Rostocker Bahnhof, kommt es im Radio, ganz zu Beginn der Acht-Uhr-Nachrichten: ‘Der Literatur-Nobelpreisträger Günter Grass hat zugegeben, Mitglied der Waffen-SS gewesen zu sein.’ Ich lache laut auf.” (1)

Upon landing in Mumbai, this “sicherheitsbesessener Europäer” (3,7) does everything possible to not appear like one: “In fremden Ländern ist es immer wichtig, so zu tun, als wüsste man genau, wo man hinwill” (2), yet every time he wants to take control, he writes, “Meine Brille beschlägt” (3), suggesting the blurry sense one has as an outsider about the nature of certain things in the place he is traveling. This personification thus can be seen as an existent reality of a traveler vis-à-vis the place he is traveling to. It can further be understood as an openness of the traveler to experience the unknown, rather than taking control of situations and circumstances or presuming to have a clear and better understanding of the other culture. Magnusson also uses the adjective “sicherheitsbesessen” to describe a commonly underlying characteristic of Europeans, but he asserts this quality as one to aspire toward and also questions it in a sarcastic, humorous way. In one such instance he narrates about his flight timing in order to ensure that he reaches the airport well in advance, highlighting his anxiousness for the lax sense of time that Indians have and how these two cultures share different time perceptions. The other instance is when an acquaintance he makes offers him to take him from one destination to the other: “Erst als wir auf der Straße stehen, wird mir bewusst, dass ‘mitfahren’, ‘vorbeifahren’ Motorrad bedeutet. Ich bin noch nie Motorrad gefahren, da ich auch in Deutschland ein sicherheitsbesessener Europäer bin” (7). He is able to see the city in a different light because of
this, and he admits: “Ich denke nur noch gelegentlich an Schädelbrüche und
Querschnittslähmungen, denn eigentlich macht Motorradfahren echt Spaß. Ich freue mich, dass
Vikram mir Pune zeigt, dass früher einmal Poona hieß” (8).

The question about how he should travel plagues him at different stages of his stay, as he
plays different roles: as an author and speaker, guest of honor in departmental functions, explorer
and so forth. Like Hartmann, Magnusson also talks of the clichés, but he never comes forth as a
tourist. The usual scenes of poverty are also bypassed quickly without lingering on the depiction
of the “Third World” country:

Die Indienklischees stimmen schon irgendwie. Niemand wird aus Indien wiederkehren
und sagen: Da ist es gar nicht so voll und Rikschas gibt’s da auch nicht. Das
Faszinierende ist, dass diese Klischees überhaupt nichts zu bedeuten scheinen, auch nicht
ansatzweise in der Lage sind, irgendwas über dieses Land zu sagen, geschweige denn,
einen auf die Erfahrungen vorzubereiten, die einen hier erwarten. Fotografieren kann man
das alles auch nicht, ein Glück, dass ich keine Kamera mitgenommen habe. Beschreiben
eigentlich auch nicht, doch, vielleicht beschreiben. (4)

Here he breaks the stereotypes and asserts that they might or might not help one to prepare for
the journey. In a way he looks at these clichés as mental baggage, and doesn’t necessarily see the
relevance of carrying this baggage, especially in a place like India, where it is hard to paint one
homogenous picture. Thus, although he may have been pre-conditioned for this travel, he neither
promotes it nor disregards it. While his previous travels pertained to the European continent, in
India the cultural shock is too deep: “Die Frage, ob ich Stockholm – oder gar Schweden -- damit
gerecht wurde, ob ich richtig reiste, stellte sich mir dabei kein einziges Mal. Hier in Indien geht
sie mir dauernd durch den Kopf: - Wage ich genug? – Mache ich die richtigen Erfahrungen, um
Indien nach dieser Reise besser zu verstehen?” (9) These questions that Magnusson asks fall in line with Trojanow’s crux of the essay “Richtig Reisen.” It is this consciousness and awareness about the surroundings and himself that also help Magnusson further to devise some ways to overcome these issues: “Es ist einfach nicht kleinzukriegen, das Gefühl, dass die gewohnten Verständnis-mechanismen nicht greifen, was sich bei mir absurderweise mit der Hoffnung mischt, man müsste nur das Richtige tun, zur richtigen Zeit durch die richtige Straße richtig laufen und alles wurde klar.” (9) This advice seems simple in theory but even he finds it challenging to bring it into practice, especially due to the ambivalence and paradox present in the Indian society. As a parting thought, he sums up his struggle: “Ich wollte verlässliche Regeln, die Herausforderung Indien in kleine kontrollierbare Einheiten aufspalten” (13). Here the author demonstrates the cognitive process of categorizing things in order to understand how they work, of coming to terms with the conflicting “idealised cognitive models” (Stockwell 33), which is a recurring experience of contemporary travelers. Magnusson even tries settling this conflict:


Oh you can say whatever comes out of your mouth. (13)

However, his efforts are rendered useless by this last statement and confuse the author further.\(^{100}\)

He seems to rely on his instinct to do the right thing at the right time, as he writes earlier, in

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\(^{100}\) I have purposely used Bombay and Mumbai both depending on the text and what the respective authors use. One must note, however, that as of 2006 it was still a new change to adapt to since the names of the metropolitan cites were changed according to the vernacular languages in 2000-2001. Today it may seem politically incorrect to use the colonial names, and yet one still finds exceptions.
order to deal with the daily circumstances in India. His diary exposes the very fundamental changes one makes while traveling in a new country and uses humor to ease the irritation of not knowing and understanding everything that he encounters. This unique feature in Magnusson’s diary is very refreshing and has not been explored by other authors to that extent. In this way it provides a new model as to how one can travel and write about India in today’s day and age.

5.3 Trojanow’s Tribute to The Ganges in *An Den Inneren Ufern Indiens*

Unlike the fictional world of *Der Weltensammler*, Trojanow presents a travelogue that traces his personal journey from the source of the river Ganga to its confluence in the Bay of Bengal in *An den inneren Ufern Indiens*. I call this journey Trojanow’s tribute to the Ganga, since he takes on a popular and known pilgrimage route for many Hindus, but delves into discovering the history of Ganga, its changing nature and form, its current relevance to the locals and finally depicts a pan-India picture of changing geographies and with it the nature of the locals. What is even more commendable is his adherence to all the three travel commandments published in his essay, as I have mentioned earlier, and despite having lived in India for a longer duration and experiencing this culture closely, he manages to be amused and falls short of becoming overly judgmental or cynical, a trait that long has been characteristic of colonial ways of travel writing. In fact, in one of his interviews about this travelogue, he openly admits to not falling into this trap of the western mode of travel writing that was influenced by imperialism and colonialism:

Ich glaube, dass die übliche Reiseerzählung eines westlichen Autors aus zwei Sachen besteht: aus einem überragenden Ich, und aus einer Besserwisserei der Welt gegenüber. Und ich habe versucht, mich beider Sachen (…) zu enthalten, also das Ich möglichst zu reduzieren, also meine eigene Befindlichkeit nicht im Mittelpunkt stehen zu lassen, und
Gokhale contradicts Trojanow’s prescriptive take on travel writing and identifies his narrative style with the western tradition of travel writing. She is inclined to analyze his subjectivity rather than the factual information he presents in the text. She bases her criticism on Vincent Crapanzo’s article “Hermes’ Dilemma. The Masking of Subversion in Ethnographic description” in which he claims, “The ethnographer’s place in his text is purely rhetorical. It is deictically, or better perhaps pseudo-deictically, constructed. It is impossible to fix his vantage point. His is a roving perspective, necessitated by his ‘totalistic’ presentation of the events he is describing” (53). On the contrary, Christina Kraenzle attributes Trojanow’s transnational lifestyle and
extensive travel experience to his “[…] awareness of the asymmetrical knowledge-power-relationship that Pratt and others have located as a generic staple, along with his desire to overcome it” (131) and analyzes the literary devices and strategies in his work that allow him to steer away from a colonial portrayal. I argue that this awareness enables Trojanow to create a narrative style that is both different from the colonial mode of portrayal, and also resembling it at times. Trojanow incorporates his curiosity and his basic understanding of Indians and their value systems and world-view in creating a layered narrative with deictic shifts that is both intriguing as well as presumptuous.

In many ways, Trojanow’s travelogue is reminiscent of works by Stefan Zweig and Josef Winkler on Varansi and the cremation sites. Indian readers will be glad not to find the same fascination and engagement with the Hindu rituals of cremation after death that these two authors do so extensively in their books. While Trojanow’s book mentions these aspects, it doesn’t linger on them and offers readers a variety of themes that are relevant in contemporary India. Published in 2003 initially, the book maps the journey that Trojanow undertakes with his friend Pac, along the course of the river Ganga, starting at Haridwar to its convergence in Kalkutta in the Bay of Bengal. Thus Trojanow travels more than 1800 km, capturing the essence of Ganga and its significance to the Indian civilization. He structures his book in mainly three parts, with subchapters headed by different titles. The first part focuses on his journey in the Himalayas; the second part stresses the ecological effects associated with the river’s changing course and unpredictability; and the third part concentrates on his interactions with the native people of Bihar and Calcutta, where his journey concludes. As mentioned before, Trojanow makes this journey by using various means of transportation. In the first part, he takes a boat journey on the river, then as a true pilgrim he resorts to “Padayatra,” where he travels in small parts on foot and
then mostly with local means of transport like bus and trains. Consequently, he explores these various forms of traveling, which expand the horizons of his experiences. It is perhaps this very nature of Trojanow that seeps into his writing and distinguishes it from the earlier writers who took the role of an observer and wrote about their impressions. In this travelogue, the readers get a wider scope, since he not only portrays his interactions with the locals, but describes how his female companion also plays a part in understanding how the female, foreign traveler is perceived by the locals, especially by Indian men.

The book is narrated in first person and mythological, historical stories of India are interlaced in the narrative. This inclusion of tales that are quite familiar in India give non-Indian readers an insight into the significance and sacredness attached to the river Ganga in Indian scriptures. Although Trojanow does take some liberty while narrating these stories, he relies on them as a narrative strategy to give readers a background of Ganga’s descent and to use it in contrast with the portrayal of contemporary Indian people, who seem to have forgotten the role this river plays not just in spiritual comfort, but also in economics. Apart from relating these tales, he also plays a role of the well-informed narrator, not just a mere tourist but a narrator who is prepared for the journey and is well aware about the political scenario in that particular place. The opening line of the chapter “Ausgang Dunkelheit” proves his insider knowledge, when he writes, “Der Hauptbahnhof von Patna war hell erleuchtet, die Infotafeln schimmerten bläulich, als wollten sie mit ihrer eleganten Leuchtkraft alle düsteren Vorurteile über Bihar ins Unrecht setzen” (136). This quotation by the narrator blurs the line of a traveler and a native, because only a person who is well aware of the notoriously corrupt situation in Patna (the capital of Bihar) can write so convincingly about its perception in the rest of India. Most readers will tend to rely on this narration and also base their own beliefs about this aspect of India on these remarks. It is
this narrative style that Trojanow uses to depict the entire spectrum of Ganga from Haridwar to Patna and Kalkutta, and also highlights how the meaning of this river changes with each place.

The riverbanks of Ganga are considered the most fertile areas in India and the sediments it carries through the snow-clad mountains of the Himalayas are considered to have healing powers. Taking a dip in the waters of Ganga is a metaphor for relieving oneself from sins. From the descriptions in Haridwar and Rishikesh, where people line up to take a dip in the water to the river’s course through Varanasi and later the industrial belt of Mirzapur, Kanpur and Patna, in which the river in turn takes in the sins of industrial waste: Trojanow shows the different course and connotation Ganga adopts. The imagery that he devises at the very beginning of the text portrays the birth of two lambs, when a shepherd dips the “Mutterleib” (7) of the sheep in the water and no sooner does she touch the ground than she delivers two lambs: “Die Geburt erscheint so selbstverständlich wie das Brummen einer Fliege, wie die Hornhaut auf der Ferse des Fisches. Sie hinterläßt nur ein Stück Nabelschnur auf dem hellbraunen Sand und die Erinnerung an die Entnabelung” (7). The opening scene captures the holy, sacred and comforting image of river Ganga, whose own descent on the earth according to the mythological tale wasn’t as easy. Trojanow portrays this contrastingly: “Nicht alles kommt so leise zur Welt” (7). Similarly, he also refers to the dynamic nature of this river, its violent and turbulent flow when it floods causing a lot of devastation during monsoons or as a result of cloudbursts. The story of Padaman Singh, the shop owner on the banks of river Ganga in Gangotri, depicts his struggle to reconstruct another shop after the floods swallow his first shop (23).

During his journey from one place to another, Trojanow illustrates different classes and perspectives of people within these small towns through his interactions with them. Thus the readers understand the pulse of the local people, what drives them, what are their dreams and
aspirations, as well as their struggles and failures in life. These small-town folks have limited knowledge of the world, but still possess an opinion on global warming. Ram Pratap, for instance, proposes the idea of Kaliyug or the dark age for global warming and sees a change coming, “erst wenn der Kosmos völlig verschmutzt und aus dem Gleichgewicht geraten sei, werde der Kreislauf der Veränderung zu einer neuen Runde aufbrechen” (11). To Trojanow with his European upbringing, these thoughts seem naïve, almost like blind faith in something that is incomprehensible, which stems from ignorance. In the same way, he is intrigued by the Nepali boy who carries tons of water from Ganga to transport it to Hindus all around the world, so that they can still get their share of the holy water without having to visit there, or Manu, who is born in that region and works as a Sherpa carrying luggage, but displays “eine gewisse Entfremdung” (13) since he wears fashionable leather jacket and works as a Sherpa, depicting a hybrid culture. Thus even these small towns display the blending of western and native culture, which is very much evident in the bigger, metropolitan cities of India to which Trojanow has been exposed already.

In reading his interactions with the locals, the readers are reminded of his European or outsider image from time to time. He doesn’t shy away from depicting the double standards of Indians when they exploit foreigners by charging them more money than native travelers. More than once Trojanow mentions of being charged more than double for something that is half the price for Indian consumers. His skin color distinguishes him and works both ways, sometimes in his favor, and on other occasions to his disadvantage. He also brings to light the role of consumerism and capitalism in places of worship, where every small thing is charged for in the name of worship. In Varanasi, for instance, he writes in great detail about the cremation ritual and the Dom community that performs this ritual on the banks of the river, but doesn’t fail to
mention that even death has become a business here. There is a network of people, Muslim weavers, who weave the “Handwebstühlen” (124) used to carry the corpse to the ritual site, and the Dom community. Again the dichotomy strikes him twofold: the involvement of the Muslim community in the cremation ritual of Hindus. Secondly, the city that celebrates death also provides life and livelihood to many, as he writes, “Etwa Dreiviertel der Bevölkerung soll sich von der Pilger- und Tourismusindustrie ernähren. Das Leben dominiert auf allen Ebenen über den Tod“ (124). Thus the syncretic society works together for commercial benefits. Kraenzle cites another example of syncreticism from Trojanow’s last day at the Kumbha Mela, where “he encounters Sadhus listening to qawwali, the music of Sufi Muslims” (Kraenzle 135) and calls it his attempt to defy the western tradition of writing: “Through such examples, Trojanow historicizes transnationalism and cosmopolitanism, and also questions the tendency to see them as a primarily contemporary or Western phenomenon” (136).

It is also in this city that he notices the voyeuristic gaze of men, when Pac is confronted by a man who meditates one moment and tells her of his singlehood in the next. He discusses this aspect in men quite strongly when he writes, “Die Zudringlichkeit der Männer in Indien ist – wie Ausländerinnen und Inderinnen einmütig bestätigen – vulgär und beleidigend” (133). He calls it the suppressed form of sexuality, which shows its consequences on the outside, and is controlled or limited in private spheres. He criticizes this mentality and has a cynical tone while comparing the female gender with the river Ganga, which is addressed as Goddess Ganga and is female in nature as opposed to the term “Fluss” in German with its masculine gender:

Die heilige Mutter, sei es die eigene oder Ganga Mataji, und die Opfer der eignenen Lust und Gier, seien es unbegleitete Frauen oder ungeschützte Flüsse, gehören verschiedenen
Welten an. Die eigene Schwester wird nicht alleine auf die Straße gelassen, und wenn, dann züchtig verschleiert, doch die Schwestern anderer Männer sind Freiwild. (133)

Trojanow’s rage is evident here and although he criticizes this characteristic in some men, he doesn’t generalize it to all Indian men. He is courageous enough to look beyond what is obvious and state it without any hesitation, since he possesses some knowledge about this country due to his residence here. Moreover, he limits this observation to Varanasi, when he writes that this place is a “Paradies für Frauenbelästiger” (133). It is also clear that by associating the river Ganga with the women, he draws attention to the fact that despite Ganga being termed as the ‘holy mother,’ she has been treated with the neglect and a lax attitude of many who keep polluting this river, which they also call the lifeline of India. By comparing the two attitudes of the locals toward the river, Trojanow urges people to look inside and get rid of this “Schizophrenie” (133), as he calls it, which has seeped in even in matters of religious beliefs, resulting in fanatical consequences. Thus Trojanow creates a multiple layered narrative by depicting not only the ambivalent nature within Indian society with regard to the dynamics between men and women, people and nature, but also between the various classes and religions across India. While the beginning of the book gives us some positive stories about locals who are still willing to fight for a better India, who are aware of the polluted Ganga and the environment issues, like Gopal Sutwala, who “hat eine Vision eines blühenden Kanpurs, aber er führt einen einsamen Kampf” (88), these examples are sparse and few. The third part of the book also focuses more on his interactions with people from Patna and Kalkutta, who are less friendly in their encounters with him. His hours long wait in vain for the boatman who promises to take them to Kalkutta on his boat from Patna enrages him. It is in this instance that he feels betrayed, since the boatman doesn’t keep his promise, nor do other people tell him that the boat rides from
Patna to Kalkutta are hindered by Naxalites (Maoist revolutionaries in India) and hence no boats travel that direction (180-81). Trojanow aptly names this chapter “Ohne Aussicht auf Bengalen.” A similar fate awaits him in Kalkutta, when his pleas for getting information on the water supply of the city are continuously rejected. Here the locals are not only unfriendly but also unwilling to share any information with him. He reflects on this struggle of one against many in a cynical tone towards the end when he reflects on this situation in Kalkutta, after the engineer explains about all the infrastructural measures that are being taken:

Nichtsdestotrotz habe man die Wasserversorgung der Stadt im Griff, aber ich, der ich den gesamten Fluß hinabgereist sei, könne mir bestimmt vorstellen, was es bedeute, wenn eine der größten Städte der Welt in ihrem Überleben völlig abhängig sei von einem launischen und mißhandelten Fluß wie dem Ganges. (186)

After having travelled the entire stretch of the river, Trojanow comes across as someone who has mastered the nature of this river and the way it is treated by the native people as well as authorities, and he comments like an expert on the subject. He doesn’t leave any stone unturned in depicting Ganga and its meaning in Indian life. He touches upon its holy aspect, writes about its polluted river course, also explains the works of many like Professor Sinha who play a vital role in keeping the river clean, and saving the dolphins, which are an integral part of this river (143). As a matter of fact, he is impressed with Professor Sinha’s work to such an extent that he also comes up with a tagline in Hindi for saving these dolphins, which he compares with the holy cow. Trojanow also translates this tagline in German for his readers: “Der Delphin ist ihre Kuh und Ganga ist unsere Mutter. Der Delphin ist ihre Blume. Ihn zu töten ist falsch” (144), and then resorts to, “Wir unterstreichen auf diese Weise ein traditionelles, kulturelles Tabu” (145). This
sentence clarifies Trojanow’s mastery of religious and cultural symbolism in India and how it affects the locals.

The third part of the book highlights the lethargy and poor work ethics of the locals. The part on Bihar particularly is always described with the motive of light versus darkness or “Licht” and “Dunkelheit.” His skeptical tone while describing the Bihar, where once Buddha attained enlightenment about its current apathetic condition of terror and crime leading only to darkness, makes the gravity of the situation understandable. In these passages his narrative perspective takes on the role of a reflective commentator, who knows better and is in a privileged position to understand the realities of India. It is in these passages that he resonates with some of the earlier western discourse and where I see his original narrative style faltering and engaging in the imperialist mode of writing.

Trojanow thus creates a narrative that portrays a wide spectrum of not only the nature and course of the river, but also of the locals that bridge thinking individuals and environmentalists working towards a better and clean Ganga, and consequently, a better India. As a traveler he gives the impression of a well-read and well-informed traveler who not only has a fairly good knowledge of the Indian deities, customs and traditions, but who also taps into the cultural nuances and the changing nature of core Indian values giving the readers a glimpse into the contemporary Indian society. In the last section of the book, his interactions with hostile locals compel him to engage in a critical and disillusioned tone when he writes about the future of India. Thus he repeats some of the writing traits of other German authors who have expressed similar views with respect to their experiences about India. Perhaps the only point of contention that separates this author from the others is the length to which he goes to depict the variety
contained in this country. Despite his skepticism for the future of this country, he is intrigued by this uncertainty. As his departing observation, he writes,

Dichte Wolken türmten sich wie Schaumberge am Horizont, als sei die Sonne mit einem Bauchklatscher ins Meer gefallen. Bald waren die Wellen nicht mehr zu sehen. Wir hörten, wie sie sich in der Brandung überschlugen und dann verstummten, wie Ganga aufgegangen in einer weiteren Unermeßlichkeit. (192)

Here he depicts the convergence point of Ganga in the Bay of Bengal and it is ironic that his final comments on the river are concluded in the chapter titled, “Abschied ohne Ende.” Thus Trojanow keeps his interest in the dichotomy intact until the very end of his narration, as well as keeps it alive in his narrative style. It is perhaps this nature of the river that motivates him to dedicate an entire book on it.
CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

My analysis of German travel narratives from the 1980s to the present has shown the wide range of travel tropes into which German authors delve and signify their authorial position in these works. While the intersection of the target and source cultures is inevitable and is also indispensable to the travel genre, it is the formation of newer identities, a deeper understanding of the existent identities, and the enhancement of intercultural understanding that makes this a fascinating as well as a dynamic genre.

Language is pivotal in describing, depicting, and representing the “Other.” The concepts from the cognitive scientific approach help us to look at language in a way that is, on the one hand, very close to human perception, but capable of creating complex conceptions on the other hand. Thus we see how metaphors used by different authors to describe the same city of Mumbai shows us how the authors subconsciously perceive this city and describe it in their own distinct manner through language. Whereas Schmidt uses metaphors of fluidity (Waschküche and Wechselbad) to describe the vibrant and dynamic nature of the city, Herbst uses the metaphor of western musical rhapsody to define its polyphonic nature. Drewitz, on the other hand, uses metaphors of sickness (Geschwüren) to describe the slum-ridden city. While the city gets these different identities, the metaphors also reveal what the authors/narrators consciously focus and write about. Similarly, we also get a sense of how narrators conceptualize their spatiality in the foreign space by using the container metaphor. For instance, Schmidt talks of landing in the Waschküche that is Bombay, conceptualizing a containment within the borders of the city to express her constrictedness, her contained self in the foreign space, while also highlighting the time of her arrival in the city during the heavy rains of a monsoon. A similar example can be seen in Drewitz’s text when she talks of a Nirgendort in the middle of the city conceptualizing a
contained space within the city that may not need any definition. I have argued that she repeats this metaphor when the narrator is overwhelmed by her surroundings or is at a loss for words to distinguish one place from the other. This metaphor not only displays her need to conceptualize borders within the city limits, which in itself constitutes a container metaphor, but they also highlight her embodied experience of a restricted existence in the foreign space. Further references about this embodied experience are expressed in words such as *Enge* and *Gewimmel* (Drewitz 15) as well as through descriptions of experiencing the poverty through all her senses: “Doch das Elend unmittelbar zu sehen, zu riechen, zu fühlen, übersteigt die Phantasie” (Drewitz 27). This experience is similar to what the Grass couple also goes through: “Utes Ekel vor allem, was sie anfassen, riechen muss. Sie duscht lange. Ich sitze in meinem Schweiß, trinke abgekochtes Eiswasser, rauche ein Zigarillo” (Grass 31). Thus the language used here displays to what extent the senses also play a role in experiencing the “Other.”

The other important aspect from cognitive poetics, that of the deictic center and the realization of the same, can help the readers understand the object of description. The deictic center reinforces the author’s position vis-à-vis the object of the text. Thus the spatial deictic indicator when Grass dreams of his “nördliche Heimat” as he sits in his home in India or when Drewitz talks about encountering the “südliche Elend” clarifies the Euro-centric roots of the authors. Spatial deixis can further affect how the conscious narrator perceives himself as seen in Stadler’s case, where from the Indian context he is able to view his own language and then reflect on the meaning derived from it when he discusses the BSE affected cows.

The presence of conceptual metaphors, and particularly conceptual blends in the texts by Hoppe, Schmidt, and Trojanow show their ability to merge identities and create new imagery, like the bed of nails in Hoppe’s suitcase or building a new framework in Schmidt’s text.
Trojanow’s text also unearths the questions of older identities, and merging of new ones, a fundamental existential question that arises as a result of traveling. My analysis of the blends helps to navigate these dense texts as in the case of Hoppe’s text *Fakire und Flötisten*, making them more accessible to readers.

The vast array of literary forms analyzed in my third chapter shows the varied narrator perspectives. The analysis of these perspectives through the concepts of cognitive poetics throws light on some of the basic qualities at work in confronting different cultures. With concepts such as spatial deixis, mental schemas, and the idealized cognitive model, I show how identifying these basic concepts helps in understanding the intention of the narrator, and his conflict with the target culture and how he expresses this in language. Furthermore, the narrative perspectives also reveal the connection between the narrative style and the perspective chosen by the author. As some of the texts illustrate, a multiple narrative perspective in Herbst’s text “Bombay Rhapsodie” corresponds with the material he chooses, portraying a multidimensional city of Mumbai. Through my analyses of these, I have proven how the author’s choice of the narrative perspective is a deeply rooted cognitive process. Trojanow’s text about Ganga shows this aptly, since he consciously chooses to steer away from traditional narrative styles and instead concentrates on the river metaphor, changing his course from time to time and eliding a linear narrative.

My last chapter focuses on a burning issue that travel writing and travel literature faces in today’s time: how does one travel and write about it in this day and age. In her book *Travel narratives and the ends of modernity* (2014), Stacey Burton stresses on what stance travel writing should take, rather than focusing on the form of the travel book. In her chapter titled, “The Privilege-and Problem-of Narrative Authority,” she articulates how the conventional
traveler, thought out as a Westerner, deems it his prerogative to describe foreign people and surrounding with authority is changing with times (19). Today not only the imperialist narrative style (Said, Pratt) is being questioned, but even ways and modes of traveling are being revised as seen in the essay “Richtig Reisen” by Ilija Trojanow. It is in fact due to the rise in cosmopolitan citizens like Ilija Trojanow, V.S. Naipaul, Pico Iyer, who live in different countries and cultures, who do not adhere to one country or culture and who write about these experiences that one can break the conventional form of travel writing and representing. This situation calls for newer narrative stances as suggested by Burton and exemplified in the works of Hartmann, Magnusson and Trojanow in my fourth chapter. This draws attention to how travel narratives are changing and adapting in interesting ways with the changing times. My analysis of these texts with the cognitive approach further illustrates the need to incorporate new methodologies for understanding travel narratives as well how this approach contributes to creating new ways of seeing travel literature.

Travel writing has been closely associated with ideological discourses, be it post-colonialism or gender discourse or others, and has proven time and again that there will always be newly emerging ways of experiencing the “Other” and writing about it. My analyses from the perspective of cognitive-literary studies have added another dimension to the study of this genre, which had gone largely unnoticed in scholarship on this genre so far. With my close reading and concrete textual examples, I have demonstrated how some of the most basic elements in intercultural encounters are driven cognitively. Cognitive literary studies gives us a basis to understand how our minds even categorize concepts of differences and how previous knowledge influences the formation of prejudices and stereotypes. Furthermore, it looks at the fascinating work of our minds in creating metaphorical language in conceptualizations of spatiality,
existence, and blending identities. I view the contribution of cognitive studies to be enormous in studying the intercultural dynamics present in travel literature. It opens avenues to understanding some basic cognitive concepts and conditioning to advanced cognitive functions that enable us to access complex literary language that enriches literary interpretation.

As we move forward with new kinds of mobility and a world where transnational identities become a norm than an exception, I intend to explore how these change the narrative expression of travel and literature of movement. I have already shown the range of literary forms associated with this genre, but now we wait to see what challenges this genre faces next. I would particularly like to expand my studies on metaphors, especially, those pertaining to borders. Another area of interest is to explore embodied experiences as depicted in travel literature, since these are often conceptualized in terms of metaphors. Last, but not the least, a comparative study of Anglo-American travel narratives and German narratives would make for a uniquely engaging study.
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