Baumgartner's Bombay: Postcolonialism and Postmemory[1]

By Linda Weinhouse

A Passage to India

In *Baumgartner's Bombay* (1988), by Indian novelist Anita Desai, a Jewish refugee (Hugo Baumgartner) flees Nazi persecution in Germany in l937 and finds himself embroiled in the sectarian violence in India following Partition. Through flashbacks, we are told of the childhood of the eponymous hero who grows up in Weimar Berlin where his father's once flourishing furniture business is ransacked by the Nazis. His father, after being imprisoned briefly in Dachau, commits suicide, his mother sells the business, and her son Hugo sets off for Calcutta where they have business connections. But she refuses to accompany him, and he will never see her again. In India, the British imprison Hugo Baumgartner in an internment camp as an enemy alien alongside German Nazi sympathizers. Thus, Baumgartner is ostracized both in Hitler's Germany and in India where he is considered a "firanghi," a foreigner. After the war, his only remaining companions are his cats and another lonely expatriate named Lotte. Baumgartner is murdered at the end of the novel by a blond German hippie who robs him in order to support his drug habit. This essay shows the ways in which Anita Desai connects two pivotal experiences: her encounter with an Austrian Jew on the streets of Bombay and with the letters he left behind1 and her memory of a photograph of her non-Jewish mother leaving Germany for India to join her Bengali husband a decade before the war. Desai uses these two disparate memories, her knowledge of the history of Germany's Jews, and the stories her mother told her about Germany and the fate of those Germans to show the ways in which Germans and Jews are inextricably linked by nationality and history and explores the postcolonial ramifications of that history for an understanding of pluralism in India's multicultural society as well as for the outsider status of the "jew." (In this work, by "jew" we mean the cultural construction of a figure as distince from real Jews. Such a construct tells us about the perception of the alien, who always plays a vital role in the formation of nationhood, and it reflects shifts in identity in the host.)

Much has been said about Baumgartner as a figure of universal isolation,[2] and Desai has confirmed that this is the reason she made her central protagonist Jewish:

> Yes. I began with this character who wandered about on the streets of Bombay and started building up a story around him. The trouble with that story was that it was too localized, particular to a place and time which meant something to me, but I couldn't see that it would mean anything to the readers of this book. So I had to find a way to generalize his isolation and one way of doing it was to make him a Jew.[3]

Desai describes how she met an Austrian Jew in Bombay who left a packet of letters when he died, which his friend brought to her. She found that they were just affectionate little unimportant notes, but later she realized that these letters carried the number of a concentration camp inmate. In the novel, Desai describes Lotte fleeing from the "blood-spattered scene" of Hugo Baumgartner's murder clutching postcards found in his room covered by faint writing that forms a "skein or web on the yellowed paper" all dated from thirty-nine, forty, and forty-one. These letters contain censored words of reassurance, "Sugary, treacly, warm, oozing love, childhood love, little mice and bunny rabbits of love—sweet, warm, choking, childish love."[4] These letters turn out to have been sent by Hugo's mother when she was incarcerated in a concentration camp in Germany.

Yet, at the same time, Desai has repeated more than once that the novel also originated in her own family history. Paradoxically, according to Desai, her encounter with a slovenly Austrian Jew on the streets of Bombay (and his cats) in addition to the letters he

left behind provided her with the key she needed in order to fulfill her desire to fictionalize her own Germanic background and her German mother. The figure of the "Jew" in Desai's novel is linked with the figure of the German as a Janus-headed figure. The widespread overvaluation of Baumgartner's ethnicity as a marker for the outsider tends to obscure the fact that Baumgartner is not the only European, the only German, or even the only German Jew in the novel. And Baumgartner's choice of isolation, his determination to eschew other Jews and other Germans, rather than being indicative of the eternal nature of the Jewish outsider, represents his attempt to shed his identification with Europe and Germany and to deal with his survivor guilt in the aftermath of the European Holocaust that destroyed his family, as well as the Germany he once knew and to which he can never return. In particular, Desai imagines the memories of her German mother's generation in order to exorcise the racist demons of Germany's past and mourn the future, which the German Jewish experience presages for pluralistic India.

Postmemory and Multiculturalism

In *Baumgartner's Bombay* Desai postulates a German-Jewish symbiosis and then recasts it in a text that probes the limits of memory and the act of writing in the aftermath of exile and war. Using the letters of the Austrian Jew in India and a photograph and the stories of her German mother, Anita Desai creates what Marianne Hirsch describes as a "postmemory" of the trauma of isolation, disruption, and war.[5] According to Marianne Hirsch the study of the genocides and catastrophes at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first and their aftermath requires new methods, in which we often find,

> the language of family can literally reactivate and reembody a "culturally/archival" image....This "adoption" of public anonymous images into the family photo album finds its counterpart in the pervasive use of private familial images and objects in institutions of public display—museums and memorials...[6]

Desai uses the concentration camp letters and her mother's photograph to activate and embody the historical events in her novel. According to Hirsch, the most powerful image in the aftermath of the Second World War is that of the "lost mother and her recovery,"[7] and at the genesis of *Baumgartner's Bombay* lies a maternal trope. Desai has stated that the inspiration for Hugo Baumgartner's journey to India came from a very early childhood memory of a gray sepia photo of her mother on her way to India from Europe, a full decade before Hugo's fictional departure from Venice, standing in the Piazza St. Marco in a soft November drizzle.[8] When questioned, she has admitted that her mother had actually left Europe from Marseille.[9] In fact, any boats leaving Italy for India in the final years before the war would have left from Trieste, not from Venice.[10] Desai admits that she altered the memory of her mother's departure from Germany in the belief that "our parents' memories are always part of who we are."[11] Baumgartner was the vehicle through which Desai was able to recreate the "strange lives" and "strange histories" of her German mother and her large circle of German friends in India about whom, she says, she could not write directly for "they were too personal, they were too close to me—they were the aunties and uncles of my childhood."[12] Indeed, in an interview with Corinne Demas Bliss in Amherst in 1988 following the British publication of *Baumgartner's Bombay*, Desai expressed her view that the Europeans in India were "strangely eccentric, obviously outsiders."[13]

> I began to think a great deal about it and felt the need to supply them with a history, so I invented a history for this figure whom I had seen but not known. In doing that I was able to use all my mother's memories of prewar Germany which had been told me as a child. It used to be our bedtime story....So I was able to put into the book and use

> the German language again, which gave me a wonderful feeling of liberating a part of my mind, of myself, which I had to keep silenced for all those years.[14]

Moreover, as Hirsch notes, pictorial images in particular can both perpetuate and revise existing hegemonic codes.[15] The photograph of Toni Niame Desai caught her on the grand tour before she joined her Bengali husband in 1927 in India, where she learned to wear a sari, cook Indian food, and speak Bengali at a time when it was not "comfortable" to have a European wife.[16] The war brought increased hostility toward Europeans in India from the British and "Mrs. Desai was aware that her nationality was against her."[17] Later Desai learned that during the war her older brother and sister asked their mother never to wear dresses or speak to them in German in the street, and though she was only eight, she does remember the look of sadness and intense relief on her mother's face when the war ended. Desai confesses, "I don't think any of us in the family were able to give her the sort of support she needed. Perhaps only other Germans in her circle of friends could have done that."[18]

Baumgartner's imprisonment in an internment camp is perhaps the most compelling example in the novel of his outsider status. However, Desai had very little information regarding the internment camps in India. As she has said in an interview with Lalita Pandit, "All I had to go on was the material about the detention camps in the West..."[19] The major literary source available to Desai was Heinrich Harrar's *Seven Years in Tibet* (1953), the first two chapters of which are devoted to his confinement and escape from one of these camps.[20] In the first chapters Harrar relates his internment and escape from the camp to Tibet, but never mentions Jews. Likewise, Hans Kopp in *Himalaya Shuttlecock* (London: Hutchinson, 1957) does not mention any Jews in his account of the British internment camp not far from Dehra Dun. Desai downplayed the brutality of the English military administration, the camp's ethnic diversity, and Harrar's many references to Indian guards in the camp, all in order to create an ahistorical environment which would enable Baumgartner "to escape the notice of history."[21] It seems that Desai is creating a postmemory of a world divided into Jews and Germans. This creates for Baumgartner a polarization of history, and Desai's concern is always for how that history might affect the hybridity and plurality that characterizes India.

Drawing on the bedtime stories of her German mother about which she had long kept silent, Desai painstakingly develops Hugo's German childhood through German language nursery poems and references to canonical German texts; she evokes Jewish life in Germany during the Weimar years and creates an imagined German-Jewish childhood for Hugo Baumgartner as a son of successful, assimilated, emancipated, bourgeois Jews who had many reasons to be complacent about their future until 1933. As the historian Peter Pulzer writes, Jewish leaders and citizens during the Weimar years thought they were experienced in dealing with the adversities of diaspora existence; there was no precedence for the Nazi plan for the extermination of the Jews.[22] Historians have recounted the progression of the relationship between Germans and Jews, which rather than leading relentlessly toward the Holocaust, followed a pattern from the eighteenth century onward as Jews were gradually integrated into German society despite scapegoating of foreigners.[23] Through authentic German children's songs, references to Goethe, and even detailed portrayals of the Baumgartners' clothing and household furnishings, Desai imaginatively recreates the domestic life of German Jews between the two wars when Berlin was said to compete with Paris as a cultural center. Along with the confident materialism of Hugo's father, Desai evokes the orientalist culture of Hugo's mother as she reads Tagore's *Gitanjali* with her poetic Jewish friends in the country, even after Hugo's father has been imprisoned and then released from Dachau. Later, when Hugo tries to interest her in actually going to India he reminds her of her interest in Tagore, but she would rather read the "verses of our own dear Friedmanns" (56). However, at this point when she and Hugo return to Berlin from the country, they find that Hugo's father has committed suicide, and their status in Germany soon becomes clear as internal Orientals, as racial Others.

The terrible tragedy of the fate of these German Jews is evident in Desai's motif of the spun sugar in Hugo's mother's voice, the same sugar that nearly chokes Lotte years later, the sweetness that one night "shatters into splinters of glass." This sugar is not only connected with the love Mrs. Baumgartner has for Germany, which includes her fashionable orientalizing, but also with Hugo's first encounter with the "east" when he arrives in Venice. He breathes in the smell of Venetian chocolates, "he had known only as a small child. Then he felt himself to be inside a chocolate box, surfeited with sweetness and richness, and tore away to breathe freely" (60). This association of the east, danger and sugar recalls the proposal of Johann David Michaelis who in the essay *Orientalishe und exegetishe Bibliothek (*Oriental and Exegetical Library, 1782), entered into the debate on Jewish emancipation initiated by Wilhelm Dohm in his book *Ueber die burgerliche Verbesserrung der Juden* (On the Civic Improvement of the Jews, 1781). Dohm had argued that the state could rehabilitate the Jews by sending them to the sugar islands to become productive in a climate "analogous to their place of origin where they might become colonial subjects promoting the wealth of the European fatherland."[24] Desai fully exploits the irony of these early German schemes to relocate their "oriental" Jewish citizens in some Caribbean island when she depicts the ultimate failure of the German experiment in the emancipation of its Jewish citizens. For when Baumgartner escapes this fate, he is imprisoned as a German in an internment camp where he labors in the sugar cane fields.

When Baumgartner arrives in India he is attracted to its plurality, "the crowds of Indians, Britons, Americans Gurkhas...." (83). He sees that "India was two worlds or ten" (85). He is exposed to India's mixture of flavors, "the sweet, the astringent and the perfumed" (87), unlike the overly sweet, sugary flavor of his childhood. He enjoys meeting the showgirls Lola and Gisela, precisely because of their ethnic backgrounds. Lola/Lotte says she was Lulu in Germany, though Hugo knows that Lulu is not German. Later, when she lives alone in Bombay, she argues with her neighbors in a mixture of Konkani and Yiddish (67). Gisela tells everyone in Calcutta she is from Russia though she advertises herself as Lily in Shanghai, and later in the novel even when she becomes a respectable matron and calls herself Gala von Roth and snubs him, Hugo is more delighted than appalled.

Baumgartner is confronted with the multiple discourses of India's indigenous native and expatriate communities:

> Languages sprouted around him like tropical foliage and he picked words from it without knowing if they were English or Hindi or Bengali—they were simply words he needed: *chai, khana, baraf, lao, jaldi, joota, chota, peg, pani, karma, soda, garee*...what was this language he was wrestling out of the air, wrenching around to his own purposes? He suspected it was not Indian, but India's, the India he was marking out for himself. (92)

Critics tend to see Baumgartner's linguistic confusion as one more signifier of his alienation in Indian society.[25] However, from Desai's own comments, it seems more likely that she saw this plethora of languages and Baumgartner's creation of his own hybrid tongue as a positive aspect of the Indian experience. For, according to Desai, Baumgartner does not lack a language; he creates a new language.[26] Desai's use of German, French, Portuguese, Bengali, Hind, and Hebrew without translation in the text has been read as a direct appeal to a certain kind of readership, one of "sophisticated cosmopolitanism," a kind of "colonialism in reverse," one that orientalizes India, which makes of it a European invention in which India is "not modern, not developed, not civilized, not Western."[27] It seems, however, that this reluctance to translate originates from quite opposite motives, from the desire to replicate and retain a sense of India's linguistic and hitherto ethnic diversity far superior in its hybridity to just such Manichean formulations.

Desai valued the diversity of the India she knew when she was growing up in the pluralism of old Delhi, for, as she told Lalita Pandit, "probably the most traumatic event of my childhood was the 15th of August l947, when the British and Muslim populations

disappeared overnight, bringing about the transformation of the old city I knew into the new of city of the postpartition era."[28] She compares her mother's exile from the land of her birth with her father's predicament after partition, when having chosen to live in Delhi and not in Dhaka, he could no longer even visit his relatives in East Pakistan, which became Bangladesh. Desai says, "It became the ultimate exile for both of them; cut off from their lands so totally."[29] Nonetheless, in the novel Baumgartner has only limited insight into the religious conflict that rages in Calcutta, despite his sympathy for his Muslim employer who must flee for safety in East Bengal, and, on the other hand, his boss does not understand why he cannot return to Germany now that the European war is over. An episode in the novel demonstrates Baumgartner's Inability to assimilate into Indian society. While traveling for business, Baumgartner explores what appears to be a sacred cave and then inexplicably has the impression that "whatever possessed or inhabited that temple...had spat him out. *Raus*. Baumgartner, out.... Shabby, dirty white man, firanghi, unwanted. Raus, Baumgartner, raus" (190). The irony here is that in Germany Baumgartner was too dark, and in India his fairness causes him to be rejected as a *firanghi,* a foreigner.[30] Indeed, as Sander Gilman notes, after the Holocaust, in the western Diaspora Jews become white and thus "lumped with the forces of patriarchy and oppression by the new forces of multiculturalism."[31]

Postcolonial Post-Holocaust

For Aamir Mufti, *in Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture* (2007), the Enlightenment project's handling of the "Jewish Question" is paradigmatic for the colonization of the Indian sub-continent, yet the Jewish nation is often critiqued in postcolonial discourse as racist in its exclusiveness or colonialist in its displacement of Muslims, thus bearing the sin of Europe's imperialism, so that the very definition of diaspora or the notion of hybridity may exclude Jewish identity.[32] What happens in Desai's novel is that the historical connection between the Holocaust and postcolonialism is explored in ways that draw parallels between German and Indian history, for "Hitler's imagination was caught by the example of the British in India. Their model of imperial rule, such as he conceived it, struck him as admirable...for him the Ukraine was 'that new Indian Empire.'"[33] Hugo Baumgartner is released from an internment camp inside India just as the postpartition riots are peaking in Calcutta and, in a foreshadowing of his own fate, dreams that the blood being spilt is the blood of his mother, murdered by the Nazis. "Yet his mother—so small, weak—could not have spilt so much blood. Or had she? The blood, ran, ran over the floor and down the stairs, soaking his feet which stood in it helplessly" (179). Hugo recognizes that this conflict is not identical to the genocide that murdered his mother, his family, and his people. That had been a "global war," a "colonial war," and the war into which he is now plunged, in which Muslims kill Hindus and Hindus kill Muslims, is "a religious war. Endless war. Eternal war" (180). Desai contends, "People kill for politics. People kill for religion. Perhaps there is some kind of affinity between India and Germany. That helped me bring these two together in the book."[34]

Nonetheless, she has Baumgartner killed by a German and not by an Indian. The crisis that ultimately leads to Hugo's death begins when Farrokh, an Indian who owns a restaurant that Baumgartner frequents, seeks to have the German youth who wouldn't pay his bill removed from his restaurant as quickly as possible, preferably by Baumgartner, whom the Indian identifies as a fellow countryman and therefore as somehow responsible for him—indeed, Farrokh sees all those of an inferior race to him as "mleccha," meat-eating Muslims.

Baumgartner has come to Bombay following the postpartition riots and is now living a lonely existence after the son of his Hindu partner, Chimanlal, summarily boots Baumgartner out of the business once Chimanlal dies. Baumgartner feels immediately responsible for freeing Farrokh of this unwanted German, however:

> Farrokh had told him nothing—No one had mentioned Germany—and had not needed to. In the camp, they had looked at each other covertly, and not only was Germanness stamped like a number on each, but further information as well—that one was a Jew, another Aryan. The looks they had exchanged had been the blades of knives slid quickly and quietly between the ribs, with the silence of guilt. (21)

As soon as he sees the boy slumped and sleeping in the corner of Farrokh's café, Baumgartner has a vision of "marching boots," "Wandervogels Lied," the songs of the German youth group: "The campfire and the beer. The beer and the yodeling. The yodeling and the marching. The marching and the shooting. The shooting and the killing. The killing and the killing and the killing. " (21) Just as the German nursery rhymes had evoked the memory of the false security of his early boyhood, so here music, this time yodeling, creates postmemories of the killing he personally escaped. In fact, the Wandervogels were misused by the Nazis who appropriated their movement for political ends and changed their songbooks in order to transmit Nazi ideology.[35] Despite the visions the German evokes, Baumgartner, seemingly against his will, agrees to take this youth, Kurt, home with him. Why, he asks himself, "ask your blood why it is so, only the blood knows" (152).

This mysterious tie of blood that Baumgartner undeniably feels between him and his mortal enemy ultimately leads to Baumgartner's death. When this blood tie is recognized between Germans and German Jews, it is usually more often acknowledged as a tie that binds the perpetrators of the Holocaust to their victims rather than the reverse. Karl Jaspers wrote in one of the earliest treatises on German guilt, "because of our consanguinity...the German—that is, the German-speaking individual" is "co-responsible for the deeds of our contemporaries.... We have to bear the guilt of our fathers."[36] To underscore these inexorable connections Desai drenches her text in references to blood. There are as numerous mentions to blood as there are to sugar. Lotte's body "thickens and clots" as she returns to her home after Hugo's death; when Baumgartner arrives in Bombay the driver screams until "blood ran from his mouth" (84); the walls of the hotel seem to be streaked with "blood from a gun battle" (84). India is described laughing "that blood-stained laugh" (86). Moreover, in Delhi Kurt had seen hundreds of animals sacrificed and stood with his "feet in blood, his hands in blood, all of him covered in blood" (159). Most of all, Hugo Baumgartner's death seems excessively bloody: "yes, that pale mound of yellow tallow was oozing with something dark, liquid. It was not like blood, it was like a diarrhea of blood" (220). This blood tie between Hugo and Kurt, the German youth, is a direct consequence of their inheritance as sons of perpetrators and victims. And as Hirsch as stated, postmemory is not a method, a movement or an idea like postcolonialism, postmodernism or postfeminism: "It is a consequence of traumatic recall...at a generational remove."[37]

Desai has commented in an interview with Feroza Jussawalla that she wrote two different endings for the novel. In the alternative version, Baumgartner is killed by the beggar who lives outside the door of his apartment building and who, in the final version, is mistakenly arrested for the murder. Desai notes that murder by the beggar, "had no meaning and Baumgartner was left incomplete or unfulfilled in a certain sense, because all through he has a sense of having escaped death in Germany. His mother was killed but he escaped. The reason for his sadness through the book is the death that he escaped.... I had to have it catch up with him in the end and it seemed right and justified in the Greek sense if that death would be by a Nazi, by a German." Desai responded to Jussawalla's remark that Kurt could be read as a representative of the Germans that all Germans are interchangeable with German Nazis so although Kurt did not "see himself as a Nazi, he's too young to have been a Nazi...one shares one's nation's history. The Germans now, even the younger generation, are aware that they haven't escaped the consequences" and this is true even for someone like Kurt, the German youth, in the novel who has destroyed his memory with drugs.[38] According to Desai, as a German, he doesn't have to have personal memories to share in the guilt and responsibility for the past. She declared that in his death

Baumgartner must have felt relieved of his guilt over having to bring his mother to join him in the safety of India. Despite Desai's associations between postcolonial and Holocaust traumas, India and Germany, the postmemories and the conclusion seem to indicate that one is bound by "one's nation's history."

Conclusion: On Not Arriving

Baumgartner's Bombay may contain elements of post-Holocaust fiction and its postmemory of a historical and personal trauma bridges the echoes of Desai's own autobiographical concerns and an epistemological concern with hybridity and cultural identity in the aftermath of catastrophe. Leslie Morris writes in *Unlikely History: The Changing German-Jewish Symbiosis, 1945-2000:*

> as the memory of the Holocaust circulates beyond the actual bounds of lived, remembered experience (and beyond the geographical where the "real" took place), it seeps into the imaginary of other cultures (and other geographical spaces) as postmemory and as postmemoir. Thus the German-Jewish symbiosis is recast as the newly refigured presence of Germans and Jews in texts that probe the contours of memory and the contours of the act of writing and most significantly, in texts that move beyond the contours of Germany.[39]

The "post" according to Morris "is the space conceptualized by post-Holocaust art," art that is all, "in one way or another, hybrid forms of memoir, some false memoirs, some even exposed as fakes" that circulate "in the present as representation, as melancholia, as elegiac repetition."[40] While *Baumgartner's Bombay* is certainly a hybrid novel, compiled of nursery rhymes, the memoirs of the Himalayan mountain climbers, Holocaust memoir, travelogue, and bildungsoman, according to Desai, her novel began with the imprint on her of the photograph of her German mother's departure for India, and that memory became transfigured in fiction in the image of a young Jewish man leaving his mother behind in Germany and departing from Venice on his way to India in the l930s. Even in his old age, Baumgartner remembers the week he spent in Venice as something wonderful. He tells the German youth, "*Es war prima.*" Yet, even the depiction of Baumgartner's stay in Venice is a "false" memory. He ran away from the surfeit of sweetness he felt there. Significantly, Desai describes his (rather improbable) encounter with a Jewish woman who is reading a newspaper written in Hebrew, which entices him to find the Jewish ghetto in the labyrinth of Venice's streets. His failure to find the Ghetto begs explanation and, when questioned on this point, Desai answered that in life there must always be something left undone.[41] Indeed, till the end of his life, Hugo remembers Venice as a hybrid mixture of East and West where he might have felt at home. As he tells Lotte when they are old and she says "there is no home for us," he replies, "If I could go, if I could leave, then I would go to Venice....Once I was there...It was so strange—it was both East and West, both Europe and Asia. I thought— maybe, in such a place, I could be at home" (81).

Kurt tells him that Venice is "only drains," and Lotte tells him he could only live in Venice "if he were a duke or a count...a millionaire, maybe in your dreams" (81). In Desai's postcolonial postmemory of the relationship between German and Jew the historical memory and the metaphorical construction linking the two will only be refigured in a "Venice" to which they have not yet arrived.

Notes

[1] Archives of the Bombay Jewish community show records of a Baumgartner who was interned in the Dehra Dun camp (e-mail communication from Shalva Weil, 6 August 2009).

[2] Mrinalini Solanki, "Baumgartner's Bombay: An Attempt to Survive," *Indian Women Novelists,* Vol. 2, ed. R. K. Dhawan (New Delhi: Prestige Books, l995), 1-13; Corinne Liotard, "Otherness in Anita Desai's *Baumgartner's Bombay," Flight from Certainty,* ed. Anne Luyat and Francine Tolron (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001), 112-122; Peter De Voogd, "Anita Desai's Baumgartner," *Shades of Empire in Colonial and Postcolonial Literatures,* ed. C. C. Barfoot and Theo D'haen (Atlanta: Rodopi, 1993), 33-89; Usha Bande, "Baumgartner's Bombay: An Assessment," *Panjab University Research Bulletin* 20, 2 (1 October l989): 131-133; P. M. Nayak and S. P. Swain, "The Outsider in Desai's Baumgartner's Bombay," *Commonwealth Novel in English* 6 1993): 112-120; Paul West "The Man Who Didn't Belong," *The New York Times,* April 9, 1989. May 28, 2008 http:query.nytimes.comgst/fullpage.html?

[3] Corinne Demas Bliss, "Against the Current: A Conversation with Anita Desai," *The Massachusetts Review* 29, 3 (1988): 522

[4] Anita Desai, *Baumgartner's Bombay* (New York: Houghton, 2000). References to Desai will be to the following edition and will be given in parenthesis.

[5] Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 22.

[6] Marianne Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," *Poetics Today* 29, 1 (2008): 194, 112.

[7] Ibid., 120

[8] Public address on receiving the Co'Foscari Prize at the EACLALS triennial conference, Venice, March 25, 2008.

[9] Desai, conversation with the author. Venice, March 26, 2008.

[10] Shaul Bassi, conversation with the author. Venice, March 26, 2008.

[11] Desai, conversation with the author. Venice, March 26, 2008.

[12] Feroza Jussawalla and Reed Way Dasenbrock, eds., *Interviews with Writers of the Post-Colonial World* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1992), 174.

[13] Corinne Demas Bliss, "Against the Current: A Conversation with Anita Desai," 521.

[14] Jussawalla and Dasenbrock, *Interviews with Writers,* 175.

[15] Ibid., 15.

[16] John Cunningham, "Interview with Anita Desai: 'View from the Outside,'" *Guardian,* June 29, 1988.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Lalita Pandit, "A Sense of Detail and A Sense of Order: Anita Desai Interviewed by Lalita Pandit," in *Literary India: Comparative Studies in Aesthetics, Colonialism and Culture*, ed. Patrick Colm Hogan and Lalita Pandit (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 170.

[20] Heinrich Harrar, *Seven Years in Tibet* (New York: Tarcher, 1997). See Katherine Capshaw Smith, "Narrating History: The Reality of the Internment Camps in Anita Desai's *Baumgartner's Bombay," Ariel: A Review of International English Literature* 28, 2 (April 1997): 143-157.

[21] Smith, "Narrating History," 156

[22] Peter Pulzer, "Emancipation & its Discontent: The German-Jewish Dilemma," *Centre for German-Jewish Studies.* University of Sussex (1997). 29 May 2008 http://www.sussex.ac.uk

[23] Solveig Eggerz, "The German-Jewish Epoch of 1743-1933: Tragedy or Success Story?" (Summer 2007). 29 May 2008 http://www.acjna.or/acjna/articles_detail.aspx?id

[24] Quoted in Jonathan Hess, "Sugar Island Jews? Jewish Colonialism and the Rhetoric of 'Civic Improvement' in Eighteenth Century Germany," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 32, 1 (Fall 1998): 93.

[25] Elaine Y. L. Ho, "The Languages of Identity in Anita Desai's *Baumgartner's Bombay*," *World Literature Written in English* 32, no. 1 (1992): 101. See also Paul West, "The Man Who Didn't Belong."
[26] Desai, in conversation with the author. Venice, March 24, 2008.
[27] Tony Simoes Da Silva, "Whose Bombay is it Anyway? Anita Desai's "Baumgartner's Bombay," *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature* 28, 3 (July 1997): 66, 68.
[28] Pandit, "A Sense of Detail," 153.
[29] Cunningham, "Interview with Anita Desai."
[30] Liotard, "Otherness in Anita Desai's *Baumgartner's Bombay*," 115.
[31] Sander Gilman, *Multiculturalism and the Jews* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 180.
[32] Amir Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).
[33] Mark Mazower quoted in Robert Eaglestone, "'You Would Not Add to My Suffering If you Knew What I have Seen': Holocaust Testimony and Contemporary African Trauma Literature," *Studies in the Novel* 40, 1-2 (2008): 73.
[34] Cunningham, "Interview with Anita Desai."
[35] Bart Plantenga, *Yodel-Ay-Ee-0000* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 62.
[36] Karl Jaspers, *The Question of German Guilt* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 73.
[37] Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," 106.
[38] Anita Desai, "Interview with Feroza Jussawalla and Reed Way Dasenbrock," in *Interviews with Writers of the Post-colonial World*, ed. Feroza Jussawalla and Reed Way Dasenbrock (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1992), 176.
[39] Leslie Morris, *Unlikely History: The Changing German-Jewish Symbiosis, 1945-2000* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 291-292.
[40] Ibid., 292-293.
[41] Desai, in conversation with the author. Venice, March 26, 2008. Desai also admitted she had not visited the ghetto prior to writing the novel; she too had to leave something undone.