



Concepts of Home and Belonging in Postcolonial Literature Compared in the Novels "Small Island" by Andrea Levy and "White Teeth" by Zadie Smith

Christina Heckmann

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Seminar paper from the year 2006 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Literature, grade: 2,00, University of Göttingen (Seminar für Englische Philologie), course: Multiethnic Britain, language: English, abstract: 1. Introduction 1.1. Brief introduction to home and belonging as a general idea Home has a significant function in our lives. Thinking of home we associate notions like shelter and comfort and when we come home we want to feel safe and welcome. John McLeod argues in this sense that "to be 'at home' is to occupy a location where we are welcome, where we can be with people very much like ourselves."¹ We are looking for who we are, where we come from and try to find our place in life. When one is born in a country but moves to another where is one's home country then? This question is hard to answer, because migration is always a process which implies a struggle of identities. When the 2nd generation is born in the host country- where do they belong if the host country does not accept them as full members? The term home is highly complicated in a complex and multicultural world like ours. 1.2. Procedure and approach of my analyses I have centered my term paper on an attempt to identify and characterize the concepts of home and belonging in postcolonial literature. Comparing how the idea of home and belonging is presented in the novels White Teeth by Zadie Smith and Small Island by Andrea Levy, I have tried a text- extrinsic approach. Furthermore, I have analysed the authors' intentions with regard to the time of publication and the time of the narrative. However, the main aspect of my analyses is which concepts of home and belonging exist and which of them can be found in the novels of my comparison. I have chosen White Teeth because it is a novel that deals with the colonial past and the postcolonial present and I have selected Small Island because it is a novel that deals with migration in the past. Small Island is set at the beginnin

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