

# *In betweeners*

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# *The Gap in the Betweeners*

By Margalit Berriet – January 2022

In between the generation we identify separate beliefs and patterns of behaviours expressed through differences in thoughts or in applied ethics and aesthetics, shaped between older and younger persons that are trying to gap between periods, and also between origins, between cultures and between places, while establishing new creative aesthetics and authenticities.

The need to understand the diverse generations is a vital principal in the will of societies to create a respectful innovative space of living together.

Karl Mannheim in his essay *The Problem of Generations*, published in 1928. He rejected the idea of a rhythm or progress of history, calibrated by the succession of generations, or the course of human life. He considers the generation as both a product and a vector of socio-historical dynamics.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, within a single generation, various "units of generations" can oppose also to each other, or reflect each other within another set of urgent contemporary matters.

Artists often reflect these dualities of identities, of belonging, of merging from certain relations, influenced by plural histories, while being in duality with the feeling of belonging to a generation that is not only formed vertically, but also horizontally, in relation to a given new spaces, places, times, events, etc.

Therefore, Generations are constituted commonly, through the continuities and transformations of societies and through intra-family, state, religion, believes, habits and other relations.

Differences may be expressed through politics, fundamental values, ways of livings and ways of expressing.

This unique space, often named as *The Gap* that is in between Generation, have been dominant and a motor in the process of evolutions of parenthoods, while connecting and reaching beyond cultural or physical old and new borders.

Within recent most significant movement of human and animals' migrations, the scoop of cultural differences between living generations has become even more important in the 20th and 21st centuries. Yet, the none defined space of in-between-generation-gap will only explain partially the differences that exist in the establishment of worldviews and of choice observed among various age groups.

However, migration is the movement of people and of cultures and is the story of who we are and how we got here. These dynamics of journey are also an expression of the assets of humanities; moving, searching, discovering, evaluating and generating new revelations and therefore new foundations for contemporary histories.

People move for countless reasons, from fleeing war or religious persecution to seeking other places, better education, financial security or simply to discover.

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<sup>1</sup> The "Problem of Generations" Revisited: Karl Mannheim and the Sociology of Knowledge in International Relations, by David M. McCourt, chapter 3 On line Link: [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137011565\\_3](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137011565_3) + on line PDF: *The Problem of Generations, Chapter VII (1927/28, republished 1952/ PP 276-322/ by Karl Manheim* <https://marcuse.faculty.history.ucsb.edu/classes/201/articles/27MannheimGenerations.pdf>

The United Nations estimates that one out of every seven people in the world is an international or internal migrant who moves by choice or by force.<sup>2</sup>

Within our recent era migration become even more massive than before, and evoke an ongoing debate about it the phenomena of integrations and of amalgamizing with the "others", becoming often the "IN BETWEENERS", questioning, also through the humanities and the arts, recent preoccupation of creating a cross cultural dialogues, successful multicultural societies while comprehend the endless reasons of relocations and displacement of beings around the world.

In a poem by Warsan Shire, a Somali-British poet he gives a voice to the experiences of refugees by saying "When Home Won't Let You Stay..." no one leaves home until home is a sweaty voice in your ear, saying- leave" ...,<sup>3</sup>

Each generation is merging from its past and is also a reflection of perceptible or immaterial heritages, just as all vegetation is stretching branches to reach out into the unknown, looking to appropriate and to define news spaces.

An average generation is about 25 years; a cycle often defined by a biological clock from birth of a parent to the birth of a child, yet, of course the number of years will varies from people to places, and the notion of generation is not only derive from biological affiliation, but also from social and temporal processes, as generations are products of a social imagination, where one can refer to a collective presentations of a social or cultural group, producing contemporary rites, myths, collective or individual imaginations, believes, new limits and common laws, original aesthetics and refreshing projections into future ideal. These are also the linking elements of each society, producing identities, memories, target aims, labours and cultures, reflecting also unique individuals within groups.

With Cultural, artistic or social needs for cross cultural communications, languages and patrimonies use symbolic sounds, body dialectal etymologies and graphs, as references and functioning to create and to (re)organise relations between people as between things and time.

In ancient greeted, a symbol (σύμβολον σύμβολον<sup>4</sup>) is understood as a shared sign of recognition. As Symbols are (σύμβολα ποιείσθαι πρὸς πόλιν, σύμβολον<sup>5</sup>) tools for bringing individuals and cultures together. As an originally a simple object, or an idea, or a metaphor, cut in half, kept apart through generations, and then passed on to offspring. The two halves, are cultural heritage and references, or elements of communication and recognition from the past. The etymology of the term symbol then evokes the idea of re-meeting, of re-cognition between persons and their

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<sup>2</sup> Stanford university/Cantor Arts center/ When Home Won't Let You Stay: Migration through Contemporary Art/February 5, 2021–May 30, 2021/ Organized by Ruth Erickson, Mannion Family Curator, Eva Respini, Barbara Lee Chief Curator, Anni Pullagura, Curatorial Assistant, Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston on line references: <https://museum.stanford.edu/exhibitions/when-home-wont-let-you-stay-migration-through-contemporary-art>

<sup>3</sup> "Home" by Warsan Shire, published online in *Facing History and Ourselves independent research study/* [www.facinghistory.org/](http://www.facinghistory.org/) online link: <https://www.facinghistory.org/standing-up-hatred-intolerance/warsan-shire-home>

<sup>4</sup> Anatole Bailly, *Abrégé du dictionnaire grec-français*, Hachette, 1901/ *Dictionnaire Grec-Français en ligne* <http://home.scarlet.be/tabularium/bailly/> & « σύμβολον », dans Henry Liddell, Robert Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1889, link to source: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.04.0058:entry=su%2Fmbolon>

<sup>5</sup> (Source: Anatole Bailly) a French Hellenist, author of the famous *Dictionnaire grec-français* (Greek-French Dictionary), published in 1895.

philosophies... A symbol become then a prove of shared humanity, of also similitude as of their differences, a tool of comprehension, of communication or of relations also between strangers.

Although the notion of generation is widely used Generation and Ages are not of one connotation, nor of one filiation. At times the word generation has been used as a standard measure of history; it represents a period of time, corresponding to given length of a period.

In modern societies more often we can identify how impossible for one to be just a product of their time. Each is singular and unique, refusing to conform to any dominant culture, yet, one cannot avoid proximity with one's own origins or sub-conscious, nor hidden memories.

Each then become also a mirror of one's time and of common conducts, never free of one's own complexity and multiplicity.

The arts, in their core, are a reflection of these complex multiplicities, and although they are also purely a product of a subjective experience and/or of a unique expression, yet they are also always a re-constitution of all reminiscences and recollections.

Artists will always challenge their time and events, reacting and proposing new combinations, with fresh perspectives, leading to contemporary interdisciplinary revelations, while constantly also question norm, traditions, ethics and aesthetics that are outdated.

Each generation is empowered by the previous one, as one englobes the other, offering new, singular approaches to life.

This exhibition is aiming to portray some of these recent enquiries by artists, on recent subjects, being themselves a product of a long and complex process of migrations, taking root also in France, in Israel and everywhere else.

14 artists of all expressions give a close-up view of a social, political and cultural life of increasingly dynamic changing and evaluating communities, depicting an inter-generational relation, embracing also histories, memories, traditions and contemporary issues beyond borders.

Within this process of *'The In-Betweeners'* portraying undefined spaces that exist in between the generations, they are also questioning colonisation, conflict situations, stereotypes and all form of racism, multiple identities, individualism, cultural complexities and modern pluralism

In Ubuntu a Nguni Bantu term meaning "humanity". It is sometimes translated as "I am because you are" or "I am because we are", or "humanity towards others" or in a more philosophical sense to mean "the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity" beyond generations and places ...<sup>6</sup>

Within this manifestation we hope to transfer also elements encounters and hybridizing, while taking into account all the facets of our actualities.

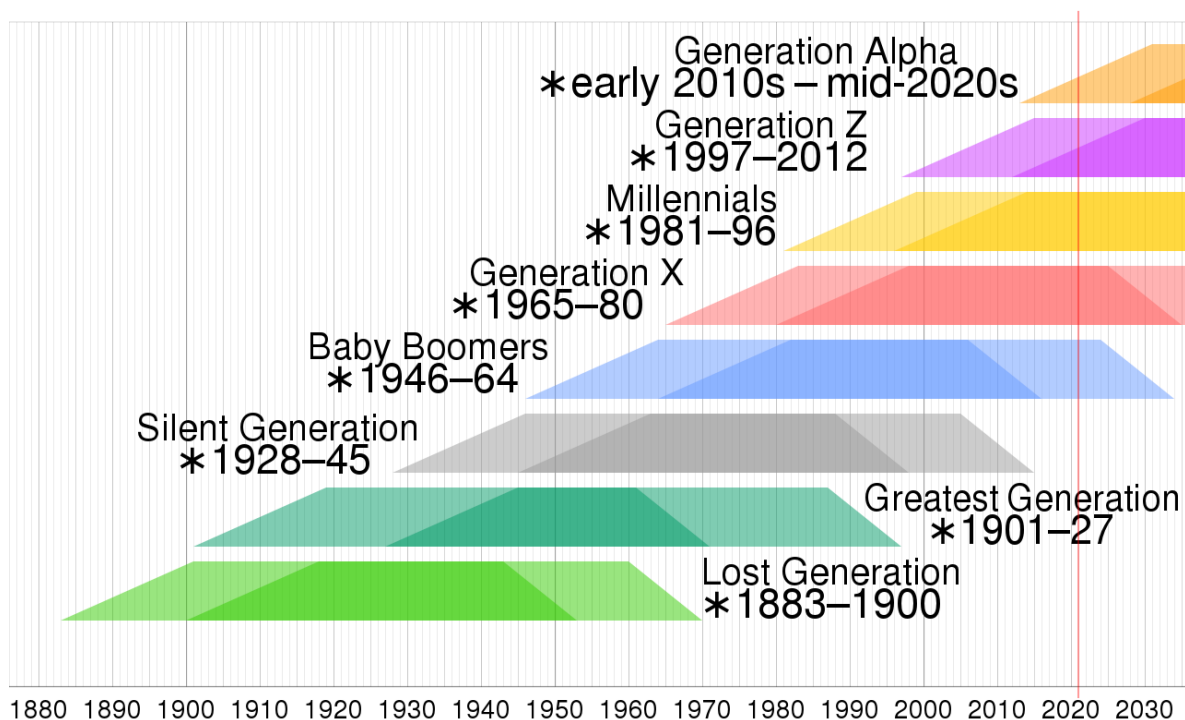
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<sup>6</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy-A peer-Reviewed Academic resources / Hunhu/Ubuntu in the Traditional Thought of Southern Africa/Chapter 3/ Author Fainos Mangena/ University of Zimbabwe/Zimbabwe/ Link <https://iep.utm.edu/hunhu/#H3>

## HIGHLIGHT

In current natural languages we articulate many generalizations to commonly describe, these generalizations are understood as reflecting an intimate, theoretically important but non-statistical relationship between a “kind(Type)” and a “property(asset)”. But, when relationship holds, the property become characteristic for the kind<sup>7</sup>. This is true also in the none defined space of In-Between-Generation-Gap, that become an *Inbetweeners* virtue of inter-generational relationships.

These linguistic and cultural *Cutting-edge* topics (in expressions) will also demonstrate deliberating wide spectrum of approaches and creative matters that are of interest to also Logicians, Mathematicians, Historians, Linguistics, Epistemologists, and Artists.<sup>8</sup>



<sup>7</sup> Between Logic and the World/An Integrated Theory of Generics/on line limited Content.  
By Bernhard Nickel/ 2016/Print ISBN-13: 9780199640003/Published to Oxford Scholarship Online: May 2016/ on line link:  
<https://oxford.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199640003.001.0001/acprof-9780199640003-chapter-1>

<sup>8</sup> Between Logic and Reality Modelling Inference, Action and Understanding © 2012/ edited by Majda TrobokNenad Mišćević Berislav Žarnić / Electronic ISSN 2214-9783/introduction/p.6/  
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# *Inter-generational 'The In-Betweeners'*

By Henie Westbrook – December 2021

The artists in this exhibition all share a North African background. They work on the boundaries between nostalgia, tradition, belonging and modernity. In this exhibit, we examine the influence of the cultural environment of their parents and grandparents - as well as their reception and integration into their new country - on their thinking and subsequent artistic practice.

In conversations with the artists it became clear that they identified strongly with both their country of origin and share grievances about their reception in the state of Israel. But we should be suspicious of our own tendency to generalise. These commonalities certainly play a part in their practice, but do not define the artists. Their responses are highly personal and individual in their creative choices. "When we put anything in a nutshell, the idea is to crack this nutshell," said art critic Jeanne Willete. Or as the philosopher Jacques Derrida, himself an Algerian Jew, puts it, 'Their art has no definable meaning and determinable mission and always extends the boundaries they currently occupy.'

## **The Historicity of Memory**

*"My heart is in the East and I am in the furthest West"*

- First line of a famous poem by the 11th century Spanish Jewish poet Jehuda Halevi.

Speaking with the artists who contributed to this exhibit, I felt a profound sense of their loss and nostalgia. Their own bereavement and alienation surfaced again and again in the tension between east and west, and between religious roots and the secular state.

Now Israel has become, paradoxically perhaps, the representation of the west. As immigrants or the children of immigrants, many of the artists feel bitter about how they were treated in the state of Israel, where at the time the Ashkenazi population played a dominant role. Sent to the extreme north or south of the state, and put up in *Maa'barot* (wrought iron dwellings), they feel they left countries, and homes, where they had a good life, were well integrated, and were able to practice their religious traditions. Like the poet

Halevi, who was in 'exile' in Spain (the west), some part of them yearns to return to the east, where his heart dwelled.

This way of appraising the past is genuine and has to be taken seriously. But historical facts tell a more complicated story. Before 1948, 800,000 Jews lived in the Arab world; two thirds in north Africa. A large- scale exodus began in the 1940s and early 1950s. In 1956, during the Suez crisis, more Jews came to Israel. They were driven by antisemitic persecution and political instability, but also by a commitment to Zionism. These Jews and their descendants make up more than half of the Jewish population of Israel today.

Jews lived in these countries long before the Arab Conquest. And under Muslim rule they were considered *Dhimmies* - a protected status, because they were 'people of the book' (*ahl al - Kitab*) - in exchange for loyalty to the state and payment of *jizya* tax. They were mostly merchants and intermediaries for Muslim rulers. In the 19th century we see the Francization of Jews in French colonial Africa due to organisations like Alliance Israelite Universelle and French political decisions such as the Algerian Citizenship Decree of 1870

- a law which placed a wedge between Jewish and Arab people.

In 1870 the Decret Cremieux elevated Jews from *Dhimmi* status to French Citizens in Algeria, which led to anti Jewish riots in 1897 instigated by the "Pied Noir" community in Oran. The Muslim community did not participate, but Muslim-led riots in Constantine in 1934 led to 34 Jews being killed. Tunisia became a French protectorate in 1881. One third of Tunisian Jews took French citizenship. Morocco became a French Protectorate only in 1912. Anti-Jewish and anti-French demonstrations took place in Casablanca, Oujda and Fez in 1907 and 1912.

During World War Two, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Libya came under Nazi and Vichy influence. Labour camps were set up for the Jewish population and racial antisemitism was transferred to the Arab world. In an interview shortly before his death, Jacques Derrida recalled how atrocious it was to be attacked by both the representatives of the Vichy government and by the local population in his homeland of Algeria. In 1948, after the Arab-Israeli war, there were riots in Oujda and Djerada and 18,000 of Morocco's Jews left for Israel and France. By 1956, most of Tunisia's 105,000 Jews had also emigrated, again largely to France and Israel. In 1961 King Hassan of Morocco agreed to Jewish emigration under pressure from Israeli intelligence agency Mossad and 70,000 Jews left.

In Libya after 1945, antisemitic incitements were widespread. In 1948 and 1949 pogroms led to emigration to Italy and Israel. In 1961 Jews could not own or transfer property, could not vote nor hold public offices; could not serve in the army or police. Riots grew and king Idris I urged the Jews to leave temporarily with one suitcase and 50 dollars. They were evacuated to Italy, Israel and the United States. In 1970 the government passed a law to confiscate all their assets. After Algeria's independence in 1962 all of the 140,000 Algerian Jews who had French citizenship left for France or Israel.



One might conclude from the above, that the nostalgia the artists expressed is illogical or based on illusion. But art has the power to deconstruct such historical facts. Again we return to Derrida and his contention that there are no meanings that are truly definable within boundaries - meaning, or definition, always exceeds and transgresses those bounds. Art has the power to transform facts and deconstruct history through personal memories, identities, and the special insight creativity brings.

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