New Geographies, New Selves?

German Women Migrating to the South Island of New Zealand in the 1980s and 1990s.

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of Master of Arts in Gender Studies
in the
University of Canterbury
by
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University of Canterbury
2001

Acknowledgements

I'd like to thank my fertile imagination that, in the end, led to my writing in this diverse country. I also have to acknowledge that Germany, my 'home' country, has had a hand in the conception of this thesis - without knowing some of the history of my mother, I would not have written anything on this topic, and without the births of my daughters in Germany, I would probably not have come here.

I would like to acknowledge the wisdom of Livia Kaethe Wittmann, my supervisor, who 'rescued' my thesis when I was ready to settle for less. I appreciated her guidance, her insights and her practical assistance, and am very grateful for her involvement in this project.

Maliah and Nora have supplied me with encouragement when I needed it, with icecreams when I felt completely frustrated, and with laughter and love when I was ready to leave the confines of the small world of my thesis to be part of the larger one around me. I thank Peter for his unfaltering patience, love and support.

And thanks to Theo for walks in the sun and in the rain. Thank you to all the interested/interesting people who said they would read whatever came out of this, it was encouraging to have a potential audience. And last, but not least,

I thank the women who participated and without whom I would not have been able to conduct this research.

Contents

Abstract .1

Introduction 2

Chapter 1
Feminism and some of the complexities of a postmodern framework 9

Chapter 2
Migration and the concepts of place, space and identity 25

Chapter 3
Flight from the Fatherland? 45

Chapter 4
From the 'old' Germany to the 'New' Zealand 77

Chapter 5
The intricate relationship between imaginary constructs and everyday life 109

Conclusion 138

References 143

Appendices 149

Abstract

This is an interdisciplinary study which draws on literature from the fields of feminist theory, feminist geography and social and cultural theory to develop an understanding of how cultural/gender identity manifests in a new cultural environment and what influence past identifications have on the meaning given to concepts of place/space and self in the 'new' environment. My intention is to highlight that the way we imagine ourselves and 'our' places (in this case Germany and New Zealand) influences how 'reality' is constructed.

In much of the literature on migration and globalisation it is assumed that the predominant reasons for migration are economic or to escape violence. Other factors, such as the search for a better place for self-development, or the search for a place where the self is imagined to have more autonomy, are less of a focus in migration studies. This thesis is based on the assumption that the German women who participated, did not necessarily immigrate for economic reasons, but rather to find 'space' for themselves. How this 'space' is imagined, depends on how the self is constructed. Within paradigms, such as modernity, that rely on binary oppositions, migration in search of a 'better' place with the hope for a 'new' self attached, might turn out to generate reproductions of past identifications. The search for a 'better' place then becomes the search for familiarity with little space left for encounters with that which is culturally 'different'. New Selves turned out to be old selves, after all.

I worked within a postmodern feminist framework, which highlights that the self is a construct. Places, in a similar vein are made up out of a multitude of selves who collectively re-construct what kind of place 'their' society is. Feminist geographers emphasise that in the age of globalisation, the local and the global are increasingly interlinked. From this perspective, immigration becomes a matter of encompassing the 'old' and the 'new', past identifications have to be re-constructed in a different cultural environment to enable the emergence of 'selves' that are both 'new' and 'old'.

Introduction

These days a growing awareness of the world as one under the banner of globalisation seems to be omnipresent. Migrating to the other side of the world was, even fifty years ago, a huge undertaking. But now with technological advances that enable us (the 'developed' world's inhabitants) to compact the logistics of getting from 'here' to 'far away' places to a matter of predominantly time and money, space and distances seem to have lost some of their significance. Zygmunt Bauman describes 'the change in question [as]... the new irrelevance of space, masquerading as the annihilation of time' (Bauman, 2000:117). Time in this context *is* money, and distances between spaces, formerly an obstacle to fast transfers, dissappear in the increasingly almost instantaneous exchange of information. Globalisation then has political and social meanings attached which remain largely invisible behind the focus on globalisation driven by economic interests. Furthermore, this understanding is part of discourses that are specific to western economic and political systems. Accordingly the Dictionary of Sociology states: 'The fundamental process that creates a global system is economic; namely, the expansion and transformation of late-twentieth-century capitalism into an integrated global economy...' (Abercrombie et al 1994:184). Abercrombie et al. imply that 'the ideology of consumerism' has spread around the globe in a complementary movement which globalises culture by replacing or supplementing localised traditions, beliefs, values, in short, ways of life. People and places are caught up in processes of globalisation, whether they want to be part of it or not.

Obvious consequences of globalisation seem to be mass population movements, in particular from 'underdeveloped' to 'developed' countries (Brah, 1996, Willis and Yeoh, 2000) and an increase in ethnic nationalism and violent conflict on a global scale (Ignatieff, 1994). The underlying assumption is that people immigrate for economic reasons or to escape violence with little scope for other possible motivations for migration. Keith Halfacree and Paul Boyle (2000) point out that

> Within migration research in general, an economic focus on labour migration has been and in many respects remains predominant from studies within the neo-

> classical tradition to those more rooted in radical interpretations (Boyle and Halfacree, 1999:1).

Katie Willis and Brenda Yeoh highlight that migration has become increasingly more 'transient and complex, with periods of "sojourning" becoming more common' (Willis and Yeoh, 2000:xii). Are there any other reasons for migration then, apart from the desire to partake in consumption through the 'ideology of consumerism', or of course the far more serious need to escape from violence?

The recognition of 'new complexity' is probably partly the outcome of recent shifts in perspectives on migration. Gender for example has only made its appearance as an important category in migration research from the 1980s onwards. From a New Zealand perspective, Jacqueline Leckie states that 'globally, there has been little recognition of the gendered patterns of migration and ethnicity. Locally, the neglect has been as strong' (Leckie, 1995:50). Leckie points out that women are assumed to immigrate as part of a family unit or as appendages to males which obscures 'the complexity of women's motives and the active role that they might take in deciding when and where a family chooses to migrate and if it will remain in New Zealand' (ibid:51). Leckie points out that this assumption is the outcome of treating women and girls as 'silent immigrants' who have generally not been directly consulted by researchers (Leckie, 1995).

In taking Leckie's observations as a starting point, I am interested in exploring the complexity of German migrant women's motives and ideas about themselves and their host country in order to highlight the diversity and non-homogeneity among these women. National/cultural/ethnic identities and gender are social constructs, which are more often than not elevated to a status of some essential (naturalised) quality. I want to focus on how migration can be understood without falling back on 'naturalised' categories, such as German, Woman, Immigrant/Foreigner by conceptualising migration as '...a long-term if not life-long process of negotiating identity, difference, the right to fully exist and flourish in the new context' (Benmayor and Skotnes, 1994:8)

How is cultural identity, in this case 'being a German woman in New Zealand', constructed? What influence do dominant discourses have on the images that underscore ideas about places and selves? What has motivated the immigration to New Zealand? Is immigration to be understood purely as the outcome of 'conscious' decision-making? Have the women been instrumental in the decision-making processes or did they simply 'follow their male partners'? These are some of the questions that I want to address in this study. Before entering into a wider engagement with these questions, I want to roughly outline my framework by addressing my position in regards to some of the terms used: my understandings of migration to New Zealand and of 'being a German woman' are specific in this context (all of the positions have been /are part of my identity at times and in places) and determine the direction of this study.

The understandings about the participants in this study as German women who immigrated have to be located in the context of postwar Germany and the political and social climate prior to their immigration. An understanding of the context in which the study is grounded is, from a feminist postmodern perspective, of paramount importance to the process of knowledge production. In chapter 1 I elaborate on the premisses of a feminist postmodern framework.

In chapter 2 I look at some of the concepts that surround collective identity in the context of migration and globalisation. My impulse is to highlight that racist discourses have a long history in western societies, and from this point of view I am emphasising the necessity to theorise cultural/ethnic identities within frameworks that deconstruct potentially racist dichotomies of 'us' versus 'them'.

From a feminist postmodern perspective, the 'time' and 'place' that formed these German women needs to be taken into consideration – what ideas about femininity were circulating in German society at the time? How was gender conceptualised and what were some of the consequences for women? What is specific about these discourses in relation to the time and place? These questions will be guiding my search for the motives that led to immigration in chapter 3. Before I embark on a further overview of the two remaining chapters, I will briefly question some common assumptions with regard to what it means 'to be German' and outline some of the historical significance of German migration to New Zealand.

'Being German' and the historical background of German immigration to New Zealand

One reason for undertaking this study was that in my experience German identity often resonates with positive as well as negative connotations that are constantly being reconstructed by whoever refers to it. From a feminist postmodern critical perspective, all communities are to a large extent imagined (Smith and Brinker-Gabler, 1997, Braidotti, 2000). For nation-states in particular this means that an image of unity overlays the fragmentations, incoherencies and regional and cultural differences that make up any nation-state. In the case of Germany, the image of unity also distracts from the fact that Germany itself is a country of immigration, contrary to the projected self-definition as 'temporary labour recruiting country' where immigrants/ 'Gastarbeiter' ('guestworkers') have an outsider status as 'birds of passage' with assimilation/integration as the ultimate goal (Morokvasic, 2000:93).[1] I find it important to highlight these political and social ideas about collective identity – the debate about who 'belongs' is contested and ongoing in Germany (as it is in all nation-states of the 'developed' world). 'Being German' in this context has very narrow and specific meanings. To 'not look German' for example can have dangerous consequences in a society largely build around images of a mono-cultural unity that does not represent the reality of increasingly visible cultural diversity. The very structures of 'belonging' have a long and painful history of being inscribed on the body in the form of race (and gender).

In the New Zealand historical context, race has played a major part in determining who is deemed a 'desirable' immigrant, and who is not. German immigrants for example have held a relatively privileged position due to their perceived 'close ties' with Anglo-Saxon culture: Germans formed the second largest immigrant group to New Zealand between the 1840s and 1886 (Bade, 1993). These early German settlers had to face that their

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[1] In the mid-1990s, Germany had 7 million foreign national residents in a population of 79 million – this compares to 3 million out of 60 million in England, and 3 million out of a population of 55 million in France (Brinker-Gabler and Smith, 1997:7).

> customs and of course their language might have been considered strange, but on the whole New Zealanders of British origins were more tolerant of Germans than, for instance, of the French or Russian, long considered enemies of Britain (King, 1998:17).

According to Stuart Greif (1995), New Zealand's historical perspective on immigration was to limit immigration as far as possible to British migrants and extend this to 'racially' related Germans and Scandinavians. This positive attitude towards Germans changed during the Boer Wars (1899-1902) 'because of the growing race for naval supremacy between Germany and Britain' (King, 1998). This perception was aggravated by the geographical closeness to Samoa, at that point a German colony, which added a 'territorial threat to the Dominion...' (ibid). During World War 1 the anti-German hysteria in New Zealand reached its height with changed attitudes towards Germans, now categorised as a race of barbarians in contrast to the former enemies of Russia and France which 'were now regarded as brethren' (ibid). The focus in the period leading up to the World War II stayed on 'race' as the decisive factor which structured 'belonging'. The New Zealand Immigration Amendment Act of 1920 allowed free entry into the country only for immigrants of British birth or descent while in particular the immigration of 'alien races' like Indians, Chinese and Jews were meant to be restricted through the Act (Beaglehole, 1998). During the Nazi regime refugees from Germany were categorised in racial terms: non-Jewish immigrants were regarded as a more suitable type of immigrant (Beaglehole, 1998). According to Beaglehole, for many refugees during this time New Zealand became an

> uneasy haven with echoes of the Nazism they had sought to escape...this small group, which included some men and women particularly eminent in their field...played a big part in enlivening the social and cultural climate of their adopted country (Beaglehole, 1998:35).

For a number of decades after World War II, German immigration came to a virtual standstill, 'and only in the 1990s are the number of German immigrants, at present the second largest non-English speaking European ethnic group in New Zealand, once again reaching significant levels' (Bade, 1998:237).

These days the reasons for immigration to New Zealand are tied up with the perception of New Zealand as a less restrictive and more egalitarian society than Germany. The search for individual freedom makes New Zealand attractive for German tourists and immigrants, and, according to James Bade, the image of tourist and immigrant intersect in the 'green settlers', 'whose concern for the environment was their principal motivation in coming to this country' (Bade, 1998:237).

In chapter 4 I analyse some of these perceptions with the intent of highlighting that ideas about places and ideas about the self are strongly interlinked. However, in most cases these ideas are imaginary constructs which have their foundation in a myriad of intersecting, at times contradictory understandings of what a 'better' place is (imagined to be). To sharpen my focus I have limited my scope to a group of thirteen women immigrants who arrived in New Zealand during the 1980s and 1990s.

Between 1982-1991, the category of Western Europeans comprised 4.8% of all migrant approvals. Between 1991-1994, the percentage was slightly less with 3.2%. Alexander Trapeznik states that 'Germany remains, as it was for the 1982 to 1991 period, the principle country...from which immigrants were drawn with 786 or 35.12% of [western European] migrants' (Trapeznik, 1995:92). According to Stuart Greif, evidence emerges that New Zealand's historical perspective on immigration still produces patterns of migration with the bulk of European coming from the traditional 'source' countries of Britain and North-West Europe (Greif, 1995:10).

In my final chapter I am focusing on the continuities and differences between the 'old' and the 'new'. Have the women been able to 'find' what they were looking for? Has living in a different cultural environment led to the construction of 'new' selves? In what ways are the 'old' and the 'new', both in terms of cultural specificities and ideas about the self, the product of 'phantasies' about New Zealand as a 'new beginning'? How did these imaginary constructs about places and selves hold up in the encounter with the 'everyday reality' of living here? Germany itself is the center of intense debates about migrants as 'others' which spark efforts to focus on the re-construction of ideas about 'otherness' and differences through empathy. If language can be used as an in-between site where alliances that 'crosscut' differences (such as ethnicity) can be forged, my overarching aim in this thesis will be to add to the cultural 'map' that makes up New Zealand in all its diversity. With more complex understandings it will hopefully be possible to develop empathy in the encounters with those who are deemed 'different'.

Chapter 1

Feminism and some of the complexities of postmodern frameworks

The framework of this thesis is made up of postmodern and post-structural components of primarily feminist theories. To categorise knowledge in this way may appear slightly arbitrary, but it seems important to draw demarcation lines in order to clarify the theoretical impulses behind this research. I prefer to work with postmodern theories, partly because inherent in this term is the critique of the Enlightenment[2] subject as the basis for western knowledge production. Accordingly, modernist theories as the object of criticism for postmodern perspectives, become suspect to accusations of placing culturally specific values, practices and beliefs into the centre of knowledge production without acknowledging their own specificity and situatedness. It appears to be problematic though, to draw a line between modernism, modernity and postmodernity and postmodernism. In order to clarify my understandings of these terms, I would like to refer to modernism as relating 'to a movement within the arts in western societies between about 1880 and 1950', whereas modernity refers to 'the particular attributes of modern socities' (Abercrombie et al, 1988:269). Abercrombie et.al point out that postmodernism and postmodernity are often contrasted with modernism and modernity, although the debate about whether they represent 'genuinely new culture and social forms or whether they are merely transitional phenomena produced by rapid social change' (ibid:326) is ongoing. There seems to be considerable disagreement as to how exactly modernity can be historicised. I do not want to enter into this debate over the historical development of modern societies – for the purpose of this project I will refer to Zygmunt Bauman who understands 'modernity' as 'fraught with ambiguity' (Bauman, 1991:4).

Bauman identifies *order as a task* as the defining feature of modernity; accordingly, modern consciousness is the 'consciousness of order'. This understanding of the self as dependent on the ability to construct itself against the chaos of non-order, relies on a categorisation of the world in clearly defined 'units': I am this because I am *not* that. In this context chaos signifies negativity in opposition to the positivity of order. This form of control demands dichotomies as the basis for sharp distinctions between what is the norm and what is not. And most importantly, as Bauman points out, these dichotomies are not symmetrical:

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[2] The 'Age of Reason/Enlightenment' refers to eighteenth century Europe and the beginnings of social science (to the extent that this can be dated).

> In dichotomies crucial for the practice and the vision of social order the differentiating power hides as a rule behind one of the members of the opposition. The second member is but *the other* of the first, the opposite (degraded, suppressed, exiled) side of the first and its creation. Thus abnormality is the other of the norm, deviation the other of law-abiding, illness the other of health, barbaritiy the other of civilisation, animal the other of human, woman the other of man, stranger the other of the native... (Bauman, 1991:14) and so on.

Modernity in this context is the provisional outcome of struggle over power and the right to define, although there seems to be agreement that we have now entered the postmodern phase (struggles over definitions of truths and rights have generally speaking become more fragmented and include more perspectives). However, a recent paradigm shift from modern to postmodern understandings of the subject mirrors the tension between feminism as a political project concerned with women's generally unequal position within the social and symbolic order, and postmodern epistemologies that question the existence of coherent and unified understandings of self and others. My aim in this chapter is to draw out why feminists support the turn towards ideas about identity as non-fixed, and how this understanding is reflected in feminist methodologies. I will also introduce the research process for this project and situate my research within postmodern and post-structural feminist paradigms.

Feminist critics of the Enlightenment subject

As Linda Nicholson (1990) points out, western scholarship has been dominated by attempts to define universal laws and to reveal all-encompassing principles '...which can lay bare the basic features of natural and social reality' (Nicholson, 1990:2). Despite variations within this modernist paradigm, the overall ideal of scholarship is to transcend '...the perspective of any one human being or group...' (ibid), thus proclaiming to represent a 'truthful' because objective and unbiased perspective. For feminists, this is a double-edged sword – on the one hand, feminism came into existence as an Enlightenment project, based on the claim that women who as a category were associated with 'nature' and emotions, had the same ability to reason as men. A focus on the construction of the category of 'woman' within this logocentric paradigm enabled feminists to analyse gender differences within the existing patriarchal social and symbolic structures and, as Susan Bordo points out,

> We all – postmodernists especially – stand on the shoulders of this work (and on the shoulders of those who spoke, often equally univocally, for black experience and culture). Could we now speak of the differences that inflect *gender* if gender had not first been shown to make a difference? (Bordo, 1990:141).

On the other hand, feminists' ongoing concern with gender inequality on a large scale is now based on the recognition that 'woman' can no longer be understood as a category that signifies half the population on this planet, as women of colour have made very clear. Chandra Mohanty, a post-colonial feminist, warns that

> Universal sisterhood, defined as the transcendence of the "male" world, ...ends up being a middle-class, psychologised notion which effectively erases material and ideological power differences within and among groups of women, especially between First and Third World women (and, paradoxically, removes us all as actors from history and politics) (Mohanty, 1992:83).

Nicholson states that logocentric projects which lay claim to 'truth' based on neutrality and transcendence as prerogatives for legitimate knowledge production, have come under attack from various quarters in recent years. Postmodernism has led to the critical questioning of who holds the right to 'know' by highlighting that 'truths' are being legitimised within structures and institutions that hold power based on the distinctions made between insiders ('knowers/authority') and outsiders ('non-knowers/non-authority') (Nicholson, 1990). Postmodern feminist bell hooks for example stresses the importance of a 'politics of difference' and supports the construction of new discursive fields to enable dialogue which includes those 'who have not traditionally been compelled by politicised intellectual practice to speak with one another' (hooks, 1990:133). The knowledges generated within those new discursive fields pose a challenge to modernist beliefs in the possibility of objective, legitimised and generalised 'truths' by disrupting the insider/outsider paradigm.

The postmodern turn and the increasing awareness that 'woman' as a universal concept silences marginalized voices, has led feminists to critique these traditions while recognising their own implication within logocentrisms; feminist philosopher Rosi Braidotti for example insisists on the importance of recognising that 'feminist theory and practice are historically and conceptually coextensive with, or built into, the modernist project' (Braidotti, 1994:97). Even if the rationalist paradigm is in decline, it still inflects how the world is given meaning to. It then becomes a matter of becoming aware of these traces in order to further disrupt the 'old order' by making it a visible part of critical analyses.

Many powerful feminist analyses have focused on binarisms, for example male/female, masculine/feminine, presence/absence in all its variations. These feminist analyses demonstrated that the symbolic and social order in western societies are based on dualisms where one side dominates and defines the other – the dominant signifies the norm which automatically designates the other as deviant. From early theoretical attempts to explain gender inequalities as based primarily in sexual difference, which developed in the 1980s '...through pluralization into multiple gynocriticisms: the production, for example, of African American, Asian American, Chicana, lesbian Euro American writings' (Stanford Friedman, 1998:25), to more sophisticated concepts which revealed a symbolic order that centres around the 'Law of the Father', feminist theory has had good reason to focus on these binary oppositions. Braidotti, referring to Luce Irigaray's work, highlights that 'the oppression of women is both real and symbolic, that is, it rests as much on material structures of repression as on philosophical presuppostions' (Braidotti, 1991:252). Politically, gender inequalities are not a thing of the past and with increased global flows of people and capital, gender inequalities on a global scale are likely to increase (Pettman, 1996).

How to represent 'Woman'?

As Braidotti points out, the recognition of the limited usefulness of logocentristic feminist analyses has also highlighted the urgent need for new representations of female subjectivity. In order to deconstruct western philosophical frameworks based on hierarchically structured concepts of 'difference' as potentially negative, which are opposed to the overriding principle of potentially positive 'sameness', an alternative system of representation is needed. Multiplicity and difference have to be recognised to expose the illusion of the subject as a totality who is in control of him/herself. Irigaray points out that in the quest for control and individuality, the binarism between body and mind features particularly strongly. 'Woman' in her psychoanalytical reading of western philosophy represents embodied, irreducible difference, a constant reminder that bodies as representations of matter and form are problematic for frameworks based on 'sameness'. According to her, '...woman represents a sense of place for man...' (Irigaray, 1987;122). What is needed, she stresses, is a system of representation that does not deny the possibility of a space where difference is irreducible and embodied. Braidotti picks up on this by suggesting the need for '...alternative figurations as a way out of the old schemes of thought', which could take on the form of intellectual feminist nomadism (Braidotti, 1996:3). She advocates a transdisciplinary approach to knowledge production, a constant movement between discursive fields, being

> ..."in-transit," moving on, passing through, creating connections where things were previously dis-connected or seemed un-related, where there seemed to be "nothing to see"...it also implies the effort to move on to the invention of new ways of relating, of building footbridges between notions. The epistemic nomadism I am advocating can only work, in fact, if it is properly situated, securely anchored in the "in between" zones (Braidotti, 1994:93).

I understand her insistence on the situatedness in 'in-between zones' as a reminder of the necessity to constantly focus on '...the relationship of *matter* to *form* and of the interval *between* the two' (Irigaray, 1987:120, emphasis in original). Reality is a construction, other versions of it are a matter of imagination and desire – at least on the theoretical level, this approach to 'reality' is open to utopias and visions of a different social, cultural or/and political order. With this in mind, it might even become possible to find non-dualistic representations of 'irreducible embodied difference' – a creative space where 'Man' and 'Woman' are recognised as different in form, not matter, a space that remains open enough to allow for playful, joyful, humourous explorations of embodiment in all its forms.

Spatialised constructions of identity

Susan Stanford Friedman takes a similar approach to theorising by highlighting the development in feminist theories of subjectivity and identity which have evolved from a binary focus on masculine/feminine or male/female through various discourses of identity to the most recent discourses on hybridity[3]. She terms the culmination of these discourses 'new geographies of identity' which she conceptualises as a challenge to earlier theories of identity. The emphasis lies now in the middle ground, the 'in-between'; notions of difference and sameness are conceptualised as blurred, as performative and intentional. Identity can be understood as constructed through discursive fields where subjectivities emerge, take on form, change in the interaction with others. Identity, the process of making the self intelligible, seems to take place between concepts of 'difference' and 'sameness'. The 'middle ground' where Braidotti's nomadic subject can roam freely, is not a given territory; it is a political project aimed at challenging the representational system of the rational, in-control subject of western culture by insisting on embodied differences, differences that are lived out and recognised as part of the incredibly complex network of human cultures - different in form, same in matter. Stanford Friedman highlights that this 'new geography' takes place between opposing movements; one the one hand, an emphasis on differences, biological and/or historical, serves as the basis for distinctions between 'us' and 'them' to establish belonging. On the other hand, the recognition of 'differences' can be mobilised as a constant reminder that

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[3] I offer definitions of the term 'hybridity' in the following chapter. In the context of Stanford Friedman's writing 'hybridity' resonates with 'multiplicity' to highlight the fragmentation (non-unity) of the 'I' (Stanford Friedman, 1998).

'belonging' is an imaginary construct – understandings of the relationship between self and other based on this recognition allow for

> the search both material and utopian for fertile borderlands, for the liminal spaces in between, the sites of constant movement and change, the locus of syncretist intermingling of and hybrid interfusion of self and other' (Stanford Friedman, 1998:19).

Discourses of 'self' and 'other' in the context of nationalistic movements for example depend on sharp, oppositional boundaries to construct categories for exclusion and inclusion, to control 'belonging' and 'non-belonging'. Counter-narratives of possible and actual encounters between self and other, which leave space for an exploration of connections and disruptions on a contingent basis, are a challenge to nationalisms and as such a political necessity. Stanford Friedman highlights the ambiguity involved in discussions on identity by emphasising that the construction of collective identity relies on identifications *with* others to formalise 'belonging', while at the same time identification *against* others stabilises the insider/outsider paradigm: 'Difference versus sameness; stasis versus travel; certainty versus interrogation; purity versus mixing: the geographics of identity moves between boundaries of difference and borderlands of liminality' (ibid).

This quote indicates the highly complex relationship between understandings of self and other, regardless of the epistemic location. When Stanford Friedman talks about 'new geographies of identity', it seems to me that she draws freely on previous feminist discourses of identity, regardless of their modernist/poststructuralist/postmodern leanings, in order to create a dense analysis of identity which focuses on the relationships between the various discourses as well as on the relationships across and between understandings of 'self' and 'other'. However, Stanford Friedman also insists on retaining categories such as 'woman', 'women' or 'feminine' to avoid slipping into the '...regressive discourse of postfeminism...' (ibid:32). In order to avoid relativism, she advocates epistemological frameworks with a view '...of changing critical practices, a spatialised metaphoric of history in which what has gone before synchronically remains, continuing to influence the new, however much it is itself subject to change' (ibid:31).

I find this stance attractive for my own project because it neither attempts to go beyond the past nor does it rely on it; rather, such a framework is built on the recognition that the past is subject to interpretation in the here and now. The 'spatialised metaphoric of history' seems to me to be inclusive of a sense of time and space of the before, to be interpreted in the present with a view towards the future. This contextualisation is ongoing and fluid and represents a version of 'middle ground', a space where differences can be recognised as locational and situated. Out of this recognition, differences can then be worked with in order to understand the shifting meanings, beliefs, values, desires and practices that make up individual subjects and subjectivities. The emphasis on differences as located and related within and across the self to others, makes it possible to construct broader categories such as 'woman' or 'cultural identity'. These categories cannot be understood as given; they have to be perceived as unstable and relational. This concept of the subject has political consequences – ethnocultural identity for example cannot simply serve as a common denominator for the construction of sameness. Rather, categories such as cultural identity can be understood as '...a move through narrative space and time...' where the actors '...occupy multiple and shifting positions in relation to each other and to different systems of power relations' (ibid:28).

Braidotti defines cultural identity as 'being external and retrospective...' by which she refers to an underlying oppositional dynamic (Braidotti, 1994:9). Cultural identity moves between sameness and difference on a broad scale – this process of constructing cultural identity takes place externally when I am confronted with 'otherness' as well as with 'sameness'. In New Zealand I may become more 'German' when confronted with 'Kiwimania', but at the same time I may refuse to identify with discourses of Germaness, which re-inscribe stereotypes based on what is perceived to be 'essentially German'. This fluidity is both retrospective and relies on an oppositional dynamic; without my previously formed understanding of who I am as a German woman, I would be unable to position myself in relation/opposition to what appears as a challenge/re-inscription to/of my cultural identity. According to Braidotti, such a locational or positional approach to identity requires a kind of geopolitical literacy based on the recognition of time and place as influences on identifications. However, Braidotti insists that this 'locational feminism' has to be open to the study of 'differences' in all its forms 'without establishing impermeable borders that inhibit the production and visibility of ongoing intercultural exchange and hybridity' (Braidotti, 1994:5). Stanford Friedman broadly defines 'geopolitics' as invoking '...questions of power as they manifest in relation to space on the planet Earth' (Stanford Friedman, 1998:109). This definition makes it possible to insert a spatial axis into questions around the construction of collective identities. 'Space' in this context is not understood as static or empty,

> but rather [as] the spatial organisation of human societies, the cultural meanings and institutions that are historically produced in and through specifically spatial locations. Thinking geopolitical means asking how a spatial entity – local, regional, national, transnational – inflects all individual, collective, and cultural identities' (ibid:110).

Within this framework, spatial location is related in a 'down to earth' manner to the construction of identity. This puts a focus on the relationship between form and matter as well as leaving space for the interval, the place where ideas or desires actually take shape in the world. In this spirit I would like to address the questions 'why did you leave Germany?' in chapter 3, 'what were you hoping to find?' in chapter 4, and finally to bring it 'down to earth', 'what did you find?' in the final chapter.

Language and feminist empirical research

The 'in-between' zones that feminist theory attempts to open up, are represented in language/discourses. According to post-structural theory, language represents not simply words or texts that speak some form of truth, but rather the analysis of language offers an entry point into an understanding of the workings of social relations and organisations. Meanings are constructed and relational – in fact, according to Jacques Derrida, it is an illusion to presume that the 'subject' is in control of the construction of meanings as encapsulated in Descartes' notion of "I think, therefore I am".[4] Derrida reminds us that 'the subject (in its identity with itself, or eventually in its consciousness of its identity with itself, its self-consciousness) is inscribed in language, is a "function" of language…' and that furthermore 'the privilege granted to consciousness…signifies the privilege granted to the present' (Derrida, 1972/1991:67&68). Language and subjectivity can also be conceptualised as constituted through the repression of the knowledge that 'control' is only achieved by refusing to allow 'the enigma of absoute alterity: the Other' (ibid:74) to weave its way into Being. According to Derrida, 'Being' is excess in the form of absence and presence, consciousness and unconsciousness, somewhat elusive but always allied with language: 'Being / speaks / always and everywhere / throughout / language' (ibid:77).

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[4] As Bauman pointed out, modern consciousness is constructed on the assumption that order is a human creation – without the thinking/conscious 'I', there is only the void of non-existence (Bauman, 1991:5).

I want to introduce this very simplistic version of the highly complex idea of 'differance' in this context to emphasise that language and subjectivity are constructions within an 'economy of the same' (Derrida, 1972/1991, Irigaray, 1991) which privileges one over the Other (incidentally the Other also signifies multitude). Each aspect of language (and of the subject constituted through language) always contains repressed elements which have been excluded for the sake of establishing coherence – this is particularly interesting in relation to discourses on collective identity and brings up questions of how categories (such as 'woman' or 'German') are maintained and/or contested and how this is context-related.

Patty Lather highlights this by spelling out some of the challenges of post-structuralism to empirical feminist research. In order to disrupt hierarchies of any kind, it is not enough to simply reverse the order of hierarchical structures, rather,

> The goal is difference without opposition and a shift from a romantic view of the self as unchanging, authentic essence to a concept of "self" as a conjunction of diverse social practices produced and positioned socially, without an underlying essence (Lather, 1991:82).

Lather points out that the constant questioning stance and the on-going de-centring/de-stabilising of fundamental categories involved in post-structural approaches to research, requires of researchers to '"think constantly against [ourselves]" as we struggle toward ways of knowing which move us beyond ourselves' (Lather, 1991:83). This stance aims at a refusal to construct binary oppositions which operate on an inside/outside basis.

Lather emphasises that reflexivity and critique have to be the main components in feminist research to avoid the exclusion or demonisation of some 'other'. She suggests that by questioning the research process on an on-going basis, the researcher becomes vigilant towards tendencies of appropriating the 'other'. By constantly considering that any form of representation involves exclusions, Lather suggests that feminist empirical research has to be grounded in the acknowledgement of situated knowledges and located actors; this has to happen within a conceptual framework based on the understanding that context matters and shapes processes and provisional outcomes. I interpret Lather's stance as a reminder that within this understanding no position is necessarily privileged over any other position – what matters are the relations between positions, discourses and actors and the ensuing politics. Consequently, any insistence on authority or expert knowledge has to come under intense scrutiny because authority (as a modern concept) is always based on exclusions and privileges. Knowledge production has to become transparent to such a degree that the inevitable exclusions and appropriations of 'others' are visible as part of the process, due to the specific location of the researcher and the overall project. Claims to universal knowledge can no longer be made if location matters.

Anne Opie draws attention to the limitations of feminist interpretations of qualitative research data and highlights the need for a methodology that '...permits a more reflexive, flexible understanding of our [own] location...' (Opie, 1992:67). Opie advocates a close reading of transcripts in order to become aware of

> ...the hesitation, contradictoriness and recursiveness of the spoken voice and because of the light they cast on the painful moving across the surfaces of remembrance/nonremembrance, presence/absence...they raise important questions about the weight that ...has traditionally [been] assigned to data which occurs only momentarily... (Opie, 1992:55).

This stresses the importance of reflecting on the workings of 'differance' in language, while Opie also emphasises the point made by Lather: the researcher is always situated in relation to the research and this situatedness is reflected throughout the whole research process. In this sense, the research is dependent on collaboration but the final interpretation of the data is the researcher's. Feminists have highlighted the power relations involved in this. Katherine Borland for example emphasises the potential for exchange/encounter in the research process, if conflict over data interpretation is used as an opportunity for reflection and increased understanding of the other's position (Borland, 1991).

In relation to my own project, I think Borland's point is valid and important but I would question the practicality of implementing her suggestion in my own research. What is important though, is the awareness that my interpretation of the data is one of many possible stories that can emerge out of the interviews. Instead of presenting 'truths', I search for connections between the stories of the participants. My interpretation of how these connections are made, how they change, and what prevents them from taking shape is influenced by my own position as a woman who chose to leave Germany in her late twenties to immigrate to New Zealand with her family.

The Research process

I interviewed thirteen German women[5], aged between 28 and 46 at the time of the interviews, who have been living in New Zealand between two and a half and fifteen years. The interviews were semi-structured, took an hour on average and were conducted in English. The individual interviews were transcribed as soon as possible after our meeting, which helped me to retain a sense of the overall atmosphere during the interview. Transcripts were returned to the participants to be read and commented on. This gave the participants the opportunity to change some of the content or to withdraw parts or all of it, if they felt the need to do so. Most of the interviews were conducted in the home of the participants. In three cases the women came to my house for the interviews. Two interviews took place in the house of a friend.

All of the women identify themselves as German and twelve of them have been born in Germany and grew up there. One of the women was born in South Africa but spoke German with her family, went to a German school in South Africa and moved to Germany when she was 18. For her, ethnocultural identity has been a particularly important concept due to her different locations. 'Being German' had shifting meanings for her in South Africa, in Germany and again, in New Zealand. Another participant grew up in the borderland area of Germany and France, where she went to a French School, being taught every subject in French but speaking German at home and with her friends out of school. Although she grew up in Germany with German parents, she identified as German only in her early twenties and made an extra effort to build up her German identity by consciously embracing 'German culture'. These women's narratives demonstrate the fluidity of ethnocultural identity and the importance of the relationship between place, self and others.

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[5] See Appendices for more information on the participants and the interview questions.

My intention was to find the participants through networking. I approached the first interviewee, a friend of mine, directly to ask for an interview. She provided me with names and contacts of other potentially interested German women, some of whom I knew. I used this snowball system after every interview, which in the end generated a network or web of women who would all know at least one other participant. Sometimes this knowledge is reflected in the data when similar opinions or statements emerge. If I knew the participant well, our interview would be more focused on specific aspects because we had previously talked about our situations in Germany and New Zealand. I found these interviews generated very substantive data because I was able to ask detailed questions. My interview partners knew me well enough to go into considerable detail and offered their responses very freely and thoughtfully. The uneven distribution of the data in chapters 3, 4 and 5 is the result of the difference in 'usefulness' of the individual interviews. However, every participant is represented in this study, albeit to different degrees.

About half of the interviewees were complete strangers to me. When I interviewed women I did not know previously, we spend some time trying to 'locate each other', positioning ourselves in relation to the other. This took place through reciprocal questioning about our experiences of immigration or growing up in Germany or whatever else seemed pertinent at that point in time. My own positions depended on my relationship to the interviewee – for example, in some cases our children go to the same school and we knew each other as parents. During the interview, these positions would change and we would slip into the roles of researcher and participant, only to be interrupted by a child that needed her mum – all of a sudden we were back in a situation where I was the visitor and she the parent to a young child. In another setting, the interviewee would turn into the researcher, probing for my responses in relation to the research topic. What became apparent during this phase of the research was the performative aspect of qualitative research and the multiplicity of positions and roles we would take on during the interviews, building bridges to each other and the topic from shifting and changing locations.

The focus concepts of 'location' is reflected in my choice of participants who have changed location in a physical and symbolic sense by immigrating to 'the other side of the world' and had to re-locate themselves in a different culture and environment. Discourses on experiences of 'belonging' and 'being different' feature strongly in their stories: from experiences of feeling 'different' in Germany or respectively of feeling 'at home' there, to feeling 'more German now' in New Zealand than they did in Germany, to feeling 'lost and constantly different' in New Zealand, the stories all demonstrate the difficulties and struggles involved in locating the self and making the self intelligible. Concepts pertaining to location in the sense of place, space and self are interlinked in their stories; depending on the 'location', experiences of 'difference' and/or 'sameness' vary and change. In my understanding subjectivity and identity as expressed through the speaking 'I' take shape by relating concepts. For example, by remembering feelings of non-belonging in Germany in relation to feelings of being 'different' in New Zealand, discourses of cultural/national identity based on fixed or essential characteristics are effectively de-stabilised in the process of discovering the 'sameness' of feeling 'different' in both locations. 'I' have to constantly re-locate 'myself' in order to construct a space for enunciation, even if the concept of 'being German' seems to offer a fleeting sense of stability in the new/unknown cultural environment.

Methodology

Feminist poststructuralism seems particularly suited to an analysis of positionality and location because it focuses on '...the relations between language, subjectivity, social organisations and power' (Weedon, 1987:12). Subjectivities are constructed through language and discourse and include '...the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world' (ibid:32).

Julia Kristeva introduced the concept of 'the subject in process' to highlight heterogeneity, 'which, known as the unconscious, shapes the signifying function' (Kristeva, 1980:135). Following Lacan and Freud, she underscores desire for the lost or renounced mother as that which is repressed in 'a civilisation dominated by transcendental rationality' but which nevertheless introduces desire into language (ibid:140). According to Elisabeth Grosz (1989), Kristeva's intention is to highlight 'the distinction between a maternal semiotic and a paternal symbolic[6]'; the subject and her/his illusion of control is constantly undermined by the repressed desire in language which works as a driving force in the continuous substitution with one object of desire for another. The subject in process is neither coherent nor unified: heterogeneity expresses itself through language, posing the threat of rupturing the symbolic through the repressed desire for a representation of the maternal[7] bond.

Weedon strongly argues for the potential for feminists to work out of post-structural understandings of subjectivity in order to explain why subject positions can be contradictory. Concepts such as 'woman' can no longer be universalised, they have to be understood as culturally specific constructs. An awareness of cultural specificity offers the possibility for 'a contextualisation of experience and an analysis of its constitution and ideological power' (Weedon in Gavey, 1989:465). This process highlights the contingency of identifications and understandings of the self in relation to 'others' in the form of people, ideas, values, wider social structures, the environment and so forth.

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[6] The symbolic refers to 'meaning and signification... language as nomination, sign, and syntax' (Kristeva, 1980:136). Semiotic here refers to 'the actual organisation, or disposition, within the body, of instinctual drives as they affect language and its practice, in dialectical conflict with the symbolic' (ibid:18).

[7] This 'maternal bond' signifies the pre-oedipal stage before the entry into language/the symbolic.

Subject positions are multiple, contradictory, a potential site for conflict and change, and make any concept of a rational, unified subject in control of her/his consciousness an impossibility. Weedon points out that 'subjectivity is produced in a whole range of discursive practices – economic, social and political – the meaning of which are a constant site of struggle over power' (ibid). In relation to cultural identity for example, this means that there can be no essence or essential characteristic that delineates the 'typical German' in contrast to the 'typical Kiwi'. What it means to be German or Pakeha or Maori depends to a large extent on the discourses that are available for the construction of meaning[8]. To be German has obviously different meanings in Germany than in New Zealand, due to the different historical contexts. For example, what New Zealand represented for Germans who decided to leave Germany, and what Germany represents for them now, depends on the specificities of their past and present social, political, economic and environmental context – in summary, it depends on the discourses and practices they have come in contact with over the course of their lifetime. The analysis of the interviews, presented in chapters 3, 4 and 5 is based on this theoretical understanding.

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[8] Discourse analysis describes a variety of analytical approaches to texts such as transcripts of interviews, documents or, as Nicola Gavey points out, even social practices. Gavey defines discourse analysis as '...the careful reading of texts, with a view to discerning discursive patterns of meaning, contradictions, and inconsistencies. It is an approach that identifies and names language processes people use to constitute their own and others' understanding of personal and social phenomena. These processes are related to the reproduction of or challenge to the distribution of power between social groups and within institutions' (Gavey, 1989:467).

Chapter 2

Migration and the concepts of place, space and identity

In this chapter I introduce some of the key terms that inform this study. My approach is interdisciplinary and consequently I have drawn on numerous fields of inquiry for this research. Literary criticism, cultural studies, postcolonial studies, cultural geography and feminist theory all have much to write about migration and identity. There appears to be quite a bit of overlap between these fields and the concepts I have focused on are approached from slightly different angles within each field. The concept of 'place', for example, features strongly within the fields of cultural geography, feminist theory and cultural studies. Migration as the process of 'changing places', 'crossing borders' and 'becoming' rather than 'being', can be read as 'hybridity' in postcolonial studies, as 'nomadism' in feminist theory, and as 'cosmopolitanism' in cultural studies. These concepts in their various guises capture different approaches and generate different insights. They can be interpreted with a focus on internal processes (conceptual and/or psychoanalytical constructs) or as external (physical bordercrossing). Although there is a wealth of literature on the topic of migration from the 'underdeveloped' to the 'developed' countries, in the case of feminist inquiry often with a specific focus on gender, ethnicity and race, literature on migration, particularly from a postmodern perspective (Boyle and Halfacree, 1999), within 'developed' countries is less available. This indicates a blindspot towards an unacknowledged centre: in order to subvert or disrupt the centre, it needs to be heard, seen, touched, *explored* - it needs to be imagined in as much detail as possible. A feminist postmodern perspective might be helpful in this because it offers a focus on the

> ...recognition of the sheer diversity of women's experiences regarding migration, explained not just in terms of conventional categories, such as class and age, but also acknowledging culture, personality and individuality....with emphasis given to the highly contextual (in the non-trivial sense) development of actions such as migration (Boyle and Halfacree, 1999:15).

A Centre? What Centre?

A postmodern framework with its focus on surfaces, flows and multi-directional movements emphasises the blurring of boundaries and the loss of distinctive categories. Some forms of post-structuralism focus on the fragmentation of identity and critically questions the ability of individuals to develop subjectivity based on conscious self-awareness (Butler 1990, Gillian, 1993) – identity is theorised as '...performative, focusing on how dominant discourses are repeated by 'subjects'...', where any reference to the possibility of conscious agency becomes suspect of indicating an 'autonomous knower' (Nelson, 1999:348). A critique of this position draws attention to individuals' choices in the process of identification.

From this perspective, 'doing identity'[9] is not simply understood as a performance, but as an inherently unstable, partial and never transparent process (ibid). The focus shifts from hegemonic discourses as formative forces to

> ...how individuals and /or collective subjects do identity in relation to various discursive processes (e.g. class, race, gender and sexuality), to other subjects, and to layers of institutions and practices – all located concretely in time and space (ibid:349).

For a project on migration, the recognition of the situatedness of the subject in the historical context of the 'country of origin' adds to an understanding of the influence of place and time on subsequent understandings of the self in the country of settlement. Taking time and space into consideration allows for an exploration of the differences and specificities of the process of identification in a globalised context.

'Doing Identity' in the Global Village

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[9] I would like to refer back to Derrida's concept of 'differance' here to highlight that 'doing identity' can insinuate an 'in control subject' – I am using these terms with Derrida and Kristeva in mind and would like to emphasise that these terms can be misleading; I would argue that 'doing identity' is easier said that done. However, the conceptualisation of identity as choice and performance is part of the literature I reviewed for this chapter.

A perspective on migration as a process that is based on the ongoing exchange between the 'known/old' and the 'unknown/new', between what has given form to cultural identities in all its various, non-homogenous aspects and the challenges to these identities, offers a complex image of the intricate development of a sense of placement, both internal and external. From a feminist perspective, geographer Linda McDowell states that

> In all sorts of disciplines, scholars are writing about migration and travel, borders and boundaries, place and non-place in a literal and metaphorical sense. These debates reflect the huge disruptions and transformations in the links between specific peoples and particular places that have taken place in recent decades (McDowell, 1999:1).

Rina Benmayor and Andrew Skotnes who are working with oral history and life stories, describe this struggle to find a position and/or place to make alliances from, as indicative of

> ...the tensions between the realities of an increasingly interconnected world and the global village as a new master myth of centrifuge; between the defence of the tribe (read ethnicity) and the complexity of identity struggles today (Benmayor and Skotnes, 1994:10).

The construct of the global village eradicates the immediate need to 'be someone specific' by making everyone part of the tribe (of humanity) without positioning the self. To claim membership in the 'global village' defers the need to recognise differences, or, from a psychoanalytical perspective, it constructs the illusion of unity and coherence by denying dependencies. On an imaginary level, the 'global village' can be read as an attempt '...to arrest rigidly the tensions of the opposition between the fragmented perceived body and the unified, specular body' (Grosz, 1990:43)[10].

To 'have a place' in the centre of United Europe (as an aspect of the 'global village') puts Germans (as an ethnic construct) in the middle of this discursive struggle to uphold an image of unity in the face of increasing pressure from the 'outside' (and the inside with an intense debate about who is 'German'), which constantly threatens to disrupt the 'imagined community'[11] of self-determination and control. On an imaginary level, the 'global village' is constructed around notions of sameness and homogenisation – otherness is extracted through continuous (centrifugal) pressure, which pin the other to the margins. The image that emerges is one of a curiously empty, apparently motionless space where potential disturbances are relegated to the outside. The idea of the 'global village' can only be constructed by someone who 'belongs' to the centre - by definition, the centrifugal force is a fictitious force which is not experienced by the subjects outside the frame of reference.

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[10] This relates back to Kristeva's understanding of the symbolic as distinctive to the semiotic – the 'global village' construct reflects control through language by condensing and displacing multiplicity.

To further understand the links spelled out by McDowell earlier in this chapter between identity and '...migration and travel, borders and boundaries, place and non-place in a literal and metaphorical sense', I will widen the discussion by briefly turning to the field of human/cultural geography. I argue that the metaphor of the 'new master myth of centrifuge' re-appears in literature on the globalisation of the economy with the assumption that a shift from temporal to spatial conceptions has taken place. I will use David Harvey's concept of 'time-space' compression to highlight dominant discourses around place in the context of the globalisation of the economy. In this framework, migration is theorised as an effect of the movement of capital – migration as a multi-layered, shifting, fluid and ambiguous process, that involves negotiation over the 'doing of identity', is overlayed by a focus on stability. Concepts like 'place' become tied up with identity in an attempt to fix movement in order to offer resistance to the (presumably) hegemonic powers of economic discourses. Feminist geographers have questioned this approach by exposing the underlying masculinist paradigms. From a feminist perspective, a conceptualisation of place as open to change allows for porous boundaries where difference can be recognised in positive terms.

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[11] I am referring to Benedict Anderson's analysis of the emergence of the modern nation state as a construct that relied on the unifying force of language, a regulated economy and technology. , 'What, in a positive sense, made the new communities imaginable was a half-fortuitous, but explosive, interaction between a system of production and productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communications (print) and the fatality of human linguistic diversity.' (Anderson, 1991:42/43). Anderson's notion of 'fatalism' is interesting because he points out that spoken languages were too diverse to offer a useful market for publishing which in turn led to a homogenisation of language along the lines of majorities. '... These varied idiolects were capable of being assembled, within definite limits, into print-languages far fewer in number' (ibid). It now became possible to determine who belonged to the (newly constructed) language field and who did not.

A ‘place’ in the centre

David Harvey defines time-space compression as the ‘collapse of spatial barriers [that] has undermined older material and territorial definitions of place...’ (Harvey, 1993:7). Time-space compression represents potentially threatening chaos without boundaries, which puts a new emphasis on ‘place’ and place-bound identity as a source of stability. The link between place and identity is important and seems implicit in Harvey’s undertaking. According to Harvey, the construction of place is predominantly tied up with concepts of space and capitalism: ‘...excess capital can be exported from one place (region, nation) to another place within an existing set of space relations....’(Harvey, 1993:6). Movements become instantaneous, obliterating a sense of space; capital flows through space; place is an effect of this flow, constructed in the process through the unevenness of capital investments. Harvey states that both ‘”Difference” and “otherness” is *produced* in space through the simple logic of uneven capital investment and a proliferation of geographical division of labour’ (ibid, emphasis in original).

In contrast to Harvey’s approach, feminist analyses stress the need for differentiation in relation to concepts like ‘place’ and ‘the economy’ which can function as blanket terms, thus covering up the ‘differences within’. J.K. Gibson-Graham advocate a feminist perspective that allows for differentiation in relation to economic discourses. One of their main points is that by accepting the discourse of capitalism and its identification with the ‘market’ as the productive force of difference, non-market transactions are marginalized and even excluded from the so called ‘capitalist economy’ (Gibson-Graham1996:261). They argue that the blanket term ’market’ functions as a hegemonizing idiom, obscuring the potentially fragmented and ‘...different practices scattered over the landscape that are (for convenience and in violation of difference) often seen as the same...’ (Gibson-Graham, 1996:260). In relation to ‘place’, feminist geographer Doreen Massey points out that the desire to repress chaos and the fear to loose control marks Harvey’s understanding of ‘place’: ‘...when time-space compression is seen as disorientating, and as threatening to fracture personal identities (as well as those of place), then a recourse to place as a source of authenticity and stability may be one of the responses' (Massey, 1994:122). Harvey's perspective with its implied link between place, identity and capital becomes problematic when trying to understand migration as something other than a disruptive process. Within dominant discourses the migrant/foreigner is by definition suspicious[12]. Harvey's preoccupation with stability as a counterforce to the destabilising force of capitalism reinforces the deviant position of the migrant.

To further highlight the necessity to 'complicate the picture', Rina Benmayor and Andor Skotnes (1994) emphasise the potential for political resistance and cultural transformation that complex constructions of identities can hold. Dichotomies of 'us' and 'them' can no longer be easy strategies, if the 'migrants' become individuals who show traces of 'sameness' as well as 'difference' in the cultural context of the host society. It becomes difficult, hopefully even impossible, to insist on generalisations such as 'Germans are materialistic' in contrast to New Zealanders who are 'laid-back and easy-going'. The same applies to ideas about places; ideas about Germany as 'technological' and New Zealand as 'natural' reconstruct paradigms that are built on oppositions. If we can understand migration on a global scale as a movement that brings the local and the global together, as a positive challenge for both migrants and 'natives' to forge alliances on a contingent basis, globalisation and migration hold the promise of bridging differences with the aim of respecting 'otherness', which is after all, a part of every individual in the form of the unconscious. From my perspective, this would be a big step towards the idea of 'living in a better place' and it would certainly counter fears about migrants as strangers and disruptions to an imagined stability before globalisation.

Harvey seems to suggest that places (and identities) used to be stable until globalisation took off which created 'considerable insecurity within and between places'

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[12] David Horrocks and Eva Kolinsky highlight that the term 'migrant' is not neutral; it '...includes a hidden assumption about the destabilising and negative effect of migration. At its most descriptive, "migrant" acknowledges the fact that the person or group in question has arrived at the present domicile through "migration", i.e. leaving on place of residency and settling in another. A "migrant", however, is also defined as a person who "continues to move from place to place". Such a person either lives in nomadic fashion or alternates, not unlike migratory birds, between homes and countries. In either case, "migrant" emphasises movement, not settlement, distance, not belonging. "Migrants" in their new society seem under suspicion of detachment and divided loyalties' (Horrocks and Kolinsky, 1996:xi).

(Harvey, 1993:7). One of the outcomes of this insecurity is an increased competition between places, which leads to

> …interplace competition…much of postmodern production…is precisely about the selling of place as part and parcel of an ever-deepening commodity culture. The result is that places that seek to differentiate themselves end up creating a kind of serial replication of homogeneity (Harvey, 1993:8).

Again, as in the 'global village' construct, we are left with sameness, this time constructed around capital and globalisation. It seems that the metaphor of the centrifuge functions as a stabiliser in the face of potentially threatening fragmentation and the demands for recognition of difference. Place in Harvey's understanding appears to represent a peculiar lack of form, a vacuum created by space and the flow of capital – place in Harvey's postmodern landscape represents little but a desperate plea for stillness in the centre of the storm. In this scenario, the migrant signifies the constant threat of movement from the outside, breaking through the illusion of placebound identities.

'Place' as 'non-fixed'

Feminist critiques of this one-dimensional understanding of the links between the flow of people and the flow of capital highlight the potential of frameworks that use a more dynamic approach to the concept of place. Doreen Massey states that

> It is capitalism and its developments which are argued to determine our understanding and experience of space. This is, however, clearly insufficient. There are many other things that clearly influence experience, for instance ethnicity and gender (Massey, 1993: 60).

In contrast to Harvey, Massey hints at some form of agency involved in all of this movement that is not entirely determined by capitalism and its developments. Linda McDowell argues in a similar fashion that place as a concept should be understood as signifying

> …boundaries that are both social and spatial….Places are made through power relations which construct the rules which define boundaries…they define who

> belongs to a place and who may be excluded, as well as the location or site of the experience (McDowell, 1999:4).

McDowell emphasises the importance of the concept of scale to define '…different *kinds* of places…' (ibid, emphasis in original). This conceptualisation attempts to take the global as well as the local into consideration by highlighting that

> …localities are produced by the intersection of global and local processes – social relations that operate at a range of spatial scales….Places may no longer be "authentic" and "rooted in tradition"…they are instead defined by the socio-spatial relations that intersect there and give a place its distinctive character (ibid).

In this understanding, localities or places are part of space – the centre and the margin can no longer be easily defined. The distinctive character of a place is under continuous re-construction. In this image, the migrant can be understood in positive terms as a link between the global and the local – 'place' ceases to be the result of 'interplace competition' and becomes the site for human encounters. This concept of place removes it from the overpowering presence of globalisation as an economic process and allows instead for the development of ideas about 'better' places from a critical social justice perspective, such as feminism.

Feminist geographers (Massey, 1994, McDowell, 1999, Gillian, 1993) have pointed out that in geography place and space are often treated as separate and asymmetrical categories; to problematise this understanding, Gillian Rose' feminist critique of the roots of geography as a discipline constructed around the male gaze, is helpful:

> The geographical imagination thinks that space can always be known and mapped, and that's what its transparency, its innocence signifies: that it's infinitely knowable: that there are no obscure corners into which geographical vision cannot penetrate (Rose, 1993:70).

She expands on this by highlighting that space as the penetrable, knowable and visible vantage point relies on its other, namely 'place' which represents the opaque and unknowable. 'In that sense, as the other of space, place is a "spatial paradox, a territory defined by its lack of definition": …a no man's land' (ibid). Rose sees in this conception the danger of reinforcing the masculine fears of embodied attachment: 'Place' in this understanding bears the potential of gestation, of yet unformed monstrosities, unless it becomes 'mappable and knowable'. Harvey, for example, worries about the concept of place as a '...possible expression as a passionate and fascistic nationalism' (Rose, 1993: 70/71). According to Harvey,

> ...there is a much deeper crisis of homelessness to be found in the modern world; many people have lost their roots, their connections to the homeland. Even those who physically stay in place may become homeless (rootless) through the inroads of modern means of communication...the rootedness...of man is threatened at its core (Harvey, 1993:9).

Harvey touches on the potential attraction that 'place', built on the assumption of stability, holds for many people in times of change. In discourses around origin/roots, the migrant's subject positions are limited – he/she is severed from the homeland and thus found 'lacking'. The migrant herself signifies emptiness, to be filled with longing for the past and/or fear of the (hostile) strangeness of the 'new'.

Roots and/or routes?

Cultural critic Susan Stanford Friedman refers to Gayatri Spivak as a post-colonial critic who is highly suspicious of the notion of roots in the form of stability based on depth, attachment and origin: 'If there's one thing I totally distrust, in fact, more than distrust, despise and have contempt for it is people looking for roots' (Spivak in Stanford Friedman, 1998:152). To contextualise this 'scorn for roots', Stanford Friedman emphasises Spivak's relatively privileged position '...as a nomadic intellectual from a well-off family, [who has had]...the wherewithal to remain diasporically "on the run"...' (ibid). This reminder to pay attention to context indicates a potential need for less privileged groups or individuals to first establish 'roots' before doing away with them.

Stanford Friedman takes up the homonym routes/roots to point out that identity often comes into play through some form, literal or figuratively, of displacement (Friedman, 1998:151). For her, Spivak's notion of 'rootlessness' as always being on the run only becomes meaningful when it is tied to its apparent opposite, being rooted in one place. ‘Routes are pathways between here and there, two points of rootedness’ (Friedman, 1998;151). This concept indicates an oscillation between past, present and future identifications, where ‘route’ describes the process of movement between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’. Concepts which frame the meaning of place and identity in terms of roots/stability, cannot account for the diversity of social relations involved, let alone offer theories of the subject that are open enough to allow for the contradictions and ambiguities that prevent any form of coherent and fixed identity. Chantal Mouffe articulates this movement between past/present by stating that

> The history of the subject is the history of his/her identifications, and there is no concealed identity to be rescued beyond the latter. There is thus a double movement. On the one hand a movement of decentring which prevents the fixation of a set of positions around a preconstituted point. On the other hand, and as a result of this essential non-fixity, the opposite movement: the institution of nodal points, partial fixations which limit the flux of the signified under the signifier’ (Mouffe, 1993:78).

In the process of constructing meaning, constructs of the self and of place depend on both, the opportunity to create partial fixations to develop a sense of continuity and ‘sameness/familiarity’ in some form, while acknowledging and respecting the challenges of ‘otherness’ and instability ‘en route’.

In terms of national/cultural/ethnic identity, these processes are embedded in discourses that define belonging and non-belonging on a large scale. ‘Identity is formed through definitions of similarity, continuity, and difference and different versions of identity work to include and exclude populations in specific ways’ (Mackey, 2000:125). This definition of identity formation highlights the political aspect of the process and the importance of the symbolic work of ‘…*imagining* and creating national identity’ (ibid, emphasis in original). In terms of migration, Madan Sarup puts the following observation forward:

> When migrants cross a boundary there is *hostility* and welcome. Migrants are included and excluded in different ways. Whilst some boundary walls are breaking down, others are being made even stronger to keep out the migrant, the refugee and the exile’ (Sarup, 1994;95, emphasis in original).

Sarup points out that 'we are born into relationships that are always based in a *place*' (ibid:97, emphasis in original). Migration then is transformation where the migrants' encounters with the 'new' and her/his memories of and attachment to the 'old' can generate creativity or spiritual death, '...every step forward can also be a step back. Exile can be an affliction but it can also be a transfiguration – it can be a resource....identity is not to do with being but with becoming' (ibid:98).

Although in Sarup's perspective 'place' appears to be a somewhat stable entity, his migrants are changed by place but in turn also change it. This happens in a positive sense if through the encounter with the new/unknown ideas about self and other are changed through openeness and empathy. Or, negatively, if ideas about self and other are fixed and inflexible which leads to the construction of new divisions between 'us' and 'them'– in both instances place and identity are part of the ongoing process of 'becoming something different'. To put it into different words, change is inevitable, but whether one faces it with resistance and the desire for stability, or with an open mind towards new possibilities, is a matter of what has happened on the way.

Hybrids, cosmopolitans and other shapeshifters

In post-colonial studies, the term 'hybridity' can be employed to catch this meaning of 'being on the move' and being exposed to the unfamiliar, albeit in the context of the colonised/coloniser. Although according to Homi Bhabha '*all* cultural statements and systems are constructed in a space that he calls the "Third Space of enunciation"' (Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin, 1999:118, my emphasis). This in-between space requires

> ...a willingness to descend into that alien territory [which]...may open the way to conceptualising an *inter*national culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's *hybridity* (Bhabha in Ashcroft et al., 1999:119, emphases in original).

Critics have pointed out that the term 'hybridity' has been influential in 'imperial and colonial discourse in negative accounts of the union of disparate races' (ibid:120); the use of the term has also been criticised for its tendency to de-localise and de-historicise specific cultural conditions by potentially idealising all cultural encounters, as if challenge and resistance against dominant powers were part and parcel of the term (ibid).

Pnina Werbner makes a distinction between cosmopolitan and transnational migrants to reflect on the political aspects of 'displacements' and cultural encounters. Although she agrees that all migrants are hybrids ('they think globally'), she insists that their point of exit separates them into different categories:

> ...their motivations and means are quite different. Cosmopolitans,...[are] the gorgeous butterflies in the greenhouse of global culture...[the] multilingual gourmet tasters who travel among global cultures, savouring cultural differences as they flit with consummate ease between social worlds (Werbner, 1997:11/12).

Werbner highlights that hybridity in itself can be used to describe 'cultural consumption': for cosmopolitans, a change of place offers the possibility of expanding the self within the limits of hegemonic practices (Werbner, 1997)[13]. Cultural hybridity becomes part of a life style, made possible by globalisation and technology. For the transnational, hybridity is more of a byproduct of economic necessity. According to Werbner, 'Most transnationals have to contend with incredible social and economic hardships...', they represent the '...bees and ants who build new hives and nests in foreign lands...their hybridity is unconscious, organic and collectively negotiated in practice' (Werbner, 1997:12). This important distinction between different forms of cultural hybridity seems to rely nevertheless on underlying assumptions with regard to consciousness and desire. Without entering into a deeper discussion on the ambiguities involved in the use of the term 'hybridity', I find it useful as a background description of the processes of change that take place in inter-cultural encounters. However, from my perspective an uncritical use of the term 'hybridity' runs the danger of obscuring the political implications and the asymmetrical power relations inherent in globalisation and migration, particularly within 'developed' countries.

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[13] Rosi Braidotti (1994) attempts to define feminist politics based on a 'nomadic' subjectivity from the perspective of 'cosmopolitans' with a political edge. This politics allows for resistance and challenges of the status quo within a specific cultural context, but may also be applicable to international encounters. Braidotti argues for subjectivity based on conscious desire for encounters with 'difference' and 'otherness'. This form of subjectivity requires (critical) education and, arguably, exposure to Western models of thought: '...nomadic consciousness is akin to what Foucault called countermemory; it is a form of resisting assimilation or homologation into dominant ways of representing the self' (Braidotti, 1994:25). For Braidotti, roots are a hindrance to the development of a consciousness that has '...forgotten to forget injustice and symbolic poverty...the nomadic style is about transitions and passages without predetermined destinations or lost homelands' (ibid).

Chantal Mouffe, writing as a political theorist with a particular focus on radical democracy and citizenship, points out that understandings of the self in terms of difference/sameness take place on a personal level as well as on a political scale. 'Instead of seeing the different forms of identity as allegiances to a place or as a property, we ought to realise that they are the stake of a power struggle' (Mouffe, 1994:110). Mouffe goes on to state that 'national' identity for example has to be understood as '...both the scene and the object of political struggle' (ibid). The imminent danger in this struggle for collective identity is to succumb to the desire to construct internal coherence through a focus on 'sameness' which leads to the exclusion of 'others' as different from 'us'. Mouffe suggests that this categorisation can be overcome by conceiving of identity, both on the collective and individual level, as

> ...a "difference to oneself, as "one's own culture as someone else's culture"[14]...By accepting that only hybridity creates us as separate entities, it affirms and upholds the nomadic character of any identity' (Mouffe, 1994:111).

To link this up with migration could mean that to be 'on route' between past (old identifications) and becoming (encounters with the unknown/new) holds the potential of making connections on the way, thus dividing allegiances because '...where identities are multiplied, passions are divided' (ibid). In this framework, the migrant becomes a positive force that signifies the possibility of 'contingent belongings', rather than posing a threat to an imagined stability that relies on dichotomies.

To get further away from concepts of origin, authenticity, biologically determined characteristics, in short essentialist understandings of the subject, concepts of hybridity have taken on the main stage in postmodern and postcolonial discussions on racism and ethnicity: 'At the broadest level of conceptual debate there seems to be a consensus over the utility of hybridity as antidote to essentialist subjectivity' (Papastergiadis, 1997:273).

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[14] Bauman takes a similar stance towards an understanding of self/other which does not depend on binary oppositions. He suggests that 'The right of the Other to his [her] strangerhood is the only way in which my own right may express, establish and defend itself. It is from the right of the Other that my right is put together. The "I am responsible for the Other", and "I am responsible for myself", come to mean the same thing' (idib:236).

Werbner points out that '…the founding assumption of anti-essentialism has been the fluidity, hybridity and openness of national culture and diasporic collective identities' (Werbner, 1997:226).

To further clarify the political importance of breaking away from all forms of essentialising, a basic understanding of how rascist discourses operate seems useful. To illustrate this point, Nira Yuval-Davis highlights from a post-colonial perspective that the term 'ethnicity', if evoked in the context of racist discourses, relies on

> …the use of ethnic categorisations (which might be constructed around biological, cultural, religious, linguistic or territorially based boundaries) as signifiers of a fixed, deterministic genealogical difference of the "Other". This "Otherness" serves as a basis for legitimising exclusion and/or subordination and/or exploitation of the members of the collectivity thus labelled….Ethnicity relates to the politics of collectivity boundaries, dividing the world into "us" and "them" around, usually, myths of common origin and/or common destiny, and engaging in constant processes of struggle and negotiation (Yuval-Davis, 1997:193).

Based on this definition of racist discourses and the ensuing politics, Yuval-Davis highlights the power struggles which are part of the construction of collectivities. In this context, ethnicity is produced in relation to the 'outside' as well as being constructed internally through sometimes intense power struggles over the rights to define boundaries/categories. Werbner states that ethnicity can become the site of essentialism from various angles – lines between '…who essentialises whom, when and for what purposes' shift according to whose interests are articulated the most forcefully at that point in time. Yuval-Davis points out that in the context of western societies, a focus on ethnicity might be of paramount importance to disrupt the process of the 'naturalisation' of dominant ethnicities.

> Ethnicity is not specific to oppressed and minority groupings. On the contrary, one of the measures of the success of hegemonic ethnicities is the extent to which they succeed in "naturalising" their ideologies and practices to their own advantage' (Yuval-Davis, 1997:194).

This relates back to my observation at the beginning of this chapter, that literature on migration within 'developed' countries is relatively scarce. Could this be an indication of the success of 'naturalised' western ethnicities? It seems useful at this point to state that from my perspective German women in this study represent an ethnocultural group; my intention is to 'de-naturalise' western, in this case, German ethnicity by highlighting some of the constructs that lead to imaginary identifications with the consequence that a sense of 'us' and 'others' is established[15].

Diasporas, ethnicity and race

Concepts of 'diaspora' indicate a form of collectivity thrown together through displacement where identification takes place through ethnification, '...the identification with a foreign homeland beyond the borders of the nation-state' (Friedman, 1997:71)[16]. From a feminist perspective, Floya Anthias (1998) criticises the use of the term in literature of transnational movements and issues around globalisation. She highlights the overall reluctance in much of the literature to move away from notions of 'origin' in the construction of identities. Anthias points out that this approach neglects a focus on possible trans-ethnic solidarities and commonalities. In the case of gender this is of particular importance to be able to understand 'diaspora' as '...an enabling device, for understanding differentiated and highly diverse forms of transnational movement and settlement' (Anthias, 1998:558). Anthias highlights the fact that within postmodern literature on the topic the focus is on inter-group relations, which assumes a country of origin as basis for the experiences in the country of settlement. Anthias points out that this puts too much emphasis on 'origin' while neglecting other trajectories, for example class and gender.

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[15] In this context the statement that 'a black German is an oxymoron' comes to mind – May Opitz et al. (1992) pointed out that in Germany to be 'not white' is commonly understood as such a deviation from the norm that 'belonging' within the constraints of ethnocultural German identity becomes an impossibility. In this case, the body features as the marker of irreducible (and unacceptable) difference.

[16] Although this concept does not feature strongly in my research, I find it useful to outline some of the ideas surrounding it. Again, 'diaspora' seems to describe non-western/non-naturalised ethnicities, but as stated earlier, this does not mean that it has no application in trans-western encounters – in this case it might be a matter of re-conceptualising the form identification with the 'homeland' (and all that this might represent) takes.

Robert Cohen for example, an influential writer on the topic of transnational movements, focuses on the '...trajectories of migration and settlement and the reconfiguration of ethnic solidarities.' (Cohen in Anthias, 1998:561). According to Anthias, Cohen's work retains the classical definition of 'diaspora' as 'scattered seed' that has been driven from the homeland more or less forcefully, but he is open to '...modem or global aspects arising from 'mass movements of population and the slow decline of the nation state'' (Cohen in Anthias, 1998:562). Hidden behind this conception of diaspora is the notion of 'place' as origin (and, from a feminist perspective, as the other of 'space'). Place is conceptualised as offering the capacity of unity, of offering a home in the sense of Harvey's understanding - the individual finds stability through familiarity/sameness at the cost of repressing ambiguities. To be 'on route' in this context is the painful process of losing 'roots', rather than the opportunity for a multiplication of identifications and a scattering of passions.

Ethnicity as non-essential

Avtar Brah advocates the theorisation of ethnicity in anti-racist dicourses to avoid notions of 'origin' and to introduce contingent foundations for discussions on collective identities. She highlights the connotations of debates on 'difference' in racial terms, which can have the effect of putting a sharp focus on issues around Otherness/alterity. 'While racialised encounters have certainly been predicated against a history of exploitation, inferiorisation and exclusion, they have equally inhabited spaces of deep ambivalence, admiration, envy and desire' (Brah, 1996;155). Brah refers to Homi Bhabha who states that '...racial and sexual otherness are intimately connected, the one is immanent in the other' (Bhabha in Brah, 1996:155). The similarity between these discourses lies in their mutual reliance on essential differences inscribed on a bodily level. 'Both sets of significations figure the body as a bearer of immutable difference whether or not this putative difference is represented as biological or cultural' (Brah, 1996:157). Out of this understanding Brah promotes the advantages of theorising ethnicity in discourses around migration and collective identities to avoid the danger of essentialising difference on the 'body level'.

According to Brah, ethnicity is a relatively new theoretical construct although the term 'ethnic' has an old trajectory which can be traced in the conceptualisation of links between ethnicity and tradition (and women as the bearers of those traditions). Sneja Gunew's discussion of the term illustrates why 'ethnicity' might be a useful tool in the deconstruction of essential differences inscribed on the body. She demonstrates that the concept bears traces of early associations with heathen beliefs and paganism while during the seventeenth century the adjacent term 'ethos' referred to a

> ...characteristic spirit, prevalent tone of sentiment of a people or "community". This connotation underlies the current meaning of "ethnicity", which is usually evoked as a way of distinguishing between race in the biological sense and custom or history, or, to put it another way, between body and spirit (Gunew, 1993:8).

According to Gunew, 'ethnicity' represents a relatively unthreatening concept because it often refers to individuals rather than groups. It appears to have '...the quality of the self-chosen appellation and this respect remains a central way of distinguishing it from "race": for example, ethnic communities and ethnic identities are self-identified' (Gunew, 1993:9).

In her discussion of multiculturalism, Gunew insists on the benefits of focusing on cultural differences as a site for 'in-between' encounters[17]. However, she warns that in the post-colonial context the resurgence of 'race' as a category used by minority groups to establish rights by insisting on irreducible difference runs the danger of re-constructing essentialised understandings of 'us' and 'them'[18]. Gunew is equally disturbed by notions of a 'mother tongue' as constitutive of collective identity, where the focus is on language as a marker of belonging rather than irreducible [bodily] difference. Underlying both concepts is the myth of origin, which reinscribes the dichotomy of 'home' and 'elsewhere', thus negating the importance (and potential for self-development) of 'being on route'. Gunew advocates a focus on multicultural critical theory which is decentred and able to bridge the often perceived as oppositional concepts of local/global, bringing minority perspectives and dominant discourses into dialogue:

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[17] I understand this to be the space where Mouffe and Bauman advocate the benefits of recognising the other as having a *right* to all her/his differences (see earlier in this chapter).

[18] Gunew writes: ' ...irreducible difference, a non-negotiable space which heralds a separate history.... also tied in disturbing ways to the notion of primordial rights to land... disturbing because such claims about bloodlines and land have fuelled the fascist doctrines of recent history... ' (Gunew, 1993:10).

> ...in relation to race and ethnicity, multiculturalism is now, according to Bhabha, a kind of floating signifier which gains both meaning and strategic capabilities only in a specific context. It can be used by any faction and has no privileged or unchanging meaning' (Gunew, 1997:38).

The benefits of working from this perspective lie in the awareness that 'hybridity' is part of all understandings of the self as subject and consequently, depending on the context, a multiplicity of affiliations and allegiances is possible. Furthermore, this perspective can be used to critically analyse the ways in which 'certain discursive traditions haunt the new...or the continuing covert racism hiding at the heart of modernity and at the heart of liberalism' (Frankenberg in Gunew, 1997:39). To conclude this chapter, it seems appropriate to return to the idea of the 'global village'; after all, this high profile construct appears in many different guises[19].

A postmodern cosmopolitan ?

Peter Wollen, an art historian, attempts a radical break with any association of origin by focusing on the idea of the cosmopolitan. He points out that in his view, theories on hybridity or diaspora represent a half-hearted attempt to put identity down to '...biographical (or historical) experience rather than the fatality of origin, derived from something more like a curriculum vitae than a birth certificate' (Wollen, 1994:189). Wollen states that historically the concept of the cosmopolitan has its 'roots' in the eighteenth century where it was lived out among artists and intellectuals through the transnational 'republic of letters', bound up with Enlightenment ideals and culturally centred in Paris. Wollen names Voltaire, Kant, Goethe, Turgot and Condorcet as principal actors in this attempt to construct

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[19] It re-appears in chapter 4, as does the cosmopolitan .

> ...a utopian order of perpetual peace, to be based on universal values, on respect and tolerance for others, and on free exchange...this period was effectively finished off ideologically by the rise of Romanticism (as Herder replaced Lessing), and politically by the nationalist turn taken by the French Revolution... (Wollen, 1994:190).

The next phase of cosmopolitanism swept the globe in a more materialist fashion through merchants who established commercial ties with foreign parts of the world, seemingly more interested in expanding their trade than nationalistic ideals. According to Wollen, this changed again during the second half of the nineteenth century when '...economic nationalism became dominant in the core economies of Europe and North America themselves, following the ascendancy of finance capital and the growth of the modern interventionist and expansionist nation state...' (ibid). During the twentieth century, cosmopolitanism apparently became a dirty word to describe '...minority immigrant and diaspora groups, especially those without a homeland, who were perceived as de-racinated and dispatriated' (Wollen, 1994:190/191). Wollen places great hope in the resurrection of cosmopolitanism as reflected in some versions of postmodernism and changes in the economic structure. Wollen states that cosmopolitans have no more desire for any form of 'home' or 'roots' or belonging.

> We can even begin to speak realistically about the globalisation of art and culture, as a result of the intense movement of people, art-works and information around the world, albeit concentrated in a limited network of key cities – a new 'Hanseatic League' as Saskia Sassen has called it... (Wollen, 1994:194).

Actors in this new privileged space will be able to exist in a world of non-attachment and non-location, free-floating agents of space whilst performing identity as an artistic endeavour based on multiple others rather than multiple 'I's. Wollen does acknowledge that this form of cosmopolitanism is a slightly futuristic version of the existing model which is still deeply '...stratified and polarised, by class and community, with an elite and an underclass...' (Wollen, 1994:194). He touches only lightly on the power struggles involved ('unenlightened' struggle still seems to take place in the suburbs of the global village, where the less fortunate dwell) as something 'backward' that can be overcome through consciousness and creative expression. His futuristic conception of space and identity bring up associations of religious images of paradise based on transcendence. The merchants of the Hanseatic League relied on servants and wives to run their everyday affairs – who will look after our basic needs in a world of non-attachment? But gender and ethnicity do not feature strongly in Wollen's analysis; I suspect that he had his reasons for ignoring these irritating trajectories - too much variation makes it more difficult to construct a vision that fits all. Globalisation and cosmopolitanism on Wollen's (uncritical postmodernist?) terms appear to be generalising and universal concepts which strongly privilege few over the vast majority. This brings us back to feminist geography and Doreen Massey's important observations with regard to globalisation and mass movement:

> Different social groups have distinct relationships to this anyway differentiated mobility: some are more in charge of it than others; some initiate flows and movements, others don't; some are more on the receiving end of it than others; some are effectively imprisoned by it. In a sense, at the end of all the spectra are those who are both doing the moving and the communicating and who are in some way in a position of control in relation to it...These are the groups who are really, in a sense, in charge of time-space compression; who can effectively use it and turn it to their advantage; whose power and influence it very definitely increases...It is not simply a question of unequal distribution, that some people move more than others, some have more control than others. It is that the mobility and control of some groups can actively weaken other people (Massey, 1993:62).

I will take this discussion up in chapters 4 & 5. In the light of my critical postmodern stance, I will first pay attention to how the past has shaped ideas about gender in the ethnocultural construct that makes up German identity.

Chapter 3

Flight from the Fatherland?

German women in New Zealand represent an ethnocultural group with specific beliefs, values, traditions and understandings regarding the meaning of 'being a German woman'. My intention is to explore the shifting meanings given to this construct based on my understanding of collective identities as imagined – how a community sees itself and others in the present and the future depends on the way the past is reflected on. Moira Gatens and Genevieve Lloyd remind us that stories and imaginings about the past of collective identities are contested and strongly influence the narratives of the present. According to them, incidents such as the '...Historikerstreit[20] in Germany attest to the political importance, for present identities, of how, and by whom, the past of a society is conceived, imagined and narrated' (Gatens and Lloyd, 1999:138). If communities are imagined, relationships between self and other, individual and collective, over time and space, are open to re-interpretation and change. In order to contextualise my research on the links between German migrant women's sense of self and their sense of place, I will discuss some of the discourses and touch on some of the power struggles that have shaped the collective identity in postwar Germany up to the early 80s. Although national identity as a concept is not the focus of this research, questions regarding the processes of how meaning in relation to 'being German' is constructed, lies at the heart of this study.

Discourses on what it means to be German have shifted considerably over time (as have territorial claims regarding the political borders), and although there might have been points of connection as well as points of divergence in the dominant versions of national identity, 'being German' has never been a homogenous concept. How individuals construct collective identity depends on which discourses have been endorsed by institutions and social structures at certain points in time, as well as by what has been repressed and excluded. My original assumption was that my interview partners would share my own sense of ambiguity in relation to 'being German'.

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[20] '...the historians' dispute of the mid-1980s was aimed towards the attempted "normalisation" of the German past...[it] implied a relativisation of Nazi crimes....The outrage of progressive historians and publicists led by Habermas may have succeeded in once again refuting these attempts to play down the Nazi past, but increasingly critical positions were forced into the defence' (Jarausch, 1997:27/28).

I interpret my own feelings as one outcome of having lived in an era when 'modernity' was in the process of becoming 'postmodernity' – having been born in the beginning of the 60s, I grew up in the aftermath of the struggle to 'rebuild' the nation. Too young to be involved in the social revolutions of the late 60s, I 'missed' active involvement in this challenge to the status quo and old paradigms. What I did experience were strong state responses in a time of upheaval; it felt to me as if my identity as a young German woman was forged between the extremes of terrorism as the violent rupture of the seemingly 'prosperous and liberal' Bundesrepublik, 'Berufsverbot' and increasing intolerance towards demands for 'difference' in the late 70s. This 'crisis of modernity', the realisation that, in Bauman's words 'the obsessive march forward that is modernity' (1991:10), was no longer a vision shared by all, brought with it a renewed interest in the past, particularly articulated by the 'second postwar generation' (McCormick, 1991)[21]. For me, knowledge of the Nazi horrors led to my emotional investment in the interests of the 'disempowered' in a broad sense, while it also increased my own intolerance towards my fellow Germans. I wanted my parents' generation to 'own up' to their involvement in the past's terror, I desperately wanted to understand how this could have happened in this country, in my town, in my street, probably even in my immediate neighbourhood. My demands for critical reflection were met with refusal, denial or superficial explanations, although there were feeble attempts of a more critical engagement with the past: for example, the German curriculum at school dictated a review of Anna Seghers 'Das siebte Kreuz'.[22] But it was not enough, I felt that the Nazi past had been allowed to cast a shadow over contemporary Germany – I interpreted this shadow as guilt, that is forced into an 'underground' existence. In terms of 'modernity', I would now give meaning to this reluctance to critically engage with the past as an obsession with progress:

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[21] Stephen Castles categorises generational differences in postwar Germany in the following (somewhat generalised) way: 'The *first generation* wanted to be silent about Auschwitz, because Auschwitz had hurt their pride. The *second generation* wanted to talk about Auschwitz, because it explained their shame at being Germans. The *third generation* does not accept Auschwitz as the centre of a moral code, and insists that they are proud to be German' (Castles, 1996:178).

[22] The Mitscherlich's condemning analysis of German collective identity is part of the discourse that captured my attention at the time: 'Neither the millions of lives lost in the war nor the millions of Jews slaughtered can prevent most Germans from feeling that they have had enough of being reminded of the past. Above all, there is a total lack of any sense that an effort should be made – from Kindergarten to the university – to incorporate the disasters of the past into the stock of experience of German young people,

> In the linear time of modernity, only the point of departure is fixed: and it is the unstoppable movement of that point which straightens up disaffected existence into a line of historical time. What affixes the pointer to this line is not the anticipation of new bliss, but the certainty of past horrors; yesterday's suffering, not the happiness of tomorrow (Bauman, 1991:11).

The past *is* waste in modern consciousness, it serves as a propeller towards imagined horizons. In my understanding, Germany as a nation and German people as individuals were particularly involved in this movement away from the past and towards 'progress', preferably measurable (material) to make the flight more successful and real[23].

For me, discourses that situated 'being German' in the context of 'guilt, shame, denial' led to a slight feeling of un-ease, a slight hesitation, a – 'let me first get a sense of what the other thinks about Germans' – before I commit to being one. For myself I can say that I became increasingly aware of this aspect of collective identity, and my interpretation of this as a 'typical German' trait found evidence in the general unwilligness to go beyond the 'Stunde Null' as the marker of a 'freshly laundered' collective identity[24]. In the course of interviewing it became obvious to me that most women did not share my strong feelings, on the contrary, many proclaimed that the German past did not interfere with their sense of 'being German'. To me this indicates that a variety of discourses on collective identity were available; this made it easy enough for some of the women to ignore 'critical voices'.

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not just as a warning, but as a specific challenge to their national society to deal with the brutally aggressive proclivities these disasters revealed' (A. and M. Mitscherlich, 1975:13).

[23] Again, I will quote the Mitscherlich's who support Bauman's point, although they understand this move away from the past as a specific German reaction. Bauman, rather more generously, describes consciousness as it appears in modernity. 'One of the economic advantages of this global retreat from their past was that it made possible for Germans an unhampered dedication to the present and its tasks. Such resolve was regarded as preferable to "useless brooding over what is past" (A. and M. Mitscherlich, 1975:25).

[24] 'The phrase "1945 was zero point" was used sometimes with a sense of inner liberation, but more often with a trace of resentment. At all events (whether used naively or under pressure of guilt), it bolstered an infantile defence of individual self-confidence, namely the notion that the beginning of the new state was tantamount to a new psychological beginning' (A. and M. Mitscherlich, 1975:107).

To come to a clearer understanding of the negotiation processes involved in 'being German', I will use this chapter to focus on discourses that analyse gender differences and collective identity in postwar Germany. My argument is that collectively, the main objective of the immediate postwar years was to forge an identity that represented 'normality'. I interpret the relatively rigid socio-symbolic structures in the postwar Germany of the 1950s as one symtom of this attempt to construct 'normality' with a vengeance. But if, as Bauman highlights, ambiguity is the by-product (or waste) of modernity and the 'will to order', this task of single-mindedly rebuilding the nation rested on ambiguous feelings about the past.

> Ambivalence is arguably the modern era's most genuine worry and concern, since unlike other enemies, defeated and enslaved, it grows in strength with every success of modern powers. It is its own failure that the tidying-up activity construes as ambivalence (Bauman, 1991:15).

Rather than pathologising the 'German condition', my emphasis lies on the repercussions of modernity as it manifested in the postwar years for German identity. A particularly strong will to create order out of chaos, coupled with a particularly strong desire to 'move into the future' seems to mark postwar German identity. To further clarify my own position in this, I would like to highlight how 'critical German voices' have influenced my own understanding of German identity while I grew up there. In hindsight it becomes obvious to me that, without having been aware of it, I had identified with discourses that pathologised 'Germanness' to a certain degree. From my perspective as a woman who grew up in Germany, these 'critical' discourses offered much needed explanations for 'typical' German traits that I despised - the often mysogynist undertones escaped my attention. If my attempt at developing a critical understanding of Germanness was strongly influenced by undisclosed gendered discourses, it seems important to at least address this phenomenon now – it might shed some light on understandings about German gender relations.

For this purpose I will turn to Susan Linville's analysis of postwar German women's autobiographical filmmaking. Linville addresses the general failure of postwar German society to overcome rigid categorisations in order to establish dialogue across divisions from a feminist post-structural perspective. For her, the constructions of 'masculinity' and 'femininity' play a vital part in the development of an understanding of the past and the ensuing re-construction of German society. She demonstrates that constructs of masculinity and femininity, as examples of dualistic thinking, are unstable to such a degree that their main function as delineator of power relations becomes obvious. To achieve this, she deconstructs 'The Inability to Mourn' by Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich, an analysis of postwar German society from a psychoanalytic perspective. I would now classify the Mitscherlich's project as an (impossible) attempt to 'heal' (make whole) the shattered modern German identity through the gaze of modernism[25].

Postwar constructions of masculinity (within a psychoanalytical framework) – a feminist critique

Linville argues that the Mitscherlich's work was highly influential in Germans' attempts 'to come to terms with the past'. According to Linville's analysis, the Mitscherlich's hypothesised from a psychoanalytical (Freudian) perspective that '...German authoritarianism and avoidance of both mourning and Vergangenhaltsbewaeltigung - coming to terms with the past – are rooted in the prototypical German's son failure to accept or identify fully with patriarchal authority' and as a consequence '...in the wake of World War II, a forceful reinstatement of the traditional patriarchal family and social gender hierarchy offered the only possible antidote to fascism'(Linville, 1998:3).

Linville highlights the status of the Mitscherlich's work as a cultural product rather than offering a comprehensive framework for understanding the past[26]. In the process, German identity becomes pathologised as 'infantile' but nevertheless potentially dangerous. The Mitscherlich's emphasise that

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[25] 'Modernism' here is used according to Bauman's definition as '...an intellectual (philosophical, literary, artistic) trend....In modernism, modernity turned its gaze upon itself and attempted to attain the clear-sightedness and self-awareness which would eventually disclose its impossibility, thus paving the way to the postmodern reassessment' (Bauman, 1991: 4).

[26] 'For while their work brings a crucial postwar problem into focus and affords a revealing interpretative framework, its science is imbricated both with Western humanist fictions of melancholia and with twentieth-century political narratives that naturalise male supremacy' (Linville, 1998:4).

> The attempts to cope with the past in this way [through infantile self-protection] strike the detached observer as grotesque....unthinking infantile behavior of this kind cannot help but keep alive the fear that no surprise is impossible where the German people are involved and that acts of obedience which obliterate individual responsibility might once again become German policy (A. and M. Mitscherlich, 1975:17).

Linville states, rather forcefully, that 'far from innocent, their work was made to order for the official needs of a postwar society that was still struggling to rigidify the social gender hierarchy and to exonerate patriarchy of its role in the fascist past' (ibid:5). According to Linville, the attempt to stabilise discourses on masculinity in a postwar context, relies on a re-conceptualisation of masculinity during the Nazi period[27]. This undisclosed gendering of Hitler as secretly female and maternal, as a pre-oedipal '...primitive mother figure, a Clytemnestra in drag' (ibid:8), highlights the negative connotations associated with femininity in German society. To further pinpoint the function of 'femininity' and 'masculinity' as cultural markers rather than 'natural' or 'neutral' categories, Linville refers to the long history of the stereotype of the Jewish man as negatively 'feminine', a representation used during the Third Reich to emphasise the contrast with the powerful 'masculine' father figure of Hitler. Linville identifies the dominance of postwar discourses that validated traditional gender roles as one outcome of this undisclosed re-gendering. This effect took form in the emergence of

> ...a body of cultural criticism, film, and West German legislative efforts from the immediate postwar era onward that furiously worked to demonstrate the social and moral urgency of pairing powerful fathers with economically dependent, supportive, privatised mothers, precisely at a time when women were challenging these roles (ibid:12).

Linville argues that the constructed 'loss of the father' in German cultural discourses led to widespread (constructed) melancholia and a longing for stability based on traditional patriarchal European values[28].

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[27] The stabilisation of masculinity '...depends upon a retrospective view that Hitler was not really an introjected father figure, despite innumerable testimonies about the idealism Germans felt he represented; instead, he was a variant on the so-called pre-oedipal, phallic mother – a figure whose guilt and lack are retrospectively exposed in a process that empowers the father' (ibid:6).

> Mass culture, technological advancements, and the recognition of equal rights for women emerge in this narrative as a key triad of counter-fatherly forces, as modern developments have sadly undermined authority structures founded on the civilised, Old World paternal image (ibid).

Linville turns to Michael Schneider, a West German writer of the 'generation literature'[29] '...written by people born in the 1930s and 1940s, these books dealt with the authors' relationship to their parents - usually their fathers - and the behaviour of the parents during Nazism' (McCormick, 1991:181) to further illustrate her argument: '... Schneider contends that postwar Germany failed to grieve due to the cultural prejudice against mourning as stereotypically unheroic – as women's work' (Linville, 1998:7).

Dominant discourses of masculinity in a postwar context relied heavily on their detachment from and distancing to devalued other/s. 'Feminised' values and beliefs such as emotions, attachment, care for others, the environment and self and so forth were understood as essential to women rather than men, which reproduced social structures that promoted a split between the private 'Kinder, Kirche, Kueche' sphere and the public arena. But before I embark further on the specificities of this ethnocultural construct, I want to briefly visit some feminist analyses of the gendering inherent in the nation state. The split into private and public spheres might have taken a particularly vigorous turn in Germany; however, Western nations are built on oppositional constructs.

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[28] 'This rejection of inner involvement on one's own behaviour under the Third Reich prevented a loss of self-esteem that could hardly have been mastered, and a consequent outbreak of melancholia in innumerable cases. The result of this unusual psychic effort of self-defence - which is by no means over – is the present psychic immobilism in the face of the acute problems confronting German society. Because of the persistence of this autistic attitude, a great number if not majority of the citizens of democratic West Germany have been unable to identify themselves with anything beyond its economic system' (A. and M. Mitscherlich, 1997:27).

[29] 'Generation literature' is a term used by McCormick; Stephen Castles refers to the phenomenon as the 'second postwar generation': 'those who came of age in the 1960s and asked what their parents had done during the Hitler-period' (Castles, 1998:178).

National identity as a gendered construct

As stated earlier, I understand national identity as inherently unstable and non-homogenous, based on the concept that nations are imagined (Anderson, 1983); they represent 'one form in which modern cultures have been articulated' (Schwarz cited in Brinker-Gabler and Smith, 1997:2). Furthermore, as pointed out by feminist scholars, discourses around national identity are gendered in such a way that the state appears as a masculinist construct (Brinker-Gabler and Smith, 1997, Pettman, 1996). This gendering becomes particularly obvious when the nation is allegorised as female, for example as Germania, Britannia, La France – 'in this way the nation is constitued as the ideal feminine in what becomes a chivalric romance of national identity, and national citizens assume the role of the adoring man' (Brinker-Gabler and Smith, 1997:11).Within liberal discourses the state and citizenship remain masculinist constructs: 'its discursive currencies are rights rather than needs, individuals rather than relations, autogenesis rather than interdependence, interests rather than shared circumstances' (ibid:14). In a less obviously gendered manner, discourses of nationalism function by naturalising 'the traditional hierarchical relationship of children to parents and wife to husband [which] provides a familial metaphor through which to legitimate sociopolitical hierarchies, or differences, within the nation' (ibid:12). One aspect of this hierarchy is the meaning given to the private sphere as women's place. The family and the home become women's responsibility and offer the main clues for female identity. In contrast to this, the public sphere is conceptualised as men's domain where prerogative power is institutionalised in ways that largely exclude women.

Constructs of femininity in postwar West Germany – the withdrawal into the private sphere

As stated previously, in postwar Germany[30] during the 1950s, social and family policies were marked by a strong emphasis on the restoration of traditional gender relations (Meyer, 1997). This attempt to restore 'normality' pervaded all layers of society; in the public sphere, women were increasingly forced to retreat, as Franziska Meyer illustrates with the example of women writers. She refers to Sigrid Weigel's argument that during this period a 'systematic forgetting' of women's writing took place (Weigel in Meyer, 1997:47). How this exclusion operated became obvious when women writers attempted to break into the literary sphere, for example through the influential Group 47[31], where they had to

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[30] I am referring to West Germany – discourses and policies on gender in the East German context took a different direction.

> appear[ed] in front of an almost exclusively male public, they were treated not only as exotic but were confronted with an increasing degree of sexism from critics which meant a considerably higher danger of public humiliation (Meyer, 1997:47).

Meyer states that sexism increased during the 1950s with the outcome that by the late 50s 'a shameful lack of respect towards women writers, which would not have been allowed in the late 1940s, became fashionable' (ibid).

Historian Ute Frevert traces the situation for women in West Germany of the late 40s and early 50s by highlighting the general desire to 'withdraw into the smallest circle', the family, as the remaining bastion of 'healthy' social interaction. She draws attention to the fact that in the immediate postwar years, families relied on the presence and leadership of mothers who had ensured a sense of continuity and stability in the war years, when the wellbeing of the family was more often than not the sole responsibility of the mother. This meant that many women were unwilling to relent this position when men returned to demand the 'fatherly right to leadership' back (Frevert, 1986:252). Women's 'new' sense of power within the family made motherhood an attractive option in an economy that sent working women home as soon as the men returned[32]. Frevert speculates that these new family constellations led to understandings of partnership and camaraderie as Leitmotiv in family discourses (Frevert legitimates this statement by suggesting that this might have been the outcome of many women's 'new' sense of power, and consequently demands for equality, within the the family), although this varied within the different social strata[33]. However, alongside this supposedly more egalitarian discourse a renewed emphasis on the restauration of old family values ensured a clear-cut divison of labour with men as breadwinners and women as mothers/nurturers at home. During the 1950s, the 'nuclear' family became the largely unchallenged norm, while women who, for a variety of reasons[34], did not enter into at least matrimonial bliss, became marginalised and were subjected to 'pity'. Frevert states that despite the general trend towards the 'normalisation' of gender roles, it was inevitable that with the steady increase in consumerism the breadwinner's wage, championed by unions, family politicians and public opinions alike, became insufficient – women as 'additional earners' were back in the workforce, albeit in part-time jobs rather than full time careers. This conceptualisation of women's roles as mothers, wives and only secondary as earners, influenced women's choices and desires into the 1960s. Frevert continues with her analysis by highlighting that women's increased activity in the labourforce from the 60s onwards went parallell with changes in the economy; due to economic factors and the demand for workers, an 'openess towards (married) female colleagues' became a well-recognised phrase even in the conservative circles of the unions (ibid:258). By 1974 women's roles had changed drastically: every third woman stayed in her profession without taking breaks to bring up children, whereas another 30% re-entered employment after an interruption of several years, with another 37% never having entered paid employment (ibid).

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[31] Gruppe 47 was founded in 1947 and 'had a huge influence on the development of literature in the post-war Federal Republic. Richter [the founder of the group] invited mostly younger, unknown authors to read from yet unpublished works which were then criticised by those present' (Meyer, 1997:46).

[32] 'Frauen arbeiteten weiterhin in Maennerberufen, aber ueberwiegend nur in an-und ungelernten Positionen. Da man mit einer raschen Rueckfuehrung deutscher Soldaten und Kriegsgefangener rechnete und im Uebrigen ein schnell wachsendes Arbeitskraeftepotential in Gestalt der Fluechtlinge und Vertriebenen bereitstand, machte sich kaum ein Betrieb die Muehe, die nur auf "Abruf" taetigen Frauen besser zu qualifizieren. Seit 1947 wurden sie in zunehmendem Masse von ihren Arbeitsplaetzen verdraengt, um den heimkehrenden Maennern Platz zu machen' (Frevert, 1983:250).

Were women pawns only in the economic and social discourses of postwar Germany, or did they make demands for agency, self-determination and consequently choice? It is interesting to note at this point that it is commonly known that we have to thank 'the fathers of the Basic Law' for a fairly inclusive and liberal basis for democracy in Germany. Ute Gerhard highlights that only in the 1980s was attention paid to the 'mothers'[35] involved in the articulation of the Basic Law.

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[33] 'So war bei Bauern die ehemaennliche Dominanz wesentlich staerker ausgepraegt als im Bildungsbuergertum oder in Arbeiter- und Angestelltenfamilien' (Frevert, 1986:254).

[34] 'Frauen, die aufgrund des kriegsbedingten Maennermangels keine Ehe eingingen und allein fuer ihren Unterhalt aufkamen, wurden als bedauernswerte Geschoepfe angesehen, denen wirkliche Erfuellung zeitlebens versagt bleiben wuerde. Ledige, verwitwete und geschiedene Frauen galten in dem Masse ueberfluessig und "randstaendig", wie die vollstaendige Familie aus Vater, Mutter und (zwei bis drei) Kindern wieder zur unangefochtenen gesellschaftlichen Norm wurde' (ibid).

> Anyone reading the debates of the Parliamentary Council today can only wonder at the fine thread on which the equal rights we take for granted today then hung....It was only a storm of submissions and protests from women's societies, businesses and trade unions which forced the male members of Parliament to recognise that equal rights for women must be implemented not simply as "the right and duties of citizen" – as the Weimar Constitution had it – but in every respect (Gerhard, 1983:130).

It seems that the egalitarian discourses which elevated women to (at least nominal) partners in (some) families, took much longer to reach the public sphere. It was only with the dawn of the Second Women's Movement in 1968, that younger women demanded 'subjecthood' in every aspect of life.

Feminist action and feminist outcomes

According to Ute Froehlich's overview of the German Women's Movement from the late 60s to the late 70s, in comparison to other European countries and the United States, women's groups formed relatively late in the Federal Republic (Froehlich, 1983). Debates were restricted to individual groups with only loose connections to each other and each of the groups had its own agenda. Some of the groups worked towards emancipation in the workplace, others were concerned with theoretical approaches, and others again focused on the increasingly public debate around abortion. In 1971 Alice Schwarzer wrote:

> Only seven years after the American women and about three years after most West European women, did the German Women's Movement achieve its first

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[35] 'Elisabeth Selbert, in particular, a lawyer from Cassel and member of the Constitutional Assembly of the Federal Republic of Germany, of the Parliamemtary Council, to whom we owe the inclusion of Article 3 Para. 2 in our Constitution ("men and women shall have equal rights'), has in this way now received belated recognition' (Gerhard, 1983:130).

> mass basis in 1971, in the protest against the prohibition of abortion. Today they have won their greatest victory so far, yet the climate of urgency and anger which is so fruitful in America does not yet exist in the Federal Republic of Germany (Froehlich, 1983:113).

Despite this slightly delayed start, the German Women's Movement had some impact on legislation (the campaign for legalised abortion was finally successful in 1974), policies and practices, and on the general understanding of women's specific problems in German society. Women demanded the right to be seen and heard publicly: women's publishing houses, health centres, feminist magazines and shelters for women and children emerged during the 1970s (Morgan, 1984). Although it is difficult to ascertain the overall effect of the Women's Movement at that point in time, it seems that feminist discourses and actions were perceived as a 'counter fatherly force'; as such, they disrupted 'normality' and posed a disturbance that was not necessarily welcomed by the majority of Germans, including women.

Women's investment in the status quo

Ulrike Prokop in her analysis of German women's dissatisfaction with their possibilites of 'becoming subjects' by entering the public sphere through work and/or a ca~~rri~~eer in the 1970s, highlights that emancipatory discourses in Germany have had more effect on a theoretical level than in practical terms (Prokop, 1977). Women themselves largely supported traditional gender roles as representing 'normality' and this is reflected in a general understanding of women's responsibilities institutionalised in the family. Prokop critiques emancipatory discourses of the 60s and 70s which, according to her, have 'alienated' many women and as a result have reproduced understandings of 'normal' gender relations. She recommends a focus on the ambiguities and contradictions inherent in women's understanding of their roles, rather than a moralising stance which highlights 'false consciousness' as the source for women's ongoing limitation of choices and agency. She speculates that this approach would generate a more substantial analysis of possibilities for new concepts of gender relations and a deeper understanding of women's reluctance to challenge traditional gender roles[36].

Eva Kolinsky refers to a study of housewives of the mid-seventies to illustrate a similar point – many women were seemingly unable to envision themselves as active participants in both the public and private spheres. Although the subjects of the study were not particularly interested in what they were doing, they had no complaints either.

> Emancipation, as they saw it, the equality of men and women in society, would not follow from housework but from employment and the independent income this would secure. However, the majority at the time were convinced that they personally could not compete in the world outside, let alone emulate the success of their husbands and of men in general (Kolinsky, 1989:87).

Kolinsky goes on to state that this attitude changed with the next generation when young women of a 1982 survey voiced their expectations of becoming wives and mothers as well as being in employment (ibid). This indicates an increase in confidence but highlights the persistence of fixed gender relations. To be a 'normal' young woman means that the necessity of earning an 'additional wage' has enticed women of this generation to embrace the double burden of family and work outside the home without even scratching the foundations of traditional gender expectations.

Frigga Haug et al. demonstrate how this persistent dualistic understanding of gender roles is reflected in German men's expectations of their wives in a European comparison in the 1980s. In a EG survey on men's preference towards their wives' status as either working outside the home or being a housewife, the results show the comparatively high percentage of German men who prefer their wives' sphere limited to the domestic and private.

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[36] 'Es kommt nicht darauf an, das Bewusstsein und das Verhalten der Frauen von einem verselbstaendigten Leitbild der Gleichheit her moralisierend zu betrachten. Eine soziologisch orientierte Theory der Frauen muss die Reaktionen, die im weiblichen Lebenszusammenhang entstehen, auf ihre Ambivalenzen und Widersprueche hin untersuchen. Sie kann die Frauen nicht einfach als unterdrueckt und manipuliert auffassen; sie muss erkennen, dass in der Tatsache, dass die Frauen sich groesstenteils auf den Lebenszusammenhang von Haushalt, Familie und Geselligkeit konzentrieren (dass sie also z.B. Berufstaetigkeit nur als notwendiges Uebel und als sekundaeren Bereich betrachten), Momente legitimen Protests, wie immer verzerrt und realitaetsuntuechtig, zu sehen sind.' (Prokop, 1977:159).

Country	wife working outside (%)	wife at home (%)
Denmark	58	23
France	53	41
Italy	51	43
Great Britain	50	40
Netherlands	42	40
West Germany	31	58

Source; EG Commission: Men and Women of Europe in 1987. Brussels, 1988 (in Haug et al, 1991:65).

It seems we're stuck with 'modern' men and women – is there no hope for change?

A focus on social inequalities, in this case the renewed institutionalisation of sexism in West Germany during the 1950s, is part of reading globalisation, time and place/space within a 'progressive modernist' framework, which, according to Doreen Massey, is characterised by its '...commitment to change...' hopefully for the better. 'But,' she warns,

> it is necessary also to recognise the inadequacies of the modernist project in its dominant form...The answers which postmodernism has so far provided may well be mistaken, but the challenges it poses must surely be addressed (Massey, 1994:239).

I find this reminder of the necessity to pay attention to the political aspects of theoretical frameworks important – to sum up my perspective on gender relations in postwar Germany, progressive change has been hindered by the failure to attend to the inadequacies of dualistic modes of conceptualisation with regard to gender, with the consequence that the stabilisation of traditional social structures became part of the postwar project in the public and private spheres. In terms of gender stratification, the socio-economic situation in postwar Germany led to women's reduced access to the public sphere and a renewed focus on women's traditional roles of wife and mother.

From the late 1960s onwards discourses, such as the women's movement that demanded social changes, began to challenge the traditional understandings of gender.

To further complicate the picture, Richard W. McCormick[37] in his investigation into the 'Politics of the Self' with a particular focus on postmodern and feminist discourses in West German literature and film, pinpoints the rise of consumer capitalism in the context of an increasingly postindustrial economy as an important factor in the development of German identity (McCormick, 1991). According to him, the political climate of the late 70s and early 80s was informed by 'the awareness of relative powerlessness [of the individual] in the face of the vastly more complex and contradictory reality than the various utopian theories and avant-garde visions had conceived' (ibid:234).

My argument here is twofold: many German women have been more strongly subjected to rigid gender role expectations than other West European women, which made it more challenging for women in Germany to question dominant structures and discourses. Traditional roles were often accepted as 'natural' and/or 'normal', despite the increasing prominence of emancipatory discourses and postmodern ideas about subjectivity. If women (or men, for that matter) positioned themselves within disocurses of the 'counter-fatherly force', they represented 'otherness' which translated into 'unnaturalness' ('not normal') within dominant discourses. This might help to explain why some of the interviewed women stated very strongly that they have never encountered discrimination based on gender, whereas others became acutely aware of limitations inherent in their positions as women within German society.

In this part of the study I am introducing the voices of women who left Germany between the mid 1980s and mid to late 1990s to live in New Zealand. The first to speak is Mimi, who came to New Zealand in 1997 to escape from domestic violence and public policies that, from her persepctive, did nothing to protect her and her children from abuse. Mimi articulates a strong sense of disempowerment/displacement which she links directly to her position as a German woman.

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[37] In my initial search for material that deals with postwar German discourses of identity from a post-structural perspective, Richard McCormack and Susan Linville offered good entry points into the discussion. I realise that German speaking post-structural analyses would have substantiated my argument, but at that point in time I had to focus on English speaking writers (supervision at that point was offered from a mono-lingual speaker).

Women's experiences of displacement in German social structures

Family violence against women and children is one indication of understandings of masculinity and femininity based on power as domination. The relationship between women and the welfare state has been theorised by feminists as ambivalent, particularly when women attempt to leave a relationship. In this case, the state can take on the status of a controlling 'surrogate' husband (Briar and Cheyne, 1998). Mimi is a very articulate, highly educated medical professional with considerable work experience. In Mimi's narrative a split between her high public status as a doctor and her private position as a battered wife led to her experiences of 'non-belonging' in encounters with German social structures. In her case, this leads to a construction of the German state as authoritarian, disguised as liberal, rational and egalitarian on the surface only.

Mimi:

I need a lot of space. Not only space, but the possibility that I don't always come across barriers and regulations and 'you can't do this and this is forbidden'...I think some regulations and some things make it possible for Germany to function as it functions, by really cutting down on the freedom of the individual...this German mentality of thinking that you are not good enough to structure your own life and make your own decisions. There has to be a fixed set of rules in place.

From Mimi's perspective, many of the structures that disadvantaged her as a woman remained invisible until she was forced to take a closer look.

Mimi:

...there is a rough set of rules that are obvious to everybody...But then, when you get into certain situations, which I did by coincidence, you come across rules that contradict the other rules and that create exactly the opposite...everybody assumes that you are safe because society created that safety net, so if you are in trouble like myself, as a mother with a violent husband, you expect that the system gives you safety, protection, and helps you to lead your life according to normal, basic requirements...and there are lots of examples where I thought: I know that not a lot of people come into the

same situation, so they won't come across these regulations, they won't detect them. And if more people knew about them, they would realise that it's an illusion. Deliberately created illusion, so that everybody thinks it's all okay and everything is in order, but behind it's hollow and it's deceptive and it really doesn't take notice of the needs of the individual...

This relates back to Linville's argument that in postwar Germany the main emphasis lay on 'normality' and establishing rigid gender roles accordingly. The state as a surrogate husband refuses to interfere in the private sphere of marriage. Social security is exposed as an illusion when Mimi realises she has to, although indirectly, rely on her parents for financial support. The process of positioning herself as a 'disempowered woman' in Germany leads to her memory of an awareness of the process of 'invisibilisation' within the private sphere, which began in childhood.

Mimi:

You know how it is in Germany with Hauptschule, Realschule and Gymnasium[38]. *And my sister went to the Realschule and when it was my turn, my parents said: well, you really should enter a nice, feminine profession later on, why would you want to go to the Gymnasium? And my teacher [a woman], thank God, talked to my parents and told them: you have to send her to the Gymnasium! So, this experience stayed with me forever.*[39] *And I never thought that it [gender/sex] doesn't matter. And I have a brother, a younger brother who grew up with very different rules.... that was always clear in my mind. And later on, when you get told: "the boss doesn't employ women," when you hand in your job application - and this happened at a point in time when it was illegal to say that kind of stuff. And I had to listen to things like: "I'm not employing any woman whose uterus I haven't removed first"... so for me, that was totally... that is Germany. Just in case you*

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[38] Hauptschule refers to 'basic' schooling only up to Year 8
Realschule provides schooling for more 'able' students up to Year 10
Gymnasium offers more academically orientated learning up to Year 13. University entrance requirement

[39] Frevert points out that from the 70s onwards, girls became increasingly aware of alternatives to traditional gender roles. Higher education for girls became more of an option than in previous years, but 'Bis in die 70iger Jahre hinein planten Eltern fuer ihre Toechter eine andere Bildungskarriere als fuer ihre Soehne.....Sofern ueberhaupt eine ueber die Volks-bzw. Hauptschule hinausgehende Bildung in Frage kam, besuchten Maedchen die Realschule. Das weibliche Bildungssoll schien mit der Mittleren Reife mehr als erfuellt, was sich auch daran zeigte, dass Gymnasiastinnen weit haeufiger als ihre Mitschueler nach der 10.Klasse die Schule verliessen. Noch 1975, als Maedchen bereits zu 48,4% unter den Gymnasialschuelern vertreten waren, betrug ihr Anteil an den Abiturienten nur 39%' (Frevert, 1986:261).

hadn't realised...

For other women, gender disadvantages were not an issue. Petra, who immigrated to New Zealand in 1990, speaks from a position where discourses of emancipation have been internalised to such an extent that gender inequalities become near invisible. Petra's schooling took place during the 70s and she represents a perspective of gender equality which, on the surface, appeared to be within easy reach. The percentage of female students had increased from 23,9% in 1960 to 36,7% in 1980. However, 27,4% of these female students were enrolled at a Pedagogical University (Paedagogische Hochschule) with the view of becoming teachers in Grund, Haupt- und Realschulen, with only 5,9% of all male students taking the same path[40]. Ute Frevert highlights that these numbers stayed fairly stable between 1960 and 1970 (Frevert, 1986:261). Gender did matter, particularly when these 'individual choices' led to differences in pay and career options later on.

Petra:

I don't think I ever thought that [my brother got a better deal]....Well, my father is pretty conservative, so...I am pretty sure that there would have been differences. He didn't get any dolls and I had dolls and he had cars and...I don't know, it's hard to say.

I used the responses of Mimi and Petra in relation to gender inequality in West Germany as representations of different understandings about gender. Both of them felt at least at some point 'in control' of their lives in Germany, but where for Mimi this sense of agency was disrupted and led to her disillusionment with German social structures, Petra was never forced to question her understanding and consequently never lost her sense of 'being in control' of her life. To further explore the sense of displacement that some of the women expressed, I want to focus on another aspect of disempowerment in the postwar German context; as a starting point I will refer to the Mitscherlich's again who, from a 'classical' psychoanalytical perspective, construct the image of a 'typical' rational (fatherly? male?) German who has 'de-realised' the Nazi past through the externalisation of the former ideal[41].

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[40] It is interesting to note that in the Mitscherlich's analysis they lament a general dis-interest of young Germans in the teaching profession, however, '...there has been a change since this book was written. Great public interest is now shown in the discussion of educational plans. These discussions involve not only pedagogic questions, but also, underlying them, questions of political conviction; as, for example: Should schools be organised along traditional or progressive lines?... In spite of this, true innovators are rare and, in the somewhat non-political and conservative teaching profession, occupy a position that is far from comfortable' (A. and M. Mitscherlich, 1975:56).

> This "type" has so far held the fate of the Federal Republic in his hands; he has brought up those who are now in their twenties and thirties. Because he is deeply divided within himself, this is bound to leave unmistakable traces in the younger generation. For we all go through identifications with older persons who, in their roles as parents or teachers, must serve as our "models" until we find our own identity (A. and M. Mitscherlich, 1975:110).

In some of the interviews, this understanding of the importance of the 'fatherly' role model, often at the cost of abandoning values that are attached to the 'motherly' model, is clearly expressed. However, at the same time an awareness of the necessity to critically question the older generations' involvement in the past led to highly ambiguous understandings about the possibilites of making 'progressive changes' a reality in Germany. In my own experience, the feeling of becoming involved in change, of being able to take part in decision-making processes was difficult and led to a sense of disempowerment for many young Germans. We felt caught between high ideals based on social justice issues and the hard, apparently hostile reality of a German society that was shaken up by violent challenges towards the status quo during the 1970s and early 1980s.

The emergence of 'New Subjectivity' in the quest for identity

Richard W. McCormick argues that in the West German context the emphasis on rationality has to be understood in the light of an underlying resistance towards antimodern/postmodern discourses, which have specific historical meaning. The emphasis on rationality functions within the paradigm of '...the idea that fascism was ultimately the result of a German tradition of irrationalism with its roots in German Romanticism...' (McCormick, 1991:7)[42]. Juergen Habermas's response to cultural trends in the 1970s

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[41] 'Now the saying goes: It was all the fault of the Nazis. Such distortions of reality serve, as we have seen, to protect the individual's ego, his self-regard, from abrupt devaluation' (A. and M. Mitscherlich, 1975:62).

[42] The Mitscherlichs represent this discourse of German 'critical' thinking. They state that 'With the ascent of Adolf Hitler, the rule of German irrationality was once again (as how often before?) restored' (A. and M. Mitscherlich, 1975:60).

> …for instance his polemical description of the young activists as "Left Fascists"…' represents a typical stance of the more established leftist intellectuals towards '…the political and artistic developments in the West German generation that came of age in the late 1960s (ibid).

According to McCormick, concepts like 'antimodern' and 'irrationality' testify to

> …a specific German conception of a rational and progressive modernism which is closely linked to the German historical context. Fascism in Germany has been explained by arguing that …the fetishisation of reason by the Left in the Weimar Republic ignored the real, "irrational" needs of the masses that the Nazis were able to manipulate. Then, under the cover of "antimodern" ideology, the Nazis went on to modernise Germany as no one before had succeeded in doing (ibid).[43]

McCormick speculates that in this way, a conceptual link between antimodern discourses and fascism found its way into German postwar culture. He traces the development of postmodern responses to '…the excesses of the rationalistic modernism the traditional German Left still wants to defend' to the next stage in the 1970s to

> …a "New Subjectivity" that rejected rationalistic objectivity – a "politics of the self" that gloried in personal expression and anarchistic spontaneity – and influenced West German literary and cinematic output of the 1970s. This subjective phase represents a change in outlook that must also be seen in some connection with new types of political activism: above all, the ecology, peace, and women's movements (ibid:8).

In cultural terms, the 'German Autumn' of 1977 represents a crisis marked by pessimism and increased violence, due to renewed terrorist activity and an extreme public and state response. Modernism as cultural critique with a focus on rationality/order as the binary opposition to irrationality/chaos, was exposed as irrelevant to a younger generation which was caught in the middle of seemingly impotent leftist responses to terrorism and increasing demands for 'law and order' in conservative (mainstream) discourses. Mc Cormick sums up what I believe many young politically interested Germans observed at the time.

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[43] McCormick elaborates on this statement by referring to the invigoration of the 'industrial sector through the massive arms build-up' (:7) as 'modernisation'.

The hysteria with which West German society reacted to these events was great - as though a small band of terrorists could have brought down the West German state, almost as if the murders of Buback, Ponto, and Schleyer, inexcusable as they were, were the greatest crime of the century. This atmosphere of national emergency created a situation in which almost everyone with leftist or oppositional views was considered a "sympathiser" whose influence had aided the terrorists. The presentation of events in the media did not deviate much from the dominant, rather one-dimensional perspective that defined public discourse in the autumn of 1977. Many leftist felt that civil liberties, especially freedom of expression, were in serious danger; some feared even that West German democracy was at an end (McCormick, 1991:179).

Identification with the 'father'

This is the political climate that led to immigration for some women who felt unheard, invisible and not represented in Germany during their early adulthood. One of these women is Ronja, who left Germany between 1986 and 1987 for political reasons after her first child was born. She imagined immigration with a baby to be straightforward from her position as a woman influenced by feminism and political activism in the late 70s in Germany.

Ronja:

I was very naïve about it, I thought it's really easy. Why not? I had this poster in my room in Germany from this movie, and it was obviously working class people fighting for their rights, and right in the front was this woman with the baby under her arm. And I think I had this poster even before I was pregnant with my first daughter, and I just assumed it's all really easy.

It was Ronja's decision to search for 'a better place', with her partner agreeing to her decision.

Ronja:

I think the main reason for me was that I wanted to leave Germany. That was *pretty clear and it became clear to me years and years earlier on... I think it started when I was about nine. I felt uncomfortable in Germany, or I became conscious that I didn't feel very German. And by the time I was a student, I was looking for other places, so the reason was really leaving for something else, [leaving] something that had a negative energy and a negative past, and it looked as if it had a negative future as well.*

Ronja's memories are situated within her understanding of herself as a political activist in the aftermath of the student movements of the 1960s. The context is the German peace movement of the 1970s and 1980s with its emphasis on antiwar politics – '... it is crucial to recall that during the early 1980s, Ronald Reagan and his advisors were actually speaking in terms of a "winnable" and "limited' nuclear war to be waged in Europe. Germany was a likely first battleground' (Linville, 1991:22). New Zealand held the double promise of offering as much distance as possible from the 'possible battleground' as well as having a reputation of being 'green'.

Ronja:

[New Zealand] seemed to be a country of the future. The whole Greenpeace thing and David Lange had a good reputation.

Ronja reflects on how she experienced the 'older' generation's inability to confront the past and acknowledge their part in it. For Ronja, this led to an increased sense of detachment and a critical evaluation of the meaning of culture.

Ronja:

... when I think about it, most of my relatives were in some way or other involved with the Nazi regime, although none of them acknowledged having been part of it. They all grew up in it, and I always felt it was fake. The whole culture was really fake.

When Ronja talks about 'fake', she seems to refer to the almost mythical 'Stunde 0', the 'Hour Zero' of new beginnings and the 'de-nazification' of postwar Germany, which only produced superficial results[44]. Ronja describes her parents' positive attitude towards Germany and German identity.

Ronja:

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[44] Here Ronja's and Mimi's constructs of Germany as presenting a 'shiny surface only' merge. However, Ronja's sense of 'fakeness' appears to be more politically informed because she is able to reflect on German identity over time – her parents' generations' influence on her German identity becomes a negative aspect in her memory. Her sense of self is constructed through the rejection of a 'fake' culture' while simultaneously identifying with her parents as representatives of this culture.

...they were young teenagers when the war was over...they didn't really feel responsible for what had happened because they were children then, they had enjoyed the advantages of the Youth groups, which were there before the Hitler regime, too. So they enjoyed that part of it – they were quite socially trained...communication skills, you could say – and they didn't take it on as their guilt trip, but instead they really understood the Stunde 0 as a new beginning.

This reflection on her parents' involvement in the Nazi regime and their uncritical participation in processes, which had far-reaching and terrifying consequences, demonstrates Ronja's connection to the 'Generationen Literature' of the late 1970s[45]. For Ronja, this process of ongoing reflection leads to an increased interest in critical thinking and critical literature, which started to appear within the German educational system.

Ronja:

...in the late 70s when I went to school, students were very critical and aware, so we had heaps of discussions at school level and in youth groups. And at university level, it was amazing how much was happening there, the feminist movement and the peace movement. And my father[46] was always interested in discussions, he was reading a lot...we always had heaps of books and magazines in the house, like "Zeitmagazin" and "Spiegel" and "Newsweek", an American one...and I could talk to both my parents. My mother was more...a typical thing, he was more interested in politics and art and culture, and my mother was more interested in literature.

But although Ronja's mother was the 'literature person' of the household, Ronja found her to be uncritical and unpolitical.

Ronja:

...she was never a critical thinker, she was more somebody who enjoyed...and I don't even know how to express it...more from her feeling. And I often hated her for that because I wanted it more analysed from the head.

Ronja expresses the tension she perceived between feminist discourses that were based on a rejection of 'feminine' values, like emotions, and emancipatory discourses that emphasised critical analysis. In Ronja's memories, an acknowledgement of ambiguities was clearly not part of 'feminist' discourses at the time. For Ronja, this tension leads to an identification with her father although she feels strongly aligned with feminist discourses. Her position illustrates the point made by Linville earlier that 'emotions' were largely devalued as 'feminine' whereas 'critical analysis' becomes part of 'rational' and as such 'masculinised' discourses. Within this paradigm, the role of the mother in particular represents passivity and powerlessness in opposition to the role of the father representing 'in control' (Linville, 1998).

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[45] See page 46 in this chapter – the focus is on the relationship with the father.

[46] Ronja's parents were both teachers, and Ronja remembers her father as taking great interest in the students' movements demands for changes within the education system.

Ronja for example links her own interest in politics directly to her perception of her father as a role model. Within a psychoanalytical framework, she understands her position as part of 'healthy adolescent development' – she has to find her own identity by challenging her father's ideals.

Ronja:

[My parents] felt that it was a great time to make changes in their own way....my mother wanted to make changes by being herself, I think, she had good women friends. And my father was quite interested in politics, he was in the SPD, strongly involved....we had lots of discussions with my father. At that stage he was getting older and he was very liberal and open-minded towards the younger revolutionary people of that era....But I don't think he ever liked our sort of extreme views, because you have to fight against your parents, and we were becoming more extreme. We were really left-wing or anarchistic or whatever, when these things in Brockdorf[47] *happened, these demonstrations. I was not exactly in favour of violence, but I didn't really mind it that much. And when this guy, Buback was... he was murdered, wasn't he? And there was this story how lots of people had this tiny hidden smile on their face about it, even politicians and university people. They didn't openly support it, but they sort of accepted it. And we had lots of discussions on those issues because [my father] was very much against violence... So, when Ronald Reagan was elected, we thought it was the end of the world and he just said: he is just a big actor, he looks bad, but he's not going to have as much influence as you think...and I felt really strongly, I felt – this is going to be the end.*

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[47] Ronja is referring to demonstrations against nuclear waste disposals. These demonstrations were linked to the wider anti-nuclear debate and marked a new phase of increased confrontations between demonstrators and the state.

Nuclear power blast, an explosion. I expected a real holocaust, apocalypse…

Petra, who was born half a decade later than Ronja, has a different perspective of the political situation in Germany during the early 80s.

Petra:

I remember as a teenager… I think maybe it was a fashion to be against Germany. You know, it was sort of [a focus on]… all the negative things about Germany… I think a lot of people were doing it and I was doing it as well …just seeing the bad things about Germany and feeling against Germany… it was probably both, there was a bit of a fashion then, doing it because it was sort of cool, and… maybe things weren't that great. But then again, every country has got good and bad things and you always have to compromise somewhere.

For Petra, as a 'second generation' West German, the emphasis lies on 'getting on with it'. She emphasises her individuality over her attachment to place.

Petra:

I think it was more for me to find out what I want to do in this life and what my sort of purpose is, that is always more the issue than where I am going to be? Because then it doesn't matter. Because if I know I'm doing what I'm meant to be doing and I have a sense of purpose, it doesn't matter where I am… because I feel I'm on the right spot anyway.

From Petra's perspective, place is of little importance as long as she can find meaning in what she is doing by focusing on 'within' rather than 'on the outside'. Politics from her point of view are a form of distraction.

Petra:

My identity? It happens all inside and that's my connectedness… becoming more aware of what I really am…

This is partly in tune with '…how the meaning of "being German" has shifted across the three postwar generations' (Castles, 1996:178) in terms of a general critical stance towards Germany from the so-called 'second generation' to 'new subjectivities' with a focus on internalisation and inwardness rather than political activism. Both Ronja and Petra are positioned within this discourse of 'feeling uncomfortable' within German culture, although their individual subject positions are influenced by their age difference and geographical location. Ronja was involved in student politics during the late 70s and early 80s within the highly politicised environment of the University of Bremen[48]. Ronja's involvement led to her increasingly radical political positioning. Petra grew up in semi-rural Bavaria at a time when the Bavarian Prime Minister Strauss promoted a new pride in being German based on economic success (Castles, 1996). Ronja remembers that her decision to leave Germany was made in 1984, the year of Helmuth Kohl's election as Chancellor.

Ronja:

He was voted in before we left, because Strauss was also up for election, and it seemed to be a turning point for the worst. And there was a lot of resignation and depression among my friends, everybody felt really low, like we were never going to change anything.

Yannis Stavrakakis, in his discourse analysis of the emergence of the German Green Party, states that

> It is true that in the German context, the 1960s and 1970s have signalled an acute disillusionment of the left which led to phenomena such as left-wing terrorism and had a profound effect on German society. More so for the politically active younger generation: violence, fruitless theoretical discussions and conflicts with their immediate surroundings led many students to search for a new context in which to overcome their isolation... (Stavrakakis, 2000:113).

For Ronja, this meant

I felt like a victim in Germany and I didn't have any influence.....society, the capitalist system, every one is so much more powerful and stronger than we are and we'll never make a difference, really. Whereas here [in New Zealand] - it's probably no different and New Zealand as a country is so much of a victim of the big, mighty, international corporations, but as a person I feel more involved in it.

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[48] Bremen is a traditional stronghold of the SPD (Social Democrats), whereas Bavaria is the stronghold of the more conservative CSU.

Identification with the '(m)other'

Stavrakakis' notion of disillusionment refers to the German 'Left' which has to be understood in the context of the overall gendered structure of society. If there was a sense of dislocation in the public sphere of left politics, for many women of the first and second postwar generation feelings of dislocation in the private sphere were nothing new. Linville draws a connection between '...the gender divide which, especially in the 1950s, but also in the 1970s and 1980s, privatised the women's work of mourning and mothering' (Linville, 1998:15), and the '...view that many West Germans substituted identification with the economic system for other sources of identity' (ibid:14). For women and girls whose potential to take part in the economic system was limited due to an emphasis on traditional gender roles, this meant that identification had to happen through their roles as wives of a breadwinner at the cost of repressing other aspects of identity. The degree of success in the role as a housewife determined identity in a society with a focus on stability, rather than change.'...Consumerist dynamics and narrow social blinders...' (ibid) lead to increased feelings of isolation and disempowerment for many women.

Susi, who immigrated with her English husband to New Zealand in 1986, became very aware of the impact social control issues used to have on her, when she recently visited her sister in Germany.

Susi:

My oldest sister up in the north of Germany, she lives in a tiny village at the edge of fields – that village must have about 50 people living there. She owns an old barn that she has converted with a couple of fields belonging to her with a huge big lawn... it's beautiful. She has a little vegetable patch and she gets told by her neighbour when to hoe the potatoes, and then there's the guilt coming through... there is not supposed to be one weed in it. They are very controlled, no matter where you live, it's all very controlled. You can't escape it. You're either in a big city, which is industrial like Mannheim, where you can be a little bit more free but you don't have nature around you, or you have to *conform, you have to conform, no matter what. You get letters, you get mail, people tell you what to do with your little square all the time.*

Susi feels that this need to conform takes a toll on her sister who finds it very difficult to create some 'space' for herself. The search for space becomes an expression of dislocation,

> ...the process by which the contingency of discursive structures is made visible...if dislocations disrupt identities and discourses, they also create a lack at the level of meaning that stimulates new discursive constructions...in short, it is the "failure" of the structure, and as we have seen of those subject positions which are part of such a structure, that "compels" the subject to act, to assert anew its subjectivity (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:15).

In Susi's narrative, this 'lack' of meaning is experienced as dissatisfaction and a search for alternatives. I interpreted Susi's focus on her sister's situation as an indicator of Susi's own memories of dislocation in Germany, which 'compelled' her to 'search' for meaning elsewhere (and led to her immigration to New Zealand). Susi's narrative emphasises that from her perspective, her sister's withdrawal from 'consumerist dynamics and social blinders' to the countryside/the private sphere, did not achieve the desired outcome (namely to escape the pressure to conform).

Susi:

My sister feels very stressed, just going to work, wearing the right clothes. She gets told: oh, you've got new shoes? The old ones were really rather shabby...you know?...so she has build herself in that barn, it's really interesting. There's the flat [in the barn], which they want to rent out as a holiday home, and they are just building other little rooms inside the barn. And they are always building in such a way, that she can walk around naked everywhere, so no one can see her.

Susi seems to use the image of the barn to illustrate her interpretation of her sister's situation in Germany. The barn represents a sanctuary from the 'hostile' outside world (work/wearing the 'right' clothes, being judged on appearances); however, the withdrawal into the 'inside' of the private sphere is precarious: parts of it have to be rented out in order to gain enough financial independence to allow for a limited expression of 'non-conformity' (to be able to let go of the the restraints, 'to walk around naked'). For Susi, her sister's attempts to 'fit in', while retaining some level of autonomy, are part of a continuum; Susi remembers her mother's attempts to 'fit in', to be part of 'normality' in the 60s.

Susi:

And then my father was transferred with his job to where I grew up and my mother, because we were really poor and didn't have much furniture... instead of moving straight to the new city, she would buy all their furniture in the place they lived, so that it would look as if they had an established household that they moved... all they had were a couple of beds and some chairs, but my mother felt so embarrassed about that situation – she didn't want to move like a refugee, she wanted to look like an established housewife, moving here, belonging. So that was quite strange, very strange...

Susi remembers one scene as indicative of her mother's dislocation in West Germany when it became obvious to Susi that her mother was 'different'. 'Normality' had to be constructed on an ongoing basis, particularly in the middle-class neighbourhood of Susi's childhood. Despite her mother's efforts to maintain the norm, recognition depended on the willingness of others to accept her status as 'one of us'.

Susi:

I remember one incident when my mother was hanging out the washing and she had a huge argument with our neighbour. And because she was saying something negative about the neighbour's child... it was just a really silly squabble, and our neighbour would blow up. She [the neighbour] came from Bavaria, she was really emotional, a really big woman, she was quite scary... she just blew up when she heard my mother say something, she called my mother something like "you bloody foreigner" so, you know, they knew she wasn't from here. And my mother came up and cried, she was very upset, I remember well because I was sitting by the kitchen window listening to it.

The neighbour from Bavaria obviously had a more established claim to 'normality' and 'belonging' which gave her the choice of positioning herself as an 'insider', able to mark the 'outsider'. Susi also remembers being aware of her mother's isolation and her withdrawal into the sphere of Kinder, Kirche, Kueche.

Susi:

...she never struck big friendships with people in our neighbourhood... I never

remember her with good friends... the church was her only friendship, yeah, she had that. It was the church.

Susi's mother's effort to fit into German society were based on her repression of other aspects of her identity which would have 'exposed' her multiplicity, her involvement in more than one culture, in an environment where 'sameness' prevailed.

Susi:

We don't know much about mum's history... we only found out after her death that her maiden name is an old, very old, Jewish name that came from Czechoslovakia. And that was probably one of the reasons why she never said anything. I think her father died in one of the concentration camps, she's never... she grew up near Dachau, which was one of the biggest ones where Jews were kept, and she just said that he died... never knew why... she said that he worked at the railways and got crushed... driven over... by a railway carriage but... the stories didn't really add up very well. So we think, because he died during that particular time when all the Jews were killed.....and then her mother married again and this time a Catholic, so they all grew up... they converted.

The history of Susi's mother had a huge impact on Susi's own feelings of belonging. The repression of the past became part of Susi's family life, making more visible what was going on in postwar Germany on a large scale.

Susi:

She's got a very strange history, and she died before we could find out what really happened.

To feel that she belonged to Germany was not an option for Susi.

Susi:

I always wanted to go. There was never a question that I would ever, ever settle where I grew up. My sisters have, which is strange.....maybe it has something to do with my mother and me... I just got sen~~d~~t pictures of my mother when she was 21 years of age and if you hold pictures of me when I was 21 next to my mother's pictures, we are looking absolutely, utterly identical.

On the outside, Susi grew up as a typical German girl. Her mother appeared to be like everybody else, a 'normal' German. In the context of postwar Germany though, the details of her story reveal the impact of gender divisions and the pain of a repressed past.

As women, neither the mother nor the daughters could give meaning to of the influences of the past on their lives. Within the discursive and social structures of postwar Germany, the mother's past could not be part of the present which led to silence and invisibility, in both the public but also the private sphere of the family. For her daughters, the feelings of dislocation based on their mother's history lead to searches for 'new' ways to live, in search of some relief from conformity and 'normality'. For Susi's sister, expressions of a 'different' identity are relegated to the private sphere; for Susi, leaving Germany for New Zealand offered the possibility to not be restricted, an escape from having to fit the tight norms of a society that has made life for her mother so difficult.

Susi:

I want to explore doing the things I want to do... being taken seriously in that I wanted and want to do those things. Trying things... open options. I see my life as not being fixed, I see it moving all the time, and there are all the little stages in my life where I might do this for a while and then might go off and do something else... I think feeling at home means that I have the freedom to do that. Never feeling – this is what you have to do for the rest of your life.

In this chapter I have offered interpretations on why some of the women left Germany. In the process I suggested that migration to New Zealand offered the hope for the possibility of developing new subjectivities and new beginnings for women from Germany. Discourses and practices that were based on traditional understandings of gender relations became increasingly interwoven with 'counter-fatherly forces' which assisted the emergence of 'new' subjectivities, new identifications, new beginnings. In some cases this rebellion against 'home' led to the search for a 'better place' where these 'new' ideas about self and others seemed to have a more realistic chance of being lived. The implication was that in some cases the possibility of imagining 'progressive change' in Germany appeared as less of an option than migration to the 'other side' of the world. In the following chapter I ask the questions: why is New Zealand conceptualised as a 'better place'? What images and ideas about this place were dominant in Germany? In what ways did New Zealand appear as an alternative to Germany? By asking these questions I bear in mind that not all of the women felt that they had wanted to leave

Germany in search for 'the better'. A surprising number of my interview partners felt that they ended up in New Zealand almost by chance. However, I assume that the decision to leave 'home' is not as easily made as it may sound – ideas about how this place might be different/better than 'home' have on some level influenced the decision making process. In the next chapter I will put this assumption to the test by identifying how places, in this case Germany and New Zealand, have been conceptualised and how these ideas led to the desire to 'change places'.

Chapter 4

From the 'Old' Germany to the 'New' Zealand – the constructions of 'place/space' in the narratives

In chapter 2, I introduced some of the ambiguities surrounding conceptualisation of place and space as separate, oppositional or complementary categories (Harvey, 1993), and the possibilities of a re-conceptualisation through understandings of the links between the local and the global, place and space (McDowell, 1999, Massey, 1994). In this chapter, I want to further explore these ambiguities and possibilities by focusing on the connections between conceptualisations of self and images of New Zealand as a place/space for 'new beginnings'.

The search for a place where 'a challenge', 'the better', 'the new', 'space' and/or 'the exciting' can be experienced, have shaped these migration stories. Barry Curtis and Claire Pajaczkowska[49] point out that in the context of travel, and by extension migration, 'the search for a place in which happiness may be found is always a metaphor for the search to recover a memory of happiness' (1994:199). Curtis and Pajaczkowska frame their discussion in terms of the 'loss of innocence' associated with modernity and the search for 'unspoilt beauty', often represented by 'nature' in contrast to culture/the metropolis. This theme will guide my understanding of migration stories in this chapter as the attempted 'escape from complexity' and 'the (illusionary) search for happiness in New Zealand'.

My use of the term 'narrative' or 'story' refers to the underlying constructedness of all experience and meaning. Sociologist Ken Plummer has the following to say on the significance of narratives:

> We are constantly writing the story of the world around us: its periods and places, its purposes and programmes, its people and plots. We invent identities for ourselves and others and locate ourselves in these imagined maps (Plummer, 1995:20).

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[49] Their writing is published in the anthology 'Travellers' Tales', an interdisciplinary collection of texts.

These 'imagined maps' in turn are being shaped by the discourses available at that point in time and space. In the previous chapter I have introduced some of the discourses around gender and 'new' subjectivity in postwar Germany. Some of these discourses resurface in the process of locating the self in the 'imagined map' of New Zealand and in turn add 'difference' to the map - my overall intention is to supplement cultural knowledge/difference without generalising, in 'adding to' rather than 'adding up' mode (Probyn, 1996) with the aim of expanding the ideas about what kind of place New Zealand is/could be.

In the interviews, 'place' ('the local', that which is presumably known) and 'space' ('the global', that which is open, unknown) are conceptualised as ambiguous and separated: according to feminist geographers, some of the stories of 'Germans in search for freedom and autonomy' seem to rely on representations of Germany as 'place' ('mapped and knowable', but also 'messy and opaque') in contrast to New Zealand as 'space' - as that which can be explored because it is seemingly 'unformed', a wide-open space. To express the longing for more 'space' because the old 'place' is experienced as over-crowded and limiting to self-development, puts German immigrants potentially in the category of the privileged few who, from a global perspective, are able to use time-space compression to their advantage. My intention is to draw out the implications of a conceptualisation of space/place as part of a (dichotomous) construct that Bauman (1991) describes as 'crucial for the practice and vision of social order', and as such as an expression of modern consciousness. In this light, the representations of New Zealand and Germany, the 'imagined maps' that some of the interviewees have constructed, reflect 'the old order'. However, in chapter 1 I tried to frame this thesis in terms of finding connections between what is often perceived as oppositions. Consequently, I understand these 'maps' as potential keys to a better understanding of the relationship between opposite poles; if we can contextualise our taken-for-granted understandings and are able to reflect on the ways meaning is constructed in culturally specific processes, positive change towards societies that are inclusive and socially just become possible. Massey reminds us that '...representation is not merely reflection; it is itself an active force in moulding social relations and social understandings' (Massey, 1994:233). 'Imagined maps', then, are powerful – they can contain the keys to overcoming dualisms that prevent dialogue, but they can also function as 'king of the castle' by stabilising the self at the cost of excluding anything that threatens to disrupt the illusional control of the rational 'I'. In order to further explore the elements that have shaped ideas about what kind of place/space New Zealand is, I want to briefly turn to images of New Zealand that were easily available to potential travellers/immigrants.

Representations of New Zealand in Germany

Gisela Holfter (1989) gives an overview of *The Image of New Zealand in Germany* in James Bade's anthology on Germans in New Zealand. She refers to image as '...the entirety of all attitudes, insights, experiences, the emotional (feelings, dreams, idealisation), and the factual side' (Holfter, 1998:245)[50]. Holfter points out that New Zealand has a positive image in the German-speaking countries, in particular in Germany and Switzerland, which is partly due to the marketing of New Zealand by the Tourism Board. The images of New Zealand and Germany define expectations that are attached to those places and its people. In this scenario, New Zealand is presented as desirable, open to exploration, natural. Germany in contrast is understood as wealthy, powerful, technological.

Holfter begins by tracing the emergence of images of New Zealand back to the 18th century. Responses to images of New Zealand were situated somewhere between the enthusiasm for the 'exotic' as the 'exciting' other (as for example represented in Tahiti as 'the Paradise Island') and the negativity of the 'savage' other (as represented by the Australian Aborigines). Holfter hints at the influence of the Enlightenment in the construction of this image which might explain the negativity associated with 'untamed' nature and indigenous, 'uncivilised' people in Australia. Tellingly, New Zealand's indigenous population does not feature in her account of early images of the country, which demonstrates a repression of difference in her story. At this point I would like to digress slightly to expand on the absence of difference in Holfter's account.

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[50] I would argue that Holfter's use of the concept 'image' is more closely linked to Rey Chow's interpretation of image as 'gaze':
'The activity of watching is linked by projection to physical nakedness. Watching is theoretically defined as the primary agency of violence, an act that pierces the other, who inhabits the place of the passive victim on display. The image, then, is an aggressive sight that reveals itself in the other; it is the site of the aggressed' (Chow, 1994:126).

The Repression of otherness in colonial discourses

Gisela Brinker-Gabler (1995) refers to Emmanuel Levinas to highlight that in Western metaphysics the '...appropriation of the other/s – which leads to its/their destruction – [is] a feature of Western civilisation and of the Greek culture it is based on...' (Brinker-Gabler, 1995:1). In colonial discourses, the metaphor of the journey and encounters with others stand for the rational subject who knows itself and will always return to its origin, untouched by radical difference because it refuses to recognise it. Brinker-Gabler points out that '...in the course of Western expansion and hegemony, the non-western worlds were represented as Western scenarios' (ibid:5). In this setting, the 'exotic' refers to '...a distortion of the other or its degradation to an object of projection' (ibid:3). In contrast to this impulse to mis-recognise difference, Brinker-Gabler refers to Levinas' philosophical conception of

> ...the other/s in terms of alterity, exteriority, distance: as something radically different – radical in terms of the illimitability of the other/s, which is something that we can not fully comprehend...For Levinas, the face-to-face relationship with the other/s is always an ethical relationship (ibid:2).

An ethical relationship creates *response*/ibility[51] which can only emerge out of dialogue embedded in an understanding of self and others as connected in a network of incredibly complex differences and sameness.

Moira Gatens and Genevieve Lloyd point out that colonialisation relied on legal fictions like *terra nullius*, which make dialogue an impossibility because the other is simply labelled as completely inferior.

> Acquisition of territory by occupation assumed the doctrine of *terra nullius*, whose extended legal meaning included not only uninhabited land but also

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[51] Interestingly, *response*/bility as well as the German translation 'Ver/*antwort*/ung' both carry the impulse for dialogue, based on listening to the other before responding.

> territories that were inhabited by peoples who did not cultivate the land, who were not seen to form an organised society governed by law and so who were deemed to be "uncivilised savages" (Gatens and Lloyd, 1999:141, emphasis in original).

This principle was applied to Australia under British colonisation and most likely influenced the image of Maori in 19th century Europe. How far reaching the consequences of fictions like *terra nullius* are, becomes chillingly obvious when Gatens and Lloyd point out that the Australian Highcourt finally overturned this legal principle in as late as 1992. The New Zealand situation is different though;

> ...Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi), articulates a particular relationship between Maori, the original inhabitants of these islands, and up to six generations of more recent settlers. Although the commitments made by the British Crown to Maori signatories have been consistently breached, 'New Zealand' as a legal entity is built on a particular kind of definition of difference (Du Plessis and Alice, 1998:xv).

Some images of New Zealand – for tourists only?

These days, the image of New Zealand[52] in Germany is carefully crafted to attract tourists. Postcolonial discourses with an emphasis on the representation of otherness as part of the reproduction of inequalities and injustices are not part of this image. Holfter highlights the message of the New Zealand Tourist Board which identifies German tourists as highly desirable '...because of their high expenditure...' (ibid:246). The Tourist Board identifies and consequently targets two main categories of German tourists, the 'culture-seekers' and the 'foreign adventures', with the second group categorising the fairly affluent independent travellers under 40. This age group, roughly the same age group as the interviewed women, is assumed to be attracted to New Zealand by the image of the country's unique nature.

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[52] Holfter refers to Aotearoa/New Zealand as New Zealand – as do the travel guides she cites. I am aware of the Treaty of Waitangi and the reference to Aotearoa/New Zealand as a recognition of this. My usage of the term 'New Zealand' in this study arises out of the context of the interviews – we talked about New Zealand rather than Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Holfter refers to a recently conducted study on the image of New Zealand and its success in terms of marketing to explain this image and its marketing in Germany. She cites a German travel book as a typical example of the image construction of New Zealand since the 1980s:

> Fascinating New Zealand...the breathtaking scenery and people whose natural, open and warm personalities surprise us Europeans has always attracted me – a country with two cultures, familiar and excitingly exotic at the same time (ibid:247).

Important for my analysis is the recognition that New Zealand offers 'emotional closeness', a term used by the Tourist Board to describe the mixture of the familiar and the unfamiliar to attract German travellers. The image of New Zealand appears to accommodate the visitors' desire for encountering the 'unknown' in the form of 'natural, geographical' differences, for example in the attraction the National Parks with their 'wilderness and remoteness' hold for many Germans. In terms of landscape, New Zealand is marketed as also offering encounters with the familiar but in a compressed form, '...beaches and bays as they are on the Algarve, green hills as in the Scottish Highlands, mountains and glaciers like the Alps', as Holfter demonstrates by citing another travel guide (ibid:247).

Another version of the mixture between the familiar and the unknown is of course the perceived 'bi-culturalism' of New Zealand. On the one hand, the familiarity of Anglo-Saxon culture (and, for many Germans, language) gives a sense of security, whereas on the other hand the 'exotic' difference of Maori culture promises experiences of something 'different' and unique to take home. Holfter points out that other important marketing features are the 'island effect' and the remoteness of New Zealand.

> Not only the geographical distance plays a role in this: remoteness, to be "far away from the crowd", is easier to achieve on an island...the geographical status of an island (or many islands, as in New Zealand) has always led to higher expectations, and desires for a better world. Even in ancient times, island and paradise concepts were closely connected (ibid:248).

New Zealand as a dream destination is another dominant image. Holfter cites an article in a well-known German travel magazine to highlight the influence of the 'far-away factor' in encouraging dreams about a 'new start'. The author based his writing on a meeting with several German immigrants in New Zealand to come to the conclusion that '...New Zealand is, or was at least at some point in their life, an equivalent of a new start, a dream of a better world, a better life...an important part of this dream is nature...' (ibid).This observation possibly links the desire for escape from modernity, represented by Germany, and the longing for innocence, represented by 'unspoilt' nature, with immigration to New Zealand.

Holfter connects this desire for a better world with a closely related but slighlty more socio-political version of the image of New Zealand as 'green, clean, and nuclear-free'. On this scale, New Zealand has held the image of '...a Sweden of the South Pacific...' which now, with increased cuts in welfare spending '...threatens to become a copy of American society', as another travel book writer sums up. This less idealistic image of New Zealand as somehow spoilt disrupts the Tourism Board's marketing strategy of constructing the 'escape' illusion for the tourist as consumer and introduces ambiguity into this idea about the possibility of finding an 'innocent place'. Holfter concludes that the dominant image of New Zealand in Germany is largely constructed around emotional factors which ensure an ongoing fascination with New Zealand for German tourists.

Some expectations and first impressions....

The features listed by Holfter are reflected in the narratives of the immigrants. In the course of the interviews, most women at some point identified with the 'tourist' who comes to New Zealand because she is attracted by the image of the country as it is marketed in Germany. Mimi expresses this clearly.

Mimi:

I don't think I ever gave much thought to how New Zealand would be before I immigrated. I looked at the "Meridian", you know, this magazine? They had those beautiful articles on New Zealand, this lovely, lush, green country, somewhere far away. That was all I had in mind.

Sabine and her husband, living here for eight years now, thought that New Zealand would be quite familiar.

Sabine:

We thought culturally it would be quite similar. The language is obviosuly different, something to adjust to, but we felt we were quite fluent in English and wouldn't have any problems with the language, really. And culturally we expected things to be really similar...

Marion, who immigrated four years ago because her husband found a job in New Zealand had few, fairly superficial expectations.

Marion:

It's remote, it will be difficult to stay in touch, the seasons would be opposite. I imagined that it would be difficult to have Christmas in summer. I would have to drive on the left had side and I would have to speak English. But nothing beyond that, I had no clue how people are...

Katja came 16 years ago and remembers her initial attraction based on the familiar.

Katja:

I wanted to do something agricultural in another country, an English speaking country, I thought I'd be alright, I could cope with the language and I'd get around okay. And I knew somebody in New Zealand...

Katja chose to come to New Zealand because it also offered the 'exotic'.

I was hoping for a tropical island. And climate was a big consideration for me, I didn't want to live in a country where I had to shut myself away for six, seven months of the year with central heating and the doors locked...I wanted a country where I could grow things pretty much all year round, and I was hoping to find something like that here. And I'd heard that there was no housing for animals, so I assumed that the climate must be quite different.

The tourist information that had informed her image of New Zealand did not prepare her for what she found.

...I was really really disappointed because it was so English...people were quite friendly but not open, rather closed-up, quite prude. And tasteless, lots of really tasteless things, I mean, these bright pink houses in a beautiful landscape...so many eyesores in

the landscape... all these houses [in Auckland] which looked like paper machee, nice front and then nothing much behind it.

The nuclear accident at Tschernobyl in 1986 influenced her decision to stay in New Zealand despite her initial dislike.

Katja:

I was going to go back to Germany to study bio-dynamics, but Tschernobyl happend towards the end of my time here and that made it easier to decide that I wouldn't go back and stay here.

For Ronja, Tschernobyl also played a decisive part in her choice of New Zealand as country of immigration.

Ronja:

And I think the reason why we started looking to New Zealand was that at that stage everybody was talking about the fear of nuclear power explosions and warfare and whatever. And it seemed to be the only safe place, either South America or somewhere in the Pacific, in the Southern hemisphere. Africa seemed too far away and too strange, we didn't have any connection to that. New Zealand was just sort of an 'in' country I think. It was the country which seemed to be the safest, perhaps. We only really went to New Zealand to have a look, we thought perhaps we continue travelling form there. And when I arrived in Christchurch I didn't like it at all, I thought it was so old fashioned English and no trees at all, very barren. Not necessarily my place.

After this brief introduction, I will now turn to some more specific ideas about selves and places; however, to begin with I will still stay within the parameters of the New Zealand Tourism Board.

From 'foreign adventurer' to 'immigrant'

Within this discourse of New Zealand as both exotic and familiar, a range of ideas about the self emerged in the interviews. One understanding of self is that of the 'foreign adventurer' who comes to New Zealand with expectations of encountering some form of challenge, often articulated in terms of a physical trial. Nicole, who has been living in New Zealand since 1996, is very clear about the attraction this place held for her.

Nicole:

When I left my job in Germany I didn't really plan to immigrate at that stage, and not to New Zealand. I came to New Zealand because I always wanted to travel for a year, do something bigger.... Canada was the other option. America I never liked, it was too big. Australia was too big, I was never interested in that. I've been to Scotland, Ireland, the other English speaking countries and I actually had friends who had been to New Zealand and had biked around it, and they showed us some slides and that was the end of it. Or the beginning.

Nicole came to New Zealand as a tourist, attracted by the size which seemed to promise accessibility - not too big to feel lost in, familiar enough to find her way in and feel safe. Nicole, as female tourist, pushes traditional gender expectation of femininity as passive/fragile by wanting to 'prove herself' and by 'taking a risk'.

Nicole:

I was quite untrained when I came here for this bike trip, and the first two weeks were absolutely terrible. It was the wind that was unexpected. We [she came with her sister] were biking about 60kmh per day and we had unbelievable headwinds. In the end we were absolutely fit, that was really good. And I'd do it again tomorrow.

In Germany, Nicole was working as a banker in a strongly regulated environment where risks of any kind were probably seen as highly undesirable. In this context physical adventures in the 'wilderness' represent the opposite of Nicole's everyday 'reality' in Germany. On some level Nicole seems to have been driven by the longing to break up '...the necessary logic of everyday life [through travel]...' (Curtis and Pajaczkowska, 1994:200). According to Curtis and Pajaczkowska, this interlude contains the desire for an experience of temporal alterity: the structuring element of time looses its grip on space, resulting in a fusion between time and space '... with the accompanying promise of a revitalisation. Foreigness adds to this a dimension of classificatory disjunction - the pleasures and alarms of a place where they do things differently' (ibid).

In contrast, Germany represents the restrictions of repetition and the predictability of everyday life. Nicole illustrates her understanding of the two places by comparing a bicycle tour she did in Germany with her New Zealand experiences.

Nicole:

We went up to Bremen and it was all sign-posted and all that. In New Zealand, you just bike on the road, or forestry road. It's not organised.... The big difference is that in New Zealand you have to apply a lot more common sense. In Germany it's like...you're being led like a sheep, everything is tested and approved and absolutely idiot prove... So when I came to New Zealand I assumed that if there was a bridge I could cross it... or sometimes the walkways go along cliffs or steep slopes. In Germany you would have railings or a fence or something... here in New Zealand you have to look and you have to decide for yourself if you can walk there or not...

'Challenge' for Nicole relates to a less structured environment where she can test her ability to make decisions, to apply her 'common sense' in potentially life-threatening scenarios. This mediation between safety and danger has parallells to proximity and distance – in this instance Germany represents 'place', understood as 'mapped and knowable' in contrast to New Zealand as 'space' ('a spatial paradox, a territory defined by its lack of definition: ...a no man's land' [Rose, 1993:70]). Germany appears as 'safe' and 'unchallenging', the opposite of New Zealand, imagined as a territory where individuality can be 'lived out' in an environment that is both familiar and curiously 'empty'.

Nicole:

I've got no problems with being a German, it was just... too many people.

Again, Curtis and Pajaczkowska are helpful by pointing put that

> the sessile condition of "home-boundedness" is gendered in most cultures as feminine; the male journey is equated with fathering and insemination. Historical travel has been closely linked with conquests – sexual and territorial (Curtis and Pajaczkowska, 1994:201).

In these terms, 'life as an adventurer' reverberates with colonial discourses. The experience of foreigness/emptiness and the challenges this represents, function to secure identity as stable in western symbolic structures. In terms of modernity, Gisela Brinker-Gabler refers to the Greek Odysseus story as a representation of modern consciousness imagined as conquering strangeness to 'find its way back to itself as itself' (Brinker-Gabler, 1995:1). From a psychoanalytical perspective the very structure of Oedipality involves a journey and a return – 'a necessary integration in the same place of an identity which has been secured by a difficult journey in time' (Curtis and Pajaczkowska, 1994:200). In terms of a gendered identity, Nicole's idea of herself as a 'foreign adventurer' subverts the binary oppositions of 'home-boundedness' as being marked as a feminine attribute and 'journey' as part of masculinity. By rejecting the gender expectation of 'staying home' as a woman, Nicole positions herself, at least for a short period of time[53], between the opposite poles as a single female adventure traveller. However, 'coming home' is part of the plan.

Nicole:

In the long run I'd say we will have kids but then we have to figure out something about jobs... I would probably be working as well, not full-time because I'm not having kids and then giving the kids to the childcare center to be looked after. That's not the reason for having kids but I would be working part time, maybe on the weekends, maybe at night.

This indicates that she expects to 'return' to a more traditional understanding of her gender role after an interlude of exploration and challenges. She expresses traditional ideas about what constitutes 'home' for her.

Nicole:

I didn't even get homesick or very, very seldom. More like... only when you're really feeling sick, like you've got the flu and nobody is looking after you, your mother is not making you a tea or a hottie or prepares a meal. I think that's when you feel homesick.

In the meantime she continues her 'difficult journey' as a transitional stage between 'leaving home' and 'finding her place' in the world.

Nicole:

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[53] Nicole met her partner shortly after her arrival in NZ and immigrated under the 'De Facto Partnership' regulations.

It's a lot harder [living here] than being a tourist. On holiday you have no worries, you don't have to find a job, you don't have to pay bills, all that hassle.

The German female immigrant as adventurer performs a rite of passage: 'Leaving home is a repetition of the first journey in the "travail" of childbirth, an active and painful displacement from the safety and unfreedom of the "maternal" home to the unknown elements and horizons of the "big wide world"' (Curtis and Pajaczkowska, 1994:200). Bearing in mind that from a historical perspective traditional constructions of femininity have a strong hold in Germany, the breaking away from the 'maternal' home seems particularly significant; however, from Nicole's perspective gender restrictions did not feature in her search for more freedom. The outer journey becomes a metaphor for an inner journey as Ronja, known to us from the previous chapter, clearly expresses. She remembers that her decision to leave was based on

...a big sense of curiosity and a feeling that everything was too restricted in Germany. Yeah, adventure, curiosity. I think it's symbolic for going on a journey...

Another aspect of the Oedipal model is the conceptualisation of individuation as 'autonomy (growing out of the family)' rather than as 'growing into social community' (Bammer, 1994:103). Nicole articulates her experience of 'feeling restricted' in terms of the German state-regulated social security system. She understands social welfare not as 'social responsibility' but as a barrier to individualisation and automomy.

Nicole:

I'm doing quite well here and I earn money, I can save up for my own retirement. In Germany, I had to pay high health insurance premiums and I had to pay whether I was using it or not. And I had to pay retirement insurance and still didn't know if I would get some pension money. At the moment, I'm certainly better off here.

Her decision to live in New Zealand appears to be based on her search for autonomy and individuation, motivated by her desire to escape the restrictions of the 'maternal home', which is conceptualised as 'filled to capacity and knowable'. The imagination of Germany as 'maternal space' fuells the desire for 'territorial conquest', represented by images of New Zealand as 'empty', a 'no-man's land'.

Nicole:

Germany is so over-crowded and I never liked heaps of people. Like on a Saturday, when you go to town and there are heaps of people there. You can't just go to the beach and you're on your own, you'll always have people there.

This wish to 'escape' from too many people, too many structures and regulations to the remote island reflects the desire to explore the world as an individual, along the lines of the 'foreign adventurer', an understanding about the self influenced by colonial discourses. The image of New Zealand as marketed by the Tourism Board fits this bill perfectly.

The search for freedom in nature

For Anja, who initially came to New Zealand as a 'foreign traveller' before deciding to immigrate, the journey also seems to represent a rite of passage and a transition into independence. The perceived dualism between space/place and/or proximity/distance informs her image about New Zealand.

Anja:

The first time I came here, that was after I'd finished school. And I just wanted to see a different place, work there...I'd always wanted to go to Alaska, but I wasn't sure what kind of work I would get there, because I wanted to work....And then also I'd seen a documentary on New Zealand and I liked it and I thought: yeah. It's far away...probably stupid but I thought: really far away, that sounds good.... I didn't really know a lot about this country at all.

For Anja, 'feeling free' is an important concept when she compares New Zealand and Germany. Her desire for being able to do what she wants (autonomy) mirrors Nicole's for more agency. Anja articulates her search for freedom in terms of solitary experiences in nature in opposition to the perceived non-freedom in the densely populated Germany.

Anja:

...it's difficult to explain. When you're on a walk and there's nobody there and it's just bush or you might have a really nice view, you feel great, you feel free. That's probably it... Ah, when I go tramping. I feel relaxed, I feel I can do what I want to do.

[....] I like that environment, I like the National Parks. That you can just...I like that. That's the reason I'm actually here.

Gatens and Lloyd refer to concepts of 'freedom' as still echoing with the Stoic ideal of detachment, according to which 'We are to be guided not by things outside us but rather by what our own nature, considered in itself, demands' (Gatens and Lloyd, 1999:42). This ideal is mirrored in the Cartesian mind/body split and in the understanding that the self is to be governed by rational thought. The self is conceptualised as a disembodied, autonomous 'knower', unhindered by the 'messiness' of embodied experiences. Feminist geographer Robyn Longhurst sums up this position by highlighting the underlying dualism which separates the 'knower' from particular social positions and particular bodies:

> Masculinist rationality is a form of knowledge which assumes a knower who believes he can separate himself from his body, emotions, values, past experiences and so on. This allows for him and his thoughts (his mind) to be autonomous, transcendent and objective; mess and matter-free so to speak (Longhurst, 1995:98).

Anja gives meaning to Germany in a similar manner to Nicole: both understand Germany, and in extension some of its Europ~~i~~ean neighbours, to be over-crowded and messy, with 'nothing [new] to see'.

Anja:

...you drive along the Autobahn, it's boring, it's terrible. I mean, there's nothing really to see. Even in France, when you go to some nice areas for, let's say, kayaking, in the Provence, the Ardeche, there are heaps of people! And every corner, whatever, you have a restaurant.

I am suggesting that the split between the reality of living with others in relatively close proximity, which harbours complexity and 'messiness', and the imagination of the individual self as autonomous/in control, opens up – masculinist rationality (the idea that control is always possible) and embodied experience (the realisation of the impossibility of total control) fuel the desire for 'wholeness' to such an extent that 'the knower' embarks on her journey to find a place where this ambiguous sense of self can be repressed. 'Nature' signifies such a place for renewal if it can be imagined as 'wild' and 'untouched' by human (western) civilisation. This construct of the self evokes a sense of imaginary 'wholeness' or 'oneness with nature', where the impossible struggle for control and autonomy can be dismissed as not relevant - the self is reborn as 'at one with oneself' and the world. This is expressed by Petra when she says

... that's what all the saints say, you find yourself, find your soul and then you realize that you are one with God and then you have all the happiness and all the peace and everything that you can possibly ever want from life. And so, it's a more exciting way to live than just focusing on the bits and pieces of everyday life without any purpose. I couldn't do it.

As a discursive construct, Germany represents 'modernity' in opposition New Zealand as 'nature/innocence before the fall', Germany is 'too ambiguous', filled with too many contradictions and too many bodies that function as constant reminders of unresolvable multiplicity and of 'messy' embodiment. Understandings of the self, that locate knowledge firmly within the paradigm of masculinist rationality, require a repression of the embodied experience of being female in a world where femininity signifies everything that masculinity as the norm cannot accommodate/has to reject, and where furthermore the 'female' is collapsed with femininity[54]. In their desire to be heard/seen as subjects, some of these women seem to repress their knowledge of gendered experiences.

Sabine:

Being a woman never influenced any of my choices or ideas.

Petra:

It would be silly to say I don't feel like a woman, but I don't know, I feel more like a person, I could never identify with all this woman stuff. It doesn't mean anything to me. I just am who I am and that's that.

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[54] Feminist philosopher Elisabeth Grosz refers to the concept of *chora* in the Platonic tradition as the '...space in which place is made possible.... it is the space that engenders without possessing, that nurtures without requirements of its own, that receives without giving....It is no wonder that *chora* resembles the characteristics the Greek, and all those who follow them, have long attributed to femininity, or rather, have expelled from their own masculine self-representation... '(Grosz, 1995:116). It seems to me that the search for wholeness can also be understood as the longing for *chora* – is it possible for women to find this place in their own society where gender expectations are known and consequently more difficult to evade? Could New Zealand be understood as a representation of this desire to escape being the embodiment of femininity, even if this is not consciously expressed?

I am arguing here that some of the German women initially came to New Zealand in the search for a space to articulate and live their (displaced) desire for less restrictive gender roles. I am not arguing that New Zealand actually offers this space; but by re-moving the self to the 'other side of the world' it becomes possible to construct 'new' subjectivities without becoming stuck in the socio-symbolic structures with their known, although possibly unacknowledged, gender restrictions within the 'home' country (I will explore this idea further in chapter 5). For this to work, it becomes paramount not to 'know' New Zealand too well, otherwise the imagined self cannot be maintained and the repressed tension between imagined self and embodied self arises again.

The search for paradise, nature, wholeness can be interpeted as an 'inward' turn. By leaving what is perceived to be highly complex, difficult and demanding behind in favour of the 'dream destination', it becomes possible to focus on self-development. The theme of 'developing potential' came up in quite a few of the interviews. As Holfter pointed out earlier in this chapter, Germans have an ongoing fascination with the image of New Zealand constructed around emotional factors, possibly in 'the search for a place where happiness may be found'. Curtis and Pajaczkowska understand this search in terms of 'a passage through symbolic time, forwards towards a resolution of conflict and backwards towards a lost aspect of the past' (Curtis and Pajaczkowska, 1994:199).

In the following section I want to explore the images of New Zealand as 'a new start', where the past is re-worked to accommodate a 'new self'. I will now return to ideas about 'tourism' which are, at least partly, the home base for this chapter.

New beginnings, new possibilities, new selves?

The serach for paradise

Griselda Pollock states that 'Tourism has been identified as one of the key structures of consciousness associated with modernity' (Pollock, 1994:63). She quotes Dean MacCannell to highlight the time factor that is involved in the construction of this particular consciousness:

> …the deep structure of modernity is a totalising idea, a modern mentality that sets modern society in opposition both to its own past and to those societies of the past and present that are treated as pre-modern or underdeveloped (MacCannell in Pollock, 1994:64).

Pollock elaborates on this by stating that

> Tourism requires a territory on which this temporal ellipsis can occur. It creates a spatial encounter in what is always a fantastic landscape populated with imaginary figures whose difference must be construed and then marked in order that the sense of loss, lack and discontinuity characteristic of metropolitan modernity can be simultaneously experienced and suspended by a momentary vision of a mythic place apparently outside time, a 'before-now' place, a garden before the fall – into modernity. This experience, therefore, becomes a classic example of fetishism, a repetitious experience of knowing loss and disavowing it by substitution (Pollock, 1994:63&64).

In the light of this discourse on tourism and modernity, New Zealand, and in particular the construction of New Zealand 'nature', becomes an antidote to the memories of fragmentation and unfulfillment in Germany. Lisa, who has been living in New Zealand for 15 years, voices this experience of New Zealand as a place of rebirth in her narrative.

Lisa:

As soon as I was away [from New Zealand] I yearned and yearned for the wet drippiness of the West Coast. It has this primal, damp, dripping energy? Ahm… it sounds weird but ahm… if you imagine a Rimu, a full grown Rimu tree with its… dangling… funny… you can't call them leaves, really, but pines or whatever you call them… and ahm… the mists among them… this feels to me… like, it's almost the fountain of life… it's such a young place and I feel that very, very strongly, and I always feel so much younger here than I do in Germany.

Lisa's image of New Zealand nature can be read as representing a desire for renewal and forgetting. Following Kristeva, this can be theorised as the rupture of the symbolic through desire in language, a trace of heterogeneity. Time and space are one in Lisa's construct - the 'place before the fall' contains an element of 'otherworldly' wisdom and transcendence – the 'fountain of life' represents continuity and as such time itself. When she relates this image to herself and her everyday life, the image of the fantastic and the everyday merge into a construction of New Zealand as a young place, unformed and as such still 'innocent' and (apparently) 'unspoilt' by human existence as a signifier for modernity. The opposition between 'nature' and 'modernity' leads to the construct of New Zealand as paradise ('the object of desire') with the promise of escape from the restrictions and limitations of the gendered/embodied[55] self in Germany. New Zealand as 'paradise' holds the potential for escape from the restrictions of symbolic 'rigid containment'. Here 'woman' searches for her own space in the 'Garden of Eden'.

Lisa:

And my apple tree, I say: kids, go and get yourself an apple of the tree. I feel in paradise when I say that, you know. Or I have fish for supper and I just pull a lemon of my tree... [laughter]... it's so good. And the older I get, you know, the more valuable these things are for me. And so I think New Zealand is unique and ... mmmh... I hope very few people come here... [laughter]... a very well kept secret.

Her attempts to guard her 'Eden' lead to a clear definition of 'others' and their significance in this construct of places and identities. Consequently, her sense of self develops in opposition to the (symbolically masculine) 'Germans', who are representative of her past, while she identifies with the (symbolically feminine) New Zealanders of the present.

Lisa:

I got to know New Zealand really, really well. And... what I saw I absolutely, absolutely and utterly adored. And what I saw in my German tourists... I just wanted to smack their faces every day,... they were so bigoted, they were so blinkered, they were so German, they drove me insane, they constantly expected me to be their... I don't

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[55] Grosz draws on Luce Irigaray's understanding of women as the representative of men's bodies/space to highlight women's symbolic positioning in dominant discourses:
'In a rigid containment or mortification of women's explorations of their own notions of spatiality (and temporality), men place women in the position of being "guardians" of their bodies and spaces, the conditions of both bodies and space without body or space of their own: they become the living representatives of corporeality, of domesticity, of the natural order that men had to expel from their own self-representations in order to construct themselves as above-the-mundane, beyond the mere material' (Grosz, 1995:122).

know ... they constantly wanted more than what was provided, they weren't satisfied with what was there, they were always dissatisfied [...] And they just reminded me of all those ghastly people that I kept meeting in the airline. My clients, so to speak. They have horrible lives and so they take it out on everybody else. And no graciousness, no humility which I'd found prevalent in most New Zealanders I'd come across [...]... coming across these, these Germans!

German tourists represent potential (human) invaders into 'nature' as paradise. Lisa's attempt to exclude the aspects of herself that they represent, gives her the opportunity for new beginnings and a symbolic shedding of her 'old and somehow grey' German identity. She understands herself as protecting (and identifying with) the 'pureness' of her 'paradise'. 'Pureness' in this discourse includes notions of origin, innocence, graciousness, virginity, values attributed to femininity. German tourists are given meaning to as the aggressors: demanding, invading, never satisfied, threatening to 'pollute' the present and the future. In Lisa's attempt to give birth to a 'new' self, the 'fountain of life' promises renewal only as long as the past can be kept at bay.

For Lisa, the desire to 'return' to some form of origin/purity seems to signify experiences of a 'lack of innocence' in Germany, a lack that she now projects onto other 'Germans'. In my interpretation of this highly complex construct, Germans/Germany represent masculinity and modernity. New Zealand represents that which Germany is not, its feminised other. Similarities or links between these constructs threaten to rupture Lisa's identification with New Zealand as a place of 'rebirth and renewal', thus placing Lisa as the 'guardian of the feminised other'. Her new self is a fragile construct which requires her constant vigilance to prevent the rebirth of her 'old' self.

Is it possible to identify with selected selves in the long run, while displacing other, apparently less desirable selves? The past appears as waste again (Bauman, 1991), giving rise to ambiguity that can either way be acknowledged and lived with, or be repressed – in the second scenario strong boundaries which keep out the 'others' will constantly have to be reinforced and maintained[56]. Lisa's 'old' self is given meaning to as 'closed in', 'contained' to the point of symbolic suffocation.

Lisa:

There were neon lights and fucking tubes in Frankfurt airport day in, day out. I started in winter... it was dark 'til 10o 'clock in the morning and it was dark at 3o 'clock in the afternoon, so, I left home in the dark in slosh, my windscreen wipers always on, on the Autobahn to the airport, I parked underneath the earth in this huge monster of a car park, got out through the slosh, went through grids with my little yellow card...

She sums up her experiences during this time in Germany by saying:

Germany to me meant hardship. And always fighting it by myself, too. And so, I think I just got a bit weary after a while? 'Cause it was always me versus the world for about eight years? And I got really, really exhausted after a while and I thought: this can't be all to life... saving your money, putting it into the bank and tomorrow is another day at work, I just can't face it... pressed down by this dark brown cloud... you know... and all these little grey people running around their little grey lives,... it was just not a good scene... and there was the opportunity to get 'raus auf die Inseln [away to the islands].

The construction of place in this narrative appears to rely on an understanding of 'essential elements' that seem to characterise Germany; this 'essence' (something apparently unchangeable) is constructed by emphasising technology, competitiveness and greyness (as a symbol for lack of life?) in contrast to New Zealand's 'essence' as 'nature', as that what is missing from Germany. Massey highlights the problems around understandings of place as containing 'essential' elements.

> Indeed, in much of the debate today about globalisation, about migration and cultural shifts, about the reorganisation of time and space, there is often a background motif which is unquestioning about the nature of "places," which holds – probably implicitly – to a notion of essential places. There are a number of aspects to this. It includes the idea that places have essential characteristics, that it is possible somehow to distill their intrinsic nature. Very often, moreover, that intrinsic nature is seen as eternal, unchanging. And even where change is

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[56] Rey Chow makes the even stronger point that 'Modernity is ambivalent in its very origin. In trying to become "new" and "novel" – a kind of primary moment - it must incessantly deal with its connection with what precedes it – what was primary to it – in the form of a destruction' (Chow, 1994;136).

> acknowledged, this approach often views the "essence" of place" as having evolved through a history which is read as a sequence of events that happened only within the place itself. It is, in that sense, an internal history (Massey, 1994:111)[57]

From this perspective, images of Germany as described by Lisa represent 'snapshots,' '...freezing moments of the past of a place...to present as its essential essence...' (ibid:112). The same applies to New Zealand as a symbolic construct that signifies femininity/nature: as the feminised other of Germany it offers German women the possibility of developing constructions of the self as agent, as more 'in tune' with themselves following the desire for an imagined wholeness. This construction of the self as reborn, innocent and virginal requires an aggressive guardianship which moderates possible invasion/memories of the past, and the 'former' self – this suggests that the 'new' sense of self is even more ambiguous than the former 'German' self.

The 'new' self as agent of change

Another significant aspect of the discourse on New Zealand as 'before now' (before 'modernity') is an understanding of New Zealand as a place that still needs to be shaped and/or given a specific form to. If New Zealand as 'paradise' has to be protected from others who might spoil its 'innocence', constructs of New Zealand as 'unmapped territory' offer the possibility of 'taking charge'. Clare has been living in New Zealand since 1989. She describes her feelings in relation to her 'old' and her 'new home' as follows:

I think it's this feeling of...yes, even though you can be in a rural place [in Germany] and it feels as if there aren't many people but I definitely had this sense of overall... like, I can breathe more easily here. It's just this sense of freedom, a sense of not being... sort of locked in, even though of course no one locked me in, but it's just a feeling, a soul feeling, it affects my soul really, my feelings. [...]It was really a dream of

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[57] In chapter 2 I have sketched the differences in a conceptualisation of place/space. However, in the following paragraphs I collapse the terms at times. The distinction was not made during the interviews and consequently the terms 'place/space' are often used rather non-specifically.

mine, I've always wanted to go to New Zealand [...] it was a dream thing, you know, in Germany it was a dream.

Clare expresses similar feelings of 'symbolic suffocation' as Lisa while her longing for freedom and autonomy reflects the desires of the 'foreign adventurers'. To some extent migration for her also represents the 'rite of passage' into adulthood and individuality.

Clare:

I've always been a very independent person I think. I couldn't...I would find it hard to live somewhere where my family is. I think I have to be somewhere quite separate.

She elaborates on that by saying:

I think as you grow older, you want to be more independent anyway, you have this sort of rebellion against what you know and you really want to totally find your own way, utterly independent.

For her, this means that New Zealand offers the possibility of 'making an impact', something she found difficult in Germany.

Clare:

...when tradition is so strong, like it is in Germany, it's very hard to break out of that. While here, I feel there's a lot more possibility for new impulses. And so I think that would have affected my decision in that I felt this is more of a future-orientated country. And Germany is more of the past, yes.

Clare's sense of herself as a 'pioneer' becomes more obvious when she states:

In general, that's how I see New Zealand, I see it as a place of work, where a lot of work has to be done, and where you need a lot of people to commit themselves to that work because it's pioneering work in many aspects, compared to a place like Germany. In Germany, there's many things that would happen even if I don't do them, while here I find myself involved in so many things, on so many committees, and there is a sense of 'if I don't' do it, it won't happen'.[...] Yes, I think my tendency, in my thoughts and in my dreams and aspirations, I always see myself more in this sort of pioneering role than in the established parts.

For Clare, 'pioneering' is based on a sense of strong individual involvement and visibility.

Clare:

It's just an inner feeling of freedom without even anybody saying: this is more free, and this isn't. But there definitely is a sense of freedom that I have here... and I think this sense of freedom comes from the feeling that one can change things. And there is a sense of stuckness because one feels in Germany even with a lot of effort it's very hard to change things. While here, you can create things, you can change things, there's a lot more possibility, yes.

In the previous chapter I have highlighted that the meaning given to women's roles in Germany is still strongly inflicted by traditional gender constructs. Clare understands herself as a 'person' rather than a 'woman' in this narrative; the problematics in this have been discussed previously (Petra and Nicole have similar understandings of themselves as 'gender-neutral'). Bearing in mind that gender is largely invisible as a construct in Clare's narrative, New Zealand offers her the possibility of seeing herself as 'not one of them' (all those Germans? Women?) by asserting her individuality and specificity:

...one has that island feeling as well. Just like I find it hard to go to very big gatherings, were there's lots of people... I quite like to not be drowned out by so much around you.

Part of this sense of self centred around individuality and agency is an emphasis on the importance of 'giving form to things', to differentiate and define, although Clare remembers Germany as 'over-formed'.

Clare:

... they [Germans] are very boundary orientated people in the way that... maybe not so much boundary but form, you know. Maybe they have to just to contain themselves, all this bureaucracy that goes with it and the red tape and the stamps and all the good German sort of things, you know?

New Zealand represents the opposite.

Clare:

Because New Zealand is so free and relaxed and Germany is so... has so much form, there is a big difference in form... Here, everything is so [unformed]... somehow, to me the ideal is in the middle.

For Clare, 'being German in New Zealand' means that she has an advantage over people who have not been exposed to 'the old world'. Her past becomes a valuable resource to Clare, something that she can draw on to strengthen her 'new' self.

Clare:

I find that I can more easily handle bringing the form back out of what isn't so formed [New Zealand], than fighting against the form all the time to relax it [Germany].

To be German and to come from the 'old' also means that she understands herself to be in a position to identify a lack in the 'young' and less formed New Zealand.

Clare:

I think it's very important for New Zealanders to have overseas people, like myself, come in, because they [New Zealanders] are so dreamy, New Zealand has this dreamy sort of state. They really need the consciousness of other places to come in. I feel that quite strongly.

The danger in this construct lies in the imagination of New Zealand as a place without history, outside of time and thus unstructured. The concept of *chora*[58], the symbolic womb, the space that nurtures, gives, protects without demanding anything in return, comes to mind. Elisabeth Grosz, following Irigaray, explores the possibility of rediscovering women's and femininity's specificities, which serve as the unconscious and/or repressed foundations for philosophical values, through the recognition and representation of the largely unacknowledged debt to *chora*. For this to take place, Grosz, Irigaray and Massey[59] argue that space, represented in phallocentric discourses as territory, as mappable and explorable has to be 'conceived in terms other than according to the logic of penetration, colonisation, and domination' (Grosz, 1995:122). In Clare's phallocentric construct, space appears as penetrable and malleable, in need of time, represented by the 'pioneer' from outside, to organise it. The self as a 'pioneer' attempts to define boundaries because she understands herself as a 'knower', possibly based on her experiences of being 'formed' by strong traditions and expectations. Within this construct, it seems of importance to maintain identifications based on 'being an outsider' to stabilise a sense of self as the 'knower'. Clare's subjectivity, which she could not develop in this form in Germany, requires her to maintain constructs of 'essential' places – differences between New Zealand and Germany have to be tangible and oppositional. Clare's sense of self rests on the knowledge that she will never be 'one of them' in New Zealand, either. In her narrative, the repression of heterogeneity leads to a peculiarly unattached/disembodied perspective. Clare and Petra would probably identify with aspects of Wollen's postmodern cosmopolitan (chapter 2).

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[58] Following Irigaray's argument, Grosz writes: 'Women become the guardians of the private and the interpersonal while men build conceptual and material worlds....This containment within the (negative) mirror of men's self-reflections strips women of an existence either autonomous from or symmetrical with men's: it relegates women to the position of support or precondition of the masculine – precisely the status of chora in the Platonic tradition' (Grosz, 1995:121&122).

[59] For a more progressive sense of place, Massey argues that '...places do not need to be defined through boundaries, an inside and an outside; rather, they can be defined through the linkage to that 'outside', which is therefore itself part of what constitutes the place. This therefore gets away from that association between penetrability and vulnerability.'(Massey, 1993:67). Furthermore, place signifies the absence of time, if time and place are constructed as binary oppositions (Massey, 1997).

Petra:

...Germanness doesn't mean that much to me...it's similar to 'woman'...I've never really identified that much with it, I can't...I don't...I feel more like a global sort of citizen, you know...I sort of try to pick up the good things of wherever and whoever I'm with...

In Clare's construct New Zealand as 'young' is lacking the 'old' – New Zealand has no past to speak of, it is represented as a 'sleeping beauty', waiting for the kiss that will bring consciousness and awakening (into modernity? Into what has been left behind?).

Clare:

...because you are creating it new all the time here and that takes a lot of energy and it's very hard but it's also very satisfying, especially when you feel something works. It doesn't always work, but when something does work, you get a lot more out of it then when it's handed to you on a plate which happens in Germany many times.

It becomes the task or work of the 'pioneer' who represents activity, movement, agency, time, (all of those are signifiers of masculinity) to give form to things. In this understanding of the self and place, New Zealand represents *chora*, and woman as 'pioneer' can imagine herself as autonomous, a 'doer' who 'constructs her world' instead of 'being made' in the mould of traditions and expectations. Clare remains firmly attached to phallocentric discourses. In the process, her sense of self is staked out within the stable frameworks offered through binary oppositions to clearly demarcate the 'new' and the 'old' territories.

Massey argues that for a 'progressive sense of place' or place as non-essential and open to differences, time and space cannot be separated because time

> ...needs spatiality to set itself in motion. Temporality as a product of process, interaction. Spatiality as productive of those indeterminations which are necessary to the existence of the political....Space and time were born together (Massey, 1997;224).

The 'pioneer' as outsider cannot be part of processes within; the intention is to give form rather than to create interaction that allows for 'indeterminations' and openness. Boundaries are important to the 'pioneer' and indeterminations cry out for frontiers. Terra nullius, the legal concept of space as empty unless 'civilised' in a recognisable, familiar manner springs to mind. Constructs of self based on ideas about 'bringing form' and discovering 'the place before the fall' disclose themselves as not new after all – the desire behind it appears as a longing for sameness, rather than a search for new possibilities.

The expectations of finding 'sameness' and the difficulties of recognising 'radical difference'

Clare:

Then it has of course this Maori aspect, which gives it a character. In a way, they are still battling to find their own character, just separating from the Englishness...

Marion:

I drive down the West Coast, it rains, it is stormy, there are hardly any villages, there is nothing. This gloominess sets in. There is... it's got its own charm, but it's very gloomy. This dark undertone comes up [...] when I drive through isolated villages. Closed down shops, hardly anyone on the streets.

By imagining New Zealand as 'new', indigenous and pacific histories are wiped out - history seems to have begun with the white man's arrival at these shores. That which came before, that which bears the potential of being radically different, is ignored, repressed and appears to generate feelings of un-ease. Within modern consciousness, dreams of paradise, of empty space and of nature as liberator of the 'true' self are part of the colonial imagination[60] which makes it difficult to even envision (radical) difference in a post-coloial context[61]. Maybe the absence of a conscious acknowledgement of histories before colonisation leaves an opening for a recognition of an 'otherness' that cannot be voiced?

The recognition of otherness is, as Chow points out, only an option for political change if it is based on respect for the other; otherwise 'difference' can easily turn into 'inferiority' (Chow, 1994). My intention in this last part of the chapter is to highlight the dangers of assuming, in most cases quite naively, that New Zealand is much the same as, or complementary to, Germany. If cultural differences become visible, they tend to reflect cultural values in some of the interviews.

For Clare, 'work' in New Zealand means:

It's future work, something that I can feel I can contribute towards the good of ... development, whatever. Human kind. Work to me is education, maybe.

This kind of 'future work' has the potential for breaking away from 'sameness' towards a recognition of radical difference, but at the same time this work towards 'development' can lead to closure and further homogenisation of already dominant discourses. It depends what kind of 'imagined map' guides the efforts. Clare's and many of the other women's 'imagined maps' do not seem to contain ideas about anything other than dominant (phallocentric) western discourses; from this persepctive, these relatively new immigrants seem to understand themselves as 'included/part of New Zealand society' by situating themselves within discourses that give meaning to New Zealand as mono- rather than bi- or even multi-cultural.

In this distinction between 'us' and 'them', Clare's narrative has a subtext because her mother is English and Clare grew up visiting her relatives in England on a regular basis. Clare's positioning as an immigrant in New Zealand is based on a partial identification with 'Englishness' in a post-colonial context. Clare claims that she never understood her bi-cultural heritage as a disadvantage. However, she remembers that in the German context, this 'half Englishness' had the potential to make life more complicated by confusing 'Germanness' for other family members:

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[60] Paul de Man uses the following description: 'Modernity exists in the form of a desire to wipe out whatever came earlier, in the hope of reaching at last a point that could be called a true present, a point of origin that marks a new departure' (in Chow, 1994:136/137).

[61] The problem, which Rey Chow sees as a problem of modernity, lies in the untranslatability of the colonised native's experience into the coloniser's. She draws on Gayatri Spivak's statement that "the subaltern cannot speak" by elaborating on the post-structural insights that '... "speaking" itself belongs to an already well-defined structure and history of domination' (Chow, 1994:132). Chow suggests that '... a radical alternative can be conceived only when we recognise the essential untranslatability from the subaltern discourse' (ibid:132).

I always remember my brother, he was a person who would complain about it, he quite rebelled against it, he wouldn't want anything to do with the English side of himself, maybe. Just wanted to be totally German.

Recognising 'difference' becomes a matter of recognising the multiplicity of selves within, although this awareness of multiplicity can be restricted to 'safe' areas. In Germany with its history of 'integration' or 'exclusion' of difference in the process of stabilising 'normality', Clare's acceptance of her own hybridity led to a stronger sense of self, possibly because she was able to construct her hybridity within discourses that endorsed the ability to speak English; Clare's inclination towards bi-linguality fitted into the German postwar context with its 'propensity of language itself to adopt foreign words, in particular English words' (Jarausch, 1997). Clare experienced her ability to speak both languages as enhancing her potential for self-determination and control. However, this understanding relies on the meaning she gives to the 'essential qualities' she has identified in each language.

Clare:

After I had been to England to school, I would from then on…I would choose quite consciously which language I would use for what. And if I was going to write a letter, then I would choose very consciously which language I would use. English is much more of a feeling language in my view. And German is more of a thinking language. And still now, when I write to people and I know they know both languages and I can choose, then I would choose on the subject matter of what I'm talking about.

Clare's conceptualisation of language reflects her understanding of cultural differences.

Well, to be honest, I never actually felt myself to be German until I went to England and studied there for a year, and we were studying philosophy, and then I actually realized that I was German. Because all the people that had a lot of enthusiasm for studying that particular subject were the German people. They had a real love for *philosophy and ideas and I really have that. And I could see that the English people really didn't have it to the same degree. I mean, we have great thinkers coming form Germany, that's why to me it's a very thinking language. And that's where I see my Germanness very much, in my love for ideas and philosophy and…just enthusiasm for things, for English people can be very dry and boring. But to me these are exciting ideas.* Clare's narrative runs the danger of turning into 'superiority', particularly in relation to New Zealand's pacific peoples, but also in relation to everyone who has not had the opportunity of having spend considerable time in the 'old' western world before coming to the 'new'.

In her discussion on the construction of racism and ethnicity, Werbner employs Emmanuel Levinas' concepts of '"face", the acceptance of human alterity, [which] contrasts with the 'silence' of violence, which is the turning away of face, a silence which is the denial of otherness' (Werbner, 1997:227). Werbner goes on to state that in political terms this kind of essentialising, which refuses the recognition of 'untranslatable' differences, has to be understood as perfomative, as a mode of action, which functions by '…silencing and suppressing the voices of oppressed subgroups' (ibid). To not be aware of the consequences of the denial of otherness thus becomes a choice and a mode of action. Petra's understanding of what she perceives as essential German qualities, is representative of the majority of the women interviewed.

Petra:

I am a bit, a lot, like that strict sort of German, with punctuality and getting things done properly, on time and they have to be done that way. It's good to be here and let go of that a bit and just be a bit more relaxed. And… but not too much, because then it gets slack….it's definitely healthy for me to be here. But it would probably be healthy for some New Zealanders to go to Germany, too. To rub off a bit.

In this case, cultural differences between New Zealanders and Germans are constructed as 'complementary'. Petra can identify with other Germans whom she perceives as having qualities like punctuality, efficiency and so forth, even if those qualities are at times recognised as restrictive. New Zealanders in contrast appear more 'relaxed and easy-going'. It becomes possible for a 'stressed-out German in New Zealand' to identify with the 'laid-back' New Zealander as long as these constructions are not disrupted by any form of human alterity; it will be a lot harder to understand New Zealand and Germany as similar or complementary, if 'Germans' include second and third generation Turkish-Germans, or if some New Zealanders live on a Marae. As a mode of action, these performative symbolic identifications lead to the denial of 'face' for others, no matter if these 'others' are dark skinned Germans or refugees in one place, or Maori or Pacific Islanders in another place. Through the imagined 'familiarity' and 'complementarity', the 'other' is rendered invisible, possibly in the form of the 'exotic'. Living in places that are constructed within this framework becomes a matter of personal preference, a lifestyle choice – this is the discursive landscape of the 'cosmopolitan', '...the gorgeous butterflies in the greenhouse of global culture...[the] multilingual gourmet tasters who travel among global cultures, savouring cultural differences as they flit with consummate ease between social worlds' (Werbner, 1997:11/12).

Petra:

> *Well, when I'm there, I am... I just feel really grateful that I can live in such a place, to actually have access to ... being with nature like that, untouched nature, and really wild and... ahm... I just always realise how great this country is. It's funny, sometimes I actually think: gee, I'm in New Zealand! Because a lot of my friends, they are from other countries. So I don't know, I don't always think specifically that I'm in New Zealand. [...]if something great came up in the States tomorrow, I'd say: great, let's go!*

In order to 'face' the messiness of social inequalities and social struggles in a post-colonial context, it is necessary to 'become aware' by casting more than just a fleeting glance. This applies to reflections on self and others, on places, and on relationships between people and places over time.

Petra:

> *I guess I never felt that, I never felt so much loaded with the German history. I was quite free of it, really, I guess I didn't' take it very personally, you know. ...*

It becomes more difficult to maintain a disembodied, rational approach to the past if symbolic identification is complicated by the 'messiness' of social interaction. Petra can only 'feel free' of the past, if she avoids the encounter with embodied, non-predictable because multiple and contradictory 'Germanness'. Clare was one of many of the women who stated that they were not keen on meeting other Germans when they first came to New Zealand.

Clare:

In fact, I would probably stay away from them [other Germans] at that point in time... There are people that go to German clubs, Swiss clubs, whatever, you know... I'm not that sort of person, no, I would actually find it quite hard. Mind you, as I've been here for ten years now, I can sort of think: why, I could... it doesn't seem like such an awful idea anymore!

A few last thoughts...

The ideas about the self as a 'pioneer', 'foreign adventurer' and 'gatekeeper of paradise' can be read as a largely uncritical re-working of the past: in each case the intention is to either 'recycle' the past as a valuable resource, to escape from what was perceived as a strongly regulated and restrictive environment, or to use the past as a (negative) reference point for the construction of a 'new' self. In every instance past and present appear as oppositions – the now is either 'better' than the past, or the past has bestowed qualities on the individual that are missing in the present. These ideas about the self make it difficult to search for the middle-ground, where the self can be imagined as 'in process' in a network of meanings that have links to the past, the present and the future. Within this multitude of possible meanings, the 'past' self can be reflected upon, thus opening up space for more complex understandings of places and selves in the present (and the past).

Chapter 5

The intricate relationship between imaginary constructs and everyday life…

My theme for this chapter centres on the question of what women who immigrated have found: what did they discover about themselves? Have they been able to find a place where they feel more 'at home' than in Germany? Are they more/less aware of cultural differences and if so, how do they make sense of these differences? How can these 'selves' be given meaning to as cultural constructs?

While exploring these questions, I am suggesting that in the process of searching for self-fulfilment and happiness many of the women seek refuge, at least for some time, in the familiarity and security that traditional gender roles seem to offer. The more secure a woman feels about 'her [natural] role', the less interest she seems to develop in 'crossing boundaries' into the 'new territory', be it an openness and willingness to engage with the host society or an openness towards less traditional gender roles. Rather than developing an awareness of the inherent multiplicity and ongoing re-construction of the self, potentially more obvious in a different cultural environment, at first glance some of the women seem to understand themselves as 'postmodern cosmopolitan housewives'; seemingly content in traditionally gendered roles, privileged and thus able to 'change places' according to their perceived needs ('more space', house ownership, 'better lifestyle'), these women fit Wollen's 'new cosmopolitan' ideal (chapter 2). However, the degree of the 'cosmopolitan housewives' syndrome varies – for some women, immigration to New Zealand led to a sense of displacement and consequently an awareness of their own cultural specificities developed. Sometimes this was given meaning to as an enabling device in encounters with others ('I am more aware of cultural differences and how other people might react to them'), in other instances renewed emphasis was put on the desire for a more coherent, unified 'I' ('life in Germany was so much easier, I knew how to do things without having to think').

I approach this chapter with the intention of exploring the possibilities a critical multicultural perspective (Gunew, 1997, see chapter 2) might offer; I intend to focus on the intertwining of 'gender' and 'ethnicity', in this case with an emphasis on possible historical links. How does this culturally specific 'self' manifest (what forms does it take? In what circumstances?)? Can a recognition of the contingency of the self be helpful in bridging 'differences'? Or does an increased awareness of cultural specificity lead to a further strengthening of divisions between 'us' and 'them'?

In chapter 4 I have highlighted that many of the women felt more able to develop themselves in New Zealand because this place is perceived as being less restrictive, thus apparently offering more freedom than German society. I emphasised that these constructs of self and place rely on frameworks that operate on the basis of binary oppositions which prevent the recognition of difference as the basis for respectful relationships between self and other, be it in terms of cultural encounters or gender. These constructs of self/other as oppositional and/or complementary are reflected in the meaning given to places, in this case Germany and New Zealand, as having 'essential' (oppositional/complementary) qualities. Understandings of self and place in these terms reinforce the necessity to draw boundaries, to categorise and to search for 'sameness' in order to establish a firm sense of self, particularly if a sense of displacement threatens to unsettle the process of identifications. It then becomes increasingly difficult to give meaning to 'places' (and selves) with an openness towards the possibilities of understanding the self as 'in process', as continually negotiating between the potential benefits of enlarging internal 'maps' by 'adding to', rather than giving in to the desire for imaginary stability by holding onto seemingly unchangeable 'old' ideas about places and people. To develop a sense of postmodern ethnic identity (Fishman, 1989)[62] means being able to locate the self in the knowledge that the 'here' and 'there' (and 'us/them' as well as 'now/before') are 'always interlocking and complicitous' (Stanford Friedman, 1998:110). The search for freedom and self development might end up being hindered not so much by the 'essential differences' between Germany and New Zealand[63] as by the reluctance to understand 'place' and self as historically produced and thus part of an ongoing re-construction.

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[62] Fishman outlines his conception of postmodern ethnicity as follows: 'Characteristics of postmodern ethnicity is the stance of simultaneously transcending ethnicity as a complete, self-contained system, but of retaining it as a selectively preferred, evolving, participatory system. This leads to a kind of self-correction from within and from without, which extreme nationalism and racism do not permit' (1989:18).

[63] As 'the spatial organisation of human societies, the cultural meanings and institutions that are historically produced in and through specifically spatial locations' (Stanford Friedman, 1998:109).

In chapter 3 I have outlined some of the specificities of gender politics and the ensuing gender role expectations and performances in postwar Germany. Although not all of the women voiced their own awareness of limitations to their sense of self-development in Germany in terms of gender restrictions, I argued that covertly gendered structures played a major part in the construction of postwar Germany. Some of these structures, often identified in the narratives as 'restrictive', led to the expectations of New Zealand as more 'free' where self- development could take place more easily. My intention in this chapter is to deconstruct these ideas about self-development as largely imaginary constructs that show traces of earlier, turn of the last century, discourses on ideas about a 'new self' that lead, at least for a time, to a re-construction of traditional gender roles on 'the other side of the globe'.

Susan Linville argued that in the German postwar context the 'counter-fatherly' forces of technology, feminism and mass culture posed a particularly strong challenge to a stable sense of self, grounded in traditional frameworks. In this light, constructs of New Zealand as the place where the longing for 'self-development in a more natural space' can be lived out, seems to be a reaction to the sense of crisis experienced by some of the women who felt confronted with intensified political/social instabilities in Germany – a phenomenon with historical roots in the German 'Lebensreform' Movement which, according to Ulrich Linse's analysis of German communes in Germany between 1890 and 1933, had its origin in the intense disillusionment of the educated liberal middle-class with traditional political structures and institutions (Linse, 1983).

Linse highlights that the early attempts to renew social impulses focused largely on self-reform in an environment imagined as conducive to withdrawal from the 'bigger picture', in this case the 'countryside', without questioning the underlying economic and social structures. Consequently, an 'anti-urban' resentment developed in the urban, educated, progressive (young?) middle-class; for some, social renewal through communal living in the country (space/nature) appeared as a possible site for self-development and re-education with the intention to influence societal values through a 'grassroots' reform, whereas others seemed more intent on 'escaping'[64] altogether. Interesting for my project is this continuity between earlier conceptualisations of movement and escape as reactions to disillusionment (be it from the city to the countryside, or from industrialisation to the 'exotic' non-industrialised south - as far as Capri and even further into the imaginary 'Suedsee/southsea Paradise' of Paul Gaugin), and contemporary ideas about self-development in a 'better' place. As highlighted in the previous chapter, the dominant image of New Zealand fits many of the characteristics that have historically been associated with 'Lebensreform' and its successors: withdrawal into a seemingly less restrictive, less structured environment ('Landflucht' in the earlier phase), little to no knowledge about the actual everyday reality of the place ('Grossstaedter als Bauern'), the 'island' effect (isolation), less technology and an immersion in 'nature'. Some of these ideas have been analysed in a contemporary context in the previous chapter: the women spoke about their desire for 'rebirth/a new start' and 'escape' to a place they had little knowledge about. This 'hope for a better place' links the immigration to New Zealand to the attempts of previous young, educated Germans who were searching for 'renewal' by withdrawing from expectations and limitations of everyday life in Germany 100 years ago. However, the differences are that 'time-space' compression allows for the scope of the search to broaden from 'escape' to the countryside to escape to another continent, and the reverberations of a recent paradigm shift – postmodern selves (and the sense of 'communities', social structures and so on) are more fragmented and consequently more open towards 'contingent belongings' (Probyn, 1996) than their predecessors.

Another historical link is the involvement of the majority of women in this study in the Steiner School movement and/or bio-dynamic horticulture. Out of the 13 women, only two women have never had any obvious links to Steiner education/Anthroposophy[65]. Many of the others are/were marginally involved through their children's schooling with varying degrees of knowledge and interest in Anthroposophy, the underlying philosophy that informs both the education and bio-dynamics. However, some women were/are strongly involved as teachers, as former pupils or as parents on the Board of Trustees (I have been part of a Steiner School myself, both as teacher and as a parent). According to Linse (1983) the origins of Anthroposophy (and by extension the Steiner School movement), can be linked to the search for alternatives as a repercussion of the 'Lebensreform'; the ensuing middle-class (buergerliche) Youth movement[66] for example put renewed emphasis on the desire to re-connect soul, spirit and body. This attempt to recapture some form of idealism in the face of political disillusionment became particularly captivating for open-minded young people in the aftermath of WW 1 (Linse, 1983). I suggest in this chapter that Steiner Schools (and Anthroposophy) can be understood as an extension of this earlier search for meaning beyond materialism and the doomsday feelings of an approaching apocalypse (Linse, 1983)[67]. These conscious and unconscious continuities and/or differences between aspects of the 'Lebensreform' and some of the resulting movements (for example the bourgeois 'Youth' movement) and this specific group of immigrant women form the background of this chapter.

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[64] '...es war Landkult und Agrarutopismus der Grossstadtliteraten, die den Auszug aus der Kernstadt in die durchgruente Siedlung, die Uebersiedlung an den Stadtrand oder in die laendliche, wenn auch grossstadtnahe Kuenstlerkolonie propagierte. Die paedagogische Intelligenz wanderte aufs Land ab ('Landschulheime'), die Boheme draengte ueber den Vorort und die Kuenstlerkolonie weiter hinaus in einer exotischen Reisepassion, die sie in einen nichtindustrialisierten mystischen Sueden (Capri) und bis in die Suedsee fuehrte' (Linse, 1983:30/31).

[65] Anthroposophy refers to Rudolf Steiner's attempts to articulate a philosophy based on spiritual science – the bio-dynamic movement and Steiner Schools are based on some of Steiner's insights (Carlgren, 1990).

To make this connection obvious I'll introduce Bea, the only participant who at this stage has not been included in the previous chapters. The reason for this is her extensive use of the right to edit the interview – by the time the transcript was returned to me, there was hardly anything of the original text left[68]. Bea immigrated with her husband; they had met through their involvement in anthroposophical communities in Europe. Prior to their immigration, both of them had been living in anthroposophical communes for many years. Bea is quite clear on the fact that she ended up in New Zealand because her husband 'felt a strong connection to this country, and I just followed him'. Upon arrival in New Zealand they moved to 'Hohepa', a communal living arrangement based on Steiner's philosophy with an emphasis on 'remedial/curative' teaching.

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[66] 'Wie in anderen Dingen erwies sich die Jugendbewegung auch hier als Erbe der Lebensreform. Denn die buergerliche Jugendbewegung hatte nicht nur die Natur entdeckt, sondern sie betonte auch die Natuerlichkeit von Kleidung, Essen, Haltung und menschlicher Bewegung' (Linse, 1983:158).

[67] Linse highlights that the impulses for social reforms were not generally supported. These ideas were taken up by people who were open to 'Agrarromantik' coupled with anti-urbanism; furthermore these people were susceptible to the '...Krisenstimmung des Fin de Siecle mit einer fast religioesen Aufbruchsstimmung...' (Linse, 1983:28). See chapters 3&4: for some women, Tschernobyl and the Cold War as well as the German Autumn of 1977 all added up to this scenario of 'no hope', at least not in Germany.

[68] I interpret this form editing as self-censoring; Bea's desire to take out all the 'uncomfortable' statements about her status as a woman in a very dogmatic strain of Anthroposophical communal life diminishes the image of gender hierarchies within this environment.

Bea:

We came to New Zealand because we wanted to live more in nature….we came to Hohepa straight away and we lived on the farm. I couldn't drive a car, I was just at home and three months after we arrived our son was born, so I was really just on the farm….there were quite a number of German people in Hohepa, so I had always German people to speak to.

Bea's 'New Zealand' reality is very much limited to that which she knows already. Her identification rests with the familiar and traditional, regardless of the different cultural environment.

Bea:

I feel quite at home here, in the Steiner philosophy, partly because of the German tradition [that underlies it]…If you live with people who have similar ideas, it doesn't really matter what nationality you are.

Bea remembers that she felt constraint of movement when she lived in Berlin. To me this indicates an overlap of 'anti-urbanism' as well as resentment against the specific political geography of Berlin up to 1989. Bea's involvement in Anthroposophy and 'anthroposophical' lifestyles arose out of her interest in working with 'special needs' children; according to Bea the only available training was offered through anthroposophical institutions. In my interpretation this illustrates the continuities between the impulses of the 'Lebensreform' and its successor movements, and late 20th century desires for a 'return' to nature combined with idealism and the willingness to 'deviate' from 'normality'. Living in an anthroposophical commune with an emphasis on remedial pedagogy certainly does not feature as a common career path for German women in the 1980s.

Bea:

It started as a teenager when I really experienced the freedom you could have outside Berlin. In Berlin, I only noticed it then, I was always surrounded by all these houses and then the wall. You couldn't just go somewhere, to the countryside….I'm not

really homesick for Berlin, for the city itself. I liked 'Camphill' [an anthroposophical commune], the environment was lovely, the hills around, you could see the mountains...
After her second child was born in New Zealand, Bea and her husband were able to buy a house and some land (10 acres). While her husband still works at Hohepa, Bea took up Early Childhood training. This led to a changed attitude towards her host society.

Bea:

I think I was a bit sheltered for a long time, still... in our own world? Now, I really feel much more at home in New Zealand, I know more about New Zealand and that makes me feel more at home. I really love the Maori course I'm doing at Polytech... to get to know about Maori culture. And as well, now that we've build the house, I think that makes a difference. To have our own piece of land... we have some sheep and a pony, we grow some vegetables...

After an initial period of 'sheltering' in the familiar, Bea is now more open towards the cultural specificities of New Zealand, while she retains her interest and involvement in the anthroposophical movement.

Bea:

I really like New Zealand, I like the Maori culture, both cultures. It's nice to bring it into the Kindergarten [where she works]. *I would love to go to a Kohanga Reo, I would like for my children to speak Maori as well as English and German. We do read Maori legends to them.*

Bea's initial motivation for immigration seems to arise out of her very traditional understanding of her gender role. However, through her increasing exposure to 'differences' outside her safety zone (the Hohepa community) she is able to build tentative bridges between the 'old' and the 'new'.

Ronja is another example of someone who was immersed in an 'alternative lifestyle' with an emphasis on 'natural living' coupled with a strong motivation to 'change society' before she came to New Zealand. Similar to the 'Lebensreform' impulses, alternative living is understood as possible only 'outside' society. The implication is that in order to reform/change society, one has to withdraw from it, at least for some time.

Ronja:

> *...because I was in an alternative lifestyle society in Germany and also in the United States, I basically just carried on not being part of society for a few years and just carried on in alternative circles. But after a few years I noticed the differences and became more aware of the New Zealand culture, and I noticed that my friends here who were true Kiwis, who were brought up here and spend all their lives here, were definitely really different to me and my upbringing.*

Is this ability to eventually move away from the safety of the familiar into the unknown 'new' territory of the host society an outcome of the postmodern shift? The 'Lebensreform', in particular some of the communes that formed out of these new impulses, showed signs of dogmatism which in the end led to their failure (Linse, 1983). If we consider the 'time-space compression' factor which enabled these women to take their escape/withdrawal from German society to the other side of the globe (rather than simply to the countryside), the encounter with 'difference' is comparable: in the case of earlier 'reformers', the farming community signified 'otherness' (Staedter als Bauern), whereas the scope is much larger now (Germans with little knowledge about the country have to eventually engage with New Zealand culture). In the encounter with difference, both Bea and Ronja show no apparent desire to impose their values or beliefs on others; theirs is not a 'colonising mentality'. Is it the beginning of understandings of ethnicity as postmodern? What happens to gender as the other major trajectory in the process of constructing meaning in a new cultural/social environment?

One of the reasons for undertaking this study was to make gender an integral part of a study on migration (see introduction). In the following section I want to highlight that gender played a vital role in the decision to immigrate. Furthermore, meaning given to gender roles and expectations led to very different outcomes in terms of the 'success' of immigration. This undermines understandings of migration purely based on the flow of capital (Harvey, 1993) and emphasises that women were often instrumental in the decision-making process (Leckie, 1995). In the following section I am focusing on constructs of gender and ethnicity and while the women were instrumental in the decision-making process, their understandings of themselves highlight the limitations of modern frameworks. Incidentally Clare, the woman with a strong voice in chapter 4 (the 'pioneer') will take the lead again in the search for a place in which happiness may be found which, according to some, 'is always a metaphor for the search to recover a memory of happiness' (Curtis and Pajaczkowska, 1994:199).

Memories, dreams and traces

For many of the women it was important to emphasise that they had 'happy memories' of their childhood in Germany. Clare, who stated in the previous chapter that New Zealand was her dream destination, describes her childhood as having been 'idyllic' in a rural setting where her father owned and managed several large dairies. Clare grew up being exposed to 'unusual' (farmers are conservative [Frevert, 1986]; bio-dynamics would have been seen as a 'marginal' discourse, to say the least) ideas through her father's engagement in bio-dynamic enterprises. Later on she developed her own interest in anthroposophy. Her mother stayed at home for Clare's early childhood years and worked later as a teacher.

Clare:

...we always had three, four horses and another two or three ponies. My father retired early and then we lived off the money that he then had from selling and he did a lot of voluntary work.....and my mother, she was at home and then... she started teaching home economics, and now she teaches handwork [Handarbeit] and religion. It was a wonderful childhood, and it's hard actually, living up to this, you want to give all those things to your own children. It was very idyllic.

It was also a very traditional middle-class upbringing where money was not a pressing issue. Although Clare stated that she became 'cosmopolitan' early on in her life, she remembers that she felt at home in one particular place (a 'counter-fatherly force' free place with little technology, away from the 'masses', largely untouched by critical discourses like feminism?):

Clare:

...there is one place where I feel at home in Germany and which I still miss. And that's where we spend most of our holidays, well, all our holidays when we wouldn't go

into other countries. We would go to an island in the North Sea, Spiekeroog, one of the Frisian Islands, no cars came onto the island, so one could walk everywhere, very safe for children... there weren't many people, I think there live about 300 people permanently, the rest were visitors. And we had a house there....my fondest memory of Germany, that's what it is really.

Marion de Ras highlights that historically women and girls struggled for 'space' and less 'restrictions' within the youth movement that emerged as part of the 'Lebensreform' at the turn of the (last) century. For women involved in the youth movement it was important to draw demarcation lines and to emphasise their specificities in order to be successful in the struggle for self-determination in a very male dominated 'world' (de Ras, 1988)[69]. In this context the image of the 'island' emerged as a site for the representation of the 'archetypal feminine' – according to de Ras, the 'island' symbolised purity, wholeness, nature in the search for a space to explore 'femininity', removed from the 'masculine' that dominated women's lives everywhere, including in the 'new' social reform movements (ibid)[70]. Holfter highlights (1989 in chapter 4) that the island image is still part of the attraction of New Zealand for Germans. My assumption is that for some German women immigrants, the island image probably holds, on a conscious or unconscious level, the additional promise of femininity as 'purity' and/or 'wholeness in nature' (see chapter 4) - an echo of earlier, seemingly forgotten/repressed discourses (some aspects of radical feminism reverberate with this – did the German feminist movement have more influence on these immigrant women than they admit/realise?) that fostered separatism as an attempt to claim self-determination for women.

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[69] 'Die Lage der Maedchen in dieser Periode war eine sich im Umbruch befindende. [....] Industrialisierung und der Zug in die Staedte, die Reformbewegung, die neue Paedagogik "Vom Kinde aus", die Frauenbewegung, Koerperkultur und Sozialhygiene, Naturwissenschaft und Psychologie, all diese so verschiedenen Elemente trugen zu einer Wandlung der Lage und des "Habitus" des Maedchens bei' (de Ras, 1988:1).

[70] 'Eine Insel, umgeben von Wasser, fern der Grossstadt und der Zivilisation, war wie geschaffen fuer die symbolgetraenkte Suche nach dem "Wellenschlag" der Weiblichkeit....war wie geschaffen fuer einen vom Maennlichen, vom Mann 'abgeschiedenen' Platz....Hier auf der Insel, dem runden, nicht bewegenden Raum, war die Wanderschaft, die Suche nicht notwendig, nur das Spiel des Sich-Hingebens. Einheit, Ganzheit im Kreis, im Abgeschlossenen, im Unberuehrten, im immanenten Weiblichen...da erschien die Insel selbst wie ein weibliches Prinzip' (de Ras, 1988:85).

Clare's aspiration as a young woman was to study singing at the 'Musik Hochschule' in Hamburg, although in Clare's words, 'my mind was never very career orientated'. In her narrative, she emphasises that she didn't 'see herself' having children, it 'just happened'.

Clare:

I never thought about having four children, they sort of just came and... I'm happy they did but it wasn't a planned thing.

As it turns out, Clare's dream of immigrating to New Zealand was fuelled strongly by her ideas about gender and the role she imagined for herself as a mother. As pointed out in chapter 3, 'normality' in Germany was build on traditional gender expectations, as Clare's understanding of gender illustrates.

Clare:

I think once one has a family, there is this strong... this desire to protect and nurture your children, and then New Zealand might be more attractive to female people, obviously. For the breadwinner, for the person who earns the money, Europe would always be more attractive.

The meaning Clare attaches to gender expectations become more visible as she proceeds in her narrative. After her first child was born (in Germany), Clare's role is clearly that of the 'homemaker'. She has specific ideas about where she wants to live, and 'having a space/house' of her own that fits her requirements seems to be of the uttermost importance.

Clare:

And then we were looking for a place to live and there was nothing within the vicinity of Ottersberg. And we were house sitting by the time Anna was five months old, we had to move five times. And I decided that was it, and I was going to go. You couldn't easily find what you can find here – a house with a garden for the children to play.

My interpretation of this search for space lies with my earlier assumption that the island holds a gender-specific symbolic value for some women. From this perspective Clare is not simply looking for a backyard for her children to play in; does she search on some level for a space that validates her role as a mother as an affirmation of her 'natural femininity'? Could the dream of the island represent the repressed desire in language for the maternal bond, as suggested by Kristeva (1980)? It seems unconvincing to me that Clare's immigration to New Zealand is the outcome of her search for a house with a garden.

At this point Ronja's[71] childhood memories illustrate my point further. A similarity with Clare is that Ronja was also in some sense in the pursuit of a dream (the dream of a better society?) when she immigrated. Ronja has the following childhood memories of a longing for a 'different place':

Ronja:

It's a feeling that I started to develop from my ninth birthday on. I had always this longing for what I called 'my home', which was completely different, a vast natural landscape without houses or anything and it felt... I really had a strong longing for that. I remember often going to my mother saying: ah, I don't know what to do, it's not like homesickness, it's like going-away sickness!... .And I always thought that I was really an American Indian and I made stuff up, so I didn't feel German.

This memory seems to be a perfect example of how desire in language works; the symbolic is in danger of being disrupted by the unconscious, by that which has no representation in language. Although in Ronja's memory this longing is not evidently symbolised by the 'island', the conceptual link between the 'vast landscape' and the island as representation of 'pure femininity' and as such as a trace of the time 'before language' (or entry into the symbolic) becomes visible. Ronja traces her own desire to 'escape' back to this memory; for her, 'escape' focuses on ethnicity, not on gender (and on people more than on 'places'). However, my interpretation rests with Kristeva's suggestion that language as meaning and signification constructs the 'self' – Ronja understands herself as 'German' since her language/world is German. In this context 'escape' from Germany signifies escape from that which she knows, fuelled by her desire for the 'Other'[72].

Ronja:

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[71] Ronja and Clare are both very engaged in Steiner education: Ronja as a teacher/counsellor and Clare as a Board of Trustees member.

[72] Kristeva (and Lacan) use the capitalised Other to refer to 'a hypothetical place or space, that of the pure signifier, rather than to a physical entity or moral category' (Kristeva, 1980).

...this sort of idolising and romanticising of the wild people, the indigenous people was really strong. Always, even when I was a student, we were like City Indians [Stadtindianer][73]*, trying to be different.*

Clare's dream of 'space' for individuality and autonomy, framed in the familiar role of the mother and homemaker, takes on shape once she has established herself on the 'island': she is able to let her husband return to his life in Germany while she remains in New Zealand with her young children. In terms of gender relations, her role as a mother and homemaker complements the role of the father and breadwinner[74]. Her narrative sounds accordingly as if these gender divisions did not exist as dichotomies – as pointed out by Bauman (1991, see chapter 1), the overarching impression is that of some form of unity and control: the differentiating power inherent in dichotomies remains hidden under the cover of husband and wife as a 'team'.

Clare:

...we got our permanent residency and then went back to Germany...because earning money proved to be really difficult here, the wages were so low, it was worthwhile for us to go back to Germany, make some money over there and then come back. At the same time we then brought our washing machine, things we had because we came with nothing the first time. So we brought some household things and books.... Franz [her husband] went back to Germany, he was always homesick for Germany. And then this process started of [him] going over and checking it out and coming back.... In the end we separated.

In chapter 2 I introduced Stanford Friedman's homonym roots/routes to highlight that the awareness of identity as 'multiple' often comes into being after some form of displacement. Clare's imaginary construct of herself relies heavily on familiarity/sameness (New Zealand understood as a place similar to the island where she felt most at home as a child); her withdrawal into traditional gender roles ensures that she can stay within the safe territory of that which she knows (even though she now lives in a foreign country). However, undercutting her desire for space is the search for the unknown (New Zealand as a representation of the semiotic, or, in Holfter's terms, New Zealand as both the familiar and the 'exotic').

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[73] This is a link to the earlier search for alternative ways of living [Lebensreform] – the 'Stadtindianer' were part of the 'Autonomous Movement' ['Die Autonomen']. I remember this as an attempt to be creative as well as critical and politically active without falling back into the 'traps' of structures. Feminism, the Men's Movement, environmentalism, animal rights issues (among others) were influential in this 'anti-organisation'.

[74] Clare's marriage broke up after the immigration; Clare remarried relatively shortly after the break-up and had two more children with her new partner.

Does Clare's apparent insistence on 'control' prevent her from giving in to feelings of displacement? From her point of view, her ability to take on the role of the highly competent mother allowed her to feel 'at home' in New Zealand, in contrast to her husband's increasing sense of displacement. Her husband, confronted with the difficult task of having to be the 'breadwinner' in a foreign country, has to shed the illusion that he can be largely 'the same' person he was in Germany. For him, the fluidity and instability of the self becomes far more obvious than for Clare. Clare's command of English (her bi-linguality, see chapter 4) prevents her further from feeling a stranger.

Clare:

...I had strong connections to the language because I learned the language when I was young. And that was the problem for my husband who... always sort of felt he was 12 years old in his language skills...

Clare's degree of having established 'familiarity' which seems to equate with feeling 'at home' in New Zealand, appears to be hindered by her husband's inability to confirm these feelings of 'sameness'. In this construct he signifies 'difference', an unwelcome reminder of that which should remain invisible (feelings of instability, of loss, of struggle?)

Clare:

...then we bought a house and I was then pregnant with our second child. And Franz [her husband] was here until..., yes, Conrad was one year old, and then Franz went back to Germany.... It is interesting, when you look at it from the outside, you think it would have been a hard thing to do, but to me it was just the way to do it. I couldn't go back, I was happy here... And I had come out here to immigrate, I had come here to live here. And unless something went drastically wrong, which it didn't from my point of view... sure, if things had gone wrong I would have gone back.

Not even the break-up of the marriage seems to register as something that 'went wrong' - Clare's sense of being powerful, of having made her dream come true, is strong enough to allow her to pursue this dream alone.

Clare:

It wasn't even that [feeling settled in New Zealand]. I mean, I felt settled in the way that I had a house, and a garden and the children and I knew it was something that was going to be very difficult to attain in Germany.

Clare's strong sense of self seems to be based on ability to stay in control – she managed to make her imaginary construct of a 'happy place' come true. However, this imaginary stable, in-control self comes at a price. As illustrated in the previous chapter, Clare understands herself as a 'pioneer' and within this construct, she remains firmly within the boundaries she has set for herself. Encounters with that which is 'other' become difficult from this position – the 'pioneer' is not necessarily a desirable identification (it brings up images of righteousness, narrow-mindedness, a 'coloniser mentality'?). Clare's privileged position (no apparent concerns about income, for example) allows her to remain safely within her imaginary construct to such a degree that she feels she 'fits in' and is, in contrast to her husband, 'not a stranger'. Her own 'hybridity', multiplicity, the awareness that consciousness and rationality have their own limitations, remain largely invisible to herself and to others: she seems to avoid crossing boundaries into 'unknown territory' where, as a migrant, she would encounter strong responses, such as 'hostility and welcome' (Sarup, 1994) which in turn would reinforce her sense of entering 'in-between zones'.

Her sense of 'belonging' outside the family relies on her involvement, through her children, in one specific community (the Steiner School movement, a link that had already been established in Germany). She emphasises again that she feels she belongs

...in a way not so much to New Zealand but I do have a strong sense of home right now, with this home and my children here and... there is strong sense of home... in this community, with these people.

This relates back to what Chantal Mouffe (see chapter 2, p.34) called the attempt to find 'nodal points' or partial fixations by moving between past and present identifications that offer a sense of continuity to construct coherence. According to Mouffe (1993), the history of the subject is the history of her past identifications. From this point of view, Clare 'clings' to the familiar, she appears reluctant to 'leave the path/past' in order to explore new ideas about herself. In this sense, her (partly unconscious) search for individuality/autonomy remains an external venture – a 'rite of passage' (see chapter 3, p.89) does not take place. Instead of 'breaking away from (the maternal) confinement', Clare remains within past identifications, both on a social (traditional gender roles) and on an individual level (within the Steiner community). The pleasures and fears attached to an exploration of the 'unknown horizons of the big wide world' (Curtis and Pajaczkowska, 1994:200) are ignored/repressed. Clare's sense of self is maintained through the search for 'nodal points' that offer familiarity. However, this movement between past identifications and the attempts to find present 'nodal points' reveals an essential non-fixity – 'outside' represents strangeness, but even within the 'inside' of the familiar imaginary community, Clare is eventually forced to realise that at times her past identifications prevent her from 'belonging'.

Clare:

I think that whenever I move outside that community, yes, I feel myself quite different. Not so much within that community because it's more of a multi-national community anyway, it's not so much the Kiwi community. But yes, one thing that people tell me all the time is that I am serious... I sometimes get pulled up because something was meant humorously and I take it too seriously. The other thing is because the languages are so different, I like to take things quite literally, because in German you can do that.

Ethnocultural identity for Clare arises out of what Braidotti (1994, see chapter 1) refers to as 'retrospective and external' moments and encounters. It is through her realisation that others perceive her as 'different' that Clare begins to reflect on the sources for this difference. I experienced Clare as very articulate, immediately ready to respond and offer an opinion, as very active in our conversation (it seemed to me that at times she took on the role of the interviewer). The 'pioneer' and control go hand in hand, and I would argue that this mode of identification requires a strong adherence to dichotomies and traditional frameworks. Clare cannot afford to feel 'strange' for too long if she wants to remain within her imaginary space[75]. For other women, marrigae break-ups and separation led to a more painful recognition of their 'strangeness' and difference in New Zealand, possibly due to the fact that their willingness to stay within the parameters of their 'dreams' were less exclusive than Clare's.

Katrin has no obvious ties to the Steiner community and a 'withdrawal' into familiarity in this context was not possible. Nevertheless, some of Katrin's ideas about New Zealand place her within the discourse of 'escape into nature' and search for 'the better'. On first impression Katrin appears to have made a 'conscious' decision (I use the term 'conscious' here to make a distinction to the 'dream' motive) when she convinced her husband to immigrate to New Zealand. After all, she was older than most other immigrant women which meant that she had considerable more 'life experience', she was fairly established in her career as a travel consultant and did not seem to be chasing a 'dream'; she decided to immigrate after having visited New Zealand several times. However, her story reveals underlying constructs of femininity that rely on 'naturalness', similar to Clare's. The difference is that Katrin could not maintain her withdrawal into 'familiarity' to the same extent as Clare. Without the safety net of a community of imagined familiarity behind her, Katrin was faced with the difficult task of 'venturing' out into the highly unfamiliar territory of New Zealand 'everyday life' after the marriage break-up.

If the possibility of withdrawal into the security of being the traditional 'homemaker' seemed, at least on some level, to have influenced the desire for immigration to New Zealand, starting a family here forced some of the women to acknowledge that complete 'belonging' might never be possible (is it ever?). If the desire to belong was accompanied by the expectation that 'fitting in' would be easy, the recognition of ethnocultural differences came as a shock. Similarly to Clare and Ronja, immigration was Katrin's decision with her husband agreeing eventually [at the time of the interview they had split up and were living apart].

Katrin:

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[75] Without wanting to restrict Clare's multiplicity, I felt it was important to highlight the limitations of this identification within the framework of this thesis. Clare is very engaged in her school community and I greatly admire her commitment and passion.

I wanted to immigrate and he was a bit tired of it and thought: oh, no, not again! And then I persuaded him to come on a holiday and on our last day here he said: oh well, I could imagine living here. So I was really pleased... it was always me, pushing and asking: can you imagine living here? There's so much space...

The theme of the 'homesick husband' recurs and again, the woman in her role as mother, is making the decision to stay (because staying is 'best' for the child and by extension, for her?).

Katrin:

He is here, but he would love to go back, but he can't because we share our child and he's really homesick, he wants to go back.

Katrin and her husband were literally looking for a place that offered 'new beginnings'.

Katrin:

When we made the decision, she [their daughter] wasn't born but we thought: if we ever have a family, with children, we wouldn't like to bring them up in Germany. So it would be a better place to do that here.

She feels New Zealand is a better place to bring up children because

...life is more natural, like having four children, or having two dogs and things like that... it's more natural.

The imaginary construct of New Zealand as 'innocent, natural, unspoilt' is too fragile to withstand a confrontation with everyday reality. Katrin for example longs to move to the parts of New Zealand that she imagines to be more 'typically New Zealandish'.

Katrin:

If I had the choice I think I'd rather live in Nelson or in that area. It's more typical New Zealand with the bush and things like that.

Perhaps her everyday reality does not allow her to feel that she has 'escaped' from the 'civilised, unnatural, polluted' Germany and all that this signifies, after all? Her 'new self' is consequently not a success; on the contrary, she feels exposed as a stranger and her desire to belong is thwarted.

Katrin:

The first two years were difficult... no friends and all the fences between the neighbours and you didn't have any contact. So I went to playgroups and the people were *really friendly but the moment you wanted to get a bit closer and invite them, they sort of became a bit abrupt and blocked things. So I tried a couple of times inviting people but they never came or turned up... there was always a sort of blockage.... I think it was because of me, because I'm a foreigner...*

In contrast to Clare who imagines 'belonging' through her children and her involvement in their schooling, Katrin's role as mother reinforces her feelings of 'non-belonging'. She gives meaning to her 'Germanness' as that which makes her 'strange' to other New Zealand parents.

Katrin:

When I went to the school here to have a look I didn't like it at all. And I talked to other parents, Kiwi parents, and they didn't... they didn't feel the same way. They said: oh well, the teacher is nice and the system is good. And all the things that I saw, all the things that I didn't like... they didn't seemed to mind.

Katrin understands her multiplicity as negativity; to feel foreign obviously prevents her from 'belonging'. Kristeva[76] reminds us that as long as we are unable to recognise 'the foreigner' within each and all of us, 'belonging' remains based on the desire for imaginary communities based on 'sameness/familiarity'. Rather than critically questioning the basis for her desire to belong, Katrin seems caught in a double movement – the desire to belong and being hailed as other – where 'ethnicity' becomes essentialised and leads to constructs of 'us' and 'them'. German ethnocultural identity is 'naturalised' to such an extent that it diminishes the focus on differences. Katrin seems to expect 'belonging' without much thought given to her own hybridity, her multiplicity which makes her foreign (and made her feel she didn't belong in Germany, either. Katrin stated that she '...was actually bored with Germany. I'd never felt at home in Germany...'). At the same time, the New Zealanders in question seem equally unable to be open towards differences. From Katrin's perspective, it seems difficult to recognise the possibility of context related affiliations and allegiances, which leads to a further strengthening of the 'us' and 'them' division through a retreat into 'known territory'.

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[76] 'Strangely, the foreigner lives within us: he is the hidden face of our identity, the space that wrecks our abode, the time in which understanding and affinity founder. By recognising him within ourselves, we are spared detesting him in himself. A symptom that precisely turns "we" into a problem, perhaps makes it impossible. The foreigner comes in when the consciousness of my difference arises, and he disappears when we all acknowledge ourselves as foreigners, unamenable to bonds and communities' (Kristeva, 1991:1).

Katrin:

I was desperate to meet people at all and I was never that sort of 'German German' in Germany, but I became more German here than I was in Germany. I met other German families, they had the same problems that I had and we became really good friends. And still, it's difficult to make Kiwi friends.

Traditions became important, 'the way we do things at home' – constructs of ethnicity and diaspora in the sense of 'scattered seeds' in the making.

Katrin:

... when you meet with other Germans you have activities like lantern festivals and special Christmas parties and making Christmas cookies and things like that.

Sabine also comments on her growing appreciation of German culture/traditions in New Zealand. However, underlying this revival of the 'old' is an awareness of the importance of connecting it with the 'new'.

Living here, you know, you realise that there actually is quite a lot of culture in Germany, although you don't acknowledge or appreciate it when you're there, you know, like traditions before Christmas time, the advent period, or Easter time, getting some Easter decorations out and things like that. ...here, other people don't do that, and we still do it in our house and then people come in and comment on that... having grown up in Germany, my mother did that and it's nice to continue this tradition.

This move towards establishing continuity through traditions marks this construct of 'ethnicity' as unthreatening; it is part of an self-identification and it is fairly limited to individuals (Gunew, 1993). Sabine elaborates on the need to recognise differences and treat them carefully according to the cultural context.

Sabine:

... the expectation was that it [fitting in] would be quite easy but in reality I realised that it takes a long time. First, there is the language, to get more confident in the language. And then, appreciate the way people are, you know. In Germany, people are a bit more upfront, they say a little bit more easily what they think, they criticise other

people more easily without meaning to hurt them. But here, people don't do that, you have to be so careful when you want to criticise someone, be very careful about what you say. So that was difficult at times. You come across as being rude at occasions. You have to appreciate that you don't do that here, do it in a different way or do it very gently. Sabine attempts to 'build bridges', to be respectful of cultural differences in intercultural encounters. From a critical multicultural perspective, it seems important to not put a value on these cultural expressions and also not to over-emphasise them as that which makes the other entirely different.

Sabine:

When you meet people that's always the first thing: where do you come from? And it's always that, always concentrating on that first... that you are from a different country, rather than... you know, what you like to do or what your kids do, or whatever. And that annoys me sometimes, I must say... I don't always want to be singled out for that – ah, you're German, let's talk about that...

Marion, who worked as a teacher in a New Zealand Steiner school for a short period of time, did not immigrate for any other apparent reason than following her husband, who as an Indian medical professional was unable to find work in Germany. Marion left him within the first two months after their immigration. She had no apparent ties to New Zealand and was unable to 'withdraw' into familiarity in any form. Facing a double loss of 'nodal points', a sense of belonging to New Zealand became of paramount importance to her.

Marion:

Once upon a time I had three pillars on which I built my life, which were, while I was still in Germany, my relationship to my then husband. Germany, I had a really strong bond to my home country... and it was my job, my profession... so the first pillar that fell was Germany, because I left it. Six weeks or four weeks after I came here, I left my husband, so the second pillar went. And then the third pillar stays, it's my profession. Choosing the Steiner School as her place of employment appears as the attempt to find familiarity; after all, there is a fairly large contingent of Germans involved in Steiner education. For Marion, this search was unsuccessful and she quit her job after a few months. Without the idealism and/or search for a 'better' place that motivated some of the other women, Marion is left with an overwhelming feeling of 'otherness' which prevents her from meeting 'the other' with an openness towards possible allegiances and affiliations. If the feeling of being different is not reinforced in encounters with 'natives', Marion's attitude changes drastically.

Marion:

I get reactions, every new person that I meet asks me where I'm from, because of my accent. It bothers me a lot. I recently came across one person and she didn't ask me where I came from and I was so happy!

Confronted with ongoing instability in her life, Marion is particularly sensitive in situations that require the ability to forge links across imagined divisions. From her perspective, she can expect to 'belong' simply because she has chosen to live in New Zealand and work here. Her demands seem somewhat naïve, raising the question of what kind of 'rightful' belonging she imagines for herself?

Marion:

...not every day, but certainly every other day I get mirrored, I get a feedback – you're not at home here, you don't belong. Although I feel I do belong. I've got residency, I pay taxes, I'm part of society, I contribute to this society, here, at this moment. I feel like a Kiwi.

However, Marion realises that 'feeling like a Kiwi' is not simply a matter of paying taxes. At times she gives meaning to her own past as being

...all around me, one carries one's culture more than one realises....it's all around me and I carry it. And it's not like a coat that I can take off and put on...

This realisation complicates her desire to belong and at times it seems impossible that she can ever overcome the hurdles of past culturally specific identifications. Without the potential to find 'familiarity/sameness' in her life (for example 'sameness' as shared past identifications and/or as shared beliefs or ideals), Marion's sense of self is too fragile to allow her to establish some form of 'belonging'. 'Belonging' for her becomes a yearning for the ability to collectively share the meaning given to experiences.

Marion:

...we went on camp, on a school camp. And we had these mini buses. And there were another teacher, myself and ten kids on the bus. And this teacher was a Kiwi. And they talked, talked about topics I had not the slightest clue about, and I realised that I don't know anything about Kiwi culture.

Her sense of displacement does lead to a renewed search for identifications (Friedman, 1998, see chapter 2), but rather than opening new possible ways of understanding herself and others as always building alliances on a contingent basis, she 'essentialises' differences as something that prevents her from being part of a collective. The realisation of the instability of the sense of self becomes a burden that constantly forces her to reflect on her way of doing things. Non-belonging in this context generates a longing for the imagined simplicity of feeling 'at home naturally'.

Marion:

It's a way to act that I don't have to reflect on. I naturally know how things work in Germany... it is a sort of unconscious way of doing things... routines, festivals. And the baking, according to the festivals...just the culture. The familiarity, unconscious familiarity with culture. I know it's getting colder, so it must be October or November and in November there are certain things on the market that you can buy, eat. Yes, culture.

In a way, Marion is longing for a return to her 'roots', to that which has formed her 'naturally' through a process of immersion into 'culture'[77]. This understanding of culture as the foundation of the 'I' needs the notion of the self as a subject-in-process to develop out of the constraints of the self as a 'tight envelope', unable to recognise differences as the potential for a more nuanced, more complex 'I' – the longing for roots, rather than the acknowledgement of past identifications and their influence on the present, prevents the 'I' in relation to others from becoming the 'site of constant movement and change, the locus of syncretist intermingling of and hybrid interfusion of self and other' (Stanford Friedman, 1998:19).

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[77] As a note if interest to Marion's 'subject-in-process' status: she has recently visited Germany and realised that she prefers to live in New Zealand.

Between roots and routes

Ronja has the 'advantage' of having lived 'outside' mainstream society in alternative settings that were partly the outcome of attempts to use critical social analyses to conceptualise ways of living that were based on non-hierarchical social/power structures (how effective these models were is another question altogether). This background has prepared her to 'tread carefully' in the knowledge that she has little insights into the intricate workings of her host society. She clearly distinguishes between 'colonisers' and 'natives' in her narrative.

Ronja:

I am Pakeha and I am a coloniser and still I have the advantage that Maori don't treat me as a coloniser because I'm not Pakeha in that sense. Pakeha for them are more the English people who had their roots here in the 1850s and started overtaking the country. German people who've come here in the last 20 years are more... visitors, they get more respect for some reason.

I assume that Ronja speaks from personal experiences – it seems inappropriate to generalise her observations. But I find it helpful to look at her notion of the 'visitor'. This implies a very different mode of action in the encounters with New Zealanders, particularly when compared to previous ideas about the self (unconscious and/or uncritical about the 'right to be here'/ the 'right to belong'). This stance enables the development of ethical relationships where dialogue can lead to respons/ibility as part of the relationship between self and other, understood as embedded within a complex network of differences and sameness (Brinker-Gabler, 1995 in chapter 4). In her search for a place in New Zealand society, Ronja stresses that

It's a delicate situation, and we do have less say, like, I wouldn't ...we're members of the Green Party and Andreas [her husband], if he wanted to he could probably be involved in politics in Wellington, but you wouldn't want to do that because you're only a first generation Kiwi. I mean, you could but it would feel wrong, it would feel like you haven't got enough understanding of this culture to really represent it.

Ronja represents some of the women who came to New Zealand in search of 'alternatives' (see Bade in the introduction). Like some of the others (Lisa, Bea, Katja) she eventually bought a large piece of land with the intention of starting a commune there. This proved to be difficult for various reasons and by now, Ronja and her family live in a newly build mud-brick house and share the vast piece of land with another German family. This development seems to sum up the link to the past search for alternative lifestyles (according to Linse, communes 'flourished' between 1890- 1933); however, times have changed and individualism weighs heavily in the equation – who wants to share increasingly precious private space (particularly after the emergence of 'new subjectivity' [see chapter 3] which put new emphasis on the 'withdrawal' into the personal)?

I'll leave the last space for Katja whose desire for immigration to New Zealand was less intense than others. Katja stated in chapter 4 that she was concerned about Tschernobyl and the consequences of nuclear politics in Europe. The link to 'alternative' lifestyles comes through her interest in bio-dynamics. Katja also represents a woman who has benefited from the feminist struggles over women's entry into male occupations. Last but not least, her moving in-between spaces leads to an interesting outcome in terms of gender relations. Her immigration in itself was unusual in relation to the other women in this chapter – she did not come with a partner but as an individual 'adventurer' (similar to the younger women without children, Nicole and Anja, in chapter 4).

Katja:

I *came on my own. After I'd done my apprenticeship and some agricultural training and I wanted to do practical time for bio-dynamic gardening in New Zealand to just see different aspects of it. So I worked here on a couple of different farms and then sort of carried on doing other things. I also really like the practical side of joinery, agriculture, anything and if you study agriculture you usually end up in some kind of office. And I found a job to immigrate with, which was part-time farm work and part-time joinery which I thought was a brilliant combination, I really enjoyed that. I was way, way out on a farm and they had angora goats and dairy goats and I helped out on the farm and the rest of it I worked in the work shop.*

Katja's 'roots' and her search for an experience of 'familiarity' in New Zealand lie with her family history. Katja's family owned a farm in East Prussia which they had to leave in the 1940s.

Katja:

In our family there was often talk of their homes, of their childhood, where they came from and that they had to leave. I remember my dad describing the beautiful summers in East Prussia and the lakes and the space and the landscape ... so maybe I never felt right at home where we lived. And I was looking for a better country, greener pastures.

Her search for a better place becomes quite literally a search for a place where she can reconstruct the memory of happiness; however, this is an imagined happiness, constructed on the basis of stories that she grew up with.

Katja:

My father was only a six year old when he left but my older uncles and my grandma told us stories about their country...

To clarify the complexities involved in the relationship between past identifications and the imagined constructs of places and selves that lead to Katja's particular form of 'reality' in New Zealand, her childhood memories shed some light on the process. Katja's memories of contentment/happiness are centred around her early childhood, a phase in her life that she gives meaning to as a precursor to her later choices.

Katja:

But I always wanted to... as a child I was most happy if I could... in kindergarten I played farm all day with another boy, and the kindergarten teacher was really worried abut us playing farm everyday and that was just with little wooden figures, we build up this whole farm. And every day and every day we would do this. And she suggested the block corner and the doll corner and books and some days we said- look, today we have to play something else, let's go and do it and get it over and done with. And we played block corner for a while, just to please the kindergarten teacher! And then we said- well, tomorrow we can go back to the farm stuff! It felt... I probably didn't... but it felt like my whole kindergarten time was spent playing farm. We had little gardens and always wanted animals, sort of gathered up all the stray dogs in the area.

This memory is recreated, in a different form, when Katja works on a farm in New Zealand.

Katja:

And my dream had always been to own a farm at some stage and that was really good... that I did work on that farm because it didn't really shatter the dream but it showed me that it's not all romantic. It's such sheer hard work and not much money in it and animals getting stuck in swamps and goats hanging themselves in willow trees and all those sort of things.

Katja's link to the (family) past has influenced her choices to a degree, but she is aware of her past and able to 'move on', to be on route to explore other options. Her relationship to her husband seems to differ markedly from Clare's and Katrin's. The roles in Katja's relationship are less fixed and the impression is that of a partnership that isn't dichotomous. Katja decides that she likes one particular area in New Zealand (after her initial disappointment with this country, see chapter 4), where she can imagine settling down.

Katja:

And Marc [her husband] fully embarked on making that possible, saying: in this area, I can only do seasonal work. If you work as a joiner that means you'd be travelling over the hill all the time and you'd be going to Nelson and we won't be living here, we'll be forever travelling forwards and backwards somewhere else. So we have to think of something we can do here. And that's how the kayaking idea was born.

They start to build up a business together and for Katja the 'settling in' process begins to take shape.

Katja:

I wanted to live there, it really suited me and I really liked the ocean so I thought: why not? It seemed like a nice life style to sit on the beach and rent out boats... and there was at the same time a little café developing in Marehau, so I helped out in the café and as a summer occupation it was a nice, nice life style. And then we went and picked apples together in autumn after the summer season and I met some interesting people there. And slowly my perspective of what New Zealand is about changed slightly as my language got better, as I found it easier to communicate, as I met more people who were on my *wavelength or...I liked it more and more. I do feel a belonging to this country and I do feel being part of this country.*

After they had started a family where childcare was a shared responsibility, Katja is now 'returning' to a more traditional gender division.

Katja:

With Rebecca [their first child] we definitely we complete job sharing, but at the moment we are a lot more traditional because I'm at home a lot more than he is. But that's fine too, I've been through the phase were I wanted everything totally equal, so it doesn't worry me as much now, that there is a phase where I am the housewife and Marc brings in the money mainly. That'll change again at some stage.

With Katja as a 'homemaker', the question arises if she is 'returning' to another form of earlier identification. In the interview she highlighted the influence her grandma had on her as a child.

Katja:

Maybe I'm trying to recreate it...my grandma, who was the farmer's...my granddad died when I was four, but my grandma lived until I left for New Zealand and I spent a lot of time with her. And she had a... she did a lot of gardening and did her own preserving and everything. My mum was quite a modern mum but she [the grandmother] still did all the old fashioned things and told me about the early days and everything and she was a really important person in my life and I loved her dearly. And... so that was probably part of it, to try and recreate that.

Katja's 'reality' in New Zealand seems to be the result of an amalgamation of past identifications, which have been given 'new' form. She has attempted to live her dream of owning a farm, but decided the experiences she's had as a farmhand were strong enough to change her perspective. She has proved to herself that she can compete in a man's world as a joiner, and is able to use this experience to build a relationship with her husband that, at least in this interview seems to be a partnership without the underlying traditional gender expectations (different to the 'partnership' model of Clare's relationship to her husband, see page 129). In a way, Katja has been able to 'free' herself from gender role expectations to such a degree that she can now 'return' to another memory of happiness, that of her Grandmother remembering and re-constructing the identification of the 'farmer's wife'. However, she has the freedom to choose this identification and make it her own without being stuck in a dichotomous/hierarchical relationship most likely strictly regulated by customs and traditions (which would have been the reality of her Grandmother's life as a farmer's wife). Katja's 'settling down' in New Zealand becomes a success for her, affirmed by visitors from Germany.

Katja:

This is a place where I'd like to stay. And it's also Marc's sister and her family came visiting last summer and they commented several times, over and over again, saying: gosh, you're place really feels like home! You guys seem so connected with everything around here while we in Germany are always looking to move and try to find a place where we can feel at home. And they commented so often on this feeling of us being quite connected where we are, good relationship with neighbours and really connected in the area and obviously feeling completely at home and at ease with the surroundings, more than they are in Germany.

Katja herself offers an analysis of her 'contentment' which emphasises that the place of happiness/contentment is an imaginary construct which does not necessarily rely on the 'right' geography. 'Reality' is an outcome of our choices, conscious and unconscious ones; whether this reality is experienced as positive or negative depends to some degree on our ability to accommodate these choices and live them meaningfully. According to Bauman, this could include having 'a memory of the past and trust in the future... as well as taking reponsibility and living by the moment' (Bauman, 2000:129).

Katja:

I've realized probably not that long ago, probably only for the last couple of years or so, that living in New Zealand is great because it suits me because of the space and I can grow things right round, I can have a bigger piece of land which I would never be able to afford in Germany. But apart from all those things which make it a lot easier for my personal development it doesn't really matter where you live, you carry your own baggage around wherever you go and it could be the totally ideal country and you're still feeling miserable or it could be a totally horrible situation and you still feel alright. Because... things depends a lot on your own perception of things and what you make of it, so by now I can imagine living in Germany again for whatever reasons, maybe I have to *look after my parents, things like that. And I can imagine that I last there for a while, that it wouldn't matter that much.*

But again, that whole comparison New Zealand/Germany, the whole personal development thing, again I find New Zealand a lot more supportive in that direction for the simple reason that it is a new country and new ideas can be thought without being rejected straight away while in Germany tradition has a lot bigger impact and certain thoughts you can't have, they don't fit into the old pattern of things. And I don't see tradition as a bad thing, it's also a very good thing, it gives you a framework to go by and all the rest of it. A lot of... everything has positive and negative aspects, there are always two sides to it.

Conclusion

Although I have presented my findings throughout this study, I want to offer a brief summary in terms of what I set out to do. Since Zygmunt Bauman's sociological insights into the modern condition have more or less been my guiding posts, I'll turn to him for some concluding thoughts on the relationship between migration to New Zealand as a choice and the Zeitgeist that accompanies these choices. Bauman defines 'rational choice' in the era of instantaneity (and 'time-space compression' is one aspect of this) as the 'means to pursue *gratification while avoiding the consequences,* and particularly the responsibilities which such consequences may imply' (Bauman, 2000:128, emphasis in original).

Is this the 'ideology of consumerism' that apparently replaces/supplements local beliefs, traditions, ways of life (see introduction, p.1)? From a theoretical point of view, the migration to New Zealand without much knowledge about the country and its society, but with the expectations that 'life will be better here', is a product of 'our' time. At least some of the women involved in this study have, as I have demonstrated in chapter 4 with the 'adventurers' and the 'postmodern cosmopolitans', come here because they felt 'stressed out' in Germany (Germany as competitive, restrictive) and imagined New Zealand as 'laid-back and easy-going', as an escape option, with little attention paid to the social, political and symbolic structures that *make* New Zealand. The image of New Zealand as 'paradise' has not changed significantly in their narratives, even after considerable time spent living in this country. However, on a practical level migration, especially for a single young woman, requires considerable more than simply the wish to change places in the pursuit of gratification. In their own way these women challenge gender expectations and in doing so, they re-construct themselves, at least for a time, as crossing boundaries into 'new' territory. Within their own imaginary constructs, they would not have been able to feel as challenged in the 'overly regulated' Germany.

However, in chapter 4 I have argued that these images of New Zealand and Germany as complemetary or oppositional represent the reconstruction of the 'old' order, where an engagement with 'otherness' and heterogeneity is avoided to stabilise the desired imaginary constructs of places and selves. Within the paradigm of modernity and in conjunction with advanced technology (the era of instantaneity), migration to New Zealand as an 'escape' can be argued to be a 'rational choice'; the result is apparently successful settlement, albeit without an awareness of the specificities that align New Zealand and Germany both as part of the 'same' while simultaneously creating tension between the differences that originate through different internal histories and symbolic structures. Living in New Zealand under these terms is a lifestyle choice – 'place' does not matter that much as long as the quality of life here is perceived to fit the criteria for 'better' than life in Germany. The 'selves' that are re-constructed in the process are the selves of modernity – this is particularly apparent in the identification with the 'pioneer' who at the same time shows traces of the cosmopolitan. This is an interesting, at times contradictory subjectivity with little attachment to, and awareness of, New Zealand as a place where the local and the global intersect in an interplay between sameness and difference. The emphasis here lies rather on 'self-development', preferably within the secure world of communities built on imagined 'sameness' (I used the Steiner community as an example).

The 'adventurers' furthermore fit the new patterns that emerge in migration literature, where periods of 'sojourning' become more common (see introduction, p. 2). These young women who have immigrated to New Zealand in the search for often physical challenges, are still in the process of settling down. It is imaginable that they 'return' to Germany or proceed with their search in a different country at any stage. In contrast to the women who came here to start a family, their expectations lie with exploration and self-discoveries, rather than with 'new beginnings' in terms of procreation in an environment that is imagined as 'safer' and more 'natural' than Germany.

In terms of migration research the focus on women in this study has highlighted two points. For one, immigration to New Zealand did not generally take place under the blanket banner of 'the economy'. Although one woman stated that she immigrated because her husband found employment in New Zealand, she nevertheless left him within a few months after arrival. However, she did not return to Germany as a result of these unexpected circumstances but decided to try to settle down here by herself. Another woman 'followed her husband', but the reasons for immigration were philosophical ('to live closer to nature'). For most of the other women, the choice to live here was made either by themselves or together with their partners. Contrary to assumptions within the literature, some of the women emphasised that 'New Zealand is a difficult choice for the breadwinner', thereby discounting purely economic reasons for immigration.

However, motives for immigration rested within traditional gender expectations, possibly an outcome of the focus on 'normality', in particular in relation to family structures, in postwar Germany (see chapter 3). Interestingly from these women's perspective, one effect of globalisation is the possibility of imagining 'the other side of the globe' as more suitable for childrearing/starting a family. Again, these ideas about New Zealand as 'paradise for mothers' are located within a problematic binary framework where New Zealand represents the essential (feminised) opposite/complement to (a masculinised) Germany. I suggested that interwoven in this construct is the unconscious desire to 'escape' from role expectations in Germany that are limiting to women, specifically mothers. In this context New Zealand as 'space' signifies traces of a search for the representation of the 'maternal bond' as indicated by Kristeva (see chapters 4&5). Within this imaginary construct New Zealand holds the promise of hope for 'maternal empowerment'; it seems possible that in some cases this construct of the self as powerful within the maternal role leads to an increased sense of control. In that sense the self that is constructed through the process of immigration is 'new' to the individual while actually reinforcing 'old' models (see chapter 5).

This brings me to the second point, namely the assumptions surrounding the process of decision-making in migration research. Contrary to general assumptions (Leckie, 1995), some of the women were the decision-makers to the degree of having to overcome their partners' resistance to immigration. In two of the thirteen interviews, the women stated that their marriages broke up because of their partner's 'homesickness', with one husband/young father returning to Germany without his family. For further research in this topic area it would be interesting to focus on both partners to gain insights into the gendered patterns of immigration.

Another variation on the non-economically motivated migration theme has been the 'green immigration' as suggested by James Bade (see introduction). I have not specified this as an important criteria in my search for participants. Consequently this is not a focus point in this study. My assumptions were guided by Bade's suggestion though, and I expected stronger responses to the 'green' theme than I ended up with. Many of the women were/are linked in some way to 'reform' discourses, and the 'green' movement in Germany is possibly historically linked to earlier reform movements. The 'green' impulse stood out in the strongly expressed desire to return to nature, but it lacked the political and social motivation that made it a forceful challenge in the German context. Further research with a focus on participants who have come explicitly as 'green' settlers would generate better insights into the links between past and present reform movements and the migration to New Zealand as a possible response to 'German conditions'.

In terms of my attempts to understand migration as a counter discourse to old fears about strangers and migrants as signifiers of instability, otherness and detachment, I have emphasised the potential for understandings across the divide of ethnicities by demonstrating some of the complexities that lead to ideas about selves and others. It then becomes possible to 'see' the individual as an amalgamation of past identifications, some of them cultural, others familial, most of them gendered in one form or the other. This is where 'familiarity/sameness' that crosscuts can be found – the relationship (and mystery) between form and matter is universal after all. With the assistance of the thirteen German women who so willingly gave their time to talk to me, the strongest insight I have gained from this project is the realisation that we share a past symbolic system and whether we like it or not, whether we resist it or long to 'return' to it, we all have been 'formed' by it in one way or another. It is up the the individuals to 'add' these cultural differences to the New Zealand 'map' which becomes all the more complex and intricate. My hope for a 'better' place rests with this vision of the development of culture in the era of globalisation, rather than with the more pessimistic view that globalisation leads to the 'Global Village' construct of culture through the 'ideology of consumerism'. It is up to us to imagine places and selves in a 'better' world.

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Appendices

The Participants (names are pseudonyms)

Lisa, age 39, full-time mother. Has lived here since 1985, immigrated as a single woman, now married. She lives with her two children and partner in the city with the intention of moving onto their land (10 hectar) once their Olive plantation is established. Lisa grew up in South Africa.

Katrin, age 46, full-time mother (currently single). Immigrated in 1995 with her Irish husband and young daughter.

Clare, age 33, full-time mother. Came with her German husband and young daughter in 1989. Remarried, has now four children. Recently bought a lifestyle block of land just outside of the city.

Sabine, age 35, science technician. Immigrated with her German husband and daughter in 1992.

Marion, age 38, teacher. Came with her Indian husband in 1997. Grew up in the border land between Germany and France.

Susi, age 38, tourism consultant. Arrived in New Zealand in 1986 with her English husband. Has one daughter. Plans to buy a lifestyle block.

Mimi, age 44, medical doctor, but not qualified to work in New Zealand. Immigrated with her German husband in 1991. Two daughters.

Petra, age 35, massage therapist. Came to New Zealand in 1990 with her German husband and son. Has two children.

Nicole, age 33, works as a customer service representative for an outdoor company. Immigrated in 1996 as a single woman.

Anja, age 28, chef. Immigrated in 1998 by herself.

Katja, age 39, trained joiner and cabinet-maker, currently a full-time mother. Immigrated by herself in 1987.

Bea, age 33, part time student and mother. Came with her husband and young child in 1991. Has two children.

Ronja, age 43, teacher and counsellor. Came with her husband and young daughter in 1986. Has two children. Lives on a lifestyle block with another German family.

Interview Questions

New Zealand as a country of settlement

1. When did you immigrate?
2. Why did you immigrate?
3. In what way did you imagine New Zealand to be different from Germany?
4. Did you imagine similarities?
5. Did you choose New Zealand specifically as a country of settlement?
5. If yes, why?
6. How did you imagine to fit into New Zealand society as a German immigrant?
7. What possible connections/difficulties did you imagine?
8. Do you think being a woman influenced your choices and your imaginations?

Cultural Identity

9. What does it mean to you to be German?
10. Do you have a sense of being German?
11. If you do, does it change or is it stable?
12. Have you travelled to Germany after you have immigrated?
13. If yes, in what way is your sense of belonging affected when you have visited Germany and return to NZ?

Home

14. Did you feel at 'home' in Germany as a child?
15. As a young adult?
16. As a woman?
17. If 'yes' to either question, what did it involve for you to feel at 'home'?
18. If 'no' or 'not sure' to either question, what made you feel not at 'home'?
19. Did the feeling change or was it largely consistent?
20. Did you at any stage of your life experience feelings of 'homelessness'?

21. Is belonging important to you?

Place

22. Do you have a sense of belonging in New Zealand?
23. If 'yes', what does it involve?
24. If 'no', why not?
25. Do you think New Zealand has a character of its own?
26. If 'yes', can you describe it?
27. How is it different from Germany? Do you feel more at 'home' in New Zealand than you did in Germany?
28. If 'yes', why? If 'no', why not?
29. Can you feel at 'home' in more than one place?

Personal details

Your age/ profession