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CONTRA VIENTO Y MAREA
(Against the Wind and the Tide)

**Latin American Women in New Zealand:
Resettlement Experiences and Issues**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Philosophy
in the Department of Social Policy and Social Work
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ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on the resettlement experiences of four Latin American women who migrated to New Zealand between 1974 and 1990. The research question for this study was: What have been the consequences of migration and resettlement in terms of gender relations, family relationships, paid work, domestic roles and ethnic identity? Particular attention was given to the experiences of the participants in the maintenance of their culture and language.

This study was approached from a feminist perspective. The researcher conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews in Spanish with each of the participants. The personal involvement of the researcher, who is also a Latin American immigrant, was an integral part of the study.

The difficulties experienced by the participants as new settlers reflected: their individual circumstances of migration; their previous knowledge of English; the loss of kin support; the gender relations within their families; and the opportunities they found in New Zealand. All the participant experienced major changes within their families, the most significant being divorce or separation from their husbands/partners.

The degree of involvement in the labour force depended to a large extent on their domestic responsibilities and their knowledge of English. The participants have emerged from their initial position of powerlessness as new settlers having gained in self-confidence and independence. One of the major changes they identified was in their adoption of more egalitarian gender roles and ideas.

Ensuring continuity with their cultures and the maintenance of the Spanish language was very important for the participants. The difficulties they experienced in this area reflected the demands of integration into New Zealand society and the lack of general community support. In this context, therefore, the support of other Latin American people was of crucial importance for the participants in terms of helping them to cope with the challenges of cultural change. This study gives weight to an approach to resettlement which recognises and values the language and culture of immigrants, as well as assisting them to obtain the skills required to be part of the new society.

DEDICACIÓN

Esta tesis está dedicada en primer lugar a mi mamá. Este poema, que ella me dió hace algunos años, ahora me hace más sentido:

*Solamente dos cosas
podemos dejar
a nuestros hijos...
Una es raíces
y la otra es alas.
(Anónimo)*

La segunda dedicación es para mis hijos Miguel, Isabel y Miriam, quienes han sido mi mayor inspiración durante mis años de inmigrante.

En tercer lugar, pero no el último, dedico mi trabajo de investigación a mi nieto Rayne.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis first to my mother. This poem, which she gave me some years ago, now makes more sense to me.

*Only two things
we can leave our children...
One is roots
and the other one is wings.
(Anonymous)*

The second dedication is to my children, Miguel, Isabel and Miriam, who have been my source of inspiration during my years as an immigrant.

The last (but not least) dedication is to my grandson Rayne.

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INTRODUCTION

Women from a variety of ethnic backgrounds have come to live in New Zealand, yet very little is known about their lives and experiences as settlers. Internationally, until the 1970s most researchers excluded women from their studies of migration. This gender-free model of migration has been challenged by more recent studies which include gender ideology and sex roles as important features in the immigration experience and settlement process. This does not suggest that immigrant men face totally different issues and experiences to immigrant women. The point I make is that for women, because of the social construction of their roles in society and the resulting gender divisions, the migration and resettlement process has a different meaning and different implications.

There is not a great deal of information available about Latin American immigrants in New Zealand. They constitute a small proportion of all immigrants to New Zealand. (only 1,449 in the 1991 Census) and about half are thought to live in the Auckland area (Thomson, 1993). The Immigration Service has reported that 328 immigrants arrived from South and Central America between 1991 and 1994, constituting 0.5 percent of the total immigrants during that period (Trapeznik,1995:88). However, this figure does not appear to take into account Latin American immigrants from Mexico (North America) or the Caribbean. For the purpose of this study Latin Americans or Latinos are understood to be people whose ethnic roots are linked to Latin America, which includes Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean region and South America. The diverse cultures of these areas are characterised by a mixture of indigenous, Spanish and African influences.

THE RESEARCH TOPIC

The topic of this thesis is the resettlement experiences of Latin American women in New Zealand. I have chosen to study this topic area for four main reasons. First, I was motivated by my desire to better understand my own experience as a Puerto Rican woman in New Zealand. I viewed the study as an opportunity to create links with

other Latin American women who were in a similar position to myself. I hoped that by sharing our experiences we would gain some insight into our lives, and maybe share some strategies for dealing with the difficulties we face as immigrant women.

The second reason for embarking on this study concerned my need to integrate my private world as a Puerto Rican Latina and my public world as a social worker practicing in different cultural settings. I believed that by gaining an insight into my own position I would be better equipped to deal with values which are different to my own. My ethnicity as a Puerto Rican Latina is of crucial importance in terms of what I bring to my interactions with people in the work setting. I use the term 'ethnicity' in this thesis to refer to what Pinderhughes (1989:6) describes as:

...connectedness based on commonality (such as religion, nationality, region, etc.) where specific cultural elements are shared and where transmission over time creates a common history.

The third reason for choosing this topic was my interest, in line with my feminist values, in documenting the situation of Latin American immigrant women so that their particular needs are understood by policy makers. An important objective of this study was to examine the findings in terms of their implication for policy formulations in areas such as: immigration, assistance for cultural maintenance, welfare, health, employment and education.

The final reason for choosing this topic was my desire to affirm and validate my experiences and those of other Latin American women in New Zealand. I recognise that the term 'Latin American women' does not imply a homogeneous group. I would be concerned if narrow or rigid assumptions are drawn from the views and experiences put forward in this thesis. There is no such thing as 'a Latina perspective'. Latin America consists of many different countries, each with its own cultural, socio-economic and political characteristics. There are, however, strong common bonds between Latin American women, as we share many common elements in our distinctive cultural backgrounds and the Spanish language (with the exception of women from Brazil who speak Portuguese). There are also similarities in the way our experiences as immigrant women are influenced by our positions within the prevalent socially constructed notions of 'woman', 'mother' and 'wife'.

I have chosen to focus mainly on the experiences of women who have migrated with their husbands/partners with or without children, either as refugees or as voluntary migrants. I believe that the voices of these women, who are considered 'dependants', are not often heard. One of the most pervasive stereotypes of female immigrants is that women migrate as 'appendages' to male immigrants, and therefore play a passive role in the migration and resettlement process. While it is true that many women migrate as part of a family unit, such assumptions overlook the complexity of the active role women might take in the migration experience. This study represents an attempt to move away from superficial assumptions about migrant women in general and Latin American women in particular. It is a contribution which, together with other immigrants' accounts, may contribute to a clearer understanding of the relationship between migration, ethnicity and gender in the New Zealand context.

As Lerner (1991) points out, in order to develop an adequate account of the lives of women in New Zealand, it is important to consider both the differences and commonalities between the groups of women who live here. It would be inappropriate and simplistic to assume that the experiences of immigrant women of one ethnic group also represent the reality for other immigrant women. It is essential to develop theoretical analyses which take into account the reality of women of different ethnic backgrounds.

THE RESEARCH QUESTION AND METHODOLOGY

The basic research question for this study was: What have been the consequences of migration and resettlement in terms of gender relations, family relationships, paid work, domestic roles and ethnic identity? Emphasis was given to changes that had occurred in attitudes, values and behaviour as a result of migration. The study focused on three main themes: first, possible changes in gender roles and status in terms of family relationships; second, the interaction of paid work and domestic roles; and third, the relationship between ethnic identity and the process of integration into New Zealand society. Particular attention was given to the experiences of the participants in the retention of their culture of origin and their ethnic identity.

This study was approached from a feminist perspective. This is reflected in the choice of topic, the research questions, and research method adopted. My aim was to conduct a research project which would look at the experiences of four Latin American women from their own perspective. In line with this aim, the research method was to conduct in-depth, semi-structured interviews with each of the women. The interactive nature of this process provided an opportunity for the participants to talk about their experiences within a context of reciprocity and solidarity.

MY STORY

Starting, staring at an empty space, being afraid.
Excitement too. What shall I say?
It can wait no longer. I must speak what I know.
What I know is part of me, it is my story.

(María Rivera)

What follows is part of my personal history as an immigrant woman. Given that my personal involvement is an integral part of the methodology of this thesis, it is appropriate to provide a snapshot of who I am.

I am a Puerto Rican. My life started in a close-knit rural community in the central region of Puerto Rico. I was the middle-child of the family, having two older sisters and a younger sister and brother. My mother was a primary school teacher. My father was involved in tobacco and sugar-cane farming, and in local politics as a member of 'El Partido Popular Democrático' (The Popular Democratic Party). Our family could probably be classified in Puerto Rico as an average middle-class family.

The first major change in my life came with shifting to San Juan with my family when I was 16 years old. San Juan, the capital, is a small city by world standards (approximately 500,000 people), but for me it was a huge city in comparison to where I had come from. The reason for moving, my mother told us, was to make it easier for all the children in our family to go to University. Both of my parents were firm believers in the value of education. On reflection, moving to San Juan was my first experience of uprootedness and alienation.

Before coming to New Zealand I experienced international migration in two different contexts. My first experience goes back to the late 1960s. After I graduated from university (BSc degree in chemistry), I left Puerto Rico to work in Wisconsin, in the United States. Like many Puerto Ricans I wanted to explore other horizons. Many changes seemed to happen at once. I left home for the first time to live far away from my family, in a country with a different culture and language to my own. It was also the first time I had a full-time job and was, all of a sudden, an independent adult.

I had learned English at school and at University, and even though I was not very fluent, it was not a major problem for me. I was living with other Puerto Rican women, with whom I could speak Spanish and eat typical 'soul' food. I had a great deal of personal and financial independence, but I was very unhappy. I had not expected the overwhelming sense of loss and estrangement which became part of my life after leaving my family and my cultural 'cocoon'. It was a time of questioning, of looking for alternatives and strategies for survival.

After 18 months in the United States I decided to go back to my family in Puerto Rico. I went back disillusioned with the career I had chosen. I felt lost and had no idea of what I wanted to do with my life. I hoped that returning home would help me find myself again, but perhaps I had changed too much. So after a few months in Puerto Rico, I decided to go back to Wisconsin and try another job in chemistry.

My second experience of migration in 1969 was quite different. This time I arrived in Papua New Guinea as a married woman with an Australian husband. Although his job was the main reason for going there, Papua New Guinea was attractive because of my sense of adventure and my new interest in anthropology. I enjoyed many aspects of life in Papua New Guinea, especially the opportunity to interact with people of many different ethnic backgrounds.

During my time in Papua New Guinea I do not remember meeting any other Latin Americans. However, I had a friend who came from Spain, with whom I met often and spoke Spanish. I do remember feeling very homesick, missing my parents and

my brother and sisters. I became much more aware of what it really meant to be so far away from family and from my culture, specially after my children were born. Fortunately, I had the support of my husband and of friends, who had also come from other parts of the world and were far away from their extended families. After almost two years in Papua New Guinea, I went back to Puerto Rico for four weeks with my first child.

At times we felt uncomfortable living in Papua New Guinea. Its colonial context and socio-economic conditions often influenced our interactions with people. In the 1970s Papua New Guinea was going through many political and social changes in the process of becoming independent from Australia. Inter-tribal conflict, racism and anti-colonial sentiments had increased. We did not like to be identified as members of a privileged, white, expatriate, minority group. In the face of these tensions we decided to find another place to live.

My husband and I had visited New Zealand twice before coming to live here. First, in 1969 on the journey from the United States to Australia, when our ship stopped in Auckland for a weekend. What I remember most was the quietness of the city, as all the shops were closed and there was hardly anyone walking around. Because of this, I thought that I would never like to live in New Zealand. I did not suspect then that six years later I would return to settle here.

The second time I visited New Zealand was in May 1974, after five years in Papua New Guinea. This time we came with the view of exploring the possibility of coming here to live. At that stage my husband and I had two children, aged three and nine months, and I had different priorities. My impressions this time were very different. New Zealand, especially in comparison with Papua New Guinea, seemed a relatively egalitarian and stable environment in which to raise our children. So, when my husband was offered a position in New Zealand, we decided to come here to live.

We came to settle in New Zealand in January 1975. Many people ask me: "Why have you come to New Zealand?" I always find this question a difficult one to answer, and whatever answer I give it sounds too simplistic. I was not a refugee, and I did not

come for professional reasons. I came for family reasons. Many times I have said that it was a joint decision between my husband and myself. But was it? My choices were limited and determined by my husband's career and priorities. This reflected the prevalent ideology which allocated men the role of breadwinner and women the responsibility for the domestic sphere. In these terms, the decision to come to New Zealand was based on implicit assumptions of gender roles, which neither of us really questioned at that stage.

The New Zealand context provided the backdrop for a new and unique experience of migration. Here I felt more of an 'outsider' than in Papua New Guinea, especially as a new immigrant. I suspect this was related to the relative cultural homogeneity of the New Zealand population in the 1970s, the majority being of Anglo-Saxon descent. For instance, having an accent was not an issue in Papua New Guinea, as there were so many different languages and cultures. As a new immigrant in Papua New Guinea, I felt less lonely and isolated than in New Zealand. I would suggest this was related to the dominant cultural values of the New Zealand context, in particular the emphasis on individualism, privacy and the 'sanctity' of the nuclear family home. I believe these values were important factors underlying my difficulties as a new settler. These difficulties were also probably related to the fact that, in New Zealand, I lived in an established suburb where people had lived for many years, while in Papua New Guinea, I had lived in a new community where the majority of both locals and expatriates were recent arrivals. Having this new arrival status in common made it easier for people to get to know one another.

The most significant event after the first few years in New Zealand was having another baby. This brought many joys as well as further challenges of motherhood and domesticity in a new context. Looking back, two changes were crucial for me during that time. First, my husband changed to part-time employment which made it possible for us to share the parenting and housework responsibilities. Second, I became involved with a network of friends, especially other Latin American women. Both of these events contributed greatly to my well-being and survival in the new context.

Employment has always been important for me, not only to have a degree of financial independence, but also in terms of my identity and self-esteem. In Papua New Guinea, the availability of paid domestic help made it possible for me to combine parenting with part-time work as a science teacher. In New Zealand, initially I had no family or friends to assist with child care during the day, nor paid domestic help. During the early years I worked as a Spanish teacher at a local High School, taking my youngest child to work with me. Other paid work was mainly in the evenings, teaching Spanish.

When my third child (born in New Zealand) started kindergarten, I embarked on a career in social work. My involvement in this field has widened my perspective and has led me to consider the socio-economic and political factors which impinge on the lives of individuals and groups. In guiding me to look at my own position as a woman and as an immigrant, social work provided the starting point for this thesis.

OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

A brief outline of the structure and content of this thesis is provided here to orientate the reader.

Chapter 1 fulfils two key objectives. First, it discusses the feminist theoretical perspective of the study. Second, it provides an overview of the literature on immigrant women relating to five main themes: gender issues and the status of women; gender relations and Latin American culture; the interaction of paid work and domestic roles; the impact of migration on family relationships; and cultural continuity and change.

Chapter 2 discusses the research process. It describes the methodology and research design, introduces the participants and addresses some ethical issues associated with the study.

Chapter 3 explores the participants' reasons for coming to, and for staying in New Zealand. It emphasises their participation in the decision to come, their preparation before coming and their feelings about coming.

Chapter 4 focuses on the experiences of the participants as new immigrants. Emphasis is given to their first impressions, the impact of culture and language challenges, and the strategies they adopted. It also presents their views on what would have been helpful for them during the early stages of resettlement.

Chapter 5 focuses on the interaction between gender relations and the participants' productive and reproductive roles. Their background in the domestic arena and paid work and the challenges they encountered in New Zealand are explored. The chapter highlights the changes which have taken place in these areas as a consequence of migration.

Chapter 6 considers the impact of migration on the participants' family relationships. New Zealand family values and norms are contrasted with those of their societies of origin, and the dilemmas and feelings they experienced in this area are explored. The effect of the absence of extended family is given particular attention.

Chapter 7 focuses on the experiences of the participants in maintaining their language and culture. Emphasis is given to the difficulties they encountered in their attempts to transmit the Spanish language to their children, and the strategies they have adopted in maintaining their own ethnic identity in New Zealand.

Chapter 8 considers aspects relating to the integration of the participants into the fabric of New Zealand society. It looks in particular at their acquisition of English language skills, their interaction with New Zealanders and their support networks. The relationship between ethnic identity and integration is highlighted.

Chapter 9 reviews the study's findings in the light of its initial objectives and highlights the main themes which emerged. It makes linkages between the findings, the literature reviewed in Chapter 1, and the feminist perspective which underpins the study. It also includes recommendations for policy and social work practice and for future research. The chapter concludes with a personal reflection on the research process and the significance of the findings.

The challenge for the reader is to try to step out of her or his own shoes and to step into the shoes of the participants; to try to share some of their experiences, views and most importantly their feelings. What is included in the following chapters is only part of the participants' stories and is the product of a dynamic interaction between myself, as an immigrant woman and researcher, and each of the four women who had the courage to participate in the study.

CHAPTER 1

THEORIES, CONCEPTS AND THEMES

This chapter presents the theories, concepts and themes which underpin this study. It begins with a discussion of the feminist theory which informs my perspective, and goes on to discuss the meaning of migration as a social process. The chapter also provides an overview of the migration literature relating to five main themes: gender issues and the status of women; gender relations and Latin American culture; the interaction of paid work and domestic roles; the impact of migration on family relationships; and cultural continuity and change. The theories, concepts and the research literature examined have provided a context for data collection and analysis in this study.

In New Zealand, gender issues have been given very little attention in the literature on immigration and ethnicity. There is an information gap about the settlement of female immigrants in New Zealand. This is particularly so for minority groups which are not of Anglo-Saxon-Celtic descent or Polynesian (see Leckie, 1995). I have drawn, therefore, to a large extent on literature from Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom.

FEMINIST THEORY

The study of immigrant women could be approached from many different perspectives. This study emphasises the experiences of immigration and settlement from the standpoint of the women themselves. The feminist methodology and theoretical perspective, therefore, seemed the most appropriate and have been adopted for this study. Reinharz (1992:241) points out that the fact that there are multiple definitions of feminism implies that there are multiple feminist perspectives on social research. The meaning of the complex terms 'feminism' and 'feminist' cannot be taken for granted. Feminism is not a "unitary phenomenon and within the feminist body politic there are, to put it mildly, disagreements" (Stanley and Wise, 1983:193). It is therefore necessary to be explicit about the meaning of these terms.

In their search for an answer to the question of what feminism is, Mitchell and Oakley (1986:3) warn us about simplistic attempts to say what feminism is and is not. One way to avoid meaningless abstract definitions is to answer the question by exploring my personal perspective. This, of course, is not an easy task, as Bowles and Duelli Klein (1983:17) state:

...women have been barred from experiencing our experience; it takes an enormous effort, an enormous consciousness to even be able to feel our own feelings and think our own thoughts.

Where and how do I begin? The following “base-line definition” constructed by Delmar (1986:8) provides a starting point:

...at the very least a feminist is someone who holds that women suffer discrimination because of their sex, that they have specific needs which remain negated and unsatisfied, and that the satisfaction of these needs would require a radical change [...]in the social, economic and political order.

Although I would go along with the above definition, my own approach tends to be much broader. The words of the black feminist bell hooks (1981:138) reflect my own perspective:

To me feminism is not simply a struggle to end male chauvinism or a movement to ensure that women have equal rights with men; it is a commitment to eradicating the ideology of domination which permeates Western culture at various levels - sex, race and class, to name a few, and a commitment to reorganisingsociety so that self development of people can take precedence over imperialism, economic expansion and material desires.

This perspective could be considered to be truly radical, for it advocates addressing all forms of oppression and not simply those resulting from patriarchal relationships. Emphasis is also given to race, class and ethnicity, as well as to other aspects such as age, disability and sexuality. The underlying assumption is that women experience oppression in these areas differently to men (Afshar and Maynard, 1994).

However, the term ‘woman’ is no longer considered a simple entity. The “very stability of the concept” has been called into question (Mitchell and Oakley, 1983:2). Stanley and Wise (1990:21) argue that the term ‘woman’ is a socially and politically constructed category, based on “a set of experiences rooted in the material world.” Women do not share, by the mere biological fact of being female, the same experiences of oppression, as highlighted by Stanley and Wise (1990:22):

The social contexts within which different kinds of women live, work, struggle and make sense of their lives, differ widely across the world and between different groupings of women. We argued that the experience of 'women' is ontologically fractured and complex because we do not share one single and unseamed material reality.

Feminism has been under intense scrutiny and critique for reflecting the concerns and priorities of white, middle class women and ignoring issues of race and ethnic difference (see hooks, 1981; Joseph and Lewis, 1981; Moraga and Anzaldúa, 1981). Bryson, (1992:254) states that:

The problem is not simply one of acknowledging that differences exist, but of challenging the underlying assumption that white women are the norm, and that the experiences of 'black women', 'women of colour' and 'third world women' are some kind of 'alien problem' or 'optional extra'; ...

Feminism, 'Difference' and Post-modernism

The concept of 'difference' has become very common in feminist writings. Maynard (1994:9) distinguishes between two formulations of this concept. The first argues, like Stanley and Wise (1990), that feminism must begin with experience, as it is from this starting point that it is possible to appreciate the extent to which the world of some women is different to the world of men and other women. The stories of individual women may be 'different' but are part of a collective history and exist within a broader, structural context (Maynard, 1994).

The second formulation of the concept of 'difference' presented by Maynard (1994) is informed by post-modern thinking. There are many ways of describing post-modernism, some of which are controversial. Williams (1990: 205) describes one of its main features as rejection of single philosophies, of suggestions of universalism, and of notions of 'the truth', which are associated with modernism. For example, the Marxist analysis of class as central to oppression is rejected in favour of a diversity of political and cultural explanations. Post-modernism is characterised by the view that there is no such thing as the objective social world, which exists without our knowledge or discourse about it. Within this perspective there is no hierarchy of theoretical positions. According to Williams (1990:205), post-modernism represents a major shift in theoretical approaches: from uniformity and universality to heterogeneity, diversity, fragmentation and difference. This perspective can be useful in understanding the

complexity of categories such as, 'race', 'migrant', 'patriarchy' and 'woman'. This emphasis on 'difference' opens up new possibilities which can be liberating (hooks, 1990:17).

While acknowledging the usefulness of post-modernism in developing a framework for the understanding of difference, it is also important to acknowledge the potential danger of such an approach. Maynard (1994) expressed concern that the emphasis on difference may result in not being able to offer any structural explanation of inequality among different groups. She argues that it is necessary to take into account the dimension of power, as expressed in the structural conditions which affect individuals and groups. Taken to an extreme, post-modernism would stand in the way of collective action and the political struggle to make changes (Bryson,1992). I would argue that post-modern perspectives are useful because they challenge what is normally taken for granted in our everyday lives. Nevertheless, I consider that in order to link the 'personal with the political', the category 'woman' is valid and important. I agree with Larner's (1993:86) suggestion that:

...rather than seeking to find a common identity that can form a basis for action, the task is to find connections that will enable a woman to join with others without pretending to be those others.

Instead of the concept of 'sisterhood', implying an oppression shared by all women, I prefer the concept 'solidarity', which implies understanding the struggles of all women as interconnected, but not the same. As Küppers (1994:5) points out, referring to the Latin American Women's Movement:

Indeed, feminism means unity in diversity, the power to be many and different, to be separate and separately organised and politically active. It is like a landscape in a state of permanent change.

Williams (1990) uses post-modern theory to develop a model which takes into account power relations and sensitivity to diversity in regard to gender, class, disability and sexuality. In this model differences are seen as shifting, interrelated and defined by the people themselves, as well as shaped by cultural and social conditions. I find this model to be relevant in the understanding of the experiences of migrant women.

Many feminist writers on migration (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1983; Bottomley and de Lepavanche, 1984; Morokvasic, 1983; Phizacklea, 1983) have emphasised the fact that economics, patriarchal relations and cultural elements are interconnected, and that specific effects are apparent when these elements intersect. Their studies show migrant women not as victims, but as actively involved in changing their particular contexts, and as resisting and subverting the power relations which influence their situations. Ethnicity, gender and class are seen as socially constructed and negotiated, not as static or objective conditions.

In New Zealand Larner (1991 and 1993) and Shameem (1992) take a similar approach. Larner found that economic factors, patriarchal relations and aspects of cultural forms interact to structure the experience of Samoan women in New Zealand. For example, while Samoan women are culturally defined as being primarily responsible for domestic work and child-care, in New Zealand they are also expected to be involved in full-time work in order to meet the economic goals of migration (Larner, 1991:61). Similarly, Shameem (1992) clearly links the personal experiences of Indo-Fijian immigrant women to gender and ethnic issues and with the political economy both of their place of origin (Fiji) and their place of settlement (New Zealand).

There is some debate about how useful is the notion of 'difference' in dealing with issues of race and ethnicity. In the Australian context, Ganguly (1995:37) argues that in attempting to correct the "false homogeneity" within the category 'woman', mainstream feminist theorists have gone to the other extreme by conceptualising women of non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) as totally "the other". This appears to take two forms: the "exotic other" and "the oppressed other" (Ganguly, 1995:37). The problem is that these representations tend to reinforce popular stereotypes about migrant women, which see the roots of their oppression as coming solely from the culture of their ethnic groups. Migrant women in a variety of contexts have experienced other people defining their situation. In contrast, in this study the participants define for themselves what it is like to be a migrant woman.

Other feminist analyses in Australia locate the difficulties of migrant women in the structural barriers they encounter in the economic, social and political spheres in the host country (see Bottomley, 1992). These approaches can also be criticised for

regarding women of non-English speaking backgrounds as a homogeneous group in opposition to mainstream women. Differences based on factors such as ethnicity, class, age, location, length of residence and conditions of entry need to be considered.

A major issue for feminist analysis is the use of simplistic binary opposites such as, men versus women, dominant culture versus minority culture, domination versus oppression, traditional versus modern (Ganguly 1995:47). Besides obscuring the great diversity among women, the use of such binary categories tend to represent women as passive victims of oppression. This representation ignores the fact that migrant women have their own strengths and can use a variety of strategies to manage their new environment to their benefit.

It is also simplistic to conceptualise migrant women and mainstream women as binary opposites. Ganguly (1995:38) argues that the issues faced by women of non-English speaking backgrounds “are neither totally similar nor totally different to that of Anglo-Australian women, but a mix of the two.” In my experience, this analysis is also relevant to the New Zealand situation. For example, I have met Anglo-New Zealand women with pre-school children, who after shifting from the South Island to the North Island, experience loneliness and isolation from their support networks. Simply stressing ethnic difference obscures the experiences and interests that women share with one another. As Afshar and Maynard (1994:2) point out, the lives of women from different cultural backgrounds are “multifaceted” and their experiences have some commonality with those of similar class positions in other societies. It is also important to keep in mind that some migrant women are economically well off. For example, in Australia, non-refugee women from Asian countries get better jobs and better pay than do Australian-born women (Ganguly, 1995:42).

In the United States context, critiques by so-called ‘minority women’ also argue for a sophisticated approach to issues of ‘women’s oppression’. This is illustrated by the example provided by Moraga and Anzaldúa (1981, cited in Walby, 1990:30):

As third world women we understand the importance, yet limitations of race ideology to describe our total experience. Cultural differences get subsumed when we speak of ‘race’ as an isolated issue: where does the Black Puerto Rican sister take out her alliances in this country, with the Black community or the Latin? And color alone can not define her status in society- How do we compare the struggles of the middle class white women with those of the light

skinned Latina welfare mother? Further, how each of us perceived our ability to be radical against this oppressive state is largely affected by our economic privilege and our history of colonisation in the U.S. Some of us were brought here centuries ago as slaves, others had our land of birthright taken away from us, some of us are the daughters and granddaughters of immigrants. Others of us are still newly immigrated to the US.

The present study is based on a feminist perspective that acknowledges the differences which exist among immigrant women. The challenge is to find a common identity as a base for action. Feminism for me is not just about understanding differences, it is also about linking 'the personal with the political' and challenging the power relations which impinge on the experiences of women.

MIGRATION AS A SOCIAL PROCESS

Before looking at some of the literature on the experiences of women in immigration and resettlement, I would like to set the scene by considering the process of migration in general. Jackson (1986:2) provides a useful definition: "Migration implies movement of individuals and groups between two societies, that which they have left and that to which they have come". Jackson expands this definition by providing three guidelines which clarify the concept. First, migration is expected to be a significant movement, for instance to another town or across a country or district. Second, migration must be sustained, not temporary or casual. Third, it must involve a social transition involving a change in relation to the social as well as the physical environment (Jackson,1986:4).

In this study migration is understood in terms of Jackson's guidelines: not only as involving individuals moving from one country to live in another for a significant period of time, but as a process which involves significant social change for these individuals. The focus of this study is social change in the areas of gender relations, employment, domestic arrangements, family relationships and identity. I use the terms 'immigration' and 'immigrants' in referring to this process and the individuals involved respectively, in relation to the society to which they have come.

It is important to consider some of the underlying assumptions which can be embedded in the concept of migration. One of these is what Jackson (1986:3) calls the "myth of

the static society"; the assumption that the natural condition of human beings is sedentary. This static model of society depicts migrants as outsiders, as marginal or deviant in relation to the settled society. Jackson, however, views the migrant not as intrinsically different but as experiencing changing roles and relationships which may at one time or another be the experience of everyone. Migration is neither a rare nor a new phenomenon as Aasen (1989:96) points out:

Migration is undoubtedly one of the most generic and pervasive of the human conditions. Throughout history people have traversed vast distances as a result of war or natural disasters in search of improved life conditions or for a variety of other reasons.

Jackson (1986:74) also views the act of migration as representing a challenge to the "known grounds of conformity" in both the society of origin and the host society. The experiences of migrants can be viewed as a reflection of the values, assumptions and prejudices of the population of the host society. They can also be seen as providing alternatives to the narrow boundaries of nationalism, race or ethnic difference.

In the context of this study it is important to distinguish between a migrant and a refugee. The United Nations 1951 Convention (cited in Tremewan, 1994) defines a refugee as a person who:

...owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his [or her] nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself [or herself] of the protection of that country.

It has been suggested that the experiences of immigrant and refugee women in their host country are often very different (Tremewan, 1994). The assumption is made that in general immigrant women have time to prepare physically and emotionally for the transition and the changes they will experience in their new country. Immigrant women are supposed to have made an informed choice and "have had the opportunity to grieve for what they are leaving behind" (Tremewan, 1994:9). In contrast, the situation of refugee women is seen as one in which they have no choice but to flee their countries, to move away from dangerous circumstances, and therefore have no time to prepare for the change or to grieve for what they leave behind.

'Liminality' is a concept which attempts to explain the refugee's transition between separation and reincorporation into the new society. Eastmond (1993:39) has described liminality in the context of Chilean refugees in the United States:

The liminal state is replete with ambiguity, marked by the undefined identity of those in transition, existing and yet not existing as social persons in society. The Chileans perceived themselves to be 'betwixt and between' social realities.

Eastmond used the concept of liminality to try to understand the dilemmas the Chileans experienced in exile. Because of their moral commitment to return to their homeland they were unable to fully try to make a place for themselves in the new society. So life was put on hold and the refugees were left suspended in a limbo. However, in her study of Chilean women in Auckland, Barnard (1996:100) found that the "myth of return" was a redundant concept, and that the sense of liminality which they had previously experienced had passed. This happened as a result of the Chilean women making the decision to live in New Zealand permanently. According to Barnard, this provides further substantiation of the proposition that the feelings of liminality experienced by most refugees in their earlier years of exile do not last (see Vásquez, 1987, cited in Barnard, 1996:100).

MIGRATION, GENDER ISSUES AND THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Until recently women have been left out of the theoretical thinking about both internal and international migration (Simon and Brettell, 1986). It appears that women have not been perceived as independent migrants in their own right but as passively following a male migrant, and consequently their role has been considered less important. Women, however, make up nearly half of the total migrant population in the world. Available evidence indicates that women constituted 48 percent of all persons outside their country of birth between 1970 and 1987 (United Nations Expert Group, 1995:2).

It has been suggested that the participation of women in international migration has been down-played, and their economic role under-rated partly because women's work tends to get little recognition. Many of the activities in which women play a dominant role do not produce a monetary income and are consequently not considered to be

work, as pointed out by Waring (1988, cited in United Nations Expert Group, 1995:4). The fact that most women migrate as part of a family unit should not be a reason to down-play their role as migrants. In migration as well as in other contexts, women have an essential role to play in the economic and social domains.

Lim (1995:38) argues that a woman's autonomy, or lack of autonomy, in the decision to migrate is an indication of her status in society. The implication is that women in highly traditional and patriarchal societies follow without question a decision made by a male family member. However, the passive role often ascribed to women has been challenged. Smith (1980:80) states in her study of Portuguese migrant women that:

...for every woman who was prompted by the male and followed willingly or regretfully, there were two who insisted and forced him to remain where he was, and there were five who had been the initiators of the idea: mothers, sisters, wives or daughters who worked at cajoling or pressuring males into taking the lead, or forced them to make the move. Women were often the pushers, the naggers, the manipulators, the innovators, the security blankets and the teachers.

It has been suggested that an important reason for migration for women is wanting to move away from the constraints imposed by their subordinate positions in their country of origin (Lim,1995). It is not surprising that many women appear to be attracted to a society which is seen as having a less hierarchical sexual stratification. Yet, as Lim (1995: 40) points out, the viability of migration as an option for women "can be seen as a function of various constraints and facilitators related to her position relative to men within the family and in society". Patriarchal social norms may proscribe, induce or restrict the migration of women. However, under economic necessity the normal constraints on the freedom of women to migrate may be ignored (Lim, 1995:40).

It is essential to consider the influence of the family context in the migration decision. Lim (1995:42) states:

The family or household can be seen as the structural or functional context within which women's status is determined, migration motivation and values are shaped, human capital is accrued, information is received and interpreted, and decisions are put into operation.

Hence aspects relating to the structure and function of the family affect women's status and roles and consequently also affect migration. Harbison (1981, cited in Lim, 1995),

argues that more emphasis should be given to the family as the immediate context of the decision to migrate. Gabaccia, (1994:xiv) found that for most immigrant women in the United States, family and economic motives for migration were inseparable.

The concept of 'the status of women' is relevant in relation to gender issues and migration. It refers to "women's position relative to men and to each other, over the course of a lifetime within a particular socioeconomic, cultural and politico-legal context" (Lim, 1995:30). In the context of migration the relative position of migrant women in comparison with non-migrant women is considered to be of fundamental importance. According to Lim (1995:31) women have been identified as having seven major roles in society; that is, as producers or members of the paid and unpaid labour force, wives, mothers, housewives, kin, community members and as individuals. Gender interaction and the status of women can be related to any of these roles and can take place in different spheres; namely, the family, the community, the kin group or extended family and within the broader society. These roles also interact with each other, having an impact on gender relations. In other words, the status of women has micro and macro dimensions. However, it may change in society at large, without changing the relative position of women within the family. For example, women may achieve equality with men in the paid labour force while carrying full responsibility for housework and child care within the domestic arena. As stated by Lim (1995: 32):

It is only by taking into account the embeddedness of gender in a structure of culturally, socially and politically circumscribed obligations and expectations, that the implications of the actions and achievements of individual women can be understood.

So it is necessary to consider the gender stratification systems which exist within the spheres of culture, ethnicity, social and political systems in a specific context. In the case of migrant women both the society of origin and the host society need to be considered, particularly in regard to the socialisation of male and female children.

The changes which may be brought about by migration involve a complex process. As Bhachu (1986, cited in Lim,1995:49) states:

The process is not a unidirectional one of assimilation into the indigenous society, but rather one that involves constant negotiation and redefinition of gender relations within and outside the family.

Lim (1995), Buijs (1993), Simon and Brettell (1986) and other writers suggest that there are differences in the way men and women adapt to a new country, in particular in regard to the adoption of new norms and values which involve a loss of male authority. An example of this is given by Buijs (1993) in the context of Palestinian refugees in Berlin. When men lost their roles of provider for the family, their continual presence in the home restricted the movement of unmarried girls and women. In that way, Buijs argues, men kept control over women and maintained their ideology of gender relations. Even though some migrant men may accept the need for their partners to assume new social roles, they may also feel threatened and try to reinforce their traditional authority.

Eastmond (1993:46) found that the sense of loss had a different focus for Chilean men and women refugees in the United States. While men tended to emphasise the loss of their roles as political actors and breadwinners, women grieved for the loss of the networks which made up their daily lives. It has been suggested that women refugees and migrants show greater resilience and adaptability than do men (Colson, 1991, cited in Buijs, 1993:4). This has been explained in terms of women having occupational continuity provided by household routines, and men being more conscious of the failure to find jobs with status comparable to those they left.

There are also differences in the way men and women view the option of returning to their countries of origin. In her study of Chilean women in the United States, Eastmond (1993:51) found that the option of returning to Chile was more attractive to their husbands.

Many women feared losing the gains they had made in terms of a more independent social and economic position, one which would be difficult to maintain back home.

The option of return presented many dilemmas for the women. Many of their children felt at home in the new society and did not share their parents' dream of returning. Eastmond (1993:51) argues that because children represent "continuity and life", many women would remain where their children and grandchildren choose to be. This, however, may result in conflict and tensions in relations with the extended family overseas.

GENDER RELATIONS AND LATIN AMERICAN CULTURE

Bottomley (1992:14) an Australian writer, suggests that "culturally-constructed gender relations operate as one of the major axes of social power in most, if not all societies". She argues that men have more formal power than women and that in many cases this is a major feature of cultural formation. I share with Bottomley her interest not only in the operation of power relations, but also in the forms of resistance and creative modifications that women have adopted.

Latin American gender roles are often described in the literature as conditioned by cultural factors embedded in traditional notions of 'machismo' and 'marianismo' (see Cubitt, 1988; Moraes-Gorecki, 1988; Amézquita et al., 1995;). 'Machismo' is defined by Cubitt (1988:103) as:

.. an exaggerated cult of virility which expresses itself in male assertion of superiority over females, and competition between men. To fulfil 'macho' behaviour patterns, a man must show no fear, demonstrate sexual prowess, father many children and exercise tight control over female kin.

The term 'marianismo' is the female counterpart of 'machismo'. It is derived from assumptions about the image of the Virgin Mary as a role model for women. It is a concept which views women as having attributes such as submissiveness, tolerance and endurance. The ideal woman is, therefore, assumed to be, in the words of Cubitt (1988:104):

...gentle, kind, long suffering, loving and submits to the demands of men, whether they be husbands, fathers, sons or brothers. She has an infinite capacity for humility and sacrifice and an abundant store of patience.

The term 'marianismo' also refers to notions of women having attributes of moral superiority and spiritual strength. These qualities apparently justify her a central role in keeping the family together (Cubitt, 1988). Traditionally women are responsible for the education of the children and the emotional support of other family members (Amézquita et al., 1995).

Over the last 20 years there has been a growing awareness of women's issues in Latin America. This is reflected in the presence of politically active women's movements which have spread in many countries of South America, Central America and the

Caribbean (see Küppers, 1994). Through these movements, Latin American women strive to change the prevalent power relations. However, change in the mainstream public consciousness is a slow and difficult process.

Moraes-Gorecki (1988:26) suggests that Latin American migrant women bring with them to the new society some "very firm patriarchal notions of gender relations", which are embedded in traditional notions of 'machismo' and 'marianismo'. In Australia, while these concepts are challenged by many, some Latin American families still maintain such values in their private lives (Amézquita et al., 1995). There appears to be a tendency in the Latin American community in Australia to be critical of Australian culture for "allowing women too much power and allowing men to lose power" (Amézquita et al., 1995:180).

According to Hondagneu-Sotelo (1993:193):

Analysing gender as a socially constructed and historically situated set of ideologies, identities, practices and displays has probably opened up new understanding of Latinas as it has no other group of women.

Latinas have often been portrayed as submissive, subordinate and passive, no doubt reflecting the concept of 'marianismo'. This stereotypical view has been challenged since the 1970s, and particularly by research over the last decade (see Deutsch, 1987; Romero, 1992; Zavella, 1987). This literature opens the door for more sophisticated approaches to the Latina's experience. It shows that the experience of Latina women is shaped by diverse and complex factors relating to ethnicity, class and gender. These factors are dynamic influences which manifest themselves in different ways depending on historical and economic contexts. For example, Fernández-Kelly and García (1990) compared the meaning of work to immigrant Latina women of different class and nationality backgrounds, who were employed in the same occupation. In spite of shared cultural values and ideals, the Cuban women used employment as a temporary strategy to raise capital for their husbands' businesses, while for Mexican women, who were single heads of households, waged work was indispensable.

During migration the shift in the social context could bring a shift of social norms, perceptions and new opportunities. However these shifts do not necessarily result in more egalitarian gender relations for a variety of reasons, which could include: the

continuation of traditional ideology in the new context; the safeguarding of family priorities and values; isolation and language difficulties (Evans, 1984). Boone (1994:189) suggests that after 30 years in the United States, many Cuban refugee women still held some 'conservative' or 'traditional' views on gender relations, while at the same time holding egalitarian beliefs regarding work and careers. This analysis, however, seems to fall into the trap of using binary categories, such as traditional versus modern. I would suggest that it is a common experience for both men and women to live our lives in the midst of contradictory beliefs and experiences.

Whether migration results in a redefinition of gender relations and how this might happen would depend on many complex factors. The interaction between the two different cultural, social and economic environments and its effect on women, needs to be considered. The particular circumstances of migration and the timing in regard to the personal and family life-cycle also play an important part. The research questions in this study have addressed these issues.

In order to appreciate the impact of migration, it is of crucial importance to compare the socio-cultural environment of the country of origin with that of the destination. Hondagneu-Sotelo (1993) points out that contemporary social science literature and historical scholarship tends to assume that Third World or racially different women are more oppressed and 'backward' than Western white women. The assumptions that migrant women come from more oppressive backgrounds, and have lower educational qualifications than women in the host society, are not necessarily valid. Deutsch (1987) demolishes this stereotype in her analysis of gender in the context of the Hispanic or Latina women in the American south-west. She found that women in the Hispanic villages in New Mexico maintained a degree of autonomy in family affairs, in productive work and in religion. Deutsch's research demonstrated that the status and autonomy of the Chicana (Hispanic-Mexican-American) women did not improve but declined with their incorporation into mainstream United States society. This study further illustrates the difficulty of labelling women as 'oppressed' without considering their cultural and socio-economic context. It adds weight to Smith's (1980) argument regarding the active role women play in their communities (see the last section).

Consideration of changes in gender relations involves the examination of complex domestic interactions in the context of the new socio-cultural environment. It is appropriate therefore to direct attention to the domestic sphere and to focus on some strategies and negotiations regarding women's productive and reproductive roles.

INTERACTION OF PAID WORK AND DOMESTIC ROLES

Studies that attempt to explore the relationship between work roles and domestic roles focus on two main issues (Simon and Brettell, 1986). The first issue is the impact of the new work roles on domestic relationships between husband and wife, and mother and children. The second issue is the increasing double burden of paid work and domestic duties. According to Simon and Brettell (1986), some of the strategies migrant women adopt to cope with their dual domestic and paid-employment roles are: leaving the children behind in the country of origin with family members; bringing family members to look after the children; or working shift work so that both partners can take part in child care and other domestic duties. Whatever solutions to the sharing of domestic roles are adopted, they have an impact on family relationships, especially between husband and wife.

Lamphere (1986:267) states that in order to understand the variety of strategies adopted by migrant women it is necessary to focus on the structure of the local economy, on the position of women within a family unit, and on the timing of immigration in relation to the family life cycle. Each of these aspects shapes the strategies adopted and the allocation of productive and reproductive labour. In this context, therefore, women cannot be studied in isolation from men or the family unit. The position of women in relation to the family life-cycle would have an effect on the issues and on the ways of dealing with these. For example, women with young children find themselves in a different position to women with a grown up family.

Cultural conceptions about the roles of husbands, wives, parents and children influence the way domestic and paid work interact. In her study of Portuguese and Colombian women in the United States, Lamphere (1986) found that their ideology of the family included the concept of husbands as the economic providers, notions about male authority, ideas about gender differences, and the concept of respect in relation to

parents and children. However, the position of the families in the local economy had created changes in behaviour within the domestic sphere (i.e men participating more in child care and housework, and women taking up paid employment). Some cultural conceptions of family roles had apparently been dropped or watered down as a result.

Existing literature documents both gains and losses in the status of women who migrate with their partners. A positive change reported in the literature is the increased participation of immigrant women in waged employment, which appears to have an effect on sex hierarchies within the family (Lim, 1995). In these instances the status of women appears to have increased through more egalitarian husband and wife relations. The following examples of households of Latin American women from Chile, Colombia and the Dominican Republic in the United States tend to support this view. Eastmond (1993) found that as a result of gaining paid employment, Chilean women in the United States learned new roles and social skills, which consequently increased their confidence and their domestic authority. Lamphere (1986) found that the need for both partners within Colombian families to be in paid employment changed the allocation of reproductive labour within the household, and gender roles within the family. Pessar's (1986) findings in her study of Dominican women pointed to similar conclusions. These studies demonstrate that gender roles traditionally prescribed to Latinas can undergo changes in a new socio-economic environment. They exemplify the point made by Hondagneu-Sotelo (1993:193), that seeing gender roles as socially constructed leads to a more sophisticated understanding of the Latina woman's experience.

Involvement in paid employment does not guarantee more egalitarian domestic arrangements. In New Zealand, studies of Latin American women comparable to those studies carried out in the United States, are non-existent. However, this area of women's lives has been researched for Samoan women. Larner (1989) found that Samoan migrant women were having difficulties combining their domestic roles with their new roles as paid workers outside the home. In these situations women experienced a 'double burden', especially in the absence of female relatives who in Samoa would undertake domestic work and child care. Larner (1989:106) suggests that the distinction between "dependent female immigrants", who move for family related reasons, and "autonomous women" is misleading. In her study she found that

from the start it was necessary for 'dependent' women to get paid employment to meet financial commitments and to send money to the extended family in Samoa.

In Australia, Moraes-Gorecki (1994:180) found that the large majority of Latin American women are "working mothers" and undertake a "double shift". In common with Samoan women in New Zealand, paid work does not relieve Latin American women from domestic duties; on the contrary, it is an additional responsibility. In the absence of the support which was traditionally provided by kinship networks, many Latin American women turn to home-based paid work in order to effectively meet their continuing domestic responsibilities. Moraes-Gorecki (1994:83) points out the detrimental consequences for women. They become "isolated in their homes", experience increasing "economic subordination to their husbands" and "become victims of highly exploitative relations with the market."

Like many Southern European immigrant women, Latin American women in Australia work predominantly in industries characterised by low wages and lack of job security. Moraes-Gorecki points out that many of these women had come to Australia with high skills in the secondary sector in their own economies. She argues that their downward occupational mobility is related to the needs of the local gender-based economy, and the allocation of certain types of work to immigrants regardless of their qualifications.

In the New Zealand context the difficulties that many immigrants experience in securing employment and having their previous qualifications and experience recognised were highlighted in the findings of a recent government survey (Department of Internal Affairs, 1996). The personal accounts in Shameem's (1992) study highlight the difficulties Indo-Fijian immigrant women (and men) experience in this area.

This 'double discrimination' which female immigrants experience by virtue of their sex and ethnicity has been highlighted in the literature (e.g. Lim, 1995; Simon and Brettell, 1986). The terms 'triple' or 'fourfold' discrimination are also used when two further aspects are considered: that is class, and women's perceptions of their own situations as natural or inevitable.

How women view their participation in the labour force is related to socio-cultural factors. It may reflect the blending of a commitment to traditional values and responsibilities, and the values encountered in the new country. For example, Pessar (1986) found that Dominican mothers in the United States saw their employment as an extension of their roles of mothers and wives, because it allowed them to raise the family's standard of living. For many migrant women, whether or not they work for wages, the household and the family remain the focus of their social identity.

MIGRATION AND THE FAMILY

This section focuses on the family context and explores issues which stem from the impact of migration. It looks in particular at changes relating to roles and responsibilities, and the loss of extended family networks.

Family Roles and Responsibilities

In the Australian context, Amézquita et al. (1995) suggest, there are fundamental differences between the traditional Latin American family perspective and that of the host society. The immigration process may bring changes in family values, structures and functioning which are not always welcomed (Amézquita et al., 1995:179) :

Latin American families [in Australia] see themselves as choosing to change in some cases and being forced to in others, sometimes in order to keep families together.

It has also been suggested by Amézquita et al. (1995), that family cohesion and mutual support still appear to be strong for Latin American families in Australia, while traditional gender roles appear to be changing. The reasons for these changes are complex and embedded in the interaction of particular characteristics of the Latin American and Australian societies. The socio-economic situation the immigrants find in Australia is considered to be a significant contributing factor. According to Amézquita et al., high unemployment levels amongst Latin American immigrants have had a major negative impact on their family relationships. However, more research is needed in this area in order to get a clearer picture.

Rearing children in a new society presents families, and women in particular, with many dilemmas. Parents want to maintain the values of their own culture, while making necessary adjustments to survive in the new environment. A recurrent theme in the literature concerns changes in the balance of authority and control over their children that migrant women experience. This may be related to factors such as: their dependency on their children for language skills; clashes of cultural values and behaviours; and the racism encountered in the host society. Bottomley (1992:155) illustrates this point in the Australian context. She discusses the effect that "racism of the playground" has on the children's perception of their parents. There is obviously a loss of respect when children see their parents in a negative way, as "stupid peasants who can't speak English properly" (Bottomley, 1992:155). Bottomley points out that this situation is exacerbated when parents are forced to use their children as interpreters, reversing the parent-child roles and heightening the parents' feelings of inadequacy.

Further tension results when immigrant parents try to enforce on children and adolescents cultural behaviours from their country of origin. Bottomley (1992) argues that migrants often become more socially conservative. This may be the result of a kind of 'fixing' of cultural traditions which occurs with migration. It may also be, as Bottomley (1992:162) states: "a desire to be respectable, in the absence of other forms of cultural and symbolic capital, in a new and ethnocentric society".

Another area of difficulty arises in households where aged parents become dependent on and subordinate to their children. As Moraes-Gorecki (1991) found, old age represents poverty for many elderly people recently arrived in Australia. Their financial resources are spent on the trip to Australia, and their pensions are either too small (after currency changes) or have been cut. As there are no welfare provisions for them for at least 10 years, their children, especially their daughters, are totally responsible for their well-being. This situation, compounded by the language barrier between the aged immigrant and the host society, creates many social, economic and family difficulties.

Extended Family and Social Networks

There appear to be some common pressure points among families from a variety of immigrant backgrounds, which have significant implications for family relationships (Hartley, 1995). Separation from close kin and friends is considered to be of particular importance. The lack of extended family and friends in a new country disrupts previous patterns of social contact and support. As a consequence some families may experience feelings of loss, isolation and extreme anxiety (Garcia-Preto, 1982). In the new context, family members may feel the responsibility to fulfil roles and functions which were previously performed by others in the extended family system. For example, in regards to Puerto Rican families in the United States, Garcia-Preto (1982:177) states that:

In Puerto Rico the nuclear family was never expected to take care of all their needs. Understandably, [family members]... may feel overwhelmed and resentful.

Their new cultural context may also present immigrants with different and unfamiliar approaches to social interaction. In reviewing the lives of immigrants who came from “the other side” to the United States, Gabaccia (1994: 77) states:

Nowhere on the other side were nuclear families or kin networks - what ever their importance - the only basis for collective action and cooperation. Instead the family status rested on the breadth, depth and extent of its social connections. The men and women of the other side needed circles of assistance and mutual aid beyond the family economy and kin networks, and they routinely built communities through personal ties to neighbours, kin and co-workers. Americans, by contrast, often pursued mutual aid via voluntary associations - individuals joining together in formal organisations to pursue shared interests.

Gabaccia (1994) points out that most immigrant women in the United States, in their desire for social connection, reached out beyond their immediate families and gradually became involved in community building and voluntarism. However, gender ideology within ethnic communities and within the American context, determined to a large extent the roles immigrant women played in community building.

Neighbourhoods have been found to be an important social arena for married immigrant women. Gabaccia (1994) suggests that many immigrants do not recognise firm lines separating family from community or household from neighbourhood.

Frequent and casual visiting is often encouraged. These patterns of social interaction, however, can meet with some criticism, as illustrated by Gabaccia (1994: 79):

Middle-class Americans reacted with dismay to this easy blending of private and public: American standards demanded the separation of the home, women and children from the public world. Immigrants in turn saw Americans as coldly indifferent to human need beyond the material concerns of the nuclear family.

Maintaining connections with family members overseas is another common theme (Hartley, 1995). Many Latin Americans in Australia assist family members to visit or immigrate, and provide financial assistance to family members in their country of origin (Amézquita et al., 1995). Strong family ties and responsibilities towards the family left behind added considerable financial pressures to the immigrant families, just as they did to Samoan families in New Zealand (Larner, 1989).

As previously mentioned, the new economic and social opportunities in the host country may result in women having an increased importance within the family. However, the issues presented in this section suggest that the position of migrant women within the family may also be undermined. This is especially true for women who do not participate in paid employment, are isolated from extended family networks, and who do not know the language of the host country (Buijs 1993:9). The constraints imposed by the host society are a major factor influencing the adaptation of migrant women to their new environment. These constraints may include the lack of economic opportunities, and a lack of access to both language learning facilities and to child care.

MAINTENANCE AND INNOVATION: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

The objective of this section is to present some theoretical approaches to the theme of culture change and continuity in relation to immigrant women. In particular it aims to understand their experiences and issues in regard to culture and language maintenance.

Continuity and Cultural Change

When two societies come together, they provoke the mutual antagonisms and adjustments termed cultural change. (Gabaccia, 1994:110)

The terms ‘assimilation’, ‘acculturation’ and ‘integration’ are often used to describe what happens to individuals and groups of people as a result of migration. Like Gabaccia (1994) in the above quote, I prefer to use the term cultural change, as it does not assume the direction of the change, nor preclude the possibility of the host society also changing in the process.

Scholarly investigations on immigrants have shifted away from giving attention to the forces of assimilation and the breakdown of culture, to giving emphasis to the persistence and continuity of ethnic groups (see Pozzetta, 1991:vi; Gabaccia, 1994:110). Notions of assimilation, and the ‘melting pot’ philosophy, view immigrants as shedding their foreign ways and taking on as quickly as possible the lifestyles and ways of speaking of the host country. According to Pozzetta (1991) recent studies view the process of immigrant integration as creating change in both immigrant and mainstream society. In the context of the United States, Pozzetta notes that the preservation of immigrant languages, values and traditions did not result in the exact duplication of old-world ways. Immigrants adapted their ethnic cultures to meet changing circumstances. The host society also had to change because of the need to accommodate the presence of diverse groups of immigrants.

Cultural change does not happen quickly or easily, as Gabaccia (1994:121) points out:

For adults, cultural and linguistic change call into question many of the assumptions that allow humans to make sense of the world and to construct their identities. In short, one cannot change languages and cultures without changing one’s very being. However exciting or freely chosen, culture change also feels disorienting and personally threatening.

The psychological effects of culture change are referred to as ‘culture shock’, or as Gabaccia (1994:121) calls it, “the sting of change”. Although it might be thought that the intensity of this ‘sting’ is especially sharp for refugees who have suffered traumatic migration experiences, in fact the hypothesis that refugees suffer more emotional distress than any immigrant group is not universally supported (see Pernice and Brook, 1994).

The stress of cultural change may have health implications for immigrant women. As Gabaccia (1994:121) suggests:

Immigrant women have often expressed the stress of cultural change through illness. Women raised to be deferent and self-sacrificing may know no other way to focus attention on their own needs.

The most important guarantors of immigrant health, and well-being have been reported to be family, friendship and “neighborliness” (Gabaccia, 1994:121). For immigrant women in particular, contact with female kin or with close friends has been identified as decreasing the likelihood of illness and depression.

Research carried out in the United States has attempted to find out about the coping strategies that immigrants have adopted in their new country. Immigrant communities emerge from these studies as “remarkably vibrant and complex entities that provided effective cushions between the often strange and harsh dominant society and the newly arrived residents” (Pozzetta, 1991:vii). Immigrants do not conform passively to the ways of the new country. They display resistance and creativity in their efforts to “construct a meaningful identity” (Buijs, 1993:18). As Eastmond (1993:36) states, referring to her study of Chilean women in the United States, continuity “does not mean absence of change, but to be able to integrate changes in culturally meaningful ways.”

However, many immigrants do abandon much of their cultural heritage. McGoldrick et al.(1982:12) suggests this is due to pressures to accommodate to the new society , and an attempt to deaden the pain associated with what they left behind in their homelands. The loss of identity they experience as a result of cutting off the past, McGoldrick argues, tends to make them more vulnerable to difficulties in the context of the new culture. In New Zealand, Waldegrave and Tamasese (1994:119) emphasise the importance of people’s sense of belonging to their culture:

Cultures with their baselines of values and the expression of these in structures, rituals and arrangements are at the heart of a people’s sense of belonging. Cultures define identity. Cultures and their positioning within each society define who and what we are.

This sense of identity and belonging would be influenced to a large extent by the presence of family members and ethnic community groups in the new country. For example, when a number of families migrate together, they bring their networks with them, and consequently find it easier to preserve their traditional heritage than families that have no one with whom they can speak their native language, or share customs and rituals. The importance of support networks of people of the same ethnic group is highlighted by Escovar's (1990) account of her experiences as a Chilean immigrant to New Zealand. She points out that for Chilean families these networks have been important for language maintenance, and for emotional and practical support. Eastmond (1993), in relation to Chilean refugees in the United States, notes that poetry, music and song have helped to build a collective identity.

Language and culture are inextricably linked to one another. Language is not simply an aspect of culture, it is "central to our individual and group identity, being the principal medium by which knowledge, ideas and cultural values are transmitted" (Waite, 1992a:9). Holmes (1984:10) stresses the relevance of language maintenance to ethnic minorities:

For those who belong to an ethnic minority, proficiency in the ethnic language is often an important affirmation of their ethnic identity; an affirmation which contributes to their psychological well being and comfort.

Until recently New Zealand has been relatively unaware of language issues. The Waite Report on the development of New Zealand language policy noted that calls from Maori groups for recognition of their language has brought issues of language diversity into the wider New Zealand context (Waite, 1992a:9). This has motivated immigrant groups to also make claims for the maintenance of their languages. The importance of immigrant families being able to retain their first language is highlighted by Waite (1992a:20):

Bilingualism (with maintenance of the first language) fulfils many goals, including the reinforcement of family structure, strengthening of individual and group identity, enhancement of educational achievement, and contributing to the pool of New Zealanders able to use languages other than English. It would be foolish to let this resource go to waste.

The report also states that the efforts of new settlers to maintain their languages should be supported. It mentions that support is needed for parents who want to maintain the language in the home setting, for linguistic communities who want to establish their own language programmes, and for schools which introduce community languages.

In international law there are principles protecting linguistic minorities and their wish to maintain their ethnic identity. The International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, Article 27 (cited in Waite, 1992a:14) declares that:

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.

New Zealand is a signatory to this Covenant. As Waite (1992a:14) points out, measures to enhance the languages of this country's linguistic minorities, either by provision for their advancement or by elimination of impediments to their use, would be in harmony with this international agreement.

There is not a great deal of research in the area of gender differences in language maintenance in new settler communities. According to Holmes (1993:4), Australian and New Zealand studies which consider this issue have found that in the first generation women tend to maintain the ethnic language better than men. Some explanations of this finding indicate that women are conservative and reluctant to embrace the new language and culture. However, Holmes (1993:5) argues, this behaviour can also be explained in the context of the roles ascribed to women. In many new settler communities the maintenance and transmission of the ethnic culture and language is regarded as the women's responsibility. Women are thus active agents, playing a positive role within their communities.

Several authors (e.g. Smith,1980; Holmes,1993) comment on the contradictions in the roles migrant women are expected to adopt. One such contradiction is the expectation that migrant women be the keepers of traditional values and language, while at the same time trying to adjust to new roles and the new culture. In the context of language, Holmes (1993:3) states:

Truly, women are in a double bind, damned as conservative if they maintain their ethnic language, damned as traitors if they learn English too well.

A similar contradiction was highlighted in the study of 60 immigrant women from diverse backgrounds in Christchurch (The Society for Research on Women in New Zealand,1979:76). This study pointed out that immigrant women walk a "cultural

tight-rope”, as they experience a conflict between their desire for the social acceptance of their children and their fear of the loss of their cultural heritage.

THE NEW ZEALAND BICULTURAL AND MULTICULTURAL CONTEXT

The literature reviewed in this chapter has highlighted that the conditions available to refugees and immigrants in the host country determine to a large extent their resettlement experiences. The distinctive quality of ethnic relations which exists in New Zealand is of particular significance, in terms of the attitudes of the community and the resources available to immigrants.

Immigration has recently become one of the most hotly debated issues in New Zealand. The issues mostly relate to the implications for New Zealand, in terms of economic growth, health and education budgets, and social cohesion (Watkin, 1996:2). A good deal of the controversy is focused on immigrants from Asian countries. A discussion on immigration policy is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, I would like to briefly comment on recent trends which have impinged to some extent on the ethnic composition of New Zealand.

The growing diversity in the New Zealand population reflects the changes in immigration policies which occurred in the late 1980s and the early 1990s (see Trlin, 1992 and 1997). These changes have significantly altered the predominance of Western Europe and North America as the origins of migrants who come to New Zealand. In spite of these changes, in 1993 the ethnic composition of New Zealand was still dominated by those identified as European/Pakeha (73.8 percent). The second largest group was Maori people (12.9 percent), followed by Polynesians (5 percent) and others (4.6 per cent), which make up the so-called ‘ethnic sector’. (Thomson, 1993). These figures help to keep the current immigration debates within a realistic perspective.

The particular history of this country is reflected in debates about ethnic relations and notions of biculturalism and multiculturalism (Pearson, 1996:248). These ‘culturalisms’ are problematic and not easy to define. Biculturalism in this thesis is understood as referring to the power dynamics which exist between the descendants of British settlers

and the descendants of the indigenous Maori tribal groups. I use the term multiculturalism not only to imply cultural heterogeneity, but to refer to moves away from notions of assimilation of immigrants into host societies, toward acceptance and encouragement of cultural diversity. Pearson (1996:249) points out that multiculturalism and biculturalism can be viewed as ideologies promoted by the state to manage ethnic conflict while ignoring power inequalities. Ethnic minorities may be encouraged by the state to see themselves as part of the nation, while the monocultural values and practices of the dominant majority remain unchanged.

In New Zealand bicultural issues are crucial and have had a profound effect on the way multiculturalism is seen. Gunew and Yeatman (1993:xv) comment about this influence, and points out that often it is seen as “deflecting attention from the fight for Maori rights”. My views on biculturalism reflect those articulated by Wendt (1989:78):

Even though I am a new migrant in New Zealand and my ancestors were not responsible for the injustices committed against the Tangata Whenua, I am a beneficiary like everyone else from the fruits of those injustices and a system which has institutionalised racism against the Maori. So I must work to correct those injustices.

My interest lies, not in competition, but in cooperation; in forging alliances while acknowledging our differences. I would suggest that there are commonalities between the marginal position of many immigrant women and the position of Maori women in the land of their birth. There are also similarities in the need to integrate our past history and ethnic roots with our present contexts, in order to move forward into the future. For immigrant women, as for Maori women, the past is of fundamental importance in terms of identity, self-worth and well-being, yet the dominant culture tends to strangle our values and ethnic identity. The importance of resisting this tendency is illustrated by Trinh (1992:158):

Identity for those of us whose ethnicity and gender were historically debased, becomes a necessary political and personal strategy of survival and resistance.

Irwin's (1992:2) suggestion, referring to Maori women, is also relevant to this study: “We need to celebrate our vision and share our perspective, for these are precious taonga we possess”. In the context of this study, we need to recognise our bonds as Latin American women, celebrate our unique perspective, and support one another in our strategies of resistance and survival.

SUMMARY

This chapter has described the theories, concepts and themes on which this study is based. The points highlighted in the literature review have provided the lenses through which I have looked at my own experiences of migration and those of the participants. My approach acknowledges the complexities of this area of research and recognises that both differences and similarities are part of the picture for women. Feminist studies of migrant women have contributed to the debate about diversity within the category 'woman', by recognising that women have multiple identities. These relate not only to gender but to other factors such as class, culture, race and ethnicity. Moreover, these identities are not static but interactive, constructed and negotiated in a particular socio-economic context. Women emerge from this literature as active participants in this process.

The constraints imposed by the new environment are a major factor influencing the adaptation of immigrant women. These constraints may be related to limited access to language learning, child care facilities, and paid work. The research literature available indicates that new economic and social opportunities for immigrant women in the host country may result in more egalitarian gender roles in the domestic arena. Yet in some situations the roles, power and status of women in the family have been undermined.

This chapter also located the experiences of immigrant women within the framework of the migration process in general. Migration is understood as involving significant social changes and challenges, both for immigrants and the host society. Migrants are seen not as victims or outsiders but as catalysts for change. The literature shows that migrants do not conform passively to the ways of the new country but aim to construct a meaningful identity for themselves. Both cultural continuity and change are part of the experience of new settlers as they attempt to affirm their ethnic roots.

There are common pressure points to immigrant families from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. These include: the disruption of patterns of social contact and support; financial stress resulting from maintaining connections and commitments with extended family overseas; and the dilemmas involved in rearing children in a society with norms and values different to their own. There are also common issues regarding the

maintenance and transmission of language and culture. Women are faced with the contradiction of having the main responsibility in this area while trying to adjust to new roles and challenges in the new environment.

In order to contextualise the experiences of the participants, it is important to recognise issues relating to immigration, and notions of multiculturalism and biculturalism. These have implications for ethnic relations in New Zealand and impinge on the experiences of immigrants. My own approach to ethnic relations is based on feminist ideals, which aim to build alliances based on commonalities, while acknowledging differences.

CHAPTER 2

THE RESEARCH PROCESS

This chapter discusses the research process in three sections: the first focuses on the methodology; the second explains the research design; and the third addresses a number of ethical issues associated with the study.

METHODOLOGY

In this section I identify and discuss the methods used to gather the data. In line with my feminist perspective (Chapter 1), I conducted semi-structured interviews with each of the participants. Reinharz (1992:281) clarifies the meaning of this approach:

Semi-structured refers to a research approach whereby the researcher plans to ask questions about a given topic but allows the data-gathering conversation itself to determine how the information is obtained.

This method is also described as an in-depth, open-ended, intensive and qualitative data gathering technique. Graham (1984) notes that the use of semi-structured interviews is the most important means by which feminist researchers have sought to actively involve their respondents in the construction of data about their lives. This method allowed me to listen to what the women had to say in their own terms. It was consistent with my interest in avoiding control over the participants, and in developing a sense of community with other Latin American women. My aim was to create an atmosphere in which the women would feel confident and comfortable enough to tell their stories in their own way. Reinharz (1992:44) claims that feminist researchers who have used the semi-structure interview method in their studies have “modified social science concepts and created important new ways of seeing the world”.

The presence of feminist ideology implies that the relationship between the researcher and the participant(s) is of crucial importance throughout the research process. According to Smith and Noble-Spruell (1986:139) feminist research emphasises “non-exploitative relationships between the researcher and the researched, which are based on collaboration, cooperation and mutual respect.”

In feminist research the process is as important as the content, with the researcher reflecting on her part throughout the process (Smith and Noble-Spruell,1986). Stanley and Wise (1990) argue in favour of the presence of feminism within the research process, in terms of the relationship between the researcher and the researched, for the inclusion of the researcher's personal experience, and with regard to the ownership of the results. I would agree with this view and have attempted to incorporate a feminist perspective throughout the study.

The semi-structured interviews provided an opportunity for dialogue with other immigrant women. As Lather (1986) points out, ‘reciprocity’ is central to this process which means a ‘give and take’ and a mutual negotiation of meaning. One of my aims was to create an opportunity for heightening the awareness of structural factors which have had an effect on both the individual woman and myself. This approach was based on the feminist principles of combining the personal and the political, and linking everyday struggles with social structures.

It has not been my intention to separate this study from my personal experiences as a Latin American woman living in New Zealand. There is widespread acceptance of the personal experience of the researcher being a starting point for feminist research. Reinharz (1992:260) argues that those who adopt this view draw on an “epistemology of insiderness”. In the context of this study, this means that as a Latin American immigrant woman (an insider), I would understand other Latin American immigrant women in a way that an outsider is not able to. I believe that the rapport that existed between myself and the participants enhanced the quality of the interviews.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The Selection of Participants

For this study the participants were selected on the basis of the following criteria: first, that they were Latin American women who have lived in New Zealand for at least five years; secondly, that they had come with a partner/ husband; and third, that they had children, who were born either in New Zealand or in their countries of origin. For practical reasons I only contacted eligible women who had settled in the lower part of the North Island.

The participants were accessed through my personal contacts and relationships. Initially I had some concerns in this regard, in terms of the women not being a randomly selected, 'representative' group. As I thought about it, however, I realised that this did not matter for the purposes of the study. My intention was not to make generalisations about overall patterns, but to gain insights into the personal resettlement experiences and strategies of immigrant Latinas.

An Overview of the Participants

In the process of presenting the findings of this study I have been faced with the dilemma of maintaining confidentiality while allowing the 'human touch' of the participants' experiences to come forth. The following brief description of each of the participants captures their key personal characteristics without compromising confidentiality. Their identity has been protected by giving them a fictional name and by changing the names of family members and other distinguishing characteristics. Respecting the wishes of the participants, the names of their countries of origin have remained unchanged.

Alma

Alma came to New Zealand in the early 1990s from Perú with her partner and their eight year old daughter Juanita. She was a trained nurse and worked at a hospital in

Perú while her mother looked after her daughter. Her partner, who was also Latin American, came to New Zealand for professional reasons. A few months after their arrival he became unemployed for reasons beyond his control. They had another daughter, Elena, in New Zealand. Two years ago, Alma separated from her husband. At the time of the interview Juanita was 13 and Elena five years old. Alma's main source of income was the Domestic Purposes Benefit. She also worked part-time as an assistant at a nursing home.

Beatriz

Beatriz is from Argentina. She came to New Zealand in the early 1980s with her New Zealand husband and their one year old baby. In her home-country she had been trained in the area of social services. Before the birth of her child she worked with adolescents and was in charge of a home for orphaned children. In New Zealand, Beatriz and her husband had two more children. At the time of the interview her children Rosario, Manuel and Jorge, were 14, 10 and eight, years old, respectively. She had recently separated from her husband. Financially, she lived on the Domestic Purposes Benefit and worked part-time in domestic cleaning.

Celia

Celia is from Guatemala. She came to New Zealand in the mid 1970s with her husband Andrew, a New Zealander. They had no children at the time of arrival. Celia was a school teacher in Guatemala. She was also a writer, and some of her work had been published in her country. At the time of the interview she had three grown up children, Teresa aged 22, Sara aged 20 and Emilio aged 18. Her marriage had broken up five years ago. Financially, she lived for a while on the Domestic Purposes Benefit but had retrained as a teacher and had recently obtained full-time employment.

Violeta

Violeta is from Chile and has been in New Zealand since the mid 1970s. She came as a 'dependent' of a refugee, sponsored through the official refugee programme. Like

many other Chileans, Violeta, her husband and their children left their country as a result of the advent of the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. At the time of their arrival in New Zealand, Violeta and her husband had two children, Alejandro aged 1 and Anita aged 5. In Chile, as her husband's employment was seasonal, Violeta's work as a secretary provided the family with a steady income. In New Zealand, when her children were small, she worked at home as a Spanish tutor and typist. At the time of the interview she lived alone. She and her husband had been divorced for 10 years, and their children had grown-up and left home. Violeta had retrained as a secretary and was in full-time employment .

The Interviews

The topics for the interviews were developed in accordance with the objectives of the study, which aimed to:

- (i) Examine the influence of immigration and resettlement on gender relations and family relationships.
- (ii) Examine the interaction of paid employment and domestic arrangements.
- (iii) Examine the relationship between ethnic identity and the process of integration into New Zealand society.
- (iv) Explore the experiences of the participants in maintaining their ethnic identity and cultural heritage.

With these objectives/themes in mind I developed a series of questions to guide me during the interviews (see Appendix 4). For each of the themes, consideration was given to the participants' experience before migration, and to changes in attitudes, values or behaviour which might have taken place since migrating to New Zealand. In order to understand the women's experiences in New Zealand it was important also to explore their background in their home countries and the reasons for migrating. The main topics included in the interviews, therefore, were:

- (i) Reason(s) for coming to New Zealand

- (ii) Experiences in New Zealand during the first few months after arrival
- (iii) Employment and study
- (iv) Domestic arrangements
- (v) Family relationships
- (vi) Culture and language maintenance
- (vii) Identity and cultural change

The interviews took place during May 1996. Each participant was involved in one or two in-depth interviews in Spanish, for approximately three hours in all. The interview times were arranged according to the availability and convenience of the participant. Three of the interviews were held in the homes of the participants, in accordance with their wishes. Each interview was tape-recorded as agreed in the consent form. I found tape recording to be an effective tool. It enabled me to keep the interviews as close as possible to ordinary conversations, without note-taking.

Most of the time the interviews proceeded in a relaxed conversational style, though there were occasions when my sense of responsibility for the direction and content of the interviews got in the way of fully and consistently achieving this. However, I noticed a considerable change as the interviews proceeded. During the first interview, I adhered closely to the sequences of topics and questions included in the interview guidelines. This limited to some extent the spontaneity of the interview and the information obtained. In contrast, during the last interview I felt more relaxed and at ease with the role of researcher, and as a result the process had a more reciprocal and empowering quality.

A degree of reflexivity was present in all the interviews. The women would often comment on my situation, pointing out differences or similarities with their own. It was clear to them that my experiences were also part of the research and they would sometimes ask me questions about my experiences. This reflected an egalitarian, non-hierarchical interaction that is a feature of the feminist approach, and one that contributed to reducing the power imbalances inherent in the research process. My concern with this aspect spurred my decision to be interviewed by one of the participants. This interview not only helped me to understand my own immigration

and resettlement experiences but also gave me insight into what it was like to be interviewed. It highlighted the relationship between the data collection context and the outcome. As Linde (1993:51) points out, stories are told differently on different occasions. The story which I shared during my interview reflected my relationship with the interviewer and the context of the interview.

Data Processing and Analysis

The transcription of each tape recorded interview was carried out by myself. This proved to be a time consuming but worthwhile process. It confirmed for me Sanjek's (1990:159) comments about the advantages of transcribing material outweighing the disadvantages. During the transcription process I had the opportunity to familiarise myself with the data, to listen carefully to what the women were saying, to 'pick up' aspects that I have previously missed and thereby to enhance my understanding of the participants' experiences. The transcriptions became a data base for analysis and interpretation, and provided the rich engaging quotations which give voice to the women in the presentation of the findings.

A copy of the interview transcription was given to each participant so that she could amend it or add any comments if appropriate. I contacted the participants after a few days to ask for feedback and their reactions to reading the transcripts. Only one of the participants suggested minor changes and clarified the meaning of some of her statements.

Miles (1983) points out that the methods of analysis of qualitative data are not clearly formulated. For quantitative data there are clear conventions which the researcher can use, but for dealing with qualitative data there are very few guidelines. However, it is necessary to organise the data collected in a meaningful and systematic way. The method which I adopted was first to examine the data, identifying the main themes covered in the interviews. I then catalogued these themes into separate packages. In practice I did this by cutting out and grouping the sections in each transcript which were relevant to a particular theme. Initially this task proved to be difficult because of the interconnection of the themes and the conversational style of the interviews. As I

persevered with the process, however, it became easier. I found this method useful to organise my ideas around the key themes.

Schatzman and Strauss (1973) suggest that field researchers cannot pre-design their analytic operations with exactness. They view analysis as involving thought processes which are not so different from ordinary thinking. However, it involves thinking which is “self-conscious, systematic, organised and instrumental”, and it is above all an interactive process between the researcher and the data (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973:186).

My main concern throughout the research has been to present the voices of the participants and the meaning they give to their experiences as accurately as possible. I have been aware of the danger of not distinguishing my own interpretation from their understandings. This has been minimised by using the participants’ own words throughout the text, and by giving them an opportunity to comment on the report of the findings. The participants have each received a draft of the final report of the study to approve the relevant sections and to suggest amendments that could then be considered and negotiated by the researcher.

Writing

In reporting the findings of this investigation I have been concerned with presenting the data in a way that is meaningful to the participants while fulfilling normal academic requirements. This concern prompted me to focus on the actual experiences of the participants rather than on theoretical concepts. Needless to say, I found it challenging having to make judgements about what to cut and what to leave in successive drafts of each chapter.

I have presented the quotations in both the participants’ own language and English for two main reasons. First, the participants and other Spanish speaking immigrants would be able to relate to the findings of the study in a more meaningful way. Second, it validates the participants’ expression of their own language. In practice I have used

italics in the text to present the original version in Spanish and standard print to present the English translation.

Translating the quotations into English was not a straight-forward operation. It required choosing equivalent expressions which would convey the meaning, depth and feeling of the original version. My translations as a second language English speaker tended to be too literal in places. Once I had selected the quotations to be included in the thesis, therefore, a first language English speaker assisted me to ensure that the original feeling was not lost in the translation.

Another issue to be resolved was how to incorporate my own experience in the text. As a Latin American migrant myself, the participants' stories inevitably triggered my own memories and feelings. This has been an invaluable aspect of the research process, through which I have gained insight into my own position as a migrant. However, in the text I wanted to differentiate my personal experience from that of the participants and from my voice as a researcher. I have resolved this dilemma by presenting my personal experiences and reflections in separate paragraphs distinguished (and therefore readily identified) by the use of a smaller, standard typeface.

ETHICAL ISSUES

Before embarking on this project I gave careful consideration to the implications for those taking part. Having formulated a detailed research proposal, I submitted an application for approval to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (see Appendix 1). In order to ensure the safety of the women taking part, I needed to address issues relating to: access to participants; confidentiality; informed consent; potential harm to participants; participants' rights; ownership of the research and conflicts of interest.

In this section I will cover the main areas of concern.

Informed Consent/ Voluntary Participation

I contacted each of the participants personally to tell them about the project. From the beginning it was natural for us to communicate in Spanish, our first language. They all expressed initial interest, so I decided to give them copies of the Information Sheet and Consent Form in Spanish (see Appendices 2 and 3). In accordance with the principle of informed consent, I made sure that the potential participants understood the aims of the project and how it would be carried out, and answered any questions they had. I stressed their right to withdraw from the project at any stage, and that confidentiality would be protected. As I made it clear that my own experiences would also be included in the project, they felt confident that I would have their interests at heart. They were keen to commit themselves as participants straight away but I asked them to take a week to think about it carefully, in line with the request of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. The participants found this formality unnecessary but accepted it as part of the process. After at least a week, I asked each of them to make a formal decision on whether or not they would participate in the study.

Confidentiality

As mentioned previously, the identity of the participants and their families has been protected by changing their names and some of their distinguishing characteristics.

In the application to the Human Ethics Committee I specified the procedures for handling the information and materials produced. The audio-tapes were transcribed by myself, so only the participant and myself had access to the audio-tapes and the transcriptions. All material is being kept secure until the investigation and the final report are completed. The material will then be disposed of according to the wishes of the participants.

Potential Harm to Participants

In spite of the advantages of using semi-structured, in-depth interviews, I recognise that there are some concerns which need to be addressed. Graham (1984) emphasises the need to be aware of the position of powerlessness of the participants in research. In order to minimise this imbalance in power relations, it was important for me to actively involve the participants throughout the research process, and not to have hidden agendas. I have also taken special care to adhere to feminist principles with the aim of enabling the participants to have a sense of achievement and empowerment throughout all the stages of the study.

Before embarking on this study I recognised that discussion of some of the topics/questions included in the in-depth interviews was going to be painful for some women. Being aware of this possibility, I took it into consideration in determining the way that I introduced topics/questions and solicited information. I also took special care to ensure the participants could exercise their right to decline to answer any question and to withdraw from the study at any time. I was confident they would let me know if there was any aspect they felt uncomfortable discussing in the interview.

Two of the participants later told me they each found it emotionally very difficult to read the transcript of their interview. They found that telling their story during the interview had been a positive experience, but reading it brought back negative feelings which they found difficult to deal with. They did not suggest any changes nor did they want to make further comments. I discussed with these two women the option of going to counselling but they felt that as they could talk with me and other friends about their feelings, counselling was not required.

Another potential danger of this methodology is that it can produce private information which could be used against the best interests of the women "who gave it so freely to another woman with whom they found it easy to talk" (Finch, 1986:81). Finch points out that the collective interests of women are at stake, not only the interest of an individual woman. The individual's interest can be protected with a guarantee of confidentiality or anonymity, but it is more difficult to safeguard collective interests.

This highlights the political nature of research and the importance of locating it within the structural systems where the women's experiences are embedded. A copy of the final report will be made available to the participants once the thesis has been examined and passed.

Conflicts of Interest

The fact that the researcher is part of the small Latin American community in New Zealand is recognised as being a potential source of conflict. However, the combination of the role of researcher and the role of friend has been of positive value to the study (in terms of the rapport between myself and the participants). As noted above, special care was taken to ensure confidentiality and to adhere strictly to the procedure for obtaining informed consent.

It is clear to me that 'value-free' social research does not exist. I am conscious of my own partiality which favours the particular interests of immigrant women. Taking the side of the people I was researching meant "an emotional as well as an intellectual commitment to promoting their interests" (Finch, 1986:86). I believe this stance is not incompatible with 'good academic work' which is open to evaluation by others.

Translations

My commitment to giving information to the women in **their own** language also posed an ethical issue concerning the translation of the Information Sheet and Consent Form. This particular issue was addressed by having my translation verified by an independent Spanish-speaking interpreter. The translation of the quotations presented in this thesis from Spanish to English was verified by the participants themselves.

CHAPTER 3

COMING TO NEW ZEALAND

The previous chapters presented the framework for this study, focusing on theoretical and methodological aspects. Now it is time to bring the participants' experiences and views to the fore, to join them as they talk about the beginning of their journey to a new country.

It has been noted that the role of women in the decision to migrate, and their experiences as immigrants, have not been given much attention in the literature. The implication seems to be that women passively accept the decision taken by male family members. In talking with the participants, therefore, I was interested in their role, their reasons and expectations. Why did they come to New Zealand? What role did they play in making this decision? What were their expectations and feelings about coming? What follows is a summary of each of their accounts that sets the scene for the following chapters.

ALMA

In Perú, Alma lived at her parent's home with Juanita, her 8 year old daughter, from her first marriage. She came to New Zealand with Juanita to join her new partner, Roberto, who had come here for professional reasons. Her intention was to start a new life.

In Latin American countries there are strict social norms which govern and constrain the lives of women and society places emphasis on respect and obedience of parents. It is not unusual for adult women, and indeed men, to live at home with their parents. In Chapter 1 the restrictions imposed on women have been linked to their motivation to migrate (Lim, 1994). This appears to have been a significant factor for Alma:

Yo vine a Nueva Zelandia porque yo quería probar algo, porque quería probar quizás que yo podía valerme sola. Yo tenía 28 años y nunca había salido de mi casa. Entonces siempre era la hija de mi mamá y de mi papá, bajo sus leyes y normas. Yo quería tener mi casa, adornarla, ponerle, quitarle.

..[En mi país] vivía simplemente una vida de niña, no de mujer...y eso me tenía cansada. Yo pienso que si yo hubiera tenido otro tipo de libertad, de poder hacer mi vida sin tener que dar tanta explicación [de lo hacía], quizás no hubiera querido hacer una vida tan lejos.... Quizás ellos no pedían la explicación, pero había que darla por el tipo de sociedad y los lazos familiares.

I came to New Zealand because I wanted to prove something, because perhaps I wanted to prove that I could manage by myself. I was 28 years old and I had never left home. I was always my parents' daughter, under their rules and norms. I wanted to have my house and to arrange it in my own way.

[In my country] I was living as a child not as a woman...and I was tired of that. I think if I'd had freedom to live my life without giving so many explanations [of what I did] perhaps I wouldn't have wanted to live so far away. Perhaps they [my parents] didn't ask for them, but explanations were expected of me, because of the norms of the society we lived in, and because of the family bonds between us.

Alma's reflection on the difficulties she experienced living with her parents reminded me of my first experience of migration to the United States. At that stage I had just finished university, and like all other unmarried young women I had always lived at home with my parents. Tension was sometimes created by the norms and expectations that I was expected to adhere to as a Puerto Rican woman. For example, having strict time limits and taking a chaperone when going out socially. For me migration provided an opportunity to ask basic questions. For instance, what sort of life do I want? What sort of person do I want to be?

There can be a sense of excitement in stepping out of the "framework of one's customary existence" into a different reality (Afkahami, 1994:6). A similar sentiment was conveyed by Alma:

Bueno, venir acá era lejos, era cegera, era una aventura, en realidad era...simplemente ilusión, de venir y empezar una nueva vida.

Well, coming here, far away, was blindness, an adventure, in fact it was....simply a dream, to come and start a new life.

These words triggered a recollection of my own desire for adventure and the feeling that somehow by coming to live in another country I could start afresh, leaving behind whatever

difficulties I was experiencing. These expectations were, of course, to a large extent unrealistic.

Alma came with the intention of starting a new life. She felt enthusiastic and optimistic about her future in New Zealand:

Yo viajé con toda la energía y el deseo de triunfar. Yo vine bien preparada para triunfar y para vencer todo lo que se me presentara.

I came with lots of energy and optimism to succeed. I came expecting to succeed and to overcome anything that came my way.

She prepared herself before coming, reading about New Zealand and trying to remember the small amount of English she had learned at school.

Me preparé por un año. Cuando tenía 17 años aprendí inglés, entonces tenía que recordar. Iba caminando a mi trabajo pensando en inglés. Me preparé a la medida que me fui despidiendo de las calles, de las casas, de las plantas, de la gente, de los perros. Me fui despidiendo de mis padres...lloraba por las noches. Me fui despidiendo de mis sobrinos...de todo me iba despidiendo, preparando mi espíritu para venir. No fue una cosa que decidí en un mes, fue un año. Estaba bien segura de lo que quería y lo que quería era venir.

I prepared myself for a year. I had to remember the English I learned when I was 17 years old. I used to think in English on my way to work. I prepared myself for coming by saying good-bye to the streets, to the houses, to the plants, to the people, to the dogs. I said good-bye to my parents...I used to cry at night...I said good-bye to my nieces and nephews. I said good-bye to everything, to prepare my spirit to leave. It was not something that took a month, it took a year. I was sure of what I wanted; what I wanted was to come.

VIOLETA

Like many Chilean refugees, Violeta's husband, Arturo, went to Argentina escaping from the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. She stayed in Chile with their 3 year old son and continued working as a secretary. The relationship between her and Arturo had not been good for quite some time. She did not want to leave Chile, but was unable to support herself and her son and was expecting a new baby. The constraints she experienced in her position as a woman intertwined with economic factors:

Antes de llegar a Nueva Zelandia tuve que ir de Chile a Argentina, porque me encontré embarazada y no pude seguir trabajando, porque estaba muy enferma. Así es que tuve que irme a Argentina donde estaba Arturo. El estaba refugiado allá. Tuve que ir cuando tenía más o menos seis meses de embarazo.

Before coming to New Zealand I had to go from Chile to Argentina. I was very ill with the pregnancy and was unable to continue working. So I had to go to Argentina, where Arturo was. I went there when I was about six months pregnant.

After the baby was born in Argentina, Violeta started looking at alternatives for her and her children. The economic and political situation for refugees in Argentina got worse after she arrived:

La cosa es que después que llegamos a Argentina hubo un 'coup', entonces la policía se puso pesada con los refugiados. Era muy difícil andar por las calles. Los paraban, le pedían documentos, los tomaban presos a veces... Yo no tuve esa mala suerte, pero así pasaba... Y otra cosa es que nos cortaron la mantención.

After we arrived in Argentina there was a 'coup d'état'. The police became heavy handed with the refugees. It was difficult for them to walk around the streets. The police would stop them and asked for their papers and sometimes would put them in jail. I didn't have such bad luck, but it happened to people... The other thing is that they stopped the financial assistance.

In the face of the many pressures they were experiencing in Argentina, Violeta and her husband applied to other countries for refugee status:

En Argentina estuvimos como 9 meses. Allí nació Anita. Nos postulamos para Canadá, Australia y otros países pero ninguno nos aceptó. Entonces, cuando la niña tenía como tres meses yo escuché que el consul de Nueva Zelandia estaba de visita en Argentina y fui al comité de refugiados a pedir una hora para hablar con él. [...] Les conté a otras familias y ellos fueron al otro día conmigo. Todos fuimos entrevistados y aceptados.

We were in Argentina about nine months. Anita was born there. We applied for Canada, Australia and other countries but none of them accepted us. Then when the baby was about three months I heard that the New Zealand ambassador was in Argentina. So I went to the Refugee Committee to ask for an appointment to talk with him. [...] I told other families and they went with me the next day. We were all interviewed and accepted.

As noted earlier, the suggestion has been made (Tremewan, 1994) that the experiences of refugee women would be very different to those of immigrant women. For Violeta, the difficult economic situation of the family was the most important driving force.

Perdimos la casa, perdimos los ahorros que había ahorrado por años... todo se pierde... los amigos, todo.

We lost the house, we lost the money we had saved for years... everything was lost... friends, everything.

Furthermore, her economic concerns were inseparable from her perception of the mothering role.

Se puede decir que yo fui una refugiada económica sin quererlo... Lo que había que hacer era por una necesidad económica. La decisión fue por los niños, así es que uno, que es madre, se decide a lo que sea.

You can say that I was an economic refugee without wanting to be. I had to do it because of economic necessity. The decision was for the sake of the children, as a mother one decides whatever is needed.

It is important to acknowledge that Violeta's circumstances of migration as a refugee contrasted with the experience of the other three women, and indeed with my own experience. Economic necessity was not for us such an urgent factor. Nevertheless, in my conversation with Violeta I was aware that while my reasons for being in New Zealand were initially very different to hers, there were many common threads linking our experiences.

Violeta played the main role in the decision to come to New Zealand and in making the arrangements to come. Her spouse followed her initiative.

Yo fui la que decidí porque me di cuenta que la cosa se estaba poniendo mala y tenía que pensar en los niños y tenía que pensar en salir. . Salió esta oportunidad y la tomé.

I was the one that decided because I realised that the situation was getting worse and I had to think of the children and I had to think about leaving.... This opportunity came up and I took it.

In the face of economic necessity, when the well-being of her children was at stake, Violeta showed a great deal of strength and courage. Her actions disprove assumptions about the traditional male and female roles in Latin American society. This seems to give weight to the view expressed by Lim (1994), that in situations of economic need, the usual constraints imposed by society on females often do not apply.

Violeta did not have any knowledge of English and knew very little about New Zealand before coming.

...no sabia ni donde estaba Nueva Zelandia. No tenia idea de nada. Era la oportunidad de salir de Argentina.

...I did not even know where New Zealand was. I had no idea what to expect. [For us] it was the chance to leave Argentina.

She vividly recalled the apprehension and feelings of loss she experienced before departing:

Uno siente miedo porque va a lo desconocido, porque va a otro país. Siente pena porque se aleja de la familia, de los amigos. Sabe que llega a un país extraño y no sabe como lo van a recibir. No sabe si uno va poder afrontar todo lo que venga.

One feels scared of going to the unknown, because of going to another country. One feels sad of leaving family and friends. You are going to a foreign country and you don't know how you are going to be accepted. You don't know if you are going to be able to handle what is coming to you.

BEATRIZ

Beatriz married Peter, a New Zealander, in Argentina. A year later, after the birth of her daughter Rosario, his parents sent them tickets to come to New Zealand to visit. This was at the time of the conflict between Argentina and England about the Islas Malvinas (Falkland Islands).

Nosotros no teníamos nada de dinero. Habíamos comprado la casa y Peter estaba trabajando haciendo cositas por ahí... porque no podía trabajar en Argentina; porque estábamos con el problema de las Malvinas y supuestamente él era ciudadano bajo la corona inglesa y no podía trabajar. Así es que nos vinimos. Era un tiempo muy difícil para Peter en Argentina, porque tenía que trabajar dos o tres trabajos... Se levantaba en la madrugada... Bien difícil la vida para para él. El dijo: "Nos vamos unos meses allá, para que conozcas la familia y vemos que es lo que vamos a hacer."

We didn't have much money. We have bought the house and Peter was only able to work on a few things here and there. Because of the problem with the Falkland Islands, Peter, supposedly a British subject, could not work there. So we came here. It was difficult for Peter in Argentina, because he had to work in two or three jobs. He used to get up very early...very difficult for him. He said, "We go there for a few months, meet the family and then we decide what we will do."

She came with the expectation that they would be returning to Argentina after a short period of time. Her feelings about leaving Argentina, were coloured by this prospect:

Siempre fui media aventurera y no le tenía miedo a nada. Tú piensas que lo puedes todo, que vas a superarlo y que vas a hacerlo. Yo pensaba que venía a unas vacaciones, entonces que más me daba. Me sentía feliz. Ni siquiera me acuerdo haber llorado mucho, porque yo pensaba que volvía en tres meses."

I was always a bit of an adventurer and wasn't scared of anything. I thought I could do anything and that I could cope with everything. I thought I was only coming on a holiday, so it didn't matter. I felt happy. I didn't even cry much, because I thought I was going back in three months.

Beatriz always spoke Spanish with Peter, who was a fluent Spanish-speaker. She had no knowledge of English before coming to New Zealand. However, she recalled enjoying her the three months as a visitor to New Zealand. The situation changed when her husband got a job here:

Peter encontró trabajo. No me consultó...porque ese fue siempre nuestro problema, falta de comunicación. Entonces yo pensaba en mi corazón que para él había sido muy duro en Argentina. El era el que proveía para nosotros. Así es que pensé: "Okay, quizás es bueno que él trabaje aquí unos meses o unos años y ahorremos un poco de dinero y volvamos a nuestro país a ponernos un negocio o a hacer algo." "Porque en estos momentos", dije yo, "para él es muy difícil la vida en Argentina," y por ende era dura para mi ...porque se iba a las seis de la mañana y volvía a las ocho de la noche.

Peter found a job here. He didn't consult with me about it...that was always our problem, lack of communication. But I thought that it was hard for him in Argentina... He was the family provider... So I thought: "Okay, perhaps it is a good idea for him to work here for a few months or a few years, so that we can save and go back to our country to start a business or something. Because at the moment life would be too hard for him in Argentina and consequently hard for me too." Because [in Argentina] he used to leave the house at six in the morning and come back at eight at night.

Beatriz clearly linked her traditional ideas about gender roles with her staying in New Zealand longer than she had expected to:

Yo decía, que era bueno para él estar acá. El tenía la oportunidad, él era el que proveía, yo tenía que estar al lado de él. En ese momento estaban mis ideas que me habían inculcado por años: "La mujer tiene que seguir al hombre, la mujer tiene que estar sujeta, la mujer tiene que ser el apoyo, la mujer tiene que entender, la mujer tiene que callar"... Todo esto que por años me fue inculcado a través de mi familia, a través de mi religión, a través de la tradición de la gente de mi país.

I used to say that it was good for him [my husband] to be here. He had the opportunity, he was the provider, I had to be by his side. At that stage I had all the ideas that I had learned over many years: "Women have to follow men, women are subjected to men, women have to be the supporters, women have to understand, women have to remain silent"...All these ideas [were those] that I learned through my family, my religion and through the traditions of the people of my country.

The relationship between the ideology of gender roles and the migration decision has been noted in the literature. In the context of the patriarchal nature of Latin American society, the ideology of gender roles makes it legitimate and 'proper' for women to migrate with their spouses. This was well illustrated by Beatriz:

Mi mamá siempre me había dicho: "Usted mijita sabe que se casa con una persona de otro país y que en algún momento él querra volver a su país. Usted tiene que estar segura si esta dispuesta a seguirlo a donde él vaya."

My mother always told me: "You know you are marrying someone from another country, and sometime he will want to return to his country. You have to be sure that you'll be ready to follow him wherever he goes."

The ideology of gender roles which Beatriz expressed was very familiar to me. It formed part of my socialisation as a woman in a Latin American country. Like her, I accepted the notion that a woman should follow her husband. However, when marrying a person from another part

of the world, I did not see myself as a passive follower. I had my own dreams. These included wanting to experience a different reality. It was my decision.

CELIA

Celia and her New Zealand husband, Andrew, had lived for a year in Canada and travelled around South America together before coming to New Zealand. She spoke English with her husband and had a relatively good knowledge of the language. Like Beatriz, Celia she did not expect to stay in New Zealand:

Veniamos a la boda del hermano de mi marido. Después de la boda jamás hablamos de que nos íbamos a quedar a vivir acá. Fue gradualmente. Las cosas fueron pasando, no teníamos dinero así es que nos quedamos por un tiempo. Después que nació mi primer hijo le pregunté [a mi marido] si era que nos íbamos a quedar a vivir acá. Él me dijo que él no podía estar en otro lado, que aquí era que íbamos a vivir. Pero yo no le pelié... Era mi marido y donde él estaba, estaba yo.

We came to the wedding of my brother in law. After the wedding we never talked about staying here. It happened gradually. Things started to happen, we didn't have any money so we stayed for a while. After the birth of my first child I asked him [my husband] if we were going to stay here to live. He said that he couldn't live anywhere else, so we were going to live here. But I didn't argue... He was my husband and where my husband was, I was.

For Celia, like Beatriz, both economic factors and the ideology of gender roles were significant. From her perspective, staying in New Zealand was necessary, in order to fulfil the role expected of her as a good mother and wife. However, her resentment at this perceived lack of choice created difficulties in terms of her adaptation to living in New Zealand:

En realidad al final de los finales se me hizo difícil vivir aquí porque me sentía que no tenía la opción de volver. Viendo la realidad, como que estás atrapada. Ese fue mi sentimiento por mucho tiempo. No podía irme porque tenía mi marido y mis chicos.

The truth is that it was hard for me living here, because going back [to my own country] wasn't an option for me. It was like being trapped. That's how I felt for a long time. I couldn't leave because I had my husband and children here.

As I reflect on my own feelings about coming to live in New Zealand, I acknowledge that they were coloured by my previous experiences as a migrant in two other contexts. First, in the United States as a young single woman, and second in Papua New Guinea with a spouse. I had also visited New Zealand on two occasions and had some knowledge of the sort of place I was coming to. In addition, before coming here I had been speaking English on a daily basis for at least six years and felt relatively comfortable communicating in the English language.

In coming to New Zealand I experienced a mixture of feelings. I was both excited and apprehensive about starting in a new place. I was leaving my friends behind and again settling in a place which was far away from Puerto Rico. However, I did not think of myself as a migrant. From my perspective, I just happened to come here to live.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has addressed background questions relating to the participant's migration decision, the role they played in the process, their feelings about coming and their preparation. It is difficult to make generalisations based on the accounts presented. The experiences of each of them was unique in many ways and reflected their individual social and economic positions in their countries of origin.

There were differences among the participants about their expectations. Violeta and Alma came with the intention to stay, if not permanently, at least for a considerable period of time. Beatriz and Celia, on the other hand, expected to return to their countries after a short period of time. In that sense, they did not make a migration decision before leaving their countries. To a large extent they felt powerless in regard to the decision to stay here. Economic circumstances and the ideology of gender roles influenced and constrained their options.

Alma and Violeta were both active agents in the decision to migrate. Violeta's experience in particular challenges assumptions about traditional male and female roles in Latin America. As Smith (1980) points out, the role of women in the decision to migrate is often underestimated.

Violeta's background as a refugee sets her apart from the rest of the participants, in terms of the urgency of her circumstances due to political and economic pressures. Her lack of preparation before coming contrasts with Alma's experience. However, the general assumption that immigrant women arrive in their new countries adequately

prepared was not valid for the all participants in this study. With the exception of Celia, the participants had no knowledge, or very limited knowledge of English before coming. Overall, they were not well equipped to face New Zealand's different culture, language and social systems.

My experiences and those of participants illustrate how gender ideology, political, social and economic pressures interact with individual and family contexts. The weight given to each of these aspects and their significance in the decision to migrate, varies according to the situation of each individual.

CHAPTER 4

LIVING IN NEW ZEALAND: EARLY EXPERIENCES

The last chapter explored the experiences of the participants in terms of the background events and factors which influenced their migration to and resettlement in New Zealand. They started the journey and finally arrived. This chapter covers their first impressions of New Zealand, the difficulties they experienced as new immigrants, and what they perceived as helpful to them during the initial resettlement process. It also includes their retrospective reflections on what would have been of help to them as new settlers.

THE ARRIVAL: FIRST IMPRESSIONS

It is important to mention here that all of the participants came from urban settings. Their first impressions were, of course, a response to the different physical environment. The contrast between the rural and urban environments of New Zealand and their home cities, stood out for them on arrival. Both Alma and Violeta commented on how green everything seemed. Celia experienced a taste of rural life as she and her husband went to live at his parents' farm:

Para mi todo era completamente nuevo, una aventura nueva, pues nunca en la vida había vivido en una finca. Nunca había visto un carnero....

For me everything was new, a new adventure, because I'd never lived on a farm before. I'd never seen sheep....

Beatriz compared New Zealand with the urban environment she was used to in Argentina:

Vengo de un país donde hay cantidades de gente por todos lados, coches que van y vienen.... Lo que más me llamó la atención era que las calles eran muy anchas comparadas con las de mi país. Los ojos se me salían de las órbitas mirando todo eso... las casas tan diferentes, no había edificios. Yo vengo de una ciudad de edificios que no te dejan ver el sol.

I come from a country where there are a lot of people everywhere, there are cars everywhere... What impressed me the most [when I arrived] was that the streets were so wide compared to my country. The houses were very different, there were no tall buildings. I come from a city where the buildings stop you from seeing the sun.

COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE CHANGE

Cultural differences between New Zealand and their countries of origin were evident to the participants from the very beginning. The different way people greeted one another, for example, stood out for Beatriz at the airport:

Creo [la llegada] fue el primer choque cultural. Me extendieron la mano y yo estaba acostumbrada a abrazar y a besar. Completamente diferente a mi país. Yo nunca había salido de mi país. Me encontré de repente en otro mundo

I think [the arrival] was my first culture shock. I was greeted with a hand shake and I was used to kissing and hugging. [It was] completely different to my country. I'd never left my country before. Suddenly I found myself in another world.

For Celia the difference in terms of the demonstration of feelings was an important issue:

El primer cambio que pasó al llegar a Nueva Zealandia, que a mi se me hizo muy difícil, fue aprender a no ser tan emocional, a no demostrar mis sentimientos, a no tocar y abrazar a la gente... Eso es duro porque estás acostumbrada que por cualquier cosita todo son abrazos y besos. Pasado el tiempo ya te vas acostumbrando y es algo que yo he tenido que hacer para poder sobrevivir acá. Me he vuelto más fría, más dura,...tuve que cambiar mi personalidad muchísimo...

The first change that happened when I first arrived in New Zealand, which was so difficult for me, was to learn not to be so emotional, not to show my feelings. That is hard because you are used to kissing and hugging often. After a while you start to get used to it in order to survive here. I have become a colder, harder person...

Alma had a minimal knowledge of English when she arrived, but she did not find communication in English to be a major issue:

Yo fui al colegio [de Juanita] y me expresé bien [en inglés]... En realidad, por eso te digo que mi inglés era suficiente para hacerme entender, no había problema. Traté de ser feliz con la gente 'kiwi'.

I went to the school [Juanita's] and I spoke all right [in English]. That's why I say that my English was sufficient to make myself understood, there was no problem. I tried to be happy with the 'Kiwis'.

It was quite different for Beatriz, however, who knew no English at all:

El idioma era una barrera para expresarme... Escuchar toda esta gente hablar sin poder entender ni una palabra, sintiéndome marginada en cierta manera, aunque no era la intención de ellos marginarme... Estaba como si estuviera en Marte, pues no entendía ni una palabra, parecía marciana.

The language was a barrier for me... I listened to everyone talking without understanding a word, feeling left out, even though it wasn't their intention. It was like being on Mars, because I didn't understand a word. It was like being a Martian.

Celia had lived previously in an English-speaking country, and had a reasonable grasp of the language. However, she also experienced language difficulties because the accent and expressions were different to what she was accustomed to. In retrospect, she felt this increased her dependency on her husband, who had better knowledge of the English language than her:

No entendía, el inglés era diferente. Las preguntas más simples no las entendía. En parte, porque me sentía tan inadecuada, me hice dependiente de mi marido. Me daba pavor estar sola, me entraban unos nervios... ¿Cómo me voy a comunicar con está gente?

I didn't understand [what people said]. Their English was different. I didn't even understand the simplest questions. Partly because I was feeling so inadequate I became dependent on my husband. I was terrified of being alone, I felt very nervous. How was I going to communicate with these people?

For Celia the loss of freedom, and the dependence on her husband for interpreting and negotiating with 'the outside world', reinforced stereotypical ideas of gender roles. Her experience illustrates Buijs' (1993) point, that not knowing the language of the host country, may adversely affect the position of immigrant women within the family.

Violeta and her family, in accordance with New Zealand's refugee policy, had 'sponsors' assigned to assist with the resettlement process. The effectiveness of this service was dampened by the communication barrier which existed between them. The stress resulting from "the sting of change" (Gabaccia, 1994:121), affected her health:

Me llené de alergia porque no podía hablar como yo quería, me comunicaba muy poco. Eso era terrible. Yo me sentía muy sola... No nos podíamos comunicar mucho con los "sponsors. No tenían idea de nuestras necesidades... Tuvimos experiencias que fueron muy malas. Si hubiésemos tenido el apoyo latinoamericano, hubiésemos estado bien.

I had allergies all over because I couldn't express myself as I wanted. I could speak very little [English]. That was terrible. I felt very much alone... We couldn't communicate much with the 'sponsors'. They were not aware of our needs... We had some really bad experiences. We would have been all right if we had had support from Latin American people.

There were other families from Chile in New Zealand at the time, but they were widely scattered as a result of refugee policy. Hawley (1986:63) argues that the refugee settlement programme upheld "assimilationist" ideals. It aimed to disperse refugees all over New Zealand in order to avoid the formation of ghettos. According to Hawley (1986:63), there was an "unconscious feeling that in this process of sponsored dispersal, refugees would soon 'fit in' and become 'good New Zealanders'." This policy, however, had the result of exacerbating the problems of isolation of refugees, as illustrated by Violeta in this study. She made the point that, at a time when she needed more support, her family was not allowed to live near other families from her own country:

Ellos [New Zealanders] tenían una estrategia para que [las familias] no nos quedáramos juntas. Así es que nos mandaban a distintas partes. Nosotros nos sentimos muy mal porque teníamos que tener el apoyo de la gente de nosotros también. Haber salido de un país y venir a otro extraño, uno necesita la amistad...

They [New Zealanders] had a strategy of not allowing a number of families to be settled together in one location. So each family was sent to a different place. We felt very bad because we needed the support of our own people. In leaving one country and coming to a foreign country, you need friendship...

Inadequate legal information also caused her unnecessary distress. It is a Latin American custom for women to keep their maiden name after marriage. While she felt strongly about this, Violeta changed her name because she understood that in New Zealand she had to have her husband's name. She felt that this situation would not have happened if she had had the support of people who understood her culture:

No nos dijeron que yo podía tener mi apellido. Eso fue terrible para mí porque yo tuve que llevar el apellido de mi marido. Fue una humillación tan grande... Son cosas que pueden ser pequeñas para otros pero para mí era tan grande... Por eso es bueno que alguien lo oriente a uno. Por eso es bueno estar con familias de su país para que puedan explicarle a uno. Pero no tuvimos esa suerte.

They didn't tell us I could keep my maiden name. It was terrible for me to use my husband's name. It was a huge humiliation for me. It might seem something small for someone else, but for me it was huge. That's why it's good to be with people from your own country who can explain things to you. But we didn't have such luck.

Because there were so few Latin Americans in New Zealand when she arrived, it took Celia a long time to meet anyone who could speak Spanish:

Yo había estado en Nueva Zelanda tres años cuando al fin conocí la primera persona que hablaba Español. Por tres años la única oportunidad de hablar Español era por cinta, no había otra oportunidad... Extrañaba también la comida. En ese tiempo no había nada, no había chile, no había tortillas, ni había nada.

I had been in New Zealand for three years before I finally met someone who could speak Spanish. For three years the only opportunity I had to speak Spanish was on a cassette. There were no other opportunities.... I also missed the food. At that time there was nothing [of my food] around here. There wasn't any chilli, there weren't any tortillas...

Even though language was often a barrier, many New Zealanders helped the participants during the settling in process in many practical ways, such as transport, child care and English tutoring. Their assistance was generally very much appreciated. Sometimes, however, the help offered with good intentions seemed inappropriate to the participants, as Beatriz illustrated:

[Neozelandeses]... Ellos creían que hacían lo mejor. Ellos creían que de esa manera me ayudaban. No me dejaban sola para no extrañar. No me dejaban sola para no pensar. Pero no me dejaban ser yo.

[New Zealanders]... They thought they were doing their best. They thought that they were helping me. They wouldn't leave me by myself so that I wouldn't get homesick. They wouldn't leave me by myself so that I wouldn't think. But they were not allowing me to be myself.

Violeta recalled feeling hurt and insulted by the manner in which financial help was offered by a volunteer from a helping organisation:

Él ayudaba porque pertenecía a una organización, pero no lo sentía. Él no aceptaba la hospitalidad que yo le daba. Yo lo sentía humillante y no recibía el dinero.

He helped because he belonged to an organisation, but wanted to keep at a distance. He didn't accept the hospitality I offered him. I felt humiliated and wouldn't accept the money.

The helper showed little cultural understanding or sensitivity. From Violeta's point of view, the helper's acceptance of the invitation to come into her home would have given her an opportunity to reciprocate. A personal and friendly approach would have evened up to some extent the power imbalance.

LONELINESS AND DEPRESSION

The alienation and isolation experienced by immigrants in the receiving society is a threat to their health and sense of well-being. For immigrant women in particular, this reflects their position within the socio-economic context of society and within the gender structures of family (see Lim, 1995; Buijs, 1993). As noted previously in Chapter 1, isolation from extended family networks, lack of knowledge of the language

of the host country, and lack of employment opportunities and child care, are some of the constraints that immigrant women may experience.

Some of the participants vividly remembered their feelings of loneliness and isolation, especially during the early stages of their resettlement. Violeta talked about how much she missed the familiar patterns of social interaction she had left behind:

Uno echa de menos su país porque es tan diferente... En mi país las familias de los barrios se juntan, los amigos, los vecinos. Los niños juegan juntos en la calle. Aquí llegamos y no había nadie en la calle. Los vecinos no se veían. Era una soledad muy grande. Los amigos estaban todos dispersos. No nos veíamos todo el tiempo, algunas veces los domingos o en ocasiones especiales.

You miss your country because it's so different here. In my country families in the suburbs get together with friends and neighbours. Children play together in the streets. We arrived here and there was no one in the streets. You couldn't see the neighbours. We felt so alone. Our friends were all scattered around. We didn't see each other much, only sometimes on Sundays or on special occasions.

This clearly illustrates the importance many immigrants give to social interaction in the neighbourhood. Violeta's experience was similar to that of immigrants to the United States, as described by Gabaccia (1994). The dominance of Anglo-Saxon culture in both New Zealand and the United States may provide some explanation. Both countries share similar cultural values based on privacy, individuality and voluntarism. Family life tends to be centred mainly around the nuclear family, and there seem to be strict boundaries between each household and the neighbourhood.

Social isolation did not seem to be an issue for Alma. When she came to New Zealand in the early 1990s a small Latin American community was already established and she was able to make contact straight away with other Latin American families. The fact that she knew some English also facilitated her integration. In contrast, Beatriz, who neither spoke nor understood English, had a very different experience:

El mayor impacto para mí fue no poder hablar, no poder expresar mis sentimientos. Yo creo que pasé una depresión profunda. Nadie supo, nadie me entendió, nadie se preocupó. Ahora me doy cuenta que estuve en un estado depresivo al borde del suicidio. Yo creo que pasé año y pico de depresión y nadie para tratarme, nadie con quien hablar....

Empezé a sentirme cada día más sola. Por meses yo iba caminando al parque llorando, porque la soledad era algo increíble. Yo siempre fui una persona comunicativa. Estaba acostumbrada a estar rodeada de gente, mis hermanos, mi papá y mi mamá, todo un bullicio... Te digo que saboreé la soledad en este país. Es inexplicable el sentimiento. Miraba las calles, yo caminaba, caminaba, y no había gente. El espacio era inmenso, grande, pero vacío, vacío..

A veces lloraba por las noches. Lloraba a no dar más... Me fui cerrando.. La falta de hablar, de comunicarme [en inglés] hasta me encerró en mi propia lengua.

The greatest impact for me was not being able to talk, not being able to express my feelings. I think I went through a deep depression. Nobody knew, nobody understood, nobody was concerned. On reflection, I was feeling suicidal. I think I was depressed for a year or so and didn't get any treatment, didn't have anyone to talk to...

I started to feel more and more lonely each day. For months I walked to the park crying, because I felt incredibly lonely. I'd always been a communicative person. I was used to being surrounded [in my country] by people, my brothers and sisters, my parents and a lot of noise... I tell you, I sank into the depths of loneliness in this country. It was an inexplicable feeling. I looked at the streets and walked, and walked, and there was no one. There was only a big, huge, empty space, empty...

Sometimes I cried at night. I cried to exhaustion... I gradually withdrew. I couldn't communicate in English. I couldn't even communicate in Spanish any more...

Listening to the women as they expressed their feelings triggered a recollection of my own early experience as an immigrant to New Zealand. Even though I could speak English relatively well, like them I also felt incredibly lonely and cut off. I missed my family, my friends and the informal lifestyle I was used to both in Puerto Rico and Papua New Guinea. Here I found myself living in a suburban house, with fences everywhere. The fence became a powerful symbol for me. The neighbours appeared not to notice our presence. The streets seemed empty. I remember looking outside and wondering: "Where is everybody? Am I the only person at home with my children?" I remember the resentment I felt having to phone people and formally invite them to come over to my house. I felt that it should just happen, that people should just 'drop in'. I also expected children to play together in the backyard without having to organise a formal 'play group'. I found it difficult to accept the emphasis given in New Zealand to privacy, individuality and the nuclear family. The lifestyle here seemed to be much more structured, compared with my previous experience.

WHAT WAS HELPFUL

The significance of immigrants having the support of people of their own ethnic background has previously been noted. This support has been found to be effective in protecting immigrants from isolation and alienation in the receiving society (see Pozzetta, 1991; McGoldrick, 1982; Escovar, 1990). This was also confirmed by the participants in this study. I invited each of the women to recall what they had found helpful during the early stages of settling in. Like Violeta they each indicated that getting together with other people from Latin America, with whom they had language and culture in common, helped the most:

Después nos empezamos a juntar con gente de Latino América. Nos juntábamos, hacíamos fiestas y veníamos a comer a las casas. Teníamos convivencia y fue muy diferente.

Later on, we started to get together with other people from Latin America. We used to have parties and get together for meals. Sharing with each other made a big difference.

For immigrant women, having the support of female kin and close friends has been identified as decreasing the likelihood of illness and depression (Gabaccia, 1994:121).

Beatriz emphasised the personal importance of her Latina friends:

A mi me ayudó luego encontrar a mis amigas [latinas]. Eso me ayudó a salir adelante. Yo digo que no hubiera podido sobrevivir en este país si no hubiera tenido amigas, que llagaron a ser parte mía, como mis hermanas, como mi familia.

Later on it helped to find [Latin American women] friends. That helped me carry on. I wouldn't have survived in this country without my friends, who became like my sisters, like my family to me.

This was also true for me. My close Latina friends are like my family here. This has been a 'life-line' for me. There were very few people from Latin America living in New Zealand when I came 22 years ago. After a few months here I finally met one woman from Latin America. We became friends straight away. Even though she was from a different Latin American country to me, we had much in common. With her I could speak Spanish and enjoy typical food and Latin American music. We both had small children at the time and were able to support each other.

Transport was an important issue for the participants. In the early stages in New Zealand the participants depended on their spouses or others to take them shopping, to doctors, schools, etc. Celia described the difference it made for her being able to have her own transport:

Tener la licencia de manejar me ayudó mucho. Me ayudó tener un vehículo para salir y para hacer mis compras y no tener que depender de otros.

Having a driver's licence was a great help for me. It helped to have a car to go out and to do my shopping without having to depend on anyone.

All of the participants indicated that in terms of their independence and self-confidence, being able to drive and have a car had been a major breakthrough.

In contrast with the participants, I could drive and had access to a car when I came to New Zealand. I was also familiar to some extent with Australasian English. In terms of what I found helpful, the local community centre was important. I started attending some of the classes and became involved as a volunteer working with a group of elderly people. I also got a part-time job teaching Spanish in a local High School. As I became involved in the community I started to feel more comfortable living here.

WHAT WOULD HAVE HELPED

I looked back with each of the women and reflected on what would have been helpful during the early stages of settling here. They felt that having contact with people who could speak Spanish, from the time of their arrival here, would have helped the most. This view is depicted by Beatriz:

Tener a alguien con quién hablar, conocer a alguien de mi idioma inmediatamente. Yo creo que personas que van a otro país, especialmente si no saben el idioma deben tratar de encontrar personas de su propia lengua.

[It would have helped] to have someone to talk to, to know someone who could speak my language when I first arrived... I think that people who go to another country, especially if they can't speak the language, should try to find people who can speak their language.

A similar sentiment was expressed by Celia:

Hubiera sido lindo haber conocido aunque sea una persona con quien pudiera compartir mi idioma, mi música. Eso lo hubiera hecho más fácil...

It would have been wonderful to meet at least one person with whom I shared my language and music. That would have made it a lot easier for me...

Even though Celia was able to speak English and made some friends, she also missed the support of her extended family, especially the help and practical advice of a maternal figure when her children were little:

... cuando nacieron los chicos, hubiera sido más fácil tener una persona tipo madre que me apoyara...

... when the children were born, it would have been easier if I had someone like a mother to support me..

I also look back to those early days in New Zealand and ask myself what would have helped. Like the participants, having the support of Latin American people from the beginning would have made a very big difference for me. Also, I would have felt more comfortable if my neighbourhood had been more welcoming and friendly.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the participants' reflections on their initial experiences of resettlement. Their experiences reflect their individual and family contexts, the circumstances of migration, their previous knowledge of English, and the opportunities and constraints they found in New Zealand. An example of the latter was provided by Violeta. The refugee resettlement practice of widely scattering refugees had a significant impact on her family. A lack of adequate interpreting and information services added to her distress.

The opportunity to make contact with other Latin American people was crucial for all the participants. Many of the difficulties they encountered would have been cushioned by the provision of adequate information, culturally appropriate assistance and especially by the support (from the beginning) of other people from Latin America.

I have seen myself reflected in many of the stories told by the participants. My own experience has been in many respects similar to theirs, especially in the significance I attached to having contact with other Latin Americans. It has also been different in some ways. Having previous experiences as a migrant to other English-speaking countries, and having visited New Zealand before settling here, lessened the initial 'culture shock'. It also enabled me to become involved in the community relatively soon after arrival.

After talking with each of the participants about their first impressions and coping in a general way in the new environment, our conversation turned to more specific domestic arrangements and the business of earning a living.

CHAPTER 5

DOMESTICITY AND PAID WORK

It is not possible to fully understand the experiences of immigrant women without considering their family context and the domestic arena. It is not uncommon for so-called 'dependent' immigrant women to combine their domestic roles with their roles as paid workers (Larner, 1989; Amrstrong, 1996; Moraes-Gorecki, 1994). The coping strategies adopted by them depend on factors such as the structure of the local economy, the family life cycle, and the position of women within the family unit (Lamphere, 1986). It is therefore important to consider the gender stratification systems which exist within the family.

The complex interaction between gender relations and the participants' productive and reproductive roles is the focus of this chapter, the first section of which focuses on the area of domestic life. It explores the background of the participants and emphasises the challenges they encountered in New Zealand, highlighting changes in the participants' perceptions of gender roles within the domestic arena. The second section considers study and employment. It looks at the significance attached to having paid employment, as well as the difficulties encountered in this area. The interaction between domestic life, employment and study is explored.

DOMESTIC ARRANGEMENTS

The domestic arrangements of the participants before coming to New Zealand reflect the internal economy of their countries of origin, and their position within it. It is common in some Latin American countries for middle-class families to employ domestic workers to do housework. Usually these workers are women, reflecting the occupational gender segregation which exists in most countries (Lim, 1995:7). Women tend to occupy most of the low status, poorly paid occupations.

Two of the participants came from families which employed domestic workers. Celia explained what it was like for her in Guatemala:

En mi tiempo de niña en mi país, las sirvientas eran baratas. En mi casa cuando yo estaba creciendo teníamos cuatro. Una que hacía las compras y se encargaba de la cocina, otra que hacía 'el de adentro', que era hacer camas, barrer, limpiar y mantener la casa arregladita y ayudar a la cocinera, la otra planchaba....Yo no tenía que hacer nada en la casa. No tenía ni que hacer mi cama. Nunca aprendí a cocinar. Yo era la señorita que se iba a trabajar por la mañana.

When I was a child at home, servants were cheap. When I was growing up we had four servants. One was in charge of the kitchen, another worked inside sweeping, cleaning, keeping the house tidy and helping the cook, another one ironed the clothes.....I didn't have to do anything at home. I didn't even have to make my bed. I never learned to cook. I was used to being the young lady who went to work in the mornings.

In Latin America the domestic/household domain is the realm of women (Moraes-Gorecki, 1994:180). Beatriz explained how she experienced this in her family of origin:

En mi país la mujer es la que hace todo en la casa. El hombre ni Dios guarde que vaya a lavar los platos. Ése es un trabajo de la mujer. Yo vengo de una familia grade donde los varones son atendidos, son servidos y donde la mujer hace todo. Para mi era normal, era parte de la vida diaria.

In my country women do all the housework. Men would never wash the dishes. It's women's work. I come from a big family where men are served and where women do everything. For me that was normal, it was part of my daily life.

She recognised, however, her resistance to that state of affairs:

Yo me doy cuenta que yo era un poquito diferente a lo que eran las mujeres , de lo que eran mis hermanas. Yo siempre fui un poco rebelde en cuanto a los derechos de la mujer. Yo creo que en el fondo de mi corazón tenía algo de feminista."

I realise that I was a bit different to other women and to my sisters. I was always a bit of a rebel about the rights of women. I think that deep in my heart I was a bit of a feminist.

My own domestic background has aspects similar to that of the participants. Housework and child care were regarded in Puerto Rico as 'women's work'. My mother was a school teacher, and was also responsible for all the housework and looking after five children. She had paid domestic help when we were little, but later on we had to help with cooking and cleaning, etc.

Celia and Alma, who were accustomed to having paid domestic workers found that in New Zealand they were expected to fit into the traditional mould of domesticity. Understandably, having the full responsibility for child care and housework was very challenging for them. Alma described what might have been a common experience:

Yo de la noche a la mañana aprendí a lavar, a cocinar,... Yo lo hacía todo, yo era la criada... Entonces el trabajo de la casa a mi me ponía de mal humor. Ahora ya más o menos...

All of a sudden I learned to wash clothes, to cook... I did everything, I was the servant... Housework used to put me in a bad mood. Now it is not so bad...

Both Alma and Celia experienced a major change in their domestic arrangements. This involved a shift from having employment and community activities outside their homes in Latin America to confinement to the domestic domain in New Zealand. Almost total responsibility for the care of young children, the absence of extended family support networks, and the language barrier, resulted in these women feeling isolated in their homes. Alma indicated that she had experienced more health problems in New Zealand as a result:

Me enfermé más acá. No he estado bien de salud y no me he ido a la cama. Nunca he dejado de levantarme para lavar, para cocinar...

My health hasn't been good and I haven't gone to bed. I always get up to do the cooking and the washing... I have been sick here more often than in my country.

Immigrant women are influenced by both the dominant gender ideology in New Zealand and the ideologies they brought from their countries. The participants, of course, brought with them the patriarchal gender roles they grew up with. Celia reflected on the cost of continuing to follow these traditional patterns in her domestic relations in New Zealand:

Yo lo mal acostumbré [a mi marido] terriblemente porque esa fue la manera de la gente de mi país. La mujer sirve al hombre y yo seguí los pasos. Aquello que lo mal acostumbré de tal manera que después pagé las consecuencias.

I spoilt him [my husband] terribly because that was the way of the people in my country. Women serve men. I just followed the same tradition. I spoilt him so much that later I paid the consequences.

The subservient (second class citizen) position Celia occupied eventually resulted in her feeling resentment and dissatisfaction, as her own needs were not being met.

In common with Celia, the other participants initially continued with the domestic arrangements they were accustomed to. However, they acknowledged that they have changed and now have more egalitarian ideas about gender roles. Beatriz commented on the difficulties this would create for her in Argentina, if she ever returned there to live:

Yo creo que dentro de todo ahora, después de haber cambiado tanto, no podría vivir en mi país. Yo creo en la igualdad. En Nueva Zealandia yo he mantenido muchas cosas mías pero en algunas cosas se me ha sido fácil adaptarme, como por ejemplo que el hombre lave los platos...

I believe that now, after I've changed so much, I couldn't live in my country. I believe in equality. In New Zealand I have kept many of my traditions, but some things have been easy to change, for example men should wash the dishes...

Like the participants, my own ideas about 'men's work' and 'women's work' have changed considerably over the years. Initially I also tried to mould to what I thought was expected of me as a 'wife'. Slowly, however, this changed. For example, I started to question the assumption that it was my job to make my husband's lunches, and refused to continue the practice. This was met with initial disapproval, of course, but was accepted. It seems silly now but at the time it was an important issue for me.

In New Zealand many changes followed. I claimed time for myself and every Saturday morning it was my time to do what I wanted while my husband looked after the children. As I became involved in study and in work further changes occurred accelerating the shift towards a more egalitarian household.

EMPLOYMENT AND STUDY

Reports from Australia claim that the majority of married immigrant Latinas enter the work-force (Amézquita et al., 1995). They tend to work predominantly in industries characterised by low wages and a lack of job security, even though many had come to Australia with skills and work experience (Moraes-Gorecki, 1994). In the United States context also, many well-educated, middle-class immigrant women “moved downward in terms of money, jobs and class after arrival” (Gabaccia, 1994:108). It has been suggested that this downward mobility is related to structural factors. These include gender divisions, the needs of the market economy, and the practice of allocating certain types of work to immigrants regardless of their qualifications (Moraes-Gorecki, 1994:181). Migrant women who can speak the language of the host country, however, are less likely to be disadvantaged in the labour market (Lim, 1995:47).

Paid Work in New Zealand: Challenges and Struggles

All the participants came to New Zealand with tertiary qualifications. They also had prior work experience, on a full-time or part-time basis, in the areas of teaching, health services, social services and clerical work. Three of the women were already mothers before coming. Alma and Violeta had combined motherhood and paid employment to meet their financial commitments. In Chile, Violeta was the main ‘breadwinner’ of her family.

Like many other immigrants in New Zealand (see Department of Internal Affairs, 1996), Alma experienced barriers in terms of recognition of her previous qualifications and experience:

Dos meses después de llegar presenté todos los papeles de mi título y me dijeron que no era reconocido en Nueva Zelandia. Podrían quizás reconocer parte de mis estudios pero tenía que presentar todo el currículo, traducido al inglés, lo cual costaba mucho dinero y era difícil de obtener desde acá.

Two months after I arrived I presented my qualifications and I was told they were not valid in New Zealand. They might have been able to recognise part

of my studies but I had to show them a copy of the whole syllabus translated into English, which was too expensive and difficult to obtain from here.

Beatriz and Violeta found that their limited knowledge of English was their main barrier in securing employment. Persistence in the face of difficulties, to the detriment of her health, is evident in Beatriz's account:

Mi experiencia buscando trabajo fue que no tenía en idioma y que no tenía calificaciones para buscar trabajo. A los tres años de estar acá busqué mi primer trabajo porque yo quería irme a mi país. Mi inglés todavía era bien malo porque yo no nunca lo había estudiado. Odiaba el inglés... Busqué ese trabajo [limpiando] y no sabía inglés, no entendía... Entonces como yo no entendía bien lo que tenía que limpiar, yo limpiaba todo, la pared, el techo, el piso, por las dudas... Ahí fue donde me rompí la espalda, pero junté la plata para irme. Yo me doy cuenta que cuando yo estoy determinada a una cosa, no hay quien me paré.

My experience finding a job was that I didn't speak the language and didn't have the necessary qualifications. After three years here, I went to work because I wanted to go back to my country. My English was still very poor because I'd never studied it. I hated English. I found a job [cleaning] but I couldn't understand English and couldn't understand what exactly I had to do. Because of this I used to clean everything, walls, ceiling, floors, just in case... it was there that I injured my back, but I managed to save the money to go back [to my own country]. I realise that when I am determined to do something, nothing will stop me.

As I listened to the Beatriz's story I gained a deep appreciation of her strength and ability to 'swim against the current'. I could understand her burning desire to return to Argentina to visit her family. I share with her the need to do this in spite of the financial implications. However, I am aware that my own story is different. My previous knowledge of English has been a definite advantage in opening doors which have led to employment.

The United Nations Expert Group (1995: 6) reports that "the need for income is the most important reason compelling migrant women to work". This has been true for the participants. Alma, who was not used to domestic work, worked as a cleaner to have money for transport and to buy clothes for herself and her children:

No tenía dinero para pagar el bus de ida y vuelta. No tenía plata para ir a una tienda de segunda mano. Para mí el 'second-hand' era caro. No tenía plata. Entonces yo tuve que salir a tabajar. Fui a trabajar a la casa de una señora que tenía cuatro habitaciones, doble sala, doble cocina... Tenía que pasar la aspiradora, limpiar las ventanas... Yo lloraba...

I didn't have money for the bus. I didn't have money to go to a second-hand shop. For me second hand-shops were expensive. I had no money. That is why I had to go out to work. I went to clean a house that had four bedrooms, double lounge, double kitchen... I had to vacuum the place, clean the windows... I used to cry...

Three of the women have been employed cleaning houses, motels and businesses during the day while the children were at school. Often they made tremendous sacrifices to earn money, not only for their immediate needs, but to visit their family overseas or to send them money.

In common with many other women, being economically dependent has been an important issue. This was reflected in Celia's story:

[El trabajo] Siempre fue importante para mi. Antes de casarme me gustaba trabajar. Para mi era lo más importante tener mi propia plata y poder ayudar a mi madre... Siempre se me hizo difícil depender económicamente de mi marido. Yo odiaba pedirle dinero para mi... Por eso yo sacaba mis trabajos para tener mi plata, aunque fuera un poquito, pero que fuera mia.

Work was always important for me. Before getting married I liked to work. For me it was very important to have my own money and to be able to help my mother. It was always hard for me to depend economically on my husband. I hated asking for money for myself. That is why I worked, to have my own money, even if it only was a small amount.

Violeta found a part-time job helping in a shop where she was able to take her youngest child. For her, who experienced refugee sponsorship and 'charity', paid employment was a matter of huge significance:

Es la dignidad [el trabajo]. Yo quería trabajar. Yo quería tener mi dinero. Así es que fue bonito empezar a trabajar, aunque fuera "part-time". Nosotros somos muy orgullosos. Los chilenos somos terriblemente orgullosos. Así es que eso es una cosa dura tener que vivir de la caridad.

It [work] is our dignity. I wanted to work. I wanted to have my own money. It was great to start working, even though it was only part-time. We are very proud. Chileans are extremely proud people. Because of this it is very hard to have to depend on charity.

In common with the participants, for me paid work fulfils many functions. It is related to my sense of self-worth and my need for financial independence. Saving money for trips to Puerto Rico and for assisting my extended family has been for me a priority. Having a job has also given me a sense of contributing to and being a part of the community where I live.

It has been reported that the majority of Latin American women in Australia are “working mothers” who undertake a “double shift” (Moraes-Gorecki, 1994:180). Like them, the participants in this study have at some stage combined child care and other domestic responsibilities with paid employment. Paid-work has tended to be part-time and is seen as secondary to their household responsibilities. The participants have also been involved in home-based paid work such as typing and Spanish teaching. In this way they both complied with and resisted the dominant ideology of women as primarily mothers and wives. This point was highlighted by Celia:

Él [mi marido estaba] feliz porque yo podía contribuir económicamente. Mientras [el trabajo] no interfiriera con los chicos y con mi labor de ama de casa....

My husband was very happy because I could bring in some money. As long as the work did not interfere with the care of the children or my job as a housewife....

The degree of involvement in paid employment was determined to a large extent by their family’s life-cycle stage. Beatriz gave primary importance to her role as a mother:

Por los primeros años no busqué trabajo porque pensé que el trabajo más importante era el trabajo de madre. Siempre en mi mente pensé que mientras los chicos eran chicos, eran lo más importante. Entonces me dedicaba a los niños, a la casa, a cocinar, a tejer...mi vida era esa. Era feliz de cierta manera. Era lo que yo pensaba que estaba bien. Era lo que yo quería.

For the first few years I didn’t look for a job because I thought the most important job was to be a mother. I always believed that when the children are small, they are the most important thing. I was dedicated to the children, to the house, to cook, to knit...that was my life. In a way I was happy. I thought I was doing the right thing. That was what I wanted.

Study

All the participants have undertaken some form of study in New Zealand. They learned English in a variety of ways; with a home tutor, attending the local high school and through informal contacts. Attending evening adult education classes on a variety

of subjects was for Beatriz a starting point in her gaining more self-confidence. This happened after she made her own decision to stay in New Zealand:

Me fui [a mi país], volví [a Nueva Zelanda] y dije, 'obviamente tengo que haber mi vida acá, tengo que salir adelante de alguna manera.' Entonces empecé a hacer todo tipo de curso [por la noche]. Ayudó mucho a mi inglés estar con esa gente por dos horas. Me ayudó a tener confianza en mi misma.

I went back to my country and returned [to New Zealand] and said to myself, "I have to make my life here, I have to get ahead somehow". I started to take all sorts of courses [at night school]. The two hours I spent with the people there helped me with my English. It helped me to become more confident.

Gaining qualifications in New Zealand in order to become more independent often required a rearrangement of domestic duties, which was not always easy. The interaction between studying and domestic life was highlighted in Violeta's story:

Aquí yo me emancipé. Yo estudiaba y si la comida no estaba lista, él [mi marido] tenía que cocinar. Puso problema cuando yo tenía que estudiar. A veces yo tenía que cerrar la puerta e irme a estudiar. Yo tenía mi plan y nadie me iba a despistar. Ese era mi objetivo, estudiar, empezar a trabajar para poder independizarme. Era lo que no había podido hacer antes porque tuve que esperar a tener el inglés necesario para un estudio académico.

Here I became liberated. I had study to do and if dinner wasn't ready he [my husband] had to cook. He didn't like it when I had to study. Sometimes I had to shut the door to do my study. I had a goal and nobody was going to distract me from it. My goal was to study, get a job and become independent. I couldn't do it before because I had to wait to learn enough English to do academic study.

Gender roles within the family unit made it difficult for the participants to study. This constraint was deeply felt by Celia:

Yo siempre le hice conocer [a mi marido] mi intención, mi deseo de estudiar y de hacer algo más que criar hijos. Pero él era el proveedor y yo la que cuidaba los hijos.

I always told [my husband] about my intentions, of my desire to study and do something more than looking after children. But he was the provider and I had the responsibility of child care.

Work or study was usually arranged around domestic routines and responsibilities. Celia and Beatriz adopted the strategy of attending night classes, as explained by Beatriz:

Yo trataba de no interferir, [de no salir] en las horas que le podía dar problema a él [mi marido]. O sea que todo lo que yo hacía era de acuerdo a no interrumpir mi rutina como madre con mis hijos. Hacía mis cursos se noche.

I tried not to interfere, [not to go out] at a time when I could cause problems for him [my husband]. I tried not to interrupt my routine as a mother with the children. I went to night school.

Evidence from overseas suggests that immigrant women tend to have more involvement in paid employment the longer they have lived in the receiving country (United Nations, Expert Group, 1995:5). In spite of the constraints they faced, Celia and Violeta obtained professional qualifications and are now in full-time employment. This achievement reflects the fact that their children are now grown up, that they have been resident in New Zealand for a considerable length of time, and that they have significantly increased their command of English.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on the position of the participants in the domestic arena, in study and in paid employment and has exposed how their changing ideology of gender relations shaped their experience. Several significant themes have emerged. First, their perspective on domestic gender roles is more egalitarian now than it was before immigration. Second, the difficulties experienced in the area of employment were related to their limited knowledge of English and the non-recognition of previous qualifications. Third, their employment options were further restricted by domestic responsibilities, especially child care. Fourth, paid employment was typically an economic necessity. And finally, working to save money to visit relatives, or to send to them, has been a priority.

Even though the women were previously employed in areas such as clerical work, teaching, social services and health care, it was initially difficult for them to obtain employment in these areas in New Zealand. Later, as they felt more confident with English, and their parenting responsibilities lessened, study and retraining became options which some of the women chose. This enabled them to secure employment, to get better jobs, and to attain a degree of financial independence.

CHAPTER 6

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

This chapter focuses on the impact of the changes resulting from immigration on the participants' family relationships. It highlights the following aspects: the impact of immigration on the participants' perception of gender relations; the differences and challenges of New Zealand family values, in comparison with the values of the societies of origin; the effect of the absence of extended family on family relationships; their experiences of going back home to visit extended family; and the dilemmas and feelings experienced upon returning to New Zealand.

Immigrant families from a variety of national and cultural backgrounds experience a number of common pressure points (Hartley, 1995). These include the loss of extended family support and the impact of new cultural values. These social changes have implications for spouses, parents and children, and for the family system as a whole. Family relationships, however, cannot be considered without taking into account their socio-economic context. For instance, high unemployment levels amongst Latin American immigrant families in Australia have been reported as having a major negative impact on family relationships (Amézquita et al., 1995). This was also shown in this study, for example the fact that Alma's partner became unemployed after their arrival in New Zealand had a detrimental effect on their relationship, and she identified this as a major factor in their marriage break-up.

GENDER RELATIONS

Amézquita et al. (1995) suggests that Latin American immigrants in Australia perceive their new society as being more empowering to women. The participants viewed New Zealand society in a similar light. Violeta, for example compared the position of women in both societies:

En Latin America lo que pasa es que la mujer está bajo al hombre. El hombre es el superior. En mi país pasa eso. Son 'machistas' 100 por ciento. Tú en mi país no te puedes desenvolver como mujer, con todo tu potencial, con todas tus actitudes. Estás limitada. Aquí la mujer no es tan dominada por el hombre en el sentido de todo, en educación, en el hogar. Aquí la mujer es más emancipada.

In Latin America women's place in society is lower than that of men. Men are considered superior to women. That is what happens in my country. People there are 100 per cent macho. Women there are not able to develop their potential and skills. They are constrained. Here women are less dominated by men in all spheres, in education, at home. Here women are more liberated.

New Zealand seemed to offer the participants an opportunity to reassess their position in regard to gender relations and consequently they have made some significant changes. This was clearly expressed by Violeta as she reflected on her marital relationship:

Yo tomé otra manera de comportarme. Antes yo me adaptaba, sufría, yo era la dominada.... Pero me di cuenta que el sistema en Nueva Zelandia protege a la mujer...Entonces yo me empecé a emancipar, empecé a tomar un plan para liberarme. Mis estudios y todo eso fue para independizarme...

[In New Zealand] I chose a different way of behaving. Before [in my country] I used to adapt, to suffer, I was dominated...But here the system protects women...So I started to make plans for my liberation. I studied in order to become independent...

Aquí he aprendido a defender mis propias necesidades. Yo exijo que se me respeten mis expectativas y mis necesidades. Eso era lo que no hacía antes. Se me tiene que respetar el ser mujer y mirarme como igual. En eso he cambiado. Antes uno tenía que adaptarse, uno tenía que hacer lo que el hombre quería...Aquí la cultura le da oportunidad a la mujer para poder desenvolverse. No puedo entender cuando aquí una mujer está limitada a un hombre que la maltrata y no hace nada... Puedo entender a la Latina [en su país] porque la sociedad no la deja. Aquí la sociedad le da la oportunidad

Here I have learned to look out for my own needs. I demand that my needs and expectations be respected. That's what I didn't do before. Now I demand to be treated with respect and as an equal. I have changed in that way. Before you had to adapt, you had to do what a man wanted... Here the culture gives women opportunities to develop. I can't understand when women here stay in abusive situations with men and don't do anything about it... I can understand when it happens to Latinas [in their countries], because society doesn't support them. Here society gives women the opportunity to do something.

Beatriz also acknowledged significant changes in this area:

Pienso que como mujer soy más independiente, no sé si hubiera podido en mi país pensar como pienso ahora...Mis ideas han cambiado, sobre la igualdad, sobre la libertad...Yo creo en la igualdad del hombre y la mujer. Pienso que las mujeres tenemos las mismas capacidades que los hombres y que tenemos derechos...Este país me ha ayudado a liberarme de los prejuicios que hay..

I think that as a woman I'm more independent. I don't know if in my country I would have been able to have the ideas I have now. My ideas about equality and freedom have changed. I believe in equality of men and women. I believe that women are as capable as men, and that we have rights...This country has helped me to get rid of some prejudices about this.

Yet egalitarian ideas about gender relations can exist side by side with traditional notions of femininity (Boone, 1994). This was apparent in the participants' perceptions of their positions and was illustrated by Alma who said:

Para mí, según mi crianza, me gusta que me abran la puerta. Me gusta mi libertad, pero también me gusta que me traten como una dama, porque así fui criada...

Because of my upbringing, I like [men] to open doors for me. I like my freedom, but I also like to be treated like a lady because that was the way I was brought up.

For me it has not been easy to change some of the patriarchal notions I grew up with. I acknowledge that my feminist ideals exist together with traditional notions of what is 'feminine'. In retrospect, these contradictions were also present in the messages I received during my upbringing. Besides patriarchal ideas, I also received liberating messages. For instance, I was encouraged by my parents to have a career and to be financially independent. These contradictions probably reflected the changes in the ideology of gender which were taking place in Puerto Rico.

PARENTING: DIFFERENCES AND CHALLENGES

It is common for immigrants of diverse backgrounds to want to maintain the family values of their own cultures in the new society (Hartley,1995). Many immigrant women face difficult dilemmas, especially in their parenting role, as they encounter family perspectives which are different to their own.

The family values which the participants brought to New Zealand were based on respect of parental authority, family togetherness, and strong bonds with extended family. In New Zealand they encountered values which emphasised independence and individuality. This culture clash was a common theme in the interviews, as illustrated by Violeta:

La cosa es que por la cultura aquí son[los hijos] muy independientes. Aquí tú pierdes el poder de padre... Hay menos control como padre..y eso hace a los niños madurar más rápido, antes de estar preparados. En mi país los niños están con los padres hasta que se casan. Mi hijo se fue de mi casa a los diecisiete años y yo no le podía decir que no. Si hubiera sido en mi país le hubiera dicho que no y no se hubiera ido.

Here, because of the culture, children are very independent. Here your power as a parent is lost... There is less parental control and children grow up too quickly before they are ready. In my country children stay at home until they get married. My son left home at 17 and I couldn't say 'No'. If I was in my country I would have said 'No' and he wouldn't have gone.

This issue also became apparent in Violeta's attempts to discipline her children:

En mi país tú le puedes dar un palmazo a un hijo y no te va a amenazar con la policía... Claro que no es bueno pegar a los niños, pero una palmada a veces está bien dada. Me sentí tonta que mi hijo me amenazó con la policía. Aquí uno se siente con menos poder como padre.

In my country you can discipline your child and he is not going to threaten you with the police... Of course it is not good to hit children, but a slap sometimes is the right thing to do. I felt silly when my child threatened me with the police. Here you feel more powerless as a parent.

Coming to Terms with Changes

The road to change has not been straight forward. It has required a whole new way of relating to children in the new social environment, as pointed out by Celia:

Una cosa que ha sido difícil es aceptar el sistema social del tratamiento de los niños, de la educación de los niños a la manera Kiwi.... Pero yo me doy cuenta que después de vivir en este país por tanto tiempo, ya en ese sentido he cambiado. Acepto muchas cosas que en mi país jamás aceptaría un padre o una madre. ... la libertad que le doy a mis hijos, la manera que ellos a veces me tratan. Eso es algo que uno tiene que aceptar acá por el sistema social. Tal vez es bueno escuchar a los hijos ..En mi país el padre tiene todo el poder y el hijo o la hija tiene que respetar sea lo que sea, sin

comunicación. Acá hubiera sido imposible hacer eso. Puedes tratar de educar a los hijos de la manera que fuiste educada, pero yo creo que cualquier persona que tratara de hacer eso va a tener problemas terribles, porque no se puede... Tienes que adaptarte a que aquí tienen más libertad, que aquí los hijos no tienen el mismo respeto para los padres.

Cuando fuimos a Guatemala ellos [mis hijos] lo notaron. No podían creer que los otros chicos estuvieran pidiendo permiso a los papás para salir. Si los papás decían que no, no iban. Eso es algo que uno no puede soñar en este país. Entonces en ese sentido sí que ha sido duro. Pero por otro lado, yo me he adaptado, yo he cambiado. Tiene uno que adaptarse al país donde uno está viviendo para sobrevivir.

It has been hard to accept the Kiwi way of bringing up and educating children. But after living in this country for so long, some of my ideas have changed. I accept many things that in my country a mother or a father wouldn't accept, for instance the freedom I give the children, and the way they treat me. That's something one has to accept here because of the social system. Perhaps it's good to listen to the children... In my country parents have all the power, and their daughter or son has to obey, no matter what, without discussion. It would be impossible to live that way here. I believe that anyone who tries to do it will have terrible problems, because it isn't possible. You have to adapt to the fact that here they have more freedom, that here they don't have the same respect for their parents.

When we visited Guatemala my children noticed the difference. They couldn't believe that 22 year old young adults had to ask permission of the parents to go out. If the parents said 'No', they wouldn't go out. That is something you can't imagine happening in New Zealand.... So in that sense it has been hard. On the other hand I have adapted, I have changed. You have to adapt to the country you are living in to survive.

Alma also pointed out that living in New Zealand involved having to come to terms with a different social system and accepting that change is inevitable:

Transculturación es lo que pasa cuando uno va a otro país. Tú llevas tú bagaje cultural y lo mezclas con otro. Mis hijas ahora no van a ser completamente Peruanas. Están asumiendo la cultura neozelandesa y de todas maneras hay una mezcla. Yo tengo la idea que si tú vives en un país y a vas a rechazar desde la comida y el aire mejor te vas. Si vives en un sitio es porque vas a aceptar y ser feliz. Hay cosas de la cultura que a mi no me gustan, por ejemplo el sistema del adolescente, de la libertad que le dan desde jóvenes. Eso es una cosa que me asusta... pero aquí vivo. O me asusto bien y me voy, o me quedo...

Transculturation is what happens when you go to another country. You bring your cultural baggage and you mix it with that from another country. My children are not going to be completely Peruvians; they are learning New Zealand culture and a mixture is inevitable. I believe that if you live in a country and can't accept what it offers, then you had better leave. If you live

in a place, you need to accept it and be happy. There are things about this culture that I don't like for example, the way of life of adolescents, the freedom they are given when they are so young. That is something that scares me. But I either get too frightened and leave, or I stay....

For Beatriz, having to change her mothering role was extremely difficult. However, in spite of her reluctance, she accepted it as a change that was inevitable:

Yo me doy cuenta que yo soy una madre muy aprensiva. En comparación con las madres aquí yo soy muy protectora. Yo estoy pendiente de cada detalle en la vida de los chicos... Yo no quiero cambiar esa parte mía. Yo tengo mis valores. Yo tengo mis principios... Me doy cuenta que los chicos están exigiendo más libertad. Me doy cuenta que yo voy a tener que cambiar eso... Dentro de mi corazón yo no quiero, pero sé que tengo que ceder esa parte, porque es parte de la vida de los niños aquí, aunque no me gusta.

I am aware that I am a very apprehensive mother. I am very protective in comparison with the other mothers here. I keep an eye on every detail in the children's lives. I have my values. I have my principles... I realise that the children are demanding more freedom. I am aware that I am going to have to change... Inside myself I don't want to change, but I know I have to give in, because the way of life for children here is different.

What I've heard from the women was in many ways also true for me. At times it has been difficult for me to reconcile my views about bringing up children with the views of the dominant culture. Sometimes it has been necessary for me to reassess my position in order to maintain a good relationship with my children. In the process I have had to accept many things which my parents would have never accepted. I can say that my children have taught me a lot about tolerance and freedom to be oneself.

ABSENCE OF EXTENDED FAMILY

The implications for immigrants of not having the support of extended family networks, and of maintaining connections with family overseas, are recurrent themes in the literature (see Garcia-Preto, 1982; Mcgoldrick, 1982; Gabaccia, 1994; Hartley, 1995).

Even after many years in New Zealand, most of the women still do not have relatives here and visits to New Zealand by relatives have been rare. All the participants, however, have gone back at least once to visit family in their countries of origin. They have also tried to maintain regular contact with relatives and close friends via letters

and telephone calls, but letters sometimes fail to reach their destination and telephone calls are expensive. The women felt a huge sense of loss at not being close to their extended families.

Effect on Relationships with Partners

In the absence of extended family support, and in the face of language difficulties, migrant women initially often become more dependent on their husbands and “are more likely to experience separation or divorce because of the instability of family relations” (Lim, 1995: 50).

In Beatriz’s situation the nuclear family context, feelings of isolation, loneliness and depression placed considerable stress on the marital relationship:

Acá [en Nueva Zealandia] yo empecé a sentirme necesitada y no tenía a nadie más que a él [mi marido]....Yo pretendía tener todo lo que necesitaba en una persona...Allá tenía a mi familia, a mis amigos, siempre tenía gente....

Here [in New Zealand] I started to feel needy and didn’t have anybody except him [my husband].... I tried to get all I needed from one person.... There [in my country] I had my family, my friends, I always had people....

Celia also linked her marriage breakdown with her migrant status and the lack of extended family support:

El rompimiento de mi matrimonio tuvo que ver con el hecho de que yo no estaba en mi país y no tenía apoyo de mi familia. Eso en realidad afectó. Al final de los finales fue la distancia, el hecho de que yo estaba tan lejos de mi país lo que contribuyó a que terminara el matrimonio.

The fact that I wasn’t in my country and I didn’t have the support of my family contributed to the break up of my marriage. That really had an effect. At the end of the day it was the distance, the fact that I was so far away from my country, that influenced the breakdown of the marriage.

Beatriz and Celia clearly illustrated the impact of the contrast between nuclear and extended family contexts. In Latin America, as well as in other societies, the nuclear

family is not usually expected to be self-sufficient and the circle of support extends to kin networks and to neighbours (see Gabaccia, 1994).

Effect on Children

In the absence of the extended family the participants felt a sense of loss not only for themselves, but also for their children. Celia explained the reason for this:

Mis hijos no han podido compartir con mi familia, conocer a mi familia, sentirse queridos por mis gentes, que es muy diferente a la relación de familia en este país.

My children have not been able to share with my family, get to know them and feel loved by my people. Family relationships in this country are experienced in a very different way.

Three of the four women had children when they arrived in New Zealand. Some of these children were old enough to miss their grandparents, uncles and aunts and other family members left behind. This was particularly significant for Alma:

Mi hija no podía amar a nadie aquí. Porque ninguna de mis amigas eran sus tías, porque no eran su sangre. Para ella era una deslealtad que yo me encariñara con la gente acá... Ahora más o menos va entendiendo... O sea que para ella fue un choque más grande que para mí. Yo llegué aquí con el corazón abierto para amar a la gente. Ella no, ella estaba cerrada porque sus lazos estaban en su país.

My daughter couldn't love anyone here. She couldn't accept any of my friends as her aunts or uncles because they weren't blood relatives. She thought it was being unfaithful [to our relatives] to feel close to people here... Now she is slowly beginning to understand... She felt a greater shock than me. When I came my heart was open to love other people. For her it was different. Her family bonds were only with the family back home, her heart was closed.

Violeta also talked about how the separation from her family and close friends had influenced her children, and said:

Sí, eso ha afectado a los niños porque ellos no tuvieron el ejemplo. Cuando salimos de mi país los niños eran pequeños. Ellos perdieron el contacto con mis amigos, que eran como familia. La amistad que teníamos con mis amigos era excelente. Ellos hubieran seguido el ejemplo... Los niños hubieran sido más unidos. Aquí son muy independientes.

Yes, it has had an effect on the children because they didn't have role models. When we left my country the children were small. They lost contact with my friends, who were like our family. We were very good friends. They would have followed their example.... The children would have been closer to each other. Here they are very independent.

“Here I am Everyone’s Umbrella”: Burdens and Benefits

In Latin America it is common for the extended family as well as the church community to have a significant role in the upbringing of children. Beatriz contrasted this scenario with the lack of support she felt in New Zealand:

Yo siento que allá [en Argentina] es más compartido. Si tienes un hijo y no puedes con él, se lo mandas a tu hermana... Tenemos el apoyo familiar, y en mi caso tenemos el apoyo cristiano de la iglesia. Es increíble como te ayudan con tus hijos... Es una comunidad. O sea que acá estás completamente aislada... Yo creo que el estar acá me ha hecho más aprensiva. Porque allá hay otra gente que cuida a los chicos, que son parte, que opinan, que te dicen, que te retan a los chicos. Allá la familia se involucra en todo... Tienes a tu hermana, a tu hermano, a la abuelita, que te cuidan los chicos. Entonces sabes que te va a ser fácil. Acá no, acá sientes que eres responsable totalmente de tus hijos, que eres única. Y los chicos mismos no tienen otra gente a quien acudir.

I feel that there [in Argentina] the responsibility of the children is shared. If you are having problems with one of your children you can send her to your sister.... We have family support and, in my case, we had the support of the church. It is amazing how much help there is. It is a community. Here you feel completely isolated. I think here I have become more apprehensive, because over there are more people to look after the children, give advice and discipline the children. Over there the whole family gets involved with everything. There you have your sister, your brother or the grandmother, who can look after the children. Here you feel you are the only one, totally responsible for the children. The children themselves don't have anyone else to go to for support.

For a variety of personal reasons, Beatriz did not continue her involvement with the church community in New Zealand. This was something she felt very deeply about, especially in regard to her children:

Mis hijos no tienen ninguna base espiritual porque yo la he perdido y no quiero inculcarles algo que no estoy viviendo..Eso es una parte que si siento que los niños están perdiendo. Yo perdí mi fe. Dios era parte mía desde que tengo noción, parte de nuestro diario vivir. Aquí vine a perder eso. O sea que cuando yo vine acá perdí mi familia, perdí mis amigos, perdí mi cultura y perdí mi religión. Mucho de perder....Yo di mucho de mi para estar en este país...

My children haven't had a spiritual base because I have lost it, and I don't want to teach them something I don't live... I feel the children are missing out in that regard. I lost my faith. God was part of me as far back as I can remember, part of our daily life. Here I lost that part of me. When I came here I lost my family, my friends, my culture, my religion. It's so much to lose... I gave up a lot of myself to be in this country...

As pointed out by Garcia-Prieto (1982), family members in the new context may feel overwhelmed because of having to perform roles which were previously performed by others. This was expressed by Alma, who had recently separated from her partner:

Quizás para mis hijos hubiera sido mejor [en mi país] porque hubieran tenido más amor. Hubieran habido otras personas que los amaran. Aquí la única que podía amar, gritar, defender, hacer todo, era yo. Sobre mi recayó todo.

Perhaps for my children it would have been better to live in my country because they would have had more love. They would have had the love of other people. Here the only one that could love them, yell at them, defend them, do everything, was me. Everything fell on me.

Aquí he aprendido a ser mamá por 24 horas al día. Siempre había estado en un hogar grande, protegida en paraguas de otros. Aquí soy paraguas de todos. Aquí aprendí que no solamente soy mamá, soy papá, país, tío, primos, Navidad, todo... que todo depende de mi.

Here I have learned to be a mother for 24 hours a day. I had always lived within a large family, protected by the umbrella of other people. Here I am everyone's umbrella. Here I have learned that I'm not only mother, but also father, country, uncle, cousins, Christmas, everything...that everything depends on me.

However, a sense of loss can exist side by side with a sense of achievement. This was recognised by Alma when she said:

El saber que no estaba nadie de mi familia me hizo valiente... Saqué fuerzas de la soledad, de la falta de familia. A veces la familia sobreproteje y no te deja ser tú misma... Yo pienso que como mujer y ser humano yo soy mejor ahora. He sobrevivido la ausencia de la familia, siendo una persona íntegra, con mis propios valores... He podido sacar adelante lo que me enseñaron [mis padres]. He aprendido a buscar dentro de mí. Es una nueva técnica. Dicen que la respuesta está dentro de uno, no fuera. Siempre estoy buscando cosas para mejorar mi sistema familiar, mi sistema de vida. Eso aprendí acá, a valerme por mí misma. No quiero sobrevivir, me gustaría vivir.

Knowing that none of my family were here made me brave.. I gained strength out of the loneliness and the lack of family. Sometimes the family can be over-protective and doesn't let you be yourself... I think as a woman and as a human being I am a better person. I have survived the absence of family with integrity, keeping my own values... I have put into practice what I have learned [from my parents]... Here I have learned to look for answers inside myself, not outside. It's a new technique for me. I'm always looking for ways of improving my family life and my life style. Here I've learned to be self-reliant. I not only want to survive, I want to live fully.

Celia, also recognised that she had changed as a result of not living in her home country near extended family. These changes, however, cannot be considered in isolation from the changes that occurred due to her marriage breakdown and divorce:

Hay muchos cambios debido al cambio de cultura. Una de las cosas es a pesar de que añoras a la familia y a la patria todo el tiempo, el vivir en este país me ha hecho independiente, al punto que ya no me gusta que nadie interfiera en mi vida.... Me doy cuenta que a pesar de que ha sido duro estar lejos de tu familia, de tu patria... me ha hecho dura en mí, como más fuerte de carácter. Siento que puedo más porque tengo que tomar decisiones sola, tengo que mantener a mi familia, no solo económicamente, sino también emocionalmente.

There have been many changes in me as a result of the culture change. One of the things is that while you miss your family and your homeland all the time, you become very independent, to the point of disliking any interference from other people in your life... I am aware that even though it's hard to be away from my family and my country, I have become a stronger person. I feel I am able to do more things because I've had to make decisions by myself and support my children here, not only financially but also emotionally.

The responses of these participants triggered my own memories and feelings about being a mother with three young children. In spite of having the support of my husband, I felt an overwhelming sense of responsibility. Deep down I felt our nuclear family alone couldn't fulfil the children's needs. I felt sure that somehow it wasn't meant to be like that. Besides their parents, the children needed other people whom they could trust, love and relate to. I was very much aware that they were missing out having regular contact with their aunts, uncles and

cousins. To me it felt that too much depended on me and my husband. These feelings have been stronger during special celebrations like Christmas and birthdays. I have always felt that our family was too nuclear and reached out to others for friendship and support.

A Strategy for Keeping in Touch

Durie (1995) proposes a model of Maori health (*whare tapa wha*) which I consider to be relevant to this study. In this model, a sense of family identity is seen as one of the essential elements for good health and well-being. This element involves having “the capacity to belong, to care and to share” and having also an awareness of being “part of wider social systems” (Durie, 1995:70). All the participants made considerable efforts towards developing in their children a sense of belonging to a wider family, as exemplified by Alma:

Yo les hago recordar [a los niños] la vida en nuestro país y trato de matener viva la idea de la familia en nuestro país, la familia grande. Yo les avivo esa idea porque para mi ellos tienen que tener una base de donde vinieron.

I remind them [the children] about life in our country, and try to keep alive the memory of the extended family, the big family that we have in Perú. I have to do this because I feel they need to be aware of where they've come from.

As part of her strategy to help them maintain a connection with the absent extended family, Alma developed special rituals with her children. These rituals marked special occasions such as Mother's Day and Father's Day.

Para celebrar el día de la Madre hago el ritual de las mamás. Pongo todas las fotos, de mi mamá, de mi abuela, de las tías... prendemos las velas para que Dios las ilumine en el Día de la Madre. Simplemente ellos [mis hijos] prenden las velas para recordar que hay madres en el otro lado del mundo, que son nuestra familia. Igualmente haremos para el Día del Padre.

To celebrate Mother's Day I make a ritual for mothers. I put up the photos of my mother, my grandmother, my aunts. We light candles to ask God's blessing for them. They [my children] light the candles to remember mothers on the other side of the world, who are our family. We will do the same on Father's Day.

I can relate to the struggles and commitment of the participants in trying to maintain a connection with the extended family. For me it was inspiring to listen to the creative ways in which they have tried to achieve this. It reminded me of the importance of supporting each other and of sharing ideas.

GOING BACK HOME

Before the advent of modern transport and communication systems, international migration tended to result in a radical, fairly final, disruption of family and cultural ties. Now, in spite of the cost and the distance involved, it may be possible for international migrants to maintain contact with their homelands. The importance given to such trips was illustrated by Alma who said:

Una cosa que a mi me ayudaría a quedarme en este país es si yo tuviera dinero para regresar cada año o cada dos años para ver a mis padres. Creo que eso nos pasa a todos los latinos. Uno acumula dinero, no se compra cosas, porque ese dinerito va quedando para el pasaje de avión. Es por el lazo familiar, porque uno quiere ver a sus padres, a sus hermanos, volver a ver sus calles, volver a estar con su gente, volver a comer sus comidas. Pero para eso necesitas tener dinero.

One thing that would help me to stay in this country is to have enough money to return to see my parents every year or two. I think that is the case with all Latin American people here. You don't buy things for yourself because the money goes towards buying aeroplane tickets. Because of the strong family bond, you want to see your parents, brothers and sisters. You also want to see the streets of home once again. You want to be with your people and you want to eat your [typical] food. But to do that you need money.

Financially, these trips have represented a considerable drain on the participants' resources, and they have often been the motivation behind obtaining paid employment. Beatriz expressed her frustration about making a constant effort to save money for these trips:

Me doy cuenta que cuando estamos acá, no podemos progresar en cierta manera porque toda nuestra vida depende y da vueltas alrededor de juntar el dinero para volver, o de juntar el dinero para pagarle a alguien que venga. Entonces no somos personas que podemos vivir una vida normalmente... resulta que estás dando, estás sacando. Entonces, ¿cuándo empezamos a pensar en nosotros mismos?

I have realised that we are not able to progress in some ways, because all our life revolves around saving money to return, or saving money to pay for some of our relatives to come over here. So we aren't able to live normal lives. We are constantly giving to others. When are we going to think of ourselves?

Since my arrival in New Zealand I have gone back to Puerto Rico several times to spend time with my family. Sometimes I have taken with me one or two of my children. Like the participants, this has meant a huge drain on financial resources. The cost has not only been financial but also emotional, as other family members are unfortunately left behind in New Zealand. In spite of these costs, strong family bonds compel me to go back home as often as I am able to.

I asked the participants how they felt about going back to their homeland after living in New Zealand for at least three years. Celia remembered her feelings and told me:

Yo tenía miedo de ir porque mi familia iba a notar el cambio en mí. Porque iban a pensar que yo era presumida, que era fea, porque como vivía en New Zealand, porque tenía hijos acá. Como la gente se va y regresan que ya no hablan bien el Español....Yo tenía pavor a que me criticaran porque era diferente....

I was frightened to go [back home] because [I thought] my family was going to see me as being different. Because they might think that I was arrogant now that I lived in New Zealand and had my children here. Some people go and when they return they cannot speak Spanish very well any more. I was really scared they would criticise me because I was different...

Alma, who had left her country full of enthusiasm and energy, felt disappointed and embarrassed about returning without achieving her objectives:

Cuando ya estaba en el avión, no quería llegar...No tenía nada que ofrecer. No tenía alegría en el corazón, no tenía energía, no tenía salud, no tenía belleza... Estaba agotada y no tenía nada que ofrecer...

I was already in the aeroplane but I didn't want to arrive [in my country]. I didn't have anything to offer. I didn't have happiness, I didn't have energy, I didn't have health, I didn't have beauty...I was exhausted and had nothing to offer...

I invited the participants to tell me about their experiences during their visits back to their home countries. Their responses, illustrated in the following quotations, covered a broad range of experiences and emotions - some positive, others less so. Violeta enjoyed being part of the big city environment again:

Me sentía perfectamente bien, contenta de de ir a todas partes. Contenta de volver a todo el bullicio y al tumulto.

I felt really good, happy to go everywhere, happy to be back to lots of noise and lots of people.

For Celia, her children's experiences with the extended family was particularly significant:

Mis hijos nunca habían sentido el cariño, la ternura que sintieron por dos meses en mi país, donde la gente demuestra lo que sienten abiertamente...

My children had never before had the love and affection they felt when we were in my country for two months, where people openly express their feelings...

Beatriz, who has been back to Argentina twice in 12 years, conveyed her feelings of loss and estrangement during her last trip:

La última vez que fui [a Argentina] me di cuenta que he perdido el contacto, que yo soy una visita, porque no he vivido, no he sido parte de lo cotidiano...Me sentí extraña. Sentí que había perdido cosas. Pero por el otro lado, pensaba que no se puede tener todo en la vida, que hay que perder unas cosas para ganar otras...

Last time I went back [to my country] I realised that I was just a visitor, that I had lost contact [with my family], because I hadn't shared in their daily lives. I felt like a stranger. I felt a sense of loss. On the other hand, I was thinking that it isn't possible to have everything in life, that you have to lose some things to find others....

Comparing herself with other family members, Beatriz realised how much she had changed, especially in regard to gender relations:

Me doy cuenta que no soy igual que mis hermanas, que he cambiado mi mentalidad. Ellas se han quedado con el pensamiento de mujer latina, sumisas al marido, sin exigir mucho, dando todo...Me doy cuenta que yo no soy como ellas, que he cambiado, que hablamos dos idiomas diferentes...

I have realised that I am different to my sisters, that my ideas have changed. They still have the ideas of traditional Latina women, submissive to their husbands, without demanding much from them, always giving ...I have realised that I am not like them, that I have changed, that we now speak different languages...

The reflections of these women reminded me of my many trips back home. Like them I experienced a mixture of feelings. It was great to be with my family, to feel the warmth of the country and the people, to hear the music I love so much, to dance, to sing, to eat 'pasteles', 'arroz con gandules', 'lechón', to drink coconut water, to lie under a palm tree, to see *my* mountains, to swim in *my* sea. But it wasn't total happiness (does it exist?). I also had to face family issues which were distressing for me.

My family and close friends left behind in New Zealand were also in my mind and in my heart. ("I wonder how they are?" "I wish they were here". "Will I get a letter or phone call today?") In Puerto Rico, I felt a comfortable a sense of belonging, however, at times I have also felt like a visitor, someone who comes and goes; I felt estrangement and loss.

My sense of identity is without doubt connected with Puerto Rico. But I have changed in many ways, and Puerto Rico and my family of origin have also changed significantly. It has not been easy for me to come to terms with so many changes. They have happened in my absence, and they suddenly come to my notice.

RETURNING TO NEW ZEALAND

During visits back home, it was common for the participants to carefully consider the possibility of not returning to New Zealand. For Beatriz, this issue posed a difficult dilemma between reason and feeling:

Pensando friamente, pensando con la mente, no con el corazón, [decidí que] mi lugar estaba acá [en Nueva Zealandia]... Yo me tomé el tiempo para considerar todo.

I decided my place was here [in New Zealand], thinking coolly with my head and not with my heart... I took my time to consider everything.

The fact that we, the participants and myself, are able to visit our own countries can create powerful tensions. Coming back to New Zealand, therefore, has not always been easy. It meant leaving the family and having to adapt once again to the New Zealand society. This situation can involve deep identity issues, as expressed by Celia:

Mientras estuve allá [en Guatemala] fui yo otra vez. Entonces la primera vez al regresar se me hizo más difícil. Ahí sí que lo noté. Porque [en Nueva Zealanda] tuve que cambiar mi manera de ser otra vez. Para poder sobrevivir te tienes que desconectar y decir, "ésta es mi vida", y seguir

adelante... Yo tenía que ser otra persona diferente. No podía ser la persona que demuestra los sentimientos en público... Yo tuve que cambiar mi personalidad, me tuve que construir una pared en frente para poder sobrevivir. En mi corazón fue difícil porque en realidad no era yo.

While I was there [in Guatemala] I felt I was myself again. So after my first trip back, it was hard to return here. I really noticed it. [In New Zealand] I had to change once again. To survive you have to disconnect yourself and say, "this is my life" and carry on... I had to be a different person. I couldn't express my feelings openly. I had to change my personality and rebuild a wall around myself in order to survive. It was really difficult because I couldn't be myself.

At various times I have considered staying nearer to my Puerto Rican family instead of coming back to New Zealand. However, it is not easy to go back after living away for 28 years. Also, my grown up children are here, my partner is here and I have a child and a grandchild who are New Zealanders.

The children who went back home with their parents reacted in different ways to returning to New Zealand. Some were happy to come back, while others felt strongly about wanting to stay. Alma found the latter feeling particularly difficult to come to terms with:

Tuve muchos problemas con Juanita porque no quería regresar [a Nueva Zelanda]. Lloró, pataleó, luchó, hasta lo más que pudo... Me rogó, me pidió...

I had a lot of problems with Juanita because she didn't want to come back [to New Zealand]. She cried, struggled, fought to the extreme... She begged, she pleaded [to stay]...

CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on the effects of immigration on family relationships. The participants' experiences have been shaped both by the family values and ideologies brought by them from their home societies, and by the New Zealand context. Their family experiences obviously have some elements in common with those of immigrants from other national and cultural backgrounds.

The themes explored in this chapter highlight a number of key points. First, in comparison to Latin American countries, New Zealand is seen by the participants as a more egalitarian society in terms of women's and men's roles. While aspects of this egalitarianism can exist side by side with traditional notions of femininity, they have also had a marked influence in the participants' relationships with their partners. A second point concerns the loss of parental authority in the face of New Zealand's family values which emphasise independence and individuality. As a result, the participants faced the dilemma of needing to adapt to New Zealand values, while at the same time wanting to bring up their children according to their own cultural values. Finally, the absence of extended family support has been acknowledged by the participants to have had a negative impact on their relationships with partners and children. Efforts to maintain contact with the extended family have been made by all of the participants via letters, telephone calls and especially by return visits to the homeland. In spite of the drain on their financial resources, the participants have given priority to these trips back home for reasons relating to the personal and cultural identity of themselves and their children.

CHAPTER 7

CULTURE AND LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE

Several authors (e.g. Simon and Brettell, 1986; Smith, 1980; Holmes, 1993; Lim, 1995) point out the conflicting nature of the various roles immigrant women are expected to perform. Lim (1995:8) clearly illustrates this:

Within the family women are usually in charge of the socialisation of children. Women who are international migrants have generally the added task of ensuring some degree of continuity with the culture, norms and values of the society of origin while at the same time embarking on a process of adaptation to the host society.

There is surprisingly little in the research literature about the strategies employed by women to negotiate this contradictory position. Gabaccia (1994:108) suggests that in America middle-class women immigrants “appear as both the most assiduous conservers of old ways and the most eager of cultural innovators.” In other words, women can be both transmitters and transformers of culture. I take the term culture to mean shared meanings and values, which are not static but “are capable of adjusting to new and changeable circumstances” (Jayasuriya, 1996:210).

This chapter focuses on the participants’ efforts to maintain their culture while endeavouring to “construct a meaningful identity” (Buijs, 1993:18) for themselves. It explores the experiences of the participants in retaining the language and culture of their countries of origin. Even though they came from four different countries, they had in common the Spanish language and many cultural elements.

TRANSMITTING CULTURE TO CHILDREN

Gabaccia (1994:115) suggests that women value their ethnicity more than men do. As noted by Holmes (1993) and others, in many new settler communities the maintenance and transmission of the ethnic language and culture is the responsibility of women. Alma indicated the importance she attached to this role:

... Cuando estás fuera de la patria, ¿quién inculca los valores de la patria, los valores de la familia, de los antepasados, de los viejos? Tú pasás tu tradición. Si tú la dejas de pasar no saben nada de tu familia porque no la viven. Entonces yo soy [responsable de] la transmisión de todos los valores... Quizás ahora ellos [mis hijos] solamente la acumulen en el cerebro, pero el día que yo no esté, ellos van a hacer algo con todo lo que yo les he dado.

When you are away from your homeland, who passes on the values of your culture, of your family, of your ancestors, of the old people? If you don't pass on your traditions, they [the children] would not know them, because they are not there [in your country] to live them. So I am the transmitter of all the the values. Perhaps now they would only keep them in their heads, but when I die they would use what I've given them in some way.

Es mi lengua, Yo soy la madre. Yo soy el nexo con la cultura, con la patria..

It is my language. I am their mother. I am the link with the culture, with the homeland...

I invited the participants to reflect on those aspects of their cultures which they have passed on to their children. It was not easy for them to stand back and reflect on something which is so implicitly embedded in their everyday lives. Alma responded by referring to links with the extended family as being the most important cultural value she wants her children to have (see Chapter 6). She also emphasised hospitality as an important value:

Yo trato que los valores de la familia prevailecan. Por ejemplo, que la casa debe estar abierta para los amigos y compartir con los amigos lo que se tiene, mucho o poco...

I try to preserve our family values. For example, that our home should be open to our friends, and that we should share with our friends what we have, big or small...

It is common for Latin American and other immigrant families to have informal patterns of social interaction (see Gabaccia, 1994:79), which sometimes clash with the dominant culture in the host society. For example, Latin Americans often encourage friends and neighbours to 'drop in', and if a visitor arrives at meal times he or she is welcomed and invited to share the meal. In my experience in New Zealand, visitors are usually expected to have made a previous arrangement, especially if visiting around meal times. Dahlia Roberts, (1995:149) a Filipina immigrant, makes a similar observation.

Personal space, touching, the physical and verbal expression of feeling, are culturally determined. It is common for Latinos to view 'kiwi' culture as cold and reserved. Celia highlighted this cultural difference:

Yo he tratado a mis hijos diferente y por eso siento que son un poquito diferente, que son un poquito más abiertos y por lo menos saben un poco de mi cultura, de las diferencias. Yo creo que ha sido algo positivo en el sentido que yo soy una persona que no tiene miedo, no tiene ningún problema en demostrar el cariño. Desde chiquitos les he enseñado esa manera de ser. Y lo veo ahora en mis hijos, comparándolos a veces con otros chicos 'kiwis'. Por ese lado pienso que es lindo haber podido influenciar con un poco de mi cultura.

I have brought up my children in a different way [to that of New Zealanders], and I think as a result they are a bit different. They are more open, and at least know a bit about my culture and about cultural differences. I think that has been a positive thing. I am a person who is not afraid, and has no problem showing affection. Since they were little I have taught them to be like that too. I see it now in my children when I compare them to other 'kiwi' children. In that regard I think it has been wonderful to be able to influence them with something of my culture.

KEEPING THE CULTURE ALIVE

The support of people of the same ethnic group is crucial to the continuation of a sense of ethnic identity. Sharing in celebrations, food, music, drama, dance and other art forms plays an important role in this process. The participants reported that they get together with other Latinos to celebrate special occasions such as their national day, Christmas, birthdays and Mothers' Day. These 'fiestas', sharing and interaction with others from similar backgrounds have played a significant role in terms of culture retention, as illustrated by Beatriz:

Yo he tratado de mantener las celebraciones, por ejemplo, los cumpleaños de los niños. Siempre he hecho fiestas y he invitado, no solamente chicos, sino adultos, como es parte de mi costumbre. Las Navidades tratamos que sean un poco parecidas, que se celebren el 24 por la noche, como en nuestros países.

I have always tried to maintain the celebrations, for example, the children's birthdays. I have always made parties and have invited adults as well as children, as is my custom. We try to make Christmas a bit similar to that in our country and celebrate it on the night of the 24th [Christmas Eve].

However, as Ioane (1987:246) points out from a Pacific Island perspective:

...culture is a dynamic by-product of human existence, and as such is subject to changes as people practicing it continue to interact with their environment and with the cultures of other societies.

Thus, for the participants, the process of construction of an ethnic identity in New Zealand has not been solely a matter of transplanting their traditional cultural forms to their new place. In their interaction with other Latinos and with the New Zealand environment, inevitably adaptation and innovation have taken place. A metaphor for this process is the preparation of traditional foods. For example, Celia makes a version of her typical Guatemalan 'tamales' using local ingredients. The result is something unique, different to the traditional 'tamales'. Nevertheless, apart from being delicious, it gives her much satisfaction to share something of her Guatemalan culture with her friends. Innovation and adaptation is also evident in celebrations, a point highlighted by Alma when she said:

Si uno quiere formar parte de la comunidad latina, uno tiene que adaptarse a las costumbres de los otros. Por ejemplo, en Perú en la noche de Navidad no se baila, solo se cantan villancicos y se dan regalos. La cena típica de la noche de Navidad es pavo. Pero aquí [en Nueva Zelanda] en nuestras celebraciones de Navidad [con otros Latinos], además de cantar villancicos y repartir regalos, se baila como en Puerto Rico, se revienta 'la piñata' al estilo de Méjico y el menú es una variedad, porque cada uno pone un pedazo de su tradición sobre la mesa. Hay que tener flexibilidad para poder integrarse. Si insistes hacer exactamente lo que hacías en tu país te quedas aislada, te da la depresión y no solo te afectas tú, sino toda tú familia.

To be part of the Latin American community one has to adjust to the customs of the other people. For example, in Perú during Christmas Eve, we have Christmas carols and gifts but there is no dancing. It is also traditional to eat turkey. But here [in New Zealand] in our Christmas celebrations [with other

Latinos] besides singing carols and having presents, we dance like in Puerto Rico, we break a 'pinata' like in Mexico and the menu is varied because everyone puts a piece of his or her tradition on the table. To be integrated [into the Latin American community] it is necessary to be flexible. If you insist on doing exactly what you did in your own country, you remain isolated and depressed, and this would affect not only yourself but also your family.

As the only Puerto Rican living in this area, it has not been possible for me to maintain many aspects which are unique to Puerto Rican culture. For my children and myself one of the most significant influences in developing and maintaining our Latin American ethnic identity in New Zealand has been belonging to a Latin American culture and music group. As the members originated from different Latin American countries, we developed a sense of appreciation of each other's unique culture. Much innovation took place as we attempted to convey to the New Zealand public the diverse cultural expressions from South America, Central America and the Caribbean. In sharing these with New Zealanders and others, we have felt our ethnic difference acknowledged and appreciated. Our participation in community festivals and celebrations has also enhanced our sense of belonging to a wider multicultural community in New Zealand. It was a tremendously enriching experience for us.

LANGUAGE LEARNING

The continuation of the ethnic language is an important affirmation of ethnic identity and contributes to the well-being of ethnic minorities (Holmes, 1994). All the participants were native Spanish-speakers and believed in the importance of the Spanish language for their children. Beatriz, whose children were fluent in Spanish, talked about this in terms of her visits with her children to Argentina:

Fue muy importante para mi cuando los hijos volvieron al país y pudieron defenderse en el idioma. No tuvieron que pasar las cosas que yo tuve que pasar [en Nueva Zelanda] por no saber el idioma [inglés]...

It was very important to me when the children went to my country that they could speak the language. They didn't have to go through what I went through [in New Zealand] for not knowing the language [English].

Beatriz also emphasised the importance of using Spanish in terms of communicating emotions:

Es muy importante para mi expresar cosas en mi lengua, el enojo, el amor, cosas que solo puedo decir en mi idioma. Tú puedes saber un idioma perfectamente, puedes hablarlo por años, pero hay cosas que solo puedes expresarlas en tu lengua, y es muy importante que tus hijos te entiendan.

It is very important for me to express certain things in my language. For example, annoyance and love - things that I can only say in my language. You may know a language perfectly, you may speak it for years, but there are things you can only express in your language, and it is very important for your children to understand you.

Obviously it is also easier to maintain the language if the family often gets together with other Spanish speakers. Beatriz was quite clear about this:

Los amigos que entran y salen de la casa hablan español, la música es en español. Otra cosa que ha contribuido es tener aquí alguna familia.

My friends who come and go from my house speak Spanish and the music we listen to is Spanish. Another thing that has helped is to have some of my relatives here.

The importance of immigrant families being able to retain their first language has already been noted (see Chapter 1). The Waite Report (Waite, 1992a:20) recommends that support be provided to parents in this regard but, the school and the community have a role to play in encouraging parents in their efforts. Beatriz commented on the importance of the positive attitude of her children's school in this regard:

La actitud de la gente de la escuela en cuanto a los chicos es de respeto porque saben otro idioma. Los maestros los consideran dichosos porque saben otro idioma y los hacen sentir importantes. Los chicos se sienten orgullosos... Eso es importante para la formación del niño, para poder sentirse bien.

The children are respected at school by the teachers because they know another language. The teachers think they are very lucky and make them feel proud. That's important for the children's development, so they can feel good about themselves.

Beatriz's experience contrasted with my own, especially with my first two children. When they went to school in the late 1970s and early 1980s, English was the only language taught in New Zealand primary schools. As soon as they started kindergarten, I felt 'the battle' to teach them my language had been lost. It seemed to me that at that stage, the dominance of monoculturalism in New Zealand did not leave any room for acknowledgment of other languages or cultures. However, when my third child went to school in the mid-1980s, there was a noticeable change of attitude. With the incorporation of Maori language in the school curriculum, I noticed that understanding of cultural difference increased, at least at my children's school. This seemed to open the door for other languages to become more acceptable.

The availability of Spanish language at school made a difference for my children. By the time my last two children went to High School, the Wellington Correspondence School had introduced Spanish and they were able to take it as a school subject. It meant they had to work on their own, but it gave them some grounding in the language.

Challenges and Dilemmas

For Alma, whose spouse was Latino, and Beatriz, whose spouse was a fluent Spanish speaker, Spanish was the main language in their homes and therefore it was easier for her children to learn the language. Violeta's husband was Chilean, but she spoke both Spanish and English with her children. In Celia's situation, her New Zealand husband did not know much Spanish, consequently the language in the home was mainly English. She encountered, therefore, the most difficulties in teaching Spanish to her children and felt unsupported in her efforts:

Ha sido muy difícil tratar de enseñarle a mis hijos la lengua. En mi caso porque no tenía el apoyo de mi esposo para ayudarme a tratar de enseñarle el idioma. Parte también por falta de experiencia no pude enseñar a mis hijos el español como me hubiera gustado. Empezé a hablarle en español cuando eran chiquitos y cuando Teresa empezó a contestarme en inglés, estaba empeñada que ella tenía que contestarme en español. Yo cometí el error con Teresa que cuando ella me contestaba en inglés, yo la ignoraba y se ponía furiosa, y como que se puso en contra. '¿Por qué tengo que hablar ese idioma si nadie lo habla, sólo mi mamá?' Yo empecé a hablar inglés después de un tiempo y así se perdió. Y cuando el primero [de los niños] no ha aprendido el idioma, es más difícil con el segundo y el tercero...

It has been really difficult for me to try to teach the children my language. In my situation it was partly because I didn't have the support of my husband to help me teach the children. It was also because of my lack of experience that I didn't succeed in teaching them Spanish, as I would have liked to. I used to speak in Spanish to Teresa when she was little. When she started to answer me in English, I felt very strongly that she should answer me in Spanish. I used to ignore her if she talked to me in English and that made her furious. She turned against Spanish and used to say, 'Why do I have to speak in that language if the only one who speaks it is my mother?' After some time I started to speak English to her and all was lost. When the first child hasn't learned the language, it is harder with the second and third child.

Si mi esposo se hubiera interesado en aprender la lengua y los chicos supieran que él quería y tomaba parte, hubiera sido más fácil.... Más viajes a mi país cuando los niños estaban chiquitos hubiera sido lo ideal.

If my husband had been interested in learning the language and the children had realised that he was interested, it would have been easier...The ideal situation would have been to have more trips with the children to my country.

I could identify myself with Celia's efforts. My children grew up in an ethnically mixed home environment where English was the main language used. Under these circumstances, teaching them Spanish was like 'swimming against the current'. In their pre-school years I spoke Spanish when I was alone with them at home, I read them stories in Spanish, and we danced together to Latin American music. Once they started kindergarten and school they lost interest in communicating in Spanish and preferred their stories in English. I continued trying for a while but eventually I became discouraged and gave up. However, the children continued to enjoy Latin American music, dancing and singing. They also enjoyed my 'soul' food and sharing in gatherings and celebrations with other Latinos.

As indicated by Celia, the presence of a Latin American community was essential because it provided a meaningful context for Spanish language use:

Si la comunidad latina que tenemos ahora hubiera estado cuando los niños estaban chicos, hubiera sido más fácil que ellos aprendieran la lengua, o por lo menos se interesaran. Ahora ven que hay necesidad de hablar el idioma y quieren aprenderlo bien, y dicen, '¿por qué no nos enseñaste?' Pero en ese tiempo la comunidad latina no era suficientemente grande para que ellos vieran que se podía usar en otros sitios...

If the Latin American community we have now had existed when the children were little, it would have been easier for them to learn the language or at least be interested. Now they see the value of speaking the language and want to learn. They say to me, "Why didn't you teach me?" But then the Latin American community wasn't big enough for them to see that Spanish was spoken in other places.

However, as mentioned before, the Latin American community is not a homogeneous group. Even though Spanish is the common language, the Latinos come from different countries and there are, therefore, language differences, mainly in vocabulary and intonation. Alma recognised that she had to accommodate these differences:

Uno tiene que ampliar su lenguaje [español]. Es necesario adquirir los modismos de otros países para poderse entender y tener una conversación familiar.

One has to broaden the language [Spanish]. To understand each other and to be able to hold an informal conversation it is necessary to adopt the expressions of other countries.

Having the dual roles of being an English language learner, as well as a Spanish teacher to their children, can be difficult for immigrant mothers to negotiate on a day-to-day basis. It is therefore understandable that Violeta chose to speak English with her children:

No hablamos inglés porque nos guste el idioma o porque nosotros queremos el idioma. Los niños entienden que yo tengo que continuar hablando el inglés, o sino el acento se me pone muy pesado.

We speak in English not because we like it or because we love the language. The children understand the fact that I need to continue to speak in English, otherwise my accent would be too strong.

The dominant New Zealand culture has undoubtedly been the overriding influence on the children. They have grown up in a different land, with different attitudes, values and beliefs. This situation can be difficult to accept, as Celia indicated:

Para mí fue durísimo aceptar que mis chicos estuvieran en este país, que fueran parte de mi cultura, pero que no supieran nada, que no se sintieran orgullosos, que no conocieran, que no hablaran la lengua... Por eso fue que traté tan duro de llevarlos a mi patria. Sí, para mí fue bien difícil aceptar que mis chicos fueran más 'kiwis' que latinos.

It was very hard for me to accept that my children didn't know my culture, that they didn't feel proud about it, that they couldn't speak my language. That was why I tried so hard to take them to my homeland. Yes, for me it was the hardest thing to accept that my children were more Kiwis than Latinos.

I saw my feelings and experiences reflected in much of what the participants said. At times I felt a sense of failure as I tried to hand down the language to my children. I was sensitive to comments such as, "Why haven't you taught your children Spanish?", made by people who did not understand the constraints of my position. Now I accept that I did the best I could. My children feel proud of their Latino and Puerto Rican roots and have learned Spanish in their own ways.

It has previously been noted (see Chapter 1) that immigrant women often experience the contradiction of wanting their children to be accepted and well adjusted in their new environment, but also want them to be proud of their ethnic identity. For the most part, the participants felt their children were proud of their cultural backgrounds. However, the tension between the needs of the children to be accepted in the new

environment, and the mother's emphasis on their ethnic difference was clearly illustrated by Alma:

Mi hija era muy tímida en el colegio. Uno trata de decirle a los hijos que son diferente, que son maravillosos, que son únicos, y ellos tratan de ser como el montón... Juanita me vino a decir que porque yo hablaba así [con un acento fuerte]. Yo creo que los chicos sufren cuando la madre no es como las otras madres. Que es más efusiva [en público], se viste diferente, habla diferente, los besa. Nosotros [los Latinos] somos diferente y ellos quisieran tener una madre 'kiwi' como los otros...

My daughter was very shy at school. You try very hard to let the children know that they are different, that they are special, and they try to be just like everyone else... Angela used to ask me why I talk as I do [with a strong accent]... I think children suffer when their mother is different to other mothers... because their mother is more demonstrative, dresses differently, talks in a different way and kisses them [in public]. We [Latin Americans] are different and the children would prefer to have a 'Kiwi' mother like everyone else...

CONCLUSION

This chapter has highlighted the importance the participants gave to ensuring some degree of continuity with the culture of their societies of origin, in terms of language, values and norms. The strategies they adopted included: speaking Spanish at home; having ongoing contact with other Latinos; and participation in group 'fiestas' and celebrations, which included Latin American music, food and dancing. These activities have played an especially significant role in developing and retaining ethnic identity. Creativity and innovation have been part of this process. In the presence of an overwhelming Anglo-Saxon dominance, and without the support of a strong Latin American community, the cultural forms which the participants brought from their home countries have undergone a process of transformation.

The experiences of the participants revealed the contradictions in trying to adapt to the new society, while at the same time maintaining and transmitting culture and language. This tension was reflected in particular in the area of language, a situation well illustrated by Violeta. Understandably, her need to learn English was given priority over maintaining the Spanish language.

Success in the transmission of the Spanish language to the children depended to a large extent on the language spoken in their homes. Other important factors were contact with other Latinos, and the language learning and language use opportunities the children encountered at school and in the community. Overall, the experiences of the participants support the position taken by Waite (1992a) in that they highlight the importance of providing support to immigrant families in their attempts to maintain their language.

CHAPTER 8

IDENTITY AND CULTURAL CHANGE

The previous chapter suggested that both continuity and change are part of the participants' migration experience. This chapter continues with this theme and explores aspects relating to the participants' integration into New Zealand society: their English skills, interaction with New Zealanders, support networks, citizenship and identity. Integration for me does not imply that immigrants become assimilated into the host society and lose their ethnic identity. I view integration as a process of give and take, which involves change in both the host society and the immigrants and requires an acceptance of ethnic diversity.

As previously stated in Chapter 3, the participants were not well prepared to face the different culture, language and social systems of New Zealand society. As new migrants they met challenges which required them to evaluate some of the cultural values and norms they brought from their societies of origin. They had to learn new skills and develop new strategies in order to survive in the new society.

INTEGRATION INTO NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY

Communication in English

Knowledge of the language of the host country, and being able to interact with the local population, is essential for the successful adaptation of migrants anywhere (United Nations Expert Group, 1995). In New Zealand, the Waite report (see Chapter 7) points out the implication of low levels of language proficiency, in terms of the lack of access to information services, employment and community participation. The participants' experiences, as revealed in the previous chapters, graphically illustrate this concern.

Beatriz and Violeta did not know English before they came, and Alma's knowledge of the language was minimal. Celia was the only participant who was relatively fluent and confident with English upon arrival. During the first few years in New Zealand, the participants' daily activities centred around the care of young children at home. This had implications in terms of contact with English speakers in the community and therefore access to opportunities to practice English. Both Beatriz and Alma spoke Spanish at home and with their friends, who were mainly other Latinos. As pointed out in the last chapter, this was important in terms of continuity of ethnic identity and the transmission of Spanish to their children.

Another factor in Beatriz's situation was her initial resistance and lack of motivation towards learning English. Her position could be described as being in a state of 'liminality', (see Chapter 5). She appeared to be "betwixt and between" social realities (Eastmond, 1993:39). Her reluctance to learn English was part of the process of coming to terms with her migration context. After her second trip to Argentina, she came back with a more positive attitude to living in New Zealand and learning English. With a sense of humour, she contrasted her early experience with the present:

...Lo que me doy cuenta es que yo entendía pero no podía hablar porque tenía vergüenza. Tenía mucha vergüenza de cometer errores. De repente fue como que se me prendió la lamparita. Perdí la vergüenza y dije, 'Si me quedó así, me quedo toda la vida y no me puedo comunicar, tengo que salir de alguna manera. No será perfecto, pero ahí'.... Ahora me cuesta hablar un poco, pero me siento cómoda con el inglés. Casi como que me está gustando...

...Before I could understand [English] but I couldn't talk because I felt embarrassed about making mistakes. But all of a sudden I saw the light. One day I said, 'If I stay like this I'll never be able to communicate, I have to get ahead somehow. It's not going to be perfect but it doesn't matter'... Now it's still a bit of an effort, but I feel comfortable speaking English. I almost like it...

Violeta, on the other hand, had a positive attitude towards learning English from the very beginning:

Aunque nunca me gustó el inglés, vine [a Nueva Zelanda] abierta a aprenderlo. Tenía que hacerlo para sobrevivir. Empecé a escuchar radio, a ver Tele, a tratar de entender. Empecé a rozarme con gente, a tratar de aprender, escuchar, hablar y leer.

Even though I never liked English, I came [to New Zealand] with an open mind. I had to learn in order to survive. I started to listen to radio, to watch T. V., to try to understand. I started to make contact with people, to try to learn, to listen, to talk and to read.

During her first months in New Zealand, Violeta had the help of an elderly man, an ex-teacher who came to her house to teach her English. Later on, when she was studying towards further qualifications a special tutor, helped her with the assignments. By the time of our interview, having been in New Zealand for over 20 years, Violeta felt quite confident about her English language skills. An accent, however, was still an issue for her:

No me gusta mi acento. No es porque me hace diferente, es porque lo encuentro muy fuerte. A la gente le gusta, pero a mi no me gusta. Me gustaría tener el acento pero no tan marcado. No me preocupa que piensen que soy extranjera, pero quiero ser entendida...

I don't like my accent. Not because it makes me different, but because I find it too strong. Other people like it but not me. I wouldn't mind having an accent but not such a strong one. I don't worry if people think I am a foreigner, but I want to be understood...

Some people comment about my strong accent. Mostly this doesn't worry me and I take it as a compliment. I consider it to be part of my ethnic identity, of which I am proud. However, I could identify with Violeta's feelings. Sometimes I feel self-conscious and ill at ease. It depends on the context and the attitude of the listeners. I am aware that ethnic diversity is not always appreciated in New Zealand.

Alma, like Violeta, was motivated to learn English. Soon after her arrival she started attending a group for speakers of English as a second language in her community. Later on she attended the local High School and completed School Certificate English. In spite of this achievement, English was still an issue for her:

El idioma [inglés] para mi es una barrera, no es libertad. No me siento libre para hablar. Depende de la receptividad de la gente. No me gusta por nada que yo diga una cosa y que me corrijan... Como me han corregido tanto no me siento confiada de hablarlo [inglés].

Language [English] is a barrier for me, it's not liberating. I don't feel free to talk. It depends on how other people respond. I don't like it at all when I say something and someone corrects what I say.... I've been corrected so much

that I don't feel confident speaking in English... Sometimes I feel so funny! I am aware I use a lot of hand gestures to communicate...

Yo escribía con amor el inglés, pero me rechazaron tantas cosas que ya no quiero....

I used to feel good about writing in English, but so much of my work has been rejected, that I don't want to write in English any more.

The degree of confidence in a language can also depend, as Alma indicated, on the attitude of other people, which may seem discouraging and too critical at times. The process of language learning can be experienced as personally threatening. As Gabaccia (1994:121) suggests: "One cannot change languages and cultures without changing one's very being".

Contact With New Zealanders

As noted previously (see Chapter 1), while the majority of people in New Zealand are of British descent, there is within New Zealand/Aotearoa a diversity of people from many ethnic backgrounds. This study did not focus on the relationship of the participants with specific ethnic groups. It explored their interactions with non-Latin Americans in general. By this I mean the people with whom they came into contact in their everyday lives. This contact occurred in a variety of contexts such as work, community groups, schools, church, study and friendships.

As Gabaccia (1994:111) states, "foreign and native-born do not come together without preconceptions of each other". In the case of Latin Americans in New Zealand, due to their small numbers and the lack of contact which exists between New Zealand and their home countries, the image New Zealanders have is shaped to a large extent by the media, especially American movies and television. Latinos are often depicted negatively, with media attention focusing mainly on material poverty, drug scandals, and oppression. Other images present male Latinos as 'romantic, hot lovers' (Don Juan), and women as passive victims or as having a fiery temper. The effect of these images on the perception of Latinos in New Zealand is difficult to assess, and outside the scope of this thesis, but Violeta made an interesting comment in this topic:

La gente nos tiene un poco de miedo porque dicen que tenemos un caracter explosivo...

People get a bit scared because they think we have got an explosive temper..

The participants revealed that they had experienced mostly positive interactions with New Zealanders. For example Beatriz said:

Yo personalmente me he sentido aceptada. Me doy cuenta que cuando voy a los negocios y a otros lugares, a la gente le gusta mi acento. Me preguntan de donde soy. La gente me ha acogido, yo no me siento extranjera..

Personally, I have felt accepted. When I go to the shops and to other places people like my accent. They ask me where I come from. I feel welcomed, I don't feel like a foreigner...

This statement contrasted with comments about her early experiences in New Zealand (see Chapter 2). It indicated to me that a significant change in her earlier perception of herself as an 'outsider' had taken place .

Neither racism nor discrimination appeared to be issues for the participants. Overall, they found that being different was usually accepted and appreciated, as indicated by Violeta:

No me he encontrado con mucha gente racista que no les gusten los emigrantes como nosotros, que piensen que le venimos a tomar el trabajo. No me he encontrado con mucha de esa gente.

I haven't found many racist people who dislike us immigrants and think we are going to take their jobs. I haven't found many of those kind of people.

Me ven diferente, pero les gusta la diferencia... No me he sentido criticada por ser diferente, excepto que soy muy emocional. Pero a mi no me afecta, porque yo pienso que la emoción es una parte muy importante en la humanidad. Les gusta [a los neozlandeses] mi manera de ser, la manera de nosotros los Latinos, espontaneos, alegres.

They [New Zealanders] see me as being different, but they like the difference. I haven't felt criticised for being different, except for being too emotional. But that doesn't affect me, because I believe emotions are an important part of being human. New Zealanders like the way I am, the way we Latinos are - spontaneous, happy.

Celia's perceptions were similar to those of Violeta:

La mayoría de la gente con quien he tratado son gente que están un poquito interesadas en diferentes culturas. No me recuerdo ningún incidente que por mi raza o por ser diferente me haya sentido mal.

Most of the people I have mixed with have been interested in different cultures. I don't remember any incident where I have felt bad because of my race or for being different.

To Latinos and other immigrants New Zealanders may appear to be shy and reserved (see Jazbani, 1995: 166). This reserve does not necessarily imply a lack of interest; it may in fact be due to a fear of offending. Alma commented on how she sometimes felt:

A veces pienso que [los neozelandeses] no me ven. A veces pienso que yo paso y soy invisible en Nueva Zelanda. Yo muchas veces me siento invisible frente al mundo neozelandés. Cuando la gente me ha tocado es que tengo voz, cuando yo he querido abrir la boca y comunicarme. Pero el resto del tiempo entre los neozelandeses yo no existo.

Sometimes I think [New Zealanders] don't see me. Many times I feel invisible in New Zealand. When people make contact with me, I then feel I have a voice and want to communicate with them. The rest of the time it's like I don't exist.

The participants generally liked to be asked about their background and, as Violeta indicated, they liked to have their ethnicity acknowledged:

Me gusta que me pregunten. Sí, que me pregunten, así yo tengo oportunidad de decirles de donde soy y me ponen atención... No tengo ningún problema de decirles de donde vengo, porque vine..

I like it when they [New Zealanders] ask me questions. Yes, I like it because it gives me the opportunity to tell them where I come from and shows they are interested. I have no problem telling them where I come from and why I've come...

Over the last twenty years I have noticed an increased awareness of immigrant groups in the community, an awareness that has not always been welcoming. However, I have not usually experienced being Puerto Rican as a barrier in my interactions with New Zealanders. It could be argued that this reflects the absence of a substantial Latin American or Puerto Rican community, in contrast to the United States.

Being neither Pakeha nor Maori, at times I have also felt invisible in New Zealand like Alma. Many people seem to feel I will be embarrassed if they ask me where I am from. But I usually like to be asked. The question indicates to me that they acknowledge my ethnic identity.

Support Networks

The analysis of social networks is of increasing interest amongst migration scholars (e.g. Pohjola, 1991; Boyd, 1989). In the absence of their own extended family networks, the participants have created a supportive community around themselves consisting of Latinos, New Zealanders and immigrants of other backgrounds. Alma, Celia and Beatriz considered their close Latina friends as their family. Alma highlighted this in her comments:

Existe una comunidad latina a la cual yo pertenezco... Es la comunidad que yo me he hecho. Es como vivir en familia. A veces uno quiere vivir en familia y tiene uno que otro amigo. Para mi mis amigas latinas son mi familia y los amigos Kiwis que yo he hecho entonces son mis amigos. Yo me acomodé el espíritu...

The Latin American community I am part of consists of my close friends. It is like living within a family. For me my Latina friends are like my family, and my Kiwi friends are just my friends. This way my spirit has adjusted to living here...

Violeta, on the other hand, did not make a distinction between Latinos and Kiwis within her support networks:

Yo no hago separación entre los amigos Kiwis y los Latinos. Para mi los Latinos son importantes porque tenemos un origen en común. Los pongo juntos con los Kiwis porque para mi la amistad es una. Si tengo algún problema emocional voy a los amigos, a la persona con quien puedo confiar, no necesariamente Latino, puede ser Kiwi. Para mi los amigos Kiwis y los Latinos son iguales, no puedo hacer diferencia. No tengo muchos amigos Kiwis pero los que tengo son buenos. Igual que los Latinos, no puedo decir que tengo muchos pero los que tengo son especiales.

Latinos are important for me, because of our common background. But I have equal regard for both Latino and Kiwi friends. In my view, friendship transcends such differences. When I have emotional problems I talk to friends I can trust, either Latinos or Kiwis. I don't have many Kiwi friends, but the ones I have are good. It is the same for Latinos, I don't have many but the ones I have are special to me.

CITIZENSHIP AND IDENTITY

Only Celia and Violeta have taken New Zealand citizenship. I asked all the participants what meaning they attached to having or not having New Zealand citizenship. Their responses indicated that their sense of identity was strongly linked to their home countries. For all of them it was clear that living in New Zealand for many years and having citizenship or permanent residency did not imply changing their ethnic identity. By their reaction also I got the impression that my question was somewhat offensive to them. Celia's response was typical:

Para mi [la ciudadanía] es un pedazo de papel que hace mi vida más fácil en este país. No cambia el hecho que yo soy Guatemalteca de la punta de la cabeza a la punta del pie. Yo no tengo absolutamente nada en contra de Nueva Zealandia. Mis hijos nacieron acá. Estoy muy agradecida de la ayuda que me ha dado... Pero de sentirme yo Kiwi... nunca voy a ser Kiwi. Que hables la lengua, que aprendas a comer las comidas de ellos, que cambies tu manera de ser para poder sobrevivir, no cambia lo que tienes adentro.

For me it [citizenship] is only a piece of paper which makes life easier for me in this country. It doesn't change the fact that I am Guatemalan from the tip of my head to my toes. I don't have anything against New Zealand. My children were born here. I am very grateful for the help I have received in this country. But this doesn't mean I feel like a Kiwi. I will never be a Kiwi. I can speak their language, I have learned to eat their food, I have changed my ways in order to survive here, but I haven't changed what I feel inside.

While recognising the common bond they have with other Latinos, the participants have each continued to identify themselves with the ethnic group of their country of origin.

No me siento neozelandesa, ni me siento ciudadana del universo, ni me siento Latinoamericana. Me siento Peruana y nada más. Venir aquí me ha dado la oportunidad de conocer a otros Latino Americanos que yo no conocía. Entonces mi vida se ha ampliado, mis horizontes, mi manera de pensar, porque ahora conozco un poco de otros países.

I don't feel like a New Zealander, nor a citizen of the universe, nor Latin American. I feel Peruvian, that's all. Here I've had the opportunity to meet other Latin Americans. Knowing about their countries has widened my horizons and my thinking.

Yo soy Argentina, Latinoamericana. Que yo haya cambiado ideas no significa que yo sea neozelandesa, no. Que yo tome lo bueno que tiene este país no quiere decir que cambie. Yo sigo siendo Latinoamericana, Argentina, con mis pensamientos, mis sentimientos, con mi música, con mis comidas, con lo que me enseñaron y me inculcaron.

I am Argentinian and Latin American. The fact that I've changed some ideas doesn't mean I am a New Zealander. No. I can take what's good about this country and continue to be Latin American, Argentinian, with my thoughts, my feelings, my music, my own food and with what I've been taught [in my country].

I was interested in exploring to what extent the participants felt part of the New Zealand community and to what extent they felt that they had roots in New Zealand. Celia made a distinction between the deep roots that connect her with her home country and the smaller, more superficial roots she developed here:

Mis hijos todos nacieron aquí. Yo tengo ya muchos años de estar viviendo en este país. Las raíces que tengo aquí no son como las raíces que tengo en Guatemala, que son raíces que van a fondo. Pero este país ha sido un buen país para mí. Aquí vivo ahora, aquí trabajo, aquí tengo amistades, aquí he hecho mi vida. Las raíces de a fondo son las que vienen de Guatemala y ahí es donde quiero terminar.

All my children were born here. I've lived in this country for many years. The roots I have here are not like the roots I have in Guatemala, which are so deep. This country has been good to me. Here is where I live, where I work, where I have friends, and where I have developed a way of life for myself. My deep roots are in Guatemala, where I want to end my days.

From Alma's perspective, feeling part of the community involved participation in activities which cost money. Financial pressure was a major constraint for her:

En realidad no me he envuelto mucho. No voy de compras, excepto a comprar comida. No conozco las tiendas, ni los restaurantes, nada de lo que es comercial. Nada que use dinero, porque no lo tengo. Mi vida cambió mucho en ese sentido. En Perú yo conocía las tiendas, iba de compras, iba a los restaurantes... Aquí solamente salgo a comer el Día de la Madre...

The reality is that I haven't been too involved. I don't go shopping except to buy groceries. I don't know the shops, restaurants, or anything commercial. Nothing that needs money, because I don't have any. My life changed a lot in

that respect. In Perú I knew the shops, I used to go shopping, to restaurants... Here I only eat out on Mothers' Day.

Overall, in contrast to their early experience, the participants saw themselves as contributing in valuable ways to the community, in terms of work, children, language, and ethnic perspective. This was highlighted by Beatriz:

Yo creo que si bien no soy neozelandesa de alguna manera estoy aportando algo a Nueva Zelandia. Estoy aportando mis hijos que algun día estudiaran y serán algo. Estoy aportando parte de mi cultura. Si, tengo raíces en este país, no me siento extranjera. Me siento que soy parte de la comunidad. Me siento incluida... Estamos aportando algo. Yo siento que estamos aportando con nuestra cultura... el hecho de tener hijos que saben otro idioma, hijos que tienen otra manera de ver las cosas.

Yo soy parte de la comunidad. Estoy interesada en lo que está pasando. No me siento marginada para nada... Quisiera ser más parte. Ahora yo creo que es el momento de ser parte de grupos [de la comunidad], de tener más contacto. Quizás salir un poco del grupo Latinoamericano, donde yo me siento tan protegida, para tener más contacto con la gente, si es que voy a vivir más años acá.

Even though I am not a New Zealander, I contribute something to this country. My children are studying and one day they will work here. I am sharing part of my culture... Yes, I have roots in this country. I don't feel like a foreigner, I am part of the community. I feel included. I feel we are contributing some of our culture, for instance our children know another language and a different way of thinking.

I am part of the community. I am interested in what is going on. I don't feel at all marginalised. I would like to become more involved. I think now is the right time for me to become involved with community groups and have more contact [with New Zealanders]. Perhaps the time has come for me to spend less time with the Latin American group where I feel safe, in order to have more contact with other people....

Much of what the participants have experienced in the process of adapting to living in New Zealand is also true for me. The journey has involved changing from initially feeling marginalised and excluded, to finding ways to accommodate to the new cultural and social environment, integrating my Puerto Rican and Latin American culture with the new context. Sometimes people say to me, "You must be a Kiwi after being here so long", meaning it as a compliment. My usual answer is, "No, I am not a Kiwi, I am Puerto Rican." To be part of the New Zealand society I do not have to give up my ethnic identity.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on aspects relating to the participants' integration into New Zealand society. Several features emerged from the interviews. First, there were differences in terms of their English language skills, differences related to aspects such as: the length of stay in New Zealand; their contact with English speakers; the attitudes of English speakers; the language spoken at home; and their motivation to learn.

Second, the participants viewed their interactions with New Zealanders as being usually positive. Neither racism nor discrimination seemed to be issues for them, as Kiwis seemed to accept their ethnicity. Third, Beatriz, Violeta and Celia indicated that they had developed roots in New Zealand and felt part of the community. I noticed a sharp contrast here in comparison to their experiences as new migrants. Alma's ambivalent position probably reflected the fact that she had been in New Zealand for a much shorter period of time than the other three. Fourth, the participants had developed support networks which consisted of Latinos, other immigrants and New Zealanders. Most of them considered their Latin American friends as their close family, an understandable view given the absence of kin from their extended families. Finally, while recognising and appreciating the common bonds with other Latinos, the participants nevertheless strongly linked their personal ethnicity with their individual countries of origin. In this regard neither the length of time in New Zealand, nor New Zealand citizenship seemed to make a difference .

These findings demonstrate that integration for the participants has involved maintaining their cultural identity, while changing some of its aspects and combining it with elements of the new society. They have been engaged in and to varying degrees have accomplished the difficult task of constructing a meaningful identity for themselves, bringing together the past and the present in order to move forward towards the future.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

It takes a broad vision to know that a piece of the sky and a chunk of the earth lie lodged in the heart of every human being, and if we are going to care for that heart we will have to know the sky and earth as well as human behaviour.

(Moore, 1992:20)

This chapter reviews the research findings of the study in the light of the initial objectives and highlights the main themes which have emerged. It makes linkages between the findings, the literature presented in Chapter 1, and the feminist theoretical perspective which underpins the study. It also includes recommendations for social policy, social work practice and for future research, and concludes with a personal reflection.

MAKING CONNECTIONS: OBJECTIVES, THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

The objectives of this study have been: first, to examine the influence of migration and resettlement on gender relations and family relationships; second, to examine the influence of migration and resettlement on the interaction of paid employment and domestic arrangements; third, to examine the relationship between ethnic identity and the process of integration into New Zealand society; and finally to explore the experiences of the participants in maintaining their ethnic identity and cultural heritage. The starting point was my own need to articulate and understand my personal experience as a Puerto Rican woman in New Zealand, and the research questions therefore reflected my desire to explore the contradictions, conflicts and tensions in my life. In merging the public and private domains, my experiences and those of the participants have been placed in a wider context; the personal and private becoming political and public.

I would like to reiterate that the objective of this study was not to search for so-called objective diagnoses, causes and explanations, but to record and recognise the views and experiences of the participants. This objective reflects the feminist perspective and methodology described in Chapters 1 and 2. My experience of the research process reinforced for me the advantages of using this methodology, both in terms of the quality of the data produced and in creating bonds of solidarity with the participants. Furthermore, my identification as a Latin American migrant woman was crucial to the quality of the study's findings. Knowing that their voices were heard by someone who understood the kind of experiences migrant women have, gave the participants confidence - in themselves and in the value of the study.

Differences and Commonalities

The migration experience of the participants certainly reflected the criteria suggested by Jackson (1986) and noted in Chapter 1. First, the movement to another society thousands of miles away from their homes was a very significant upheaval. Second, although they initially expected the migration to be temporary, it was definitely sustained and gradually became more permanent. Third, the movement definitely involved social change in many areas, including gender relations, parenting, support networks, domestic arrangements and employment. Living their daily lives in New Zealand involved confronting challenges and a great deal of negotiation in the process of constructing a meaningful identity in a new society. This process entailed both the maintenance of some of the cultural values of their societies of origin, and the adoption of new values and patterns of behaviour.

The findings of this study indicate that contextual factors play an important role in the experiences of immigrant women. The tensions they experience, the opportunities they encounter and the strategies they adopt, reflect the interaction between the individual, the family, the community and society at large. In order to have a genuine understanding and appreciation of the experiences of the participants it is therefore necessary to consider not only the New Zealand context, but to cross social and

cultural 'borders' and thereby to consider their experiences in the context of the cultures, communities and families from which they came.

I am aware of the danger in making generalisations based on experiences which are complex and in many ways unique to each of the participants. They each came from a different society with its own socio-cultural context. Their circumstances of migration were also different. For example, the pre-migration experiences of Violeta, who came as a refugee, had a dimension in which economic necessity and political factors were intertwined. She also seemed to have played a more active role than the other participants in the migration decision-making process and her early experiences in New Zealand reflected the impact of this country's refugee policies and practices.

There were also significant differences among the other three participants. For example, Celia's and Beatriz's decision to come was not based on the desire to migrate and start a new life. They expected to return to their home countries after a relatively short visit. The constraints of their positions, and their perceived lack of freedom of choice, meant that they resented being here in New Zealand. This state of mind coloured their experiences in many ways for quite a long time. Alma, on the other hand, made a conscious decision to come, and had the expectation of staying for a significant period of time, and therefore her attitudes and feelings about being here were rather more positive.

Other significant differences among the participants were in the areas of domesticity, paid work, and their pre-migration knowledge of English. For example, in their home countries Alma and Celia were involved in paid employment and were used to having paid domestic help, while in New Zealand their primary role was expected to be centred around the domestic sphere. This contrast was a factor in the difficulties and tensions they experienced. Celia, like myself, had previously lived in an English-speaking country and had a reasonable knowledge of the language. Before her first child was born this language knowledge facilitated her participation in paid employment in New Zealand. Similarly, the fact that Alma could understand and speak some English helped her to make contacts with others and to negotiate some aspects of her daily life. In contrast, Beatriz and Violeta could not speak or understand English

when they arrived, and this was a major factor in their experience of extreme isolation as new immigrants.

However, in spite of the differences among the participants and the uniqueness of their individual experiences, common themes have emerged in each of the areas examined in the study. These themes are discussed in the following sections.

Migration, Gender Relations and Status

As noted in Chapter 1, gender interaction and the status of women can be related to any of the roles society ascribes to them as individuals, wives, mothers, housewives, kin, community members and paid and unpaid workers. So in considering the impact of migration on the participants it is necessary to look not only at their individual circumstances and their position within the family but also at their roles and position in the society. It is also important to compare their pre-migration position in their own countries to that in New Zealand, relative to other women.

This study demonstrates that migration is a complex process with particular characteristics at various stages. The position of the participants at the time of the interview, after a number of years in New Zealand, contrasted with their initial experiences as new migrants. They came from Latin American societies which appeared to be structurally more patriarchal than New Zealand. However, overall, in their home countries they occupied a less marginal position than they did in New Zealand during the initial stages of resettlement, in regard to employment, involvement with the community, kin and family. In New Zealand their status in these areas was initially undermined for a variety of reasons which included: financial and social dependency on their spouses; increased isolation in their homes; language barriers; lack of child care support; and downward mobility in terms of employment. These changes had an impact on their well-being and family relationships.

New Zealand, like many other countries, is not a gender neutral society and the status of women in general is not equivalent to that of men. The report *Women in New Zealand* (Department of Statistics, 1990:10), states that:

...despite the favourable circumstances of most New Zealand women in relation to women in many overseas countries, and substantial intervention by the state over the past two decades in the interest of their legal and economic equality, women still do not enjoy the same range of opportunities and life chances as men.

Inequalities between men and women in New Zealand are evident in areas such as employment, income and the domestic division of labour. For example, in terms of income in 1984-1985, women's pre-tax income from all sources was only 48 per cent of men's (Household Income and Expenditure Survey 1984-1985, cited in Briar, 1992:43). There is no doubt, therefore, that the participants came to a society in which gender differences were still socially and economically embedded (see also Bunkle and Hughes, 1980). Nevertheless, from their perspective, New Zealand society was more egalitarian than their societies of origin in terms of gender roles. Indeed, because of opportunities offered by New Zealand, one of the major post-migration changes experienced by the participants has been in their perception of themselves as women. As a result they have gained confidence in their own abilities and have become more independent. In doing so, they have emerged from their initial position of powerlessness and alienation. This experience they have in common with other migrant women, as suggested in the report of the United Nations Expert Group (1995:9). Such changes, however, may ultimately make it very difficult for the participants to fit back in their home countries. As Celia put it:

Tendría que hacer muchos cambios otra vez. Yo no sé si será posible. Yo creo que nunca sería otra vez la mujercita sumisa Guatemalteca. Si sucede [que regrese] en el futuro yo tendría que tener la independencia económica para poder vivir y mantenerme a mi misma. Yo me he vuelto tan independiente que no podría depender más de nadie... A veces pienso que es un sueño y que me iría rebien y otras veces pienso que no podría acomodarme allá otra vez porque me he 'Kiwizado' mucho.

I would have to make many changes again. I don't know if it would be possible. I think I will never again be a submissive Guatemalan woman. If in the future I go back, I would have to be economically independent and support myself. I have become so independent that I couldn't depend on anyone any more. Sometimes I dream of returning and think it would be great. Other times I think I wouldn't get used to living there again, because I have been 'Kiwi-ized' too much.

Family Relationships

The findings of this study also show that the impact of migration and resettlement on the family is inextricably linked to the cultural and socio-economic context. In the sphere of culture, the participants on arrival entered a society with contrasting dominant values based on individualism, the nuclear family home, and with an emphasis on the separation of the public and private arenas. In terms of the economic context, Beatriz and Alma encountered a society which was going through restructuring and increased unemployment. This was particularly significant for Alma, whose partner lost his job soon after their arrival, and in spite of his efforts was unable to find work. The financial and emotional consequences of this situation added considerable strain to their relationship. Globally, their experiences were located within an era characterised by political instability and economic recession in many countries. In such a social climate, international migrants are “viewed as liabilities rather than assets” (United Nations Expert Group, 1995:9).

All four participants have divorced or separated from their partners since their arrival in New Zealand. The significance of this feature in relation to migration is difficult to determine. It obviously involves complex personal aspects, some of which relate to their pre-migration circumstances. For example, Violeta stated that her marriage had deteriorated considerably before migration. On the other hand, the other three participants indicated that it was in New Zealand that tensions started to affect their relationships. While Alma stressed economic factors, Beatriz and Celia linked the break-up of their marriages to stresses resulting from homesickness and the lack of kin support.

Living without the emotional and practical support of their extended families and close friends has been extremely challenging for all the participants. The study’s findings have clearly illustrated the sense of loss, loneliness and isolation they experienced. Nevertheless, they have shown courage, strength and persistence as they carried on ‘against all the odds’ (or ‘contra viento y marea’, literally translated as ‘against the wind and the tide’). The four participants have each continued to feel a solid sense of commitment and responsibility towards their kin back home. They gave priority to

maintaining contact with their loved ones, even though this involved an enormous drain on their financial resources, especially during return trips to their home countries.

Another significant impact of migration has been in the area of parenting. A common theme among all the participants was the loss of parental authority they experienced in the face of New Zealand family values which emphasise individualism and independence. The fact that children in New Zealand are given more freedom, and become independent at an earlier age than in Latin America, has been a source of tension. As mothers they were under pressure to give their children more freedom and felt caught between this demand and their own cultural values.

In New Zealand the parenting role of the participants was expanded to fill gaps caused by the absence of an extended family. It also included the additional responsibility of transmitting to their children their language, cultural norms and values. Understandably, they sometimes felt overwhelmed by the many different roles they were expected to perform.

Paid Work and Domesticity

The findings of this study challenge the stereotype of migrant women as being uneducated and backward. In common with other well-educated migrant women, the participants initially experienced a downward shift in terms of paid employment and status. This reflected their family life-cycle stage, their domestic responsibilities, the problem of child care, their limited knowledge of English and the lack of recognition of their previous qualifications and skills.

The participants both complied with and resisted the dominant ideology of women as dependents, mothers and housewives. From the beginning, paid employment was an economic necessity to meet everyday needs, to send money to family overseas or to pay for trips back home. The importance given to employment, in terms of having a sense of self-worth and their integration in the community, was also evident. The strategies adopted by the participants included: working part-time when the children were at school; taking the children to work; and doing home-based work, such as

typing and Spanish tutoring. Like many other women, the combination of home-based work and part-time work fulfilled both the need to gain an income and the demands of their roles as mothers. This obviously involved a double burden of paid work and domestic duties.

The study's findings support the suggestion that immigrant women tend to have more involvement in paid employment the longer they stay in a country. For example, Celia and Violeta, who came to New Zealand in the early 1970s, had both obtained full-time employment by the time of the interview. They were able to gain further qualifications and skills as they became more confident in English and their parenting responsibilities lessened, enabling them to secure employment and attain financial independence. Alma, who came in the early 1990s, and Beatriz, who came in the early 1980s, had young children and consequently combined paid part-time work with their domestic responsibilities.

Language and Culture Maintenance

The concept of culture is complex and full of ambiguity. Bottomley (1992:71) points out that in a good deal of the migration literature: " 'Culture' has been either reified - in the emphasis on tradition - or marginalised - as irrelevant or ideological." Yet, as Bottomley (1992:71) suggests, culture is "both centrally important and constantly in process".

It is common for immigrants and refugees to attempt to reconstruct the familiar as a way to cope with separation and loss. The creation of collective symbolic expressions is also a means of resistance "for a community of uprooted people" (Eastmond, 1993:40). Thus cultural reconstruction in the new context takes on a special significance as a strategy for resisting assimilation. The participants highlighted the importance they gave to ensuring a degree of continuity with the culture of their societies of origin. They gave emphasis not only to the retention of the Spanish language, but to some extent to family values and norms. They viewed their role as central in this regard.

The Latin American community in New Zealand is small and consists of people from many different countries. It is not a cohesive, close-knit group with strict boundaries between the group and the host community, as might be the case for other ethnic groups. For the participants, maintaining their ethnic identity, largely without the support of a group of people from their own nationality, has involved a great deal of innovation. As pointed out by Eastmond (1993:41): "Defining a collective identity and a heritage as part of a political process to legitimate claims, often involves revitalising or 'inventing' traditions." The participants developed a Latin American identity in the community, while preserving their individual national identity. Barnard (1996:56) also noted this tendency among Latin Americans in Auckland.

For myself and the participants, trips to our home countries and contact with extended families have been of central significance in maintaining our culture. Other strategies adopted in this area have included: having frequent contact with other Latinos; speaking in Spanish as often as possible; and participation in group cultural activities such as festivals and celebrations. For my children and myself, participation in a Latin American culture and music performing group has been of special significance.

As pointed out by Bottomley (1992:51): "Even where people remain firmly in one place, customs and beliefs handed down from generation to generation do not remain unchanged." In terms of the maintenance of norms and values the participants highlighted their attempts at instilling cultural values in their children in areas such as hospitality at home and the expression of feelings. In particular, the notion of respect for parental authority was found by the participants to be difficult to maintain in New Zealand. It is not easy to counteract the overwhelming dominance of the Anglo-Saxon, New Zealand culture and language. The experiences of the participants show that cultural change and continuity go hand in hand. It was necessary for them to adopt some values and norms from the mainstream culture and combine these with aspects of their own cultures.

The dilemma faced by minority groups is highlighted by Nelde (1989, cited in Holmes, 1996:24):

The individual, and often the entire language group, is confronted with the alternative of either asserting himself (*sic*) against the outside influence and thereby creating a conflict situation, or adapting himself (*sic*) and thereby relinquishing something of its own identity.

Success in the transmission of the Spanish language to their children depended to a large extent on the language spoken in their homes. I would suggest, however, that the difficulties encountered by the participants in this area were located not only at the level of the family, but also at the structural level. The attitude of the community towards appreciation and acceptance of difference is a major factor in the retention and transmission of a minority language (see Holmes, 1993). The findings of the study highlight that the presence of a Latin American community is essential to provide both the motivation for learning and a meaningful context for language use. This implies that parents need encouragement and support not only within their families but from the community where they live.

Having the dual role of English learner and Spanish teacher to their children can be difficult for parents to negotiate. The difficulties experienced by the participants reflected the contradiction inherent in living with both the demands of integration to the new society and the need to maintain their language and culture. This contradiction also applied to situations where their children's need to be accepted in the new environment conflicted with the mothers' emphasis on cultural difference.

Identity and Cultural Change

*Cambia, todo cambia,
así como todo cambia,
que yo cambie no es extraño.
Y lo que cambió ayer
tendrá que cambiar mañana,
así como cambio yo
en esta tierra lejana.
Pero no cambia mi amor
por más lejos que me encuentre,
ni el recuerdo, ni el dolor
de mi pueblo y de mi gente.*

Changes, everything changes,
 so it is not strange that I change.
 What changed yesterday
 would have to change tomorrow,
 in the same way I change
 in this far away land.
 But my love, my memories, my pain
 do not change no matter how far away
 I may be.

(Song by Julio Numhauser)

At the end of each interview the participant was invited to consider what significant changes had taken place in her perceptions, behaviour and ideas during her time in New Zealand. Responding to this challenge the participants posed questions such as the following: To what extent was there a causal relationship between these changes and their immigration experiences? What changes would have taken place in their home countries anyway? They acknowledged that there were no easy answers to these questions. Nevertheless it was clear to them that in New Zealand they had developed some behaviours and ideas which were different to the ones they brought from their home countries. They also recognised that there had been a mixture of gains and losses as a result of this process.

The conditions for the learning of English conflicted with those for Spanish language maintenance. Participants who spoke English at home obviously had a greater confidence in their English language skills. Proficiency in the English language, unsurprisingly, was also related to the length of stay in New Zealand, to access to language classes and to contact with English speakers. Their need to learn English was in conflict with their need to retain fluency in their first language and their role as teachers of Spanish to their children. Negotiating this cultural tight rope involved tensions within themselves, within the family and in their interactions at the community level. In handling the competing demands in their daily interactions they were faced with having to make choices. For example, Violeta spoke English with her children in order to improve her accent and to feel more comfortable in her interactions in her work setting.

Like many other immigrants (see Chapter 1), all the participants had experienced a sense of 'liminality' at some stage; the feeling of 'sitting on the fence', not belonging anywhere. The powerlessness of this position was felt in particular by Celia and Beatriz in their early years in New Zealand. The importance of making their own decision to stay in New Zealand, therefore, cannot be underestimated in terms of their integration into the new society.

A clear picture did not emerge with regard to the attitudes of New Zealanders toward the ethnicity of the participants. Their interactions with New Zealanders generally conveyed acceptance of their ethnic difference. Discrimination and racism did not appear to be an issue for them. The process of integration involved a movement from a marginal position as 'outsiders' to mostly feeling accepted, and to some extent feeling part of the community.

The significant changes which had taken place in this process, and the support gained from other Latinas and New Zealanders, gave them confidence in their ability to live a meaningful life in New Zealand. They built new support networks which mended to some extent the dislocation they experienced as a result of migration. Their circles of support consisted of both New Zealanders and Latinos, but most of them regarded their Latina friends as being their 'close family' in New Zealand. Regular contact with Latinas created a space where their needs were understood and their common identity appreciated.

In spite of having close bonds with other Latinos, the participants' ethnic identity was closely linked to their individual home countries. They each described themselves as "Peruana", "Argentina", "Guatemalteca" and "Chilena" (Peruvian, Argentinean, Guatemalan and Chilean). Their ethnicity was of crucial importance to each of them, regardless of whether or not they had taken New Zealand citizenship or the length of time they had lived here. This is also true for me. First and foremost I am proud to be "Puertorriqueña" (Puerto Rican). However, in the absence of other Puerto Ricans in New Zealand, I have developed strong bonds of solidarity with people of other Latin American countries. These bonds have made it possible for me to remain connected to

my cultural roots in a meaningful way. Without the support of my Latina friends this would have been much harder.

For them, and myself, integration was not about losing one's ethnic identity and becoming assimilated into the New Zealand social fabric. Integration is a dynamic process of give and take, involving both continuity and change. I would argue that integration is also about change within the host society. It is about: cross-cultural understanding and an appreciation of diversity; creating opportunities for immigrants to retain their cultural heritages; and about encouraging strategies which facilitate, sustain and enhance the well-being of members of ethnic minority groups.

I, like the participants, move in two cultures. This is a common theme in the writings of many immigrant women, of which the poem by Irini Pappa (cited in Ganguly, 1995:223) is one example:

Its time you understood
that I have not just one
but two allegiances.
Neither to one am I pledged totally
nor fully to the other.
My life is rich
richer than yours twice over
because I've found my niche in both.

STAYING OR RETURNING

All the participants have considered returning to live in their home countries. They have weighed the positive and negative aspects of this difficult decision, and for most this was still an issue. Differences as well as common themes can be identified in their arguments.

For Celia, Alma and Beatriz the education and economic future of their school age children were important considerations. Beatriz illustrated this point as follows:

Por ahora pienso que económicamente es mejor este país para mis chicos... Pienso que yo tenía que haberme vuelto, si es que volvía, antes que los chicos se fueran a la escuela. Ahora siento que es un poco tarde para que los chicos empiezen otra educación. Es una de las cosas que me retiene en ese país. Los chicos tienen la mitad de la escuela en este país...

At the moment I think that economically this country is better for my children. If I was going to leave, I should have left before the children started school. Now I think it's a bit late for them to start in a new school system. That's one of the things that keeps me in this country. The children have done half of their education in this country...

As second-generation Latin Americans in New Zealand, their children may not be interested in returning. Alma was naturally concerned about the implication of this:

No me gustaría que los niños se acostumbren aquí y no quisieran volver a la patria. Yo tendría que quedarme porque no los voy a dejar. Es una situación muy difícil, porque si ellos se hacen adolescentes y pasan aquí, entonces su círculo de amistad lo tienen aquí...

I wouldn't like my children to get used to living here and refuse to return to their homeland. I would have to stay then because I will not leave them. It is a very difficult situation because if they become adolescents here they would have their friends here...

Violeta was the only participant who was clear about her decision to stay here permanently:

Yo no veo la razón de volver porque la gente con la cual yo tenía contacto ya no va a estar, y mis hijos están acá. Volvería si tuviera dinero de visitar pero no a quedarme porque yo estaría sola. Aquí están mis hijos y mis nietos.

I don't see any reason for returning, because the people I used to have contact with won't be there any more, and my children are here. I would return for a visit if I had the money, but not to stay because I would be alone there. Here I have my children and grandchildren.

The other participants, however, had not given up the idea of one day returning to their home countries to live. But if this was not possible they said they would like to die or to be buried there. Beatriz, Alma and Celia, highlighted their concerns in this area:

Nunca pienso que voy a quedarme permanentemente. Pienso que aunque sea muerta volveré a mi tierra.

I never think I will stay here permanently. For sure, at least when I die I will return to my homeland.

He pensado en regresar porque no me gustaría morirme aquí en Nueva Zelanda. No me gustaría envejecer aquí.

I have thought about returning, because I wouldn't like to die here in New Zealand. I wouldn't even like to get old here.

Una de las cosas que para mí es importante es que yo no quiero ser enterrada acá cuando muera. Es algo que siento muy fuerte.

One thing that is very important for me is that I don't want to be buried here. It is something I feel very strongly about.

A spiritual perspective provides another way of looking at issues of ethnic identity and migration. This insight was a gift from Violeta:

Porque no es el lugar donde vives, es lo espiritual, lo que hay en ti. Tú puedes vivir en cualquier parte pero lo que hay en ti va siempre contigo. Mis raíces étnicas van siempre conmigo. Yo no voy a perder eso aunque esté aquí. Yo soy Chilena pero ésta es mi casa ahora...

In my view the important things are spiritual, not the place where you live. You can live anywhere, but what's inside you will always go with you. My ethnic roots are always with me. I am not going to lose them because I live here. I am Chilean, but I have my home here now...

I also sometimes think about returning to live in my country of birth. I still feel deep within myself a sense of loss for my culture and my family, for the people who saw me grow up, for the mountains and the warmth of sandy beaches. Most of all I would like to live close to my family, yet it is not easy for me to go back. After living here for so long I would have to start all over again. Puerto Rico has undergone many changes in my absence, and I have lost touch with most of my friends. I have grown-up children and a grandson in New Zealand. Like Violeta, these are new roots which help to keep me here.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Implications for Practice

The theories and models used in social work practice can become the oppressive instruments of the dominant culture when applied to the situations and needs of immigrants and other ethnic minorities. Social workers and other helping professionals often reflect the values of the centre (dominant) culture, as highlighted by Waldegrave and Tamasese (1994: 123):

Education and religion are the mighty swords of colonialism and assimilation. More dangerously, the helping professions, because they are usually defined by the centre culture along with its meaning system, impose both therapy and models on people of other cultures tearing them away from the centre of their belonging, their culture.

In Aotearoa/New Zealand the greater awareness of Maori culture and the Treaty of Waitangi during the 1980s have influenced social work practice and education. As Ruwhiu (1994:137) noted:

...parts of the social service delivery system in Aotearoa are transforming rapidly as Maori people continue to advance their views, perception, knowledge and practice as legitimate and valid. On the other hand, the imperialism and colonisation mentality continues to pervasively intrude, by creating barriers that inhibit the opportunities to experience, as Freire (1972, 1985) put it, true freedom from oppression.

As a result of this increased awareness of Maori issues and perspectives, the New Zealand Association of Social Workers has introduced a system of competency assessment to establish practice standards which uses assessment procedures acceptable to Maori and based on a Bicultural Code of Practice (see Beddoe and Randal, 1994).

Another important influence in the development of culturally safe social work practice was the introduction of the Children and Young Persons and their Families Act in 1989. This act embraces Maori concepts and views in the involvement of the family in decision-making processes (see Bradley, 1994). It has changed to some extent the

practice of social work, shifting the focus from the individual to include the extended family.

The changes over the last decade towards cultural safety in social work reflect a recognition of the position of Maori as *Tangata Whenua* and the necessity to redress past injustices. I would argue that these changes are a crucial first step toward recognition of the centrality of culture in social work delivery with other ethnic groups. As stated in Chapter 1, the importance of appreciating cultural difference in New Zealand, has been reinforced by the recent influx of immigrants and refugees from Asia and other countries. In the human services professions of health, social welfare and education this move toward pluralism or multiculturalism has implications for service delivery. There is a growing awareness of the need to structure services to take into account the diversity of cultures.

It is my hope that the voices of the participants and the findings of this study will reach social work professionals and others who come into contact with immigrant women. This would be an opportunity to learn from (not about) immigrant women, and to appreciate the complexities and contradictions present in their lives. It is of crucial importance to recognise that the experience of migration and resettlement is unique to each individual. This may lead to dialogue, to the building of alliances and the provision of more effective services. However, the findings of this study have highlighted some common themes which may alert us to possible issues or areas of difficulty.

The importance of immigrant women having the support of people of the same or similar background has been highlighted in this study. In particular, the support of other women dealing with similar issues can be instrumental in diminishing the conflicts, isolation and loneliness faced by the new immigrant. This needs to be taken into account by helping professionals in terms of linking women with the most appropriate support networks in the community.

It is important also for practitioners working in cross-cultural situations to understand the degree to which cultural conflict may constitute a major source of difficulty for

individuals and families. Migration and the process of resettlement presses people to take different values and roles in order to cope. These shifts, as suggested by Pinderhughes (1989:6), can threaten “the balance that existed in role function, jeopardising both family and individual functioning.” When immigrants present themselves to social service practitioners as clients it would be to the advantage of both parties if practitioners first established the cultural backgrounds of clients and the nature and circumstances of their relocation and resettlement.

Implications for Policy

In the light of the findings of this study there are several social policy implications I would like to comment on. First, I wish to endorse Waite’s recommendation, that both informal and formal English classes be made available to suit a variety of needs, with special attention given to mothers with young children (Waite, 1992a:27). In New Zealand the dominance of the English language is evident in most domains. I would argue, as suggested by Eckert (1980, cited in Holmes, 1996:24) that:

...it is imposed from above in the form of administrative, ritual or standard language. By virtue of its political and economic status, this language becomes requisite for access to power and mobility within the society.

The findings of this study illustrate the implication and effects of low levels of English language proficiency for immigrants, in terms of lack of access to information services, employment, and community participation.

Second, the difficulties that many new immigrant women (and men) experience would be lessened by the wider availability of information and interpreting services provided in a culturally appropriate manner. Access to government services and information for all New Zealanders, regardless of their cultural and linguistic background, has become an issue of equity and social justice. Under the Human Rights Act 1993 every individual has the right to an interpreter when dealing with the law, health service providers, during elections and when applying for a driver’s licence (Kasanji, 1995:7).

But what about the needs of non-English speaking migrants in a broad range of other areas of day-to-day life?

The necessity of providing training for interpreters has been recognised, especially in Auckland. In 1990 the first Community Interpreting Course was introduced by the Auckland Institute of Technology to train interpreters for Auckland Hospitals (Fenton, 1991). Interpreting Training Courses have also been developed in other areas such as Wellington and Tokoroa (see de Ruyter, 1992). A further development was the recent publication called *Let's Talk* by the Ethnic Affairs Service introducing guidelines for government agencies hiring interpreters (Kasanji, 1995). These developments are welcomed but more resources appear to be needed if the demand for services arising from recent changes in immigration is to be met effectively.

Third, the personal, social, economic and cultural benefits of bilingualism have already been widely recognised (see Holmes, 1996; 1993). In the light of the findings of this study I would therefore support the promotion of community languages, as proposed by Waite (1992:20):

To ensure that children from non-English speaking backgrounds have the opportunity to maintain their first language into adulthood, support is needed for parents who want to maintain the language in the home setting, for linguistic communities to take the initiative to establish their own language programmes, as well as for schools who choose to introduce community languages into their curricula.

I would argue that unless measures are put in place to promote community ethnic languages, their loss will impoverish not only individuals who belong to these communities, but the New Zealand community as a whole.

Richmond Road primary school in Auckland is an example of a school which has tried to redress the uncritical acceptance of the majority language by incorporating other languages and cultures throughout its curriculum (see May, 1992; Cazden, 1989). One of the main concerns of Richmond Road school is to empower minority children by recognising the languages and cultures they bring to the school. The two central tenets of the school's educational philosophy were outlined in the 1985 collective school document, as reported by May (1992:152):

The first, ...cultural maintenance ...is the right of every child to know and to be proud of who she/he is. If a child is strong and proud in self-knowledge, this results in respect for other people's differences; differences are no longer a threat. At Richmond Road we promote difference and celebrate it. The second principle, access to power, deals with the teacher's responsibility to help children acquire the skills they may need to function in the wider context of the power society (*sic*), as it exists at present...

May suggests that both principles are necessary "if dominant relations in society are to be effectively contested." This school demonstrates that an educational approach which caters for the needs of minority children is possible in New Zealand.

Fourth, I would recommend funding for Latin American and other ethnic community groups to support a variety of programmes and activities such as: festivals, language classes, interpreting services and groups for immigrant women to have their own 'space' to meet and support one another. 'La Casa Latina' (the Latin American House) in Auckland provides support to the Latin American community of that city. Securing funding for its activities, however, is an ongoing struggle for the organisers.

The significance and contribution of ethnic community groups has been highlighted in this study, both in the literature review (see Chapter 1) and in the experiences of the participants. In New Zealand over the last five years there has been increasing recognition by both local and central government authorities of the existence and importance of ethnic community groups. The presence of regional ethnic councils at the local level, and the Federation of Ethnic Councils at the national level, provides a forum and a channel for addressing some of the concerns of ethnic groups. The New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils (NZFEC) is a voluntary organisation which was formed in 1989 to represent the interests of New Zealanders with non-English speaking backgrounds.

In 1992, in response to NZFEC representations to the New Zealand Government, the Ethnic Affairs Service (EAS) was established to advise the Government on issues affecting ethnic communities (other than Maori and Pacific Islander which have their own ministries) (Ethnic Affairs Service, 1996:4). The Service also provides information to ethnic groups and to government and non-government agencies. The

key strategic policy areas identified by the Ethnic Affairs Service for the period 1996-2000 include: settlement issues, community relations, language and culture maintenance, and support and strengthening of ethnic communities. In terms of language and cultural maintenance, the Ethnic Affairs Service (1996:8) has stated that:

Language and cultural maintenance strengthen the fabric of ethnic communities and promotes social cohesion by reinforcing group identity. It enables an exchange of information, ideas, and values between older and younger generations and between established immigrants and new arrivals.

The objectives articulated by EAS include: supporting community initiatives which promote language and cultural maintenance; the development of resources to support and strengthen ethnic communities; and supporting the efforts that ethnic communities are making to integrate into the wider society. These objectives are based on the assumption that "ethnic communities have considerable potential to respond to their needs in their own way" (Ethnic Affairs Service, 1996:8). However, the realisation of these objectives is ultimately dependent upon the availability of adequate funding.

Finally, funding needs to be targeted for immigrant women to take positions as researchers, writers and teachers; to be included as an integral part in educational institutions, not as an optional extra. In terms of social work education and training, Nash (1994:51) suggests that "cultural knowledge and understanding have to be predominant aspects of the curriculum". This has been recognised to some extent in terms of Maori and Pacific Island cultures, but there is a need now to expand this to include other cultures if social workers are to practice safely and effectively in the context of a culturally diverse New Zealand society.

An important issue for women of minority backgrounds is "who speaks for whom and who produces knowledge of whom" (Ganguly, 1995:47). Migrant women in a variety of contexts have experienced other people defining their situation and constructing knowledge for them which could be used against their interests. The words of Irwin (1992:5), referring to Maori women, are also relevant for women of other backgrounds: "We don't need anyone else developing the tools which will help us to come to terms with who we are. We can and we will do this work." To do so,

however, their efforts must be supported by opportunities to take up positions in the relevant educational institutions.

Future Research

As a relatively new ethnic group in New Zealand, Latin Americans have been given very little attention by researchers. Yet, information is necessary in order to take into account their needs and expectations in policy decisions. The EAS (1996:7) acknowledges that “consideration of settlement issues (the requirements of immigrants for example) is needed to facilitate the adjustment of immigrants, especially refugees, to New Zealand.” There is therefore a need for in-depth, comprehensive information about the Latin American community in New Zealand. This study, which focused on the experiences of four Latin American women in the lower North Island, together with Barnard’s (1996) study in Auckland, can be considered to be ‘pilots projects’ which have identified areas in need of further, more detailed investigation. I believe it is essential, as part of a broader immigration research programme, to conduct a national survey of Latin American immigrants to determine their needs in areas such as employment, language and culture maintenance, English language needs, child care and education. Such a survey would provide information on issues affecting Latin Americans in New Zealand, and together with surveys on other groups would be a basis for policy considerations in relation to immigrant resettlement in general.

I would also like to suggest three other projects which focus on more specific topics. First, there is a general lack of information on second-generation immigrants in New Zealand. In particular, the issues and experiences of second generation Latin Americans in New Zealand is an area which needs investigation. The rationale for this suggestion can be readily found in the findings of this study in terms of the dilemmas and tensions experienced by the participants in their parenting role. This would suggest that the children of immigrants face some challenges as they attempt to relate to mainstream New Zealand society.

Second, this study briefly touched on the relationship between migration and marriage breakdown. The experiences and views of the participants suggest that the stresses of

uprootedness and culture change may place considerable stress on family relationships. Further research is necessary to identify particular areas of tension and possible preventative approaches.

Finally, the decision to stay in New Zealand or to return to their home countries was an important issue for the participants, as is probably the case for other ethnic groups. The topic of return migration needs investigation in terms of identifying the reasons for departure from New Zealand and the implications in relation to needs and expectations. This information could provide a basis for identifying possible gaps in the provision of services to Latin Americans and other immigrants and their families. It is acknowledged that return migration is a difficult topic to research, but it is one that ethnic community groups may monitor and investigate as their member announce their intentions to leave. For students training as social service providers this research topic could be an important opportunity to gain insights into the lives of immigrants in New Zealand.

FINAL COMMENT: A PERSONAL REFLECTION

So I have come to the end of that part of the 'journey' which this thesis has signified. What have I learned on the way? What has come out of the agony and the ecstasy, out of the ups and downs and the unexpected turns on the road, now that I look back to the beginning, and at the reasons which prompted me to take this route. The most exciting part of the journey has been to meet with 'fellow travellers', to share feelings, ideas, stories, disappointments and achievements. We started the journey in different places and different circumstances brought us here. Our commonality was based on our position as women and our identity as Latinas in a strange land. We gave each other courage to share our stories and to break the dichotomy between the private and public domains. At times, telling our story has not been easy. It required going inside ourselves to places where there were scars, and where there was still pain from past and present struggles. However, there was also much laughter and our sense of humour made the journey lighter.

The process of 'naming' our personal experiences had a wider dimension as described by Waldegrave and Tamasese (1994:123):

Naming is indeed an act of courage, a political act, a costly act, an act ascribing belonging, drawing on sacredness. Naming is an act of liberation. Naming is indeed a therapeutic act.

It is evident that this study has been much more than a cold academic exercise; it has been part of my journey towards wholeness. In this sense, the journey also had a spiritual quality, which in this context does not refer to a particular type of institutional religion, but to "something more akin to the sacredness of life or 'soul' in music" (Waldegrave and Tamasese, 1994:117). I am reminded here of the words of Apsolum (1996:6), writing from a Maori perspective, who said: "In any investigation of a people occupying a culture, it is impossible to avoid intruding upon the domain of spirituality." For me this domain contains elements which exist side by side, and yet at times appear to be contradictory: roots, belonging, liberation. It is like having 'roots and wings' ('raices y alas') at the same time. Now the poem which my mother gave me many years ago makes more sense:

*Solamente dos cosas
podemos dejar
a nuestros hijos...
Una es raices
y la otra es alas.*

Only two things
we can leave
our children...
One is roots
and the other one
is wings.

(Anonymous)

As Latinas, in order to construct a new and meaningful identity we honour and celebrate our 'roots', our ancestors, and our belonging to our own individual cultures. We also celebrate our 'wings' that have enabled us to expand our choices and embrace changes, to lift ourselves above the 'wind and the tide' of resettlement in a new society. As stated by Agosin (1994:145): "Maybe no one really has a home except one that he [or she] invents." Inventing this 'home' has at times involved making painful choices and living with fundamental contradictions, as reflected in the words of Mai-Mai Sze (cited in Trinh, 1992:160):

Fervently we have wanted to belong somewhere at the same time that we have often wanted to run away. We reached out for (something and when we by chance grasp it, we often found that it wasn't what we wanted at all. There is one part of us that is always lost and searching.

In part my intention in writing this thesis has been to find my own voice, and to put it together with the voices of other immigrant women like myself. It has been my hope that through telling our stories we would better understand our experiences as immigrants. I will be immensely rewarded if the experiences of struggle and survival contained in this work would, in a some way, inspire other immigrant women "to defy the odds, to endure, to conquer - for themselves, for their children and for the world" (Afkhami, 1994: x).

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APPENDIX 1**MASSEY UNIVERSITY
HUMAN ETHICS COMMITTEE**

NAME OF APPLICANT:	Maria Anita Rivera
DEPARTMENT:	Social Policy and Social Work
CURRENT EMPLOYMENT:	Part-time student
PROJECT STATUS:	M Phil Thesis
FUNDING SOURCES FOR PROJECT:	Personal funds
NAME OF SUPERVISORS:	Associate Professor Dr. Andrew D. Trlin Mary Nash, Lecturer
TITLE OF PROJECT:	Latin American Women in New Zealand: Immigrant Resettlement Experiences and Issues

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT**(a) Justification**

Women from a variety of ethnic backgrounds are living in New Zealand. There is very little information about their lives and in particular their experiences of settling in a new country. It is essential to have an understanding of the situation of immigrant women so that their needs can be taken into account in the formulation of policy. This project will attempt to provide some information and understanding in this area with regard to women of Latin American origin.

(b) Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- (1) To examine the influence of immigration and resettlement in New Zealand on gender relations and on the status of Latin American women. This will include exploring the impact of migration on family relationships and examining the interaction of paid-employment and domestic arrangements. Emphasis will be given to changes that might have occurred in attitudes, values and behaviour as a

result of migration.

(2) To examine the relationship between ethnic identity and the process of integration into New Zealand society. Particular attention will be given to the experiences of Latin American women in maintaining their personal and collective ethnic identity and cultural heritage.

(3) To examine the results obtained in terms of their implication for policy formulation in areas such as, immigration, assistance for cultural maintenance, welfare, health, employment and education.

(c) Procedure for Recruiting Research Participants and Obtaining Informed Consent

Participants will be recruited through personal contacts and relationships, and through approved referrals by Latin American organizations in New Zealand.

All possible participants will be contacted personally or by telephone. Initially each possible participant will be given copies of the Information Sheet and Consent Form (in Spanish and English). The researcher will then answer any questions and provide any further information requested. One week after receiving the information sheet and consent form the person will be asked whether or not she will participate.

(d) Procedures in which Research Participants will be Involved

Each participant will be involved in one or two private in-depth interviews in their native language, Spanish. The total interview time will not be more than three (3) hours. One or two interview times will be arranged according to the availability and convenience of the participant. Each interview will be tape-recorded and will be held at a place and time agreed upon by the researcher and the participant. A copy of the transcription of each interview will be given to the participant so that she can amend or correct it as appropriate.

(e) Procedures for Handling Information and Materials Produced

The audio-tapes of the interviews will be transcribed by the researcher, so only the researcher and the participant will have access to the audio-tapes and the transcriptions. All material will be kept secure by the researcher until the investigation has been completed. After this point the material will be disposed of according to the wishes of the participants. The options for disposal include: erasure of tape and shredding of transcript, return the tape and transcript to the participant, archiving of the tape and transcript with an organisation of the participant's choice. If the later option is taken the participant will be asked to formally waive the commitment to maintain confidentiality.

ETHICAL CONCERNS

(a) Access to participants

As stated previously, the participants will be accessed through personal contacts or relationships of the researcher and via referrals from other participants or relevant organizations. All referrals will require the approval of the participants concerned. This means that each participant referred would have given permission for their name, telephone number and address to be given to the researcher for the purpose of making contact.

(b) Informed Consent

The researcher is strongly committed to the process of informed consent. This would be achieved by providing each prospective participant with the Information Sheet and Consent Form (in English and Spanish) and by answering their questions regarding the study (the researcher is a fluent Spanish speaker).

(c) Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be observed throughout the investigation, unless the participant gives written consent to a release of the condition of confidentiality. The procedures for handling the information obtained and any materials produced have been indicated above. In regard to reporting the results of the study, the identity of individuals and their families will be protected by changing their names and distinguishing characteristics.

(d) Potential Harm to Participants

I recognize that in-depth interviews focusing on the themes of this study could be painful for some women. Being aware of this possibility, I will frame questions very carefully and take special care to ensure participants exercise their right to decline to answer any questions and to withdraw from the study at any time. Should there be a need for support for an individual woman with certain aspects of her life, the person concerned will be referred to appropriate sources of assistance (e.g. a family doctor, social worker or counsellor)

(e) Participants' Right to Decline

All participants will have made the decision to be involved in the project after fully considering the information provided and would have given informed consent. As indicated above, the researcher will make sure that all participants are aware of their right to refuse to answer any questions during each interview and of their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

(f) Arrangements for Participants To Receive Information

Each participant will receive a draft of the final report for their approval of relevant

sections and to make amendments where required. A copy of the final report will be made available to the participants.

(g) Use of Information

The information collected and reported will be used primarily for academic research and publishing purposes. It may also be used by the Latin American community in submissions to policy makers in regard to issues of their interest.

(h) Conflicts of Interests

The fact that the researcher is part of the small Latin American community in New Zealand and may have personal relationships with some of the participants is recognised as being a potential source of conflict. However, the combination of the role of researcher and the role of friend can be of positive value as the rapport which exists between the researcher and the participant will enhance the quality of the information gained. In this situation particular attention will be given to strict adherence to the procedure for obtaining informed consent and reminding the participants of their right to decline to answer any question and to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher is also aware of the need to take special care to ensure confidentiality in these situations.

(i) Other Ethical Concerns Relevant to the Research

The translation of the Information Sheet and the Consent Form into Spanish will be done by the researcher but will be checked by an independent translator before giving them to the participants.

LEGAL ISSUES

(a) Copyright

Copyright of any published results of the study or any material produced by the researcher shall rest with the researcher or publisher.

(b) Ownership of Data or Materials Produced

Participants will be recognised as owners of their individual raw data (i.e. the audio-tape and the transcript of their interview). Data relating to an individual, which has been processed, edited or transformed in some way will be owned jointly by the participant and the researcher. Aggregated data which has been processed and which includes the interpretations of the researcher will be owned by the researcher alone.

At the conclusion of the study attention will be given to the question of disposal of raw data. The options for disposal have been outlined above.

(c) Any Other Legal Issues

I am not aware of any other relevant legal issues.

SUBMISSION TO OTHER ETHICAL COMMITTEES

This project will not be submitted to any other ethical committees.

ANY MATTERS YOU WISH TO DISCUSS WITH THE H.E.C.

There are no matters I wish to discuss with the Human Ethics Committee.

APPENDIX 2**INFORMATION SHEET****LATIN AMERICAN WOMEN IN NEW ZEALAND:
IMMIGRANT RESETTLEMENT EXPERIENCES AND ISSUES****The Researcher**

My name is Maria Anita Rivera. I am Puerto Rican and came to live in New Zealand in 1975. I have been living since then in Palmerston North as a permanent resident. At present I am studying at Massey University towards the degree of Master of Philosophy in Social Policy and Social Work. My contact phone number is (06)357-7692. My supervisor is Associate Professor Andrew Trlin whose contact phone number is (06)350-4305.

The Study

The aim of this study is to explore the experiences and issues of concern for women of Latin American origin in their attempt to establish themselves and their families in New Zealand. Emphasis will be given to the impact of migration on family relationships, the interaction between domestic arrangements and paid-employment, and the changes that might have occurred in attitudes, values and behaviour in these areas. Particular attention will be given to your experiences in maintaining your culture and language, such as contacts with other Latin American people and contacts with relatives in Latin America.

Your Participation

If you decide to take part in this study, I will meet with you for one or two private interviews. The interviews will be conducted in Spanish. The total interview time will not be more than three hours. The arrangements for one or two sessions will be made according to your convenience and availability. The interviews will be tape-recorded, and will be held at a time and place that we agree is suitable.

After the interview(s) I will send you a transcript (written version) of the interview so that you can check it and make any corrections if necessary. I will also give you a copy of the preliminary results of the study (in English) so that you have another opportunity to make any changes to relevant sections if you wish to.

Rights

If you decide to take part in the study, you have the right to:

- * refuse to answer any particular question and withdraw from the study at any time.
- * ask any further questions about the study that occur to you during your participation.
- * provide information on the understanding that it is completely confidential to the researcher. It will not be possible to identify you in any reports that are prepared from the study, unless you give written permission to have your identity revealed.
- * to ask for the tape recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.
- * be given access to the summary of the findings from the study when it is concluded.
- * to determine at the conclusion of the study whether you would like the interview tape to be returned to you, destroyed or stored in an approved location.

Maria Anita Rivera

MASSEY UNIVERSITY

CONSENT FORM

PROJECT TITLE : LATIN AMERICAN WOMEN IN NEW ZEALAND:
IMMIGRANT RESETTLEMENT EXPERIENCES AND ISSUES

I have read the Information Sheet for this study and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions about the study have been answered, and I understand that I may ask any questions at any time.

I also understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and to decline to answer any particular question in the study.

I agree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that is completely confidential.

I agree to the interview being audio-taped. I also understand that I have the right to ask for the tape recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

I understand that at the conclusion of the study I have the right to determine whether the interview tape shall be returned to me, destroyed or stored in an approved place.

I wish to participate in this study under the conditions set out on the Information Sheet.

Signature

Name

Date

TOPICS FOR INTERVIEWS

Background

1. What made you decide to come here?
2. Did you have any say in the decision to come to New Zealand?
 Could you tell me how you had a say?
3. When you made the decision to come to New Zealand, did you intend to be here permanently or did you intend to return to your country eventually?
4. How did you feel about coming to New Zealand?
5. How did you feel about leaving your country?
6. What family did you leave behind?
7. How did they feel about you coming to New Zealand?

Arrival

1. What were your first impressions of New Zealand? What sticks in your mind? What do you remember as significant?
2. Tell me about your experiences when you first arrived here.
3. When you first arrived, did you think a lot about your country?
4. Did you have anybody here who helped you settle in? Did you need someone?

Employment\Education

1. To what extent was paid employment important to you before coming to New Zealand?
2. Tell me about your experiences in finding work here, including voluntary work.
3. What sort of work have you done in New Zealand?
4. Have you enjoyed the sort of employment you have been involved with?
5. Have you acquired any qualifications in New Zealand?
6. How does your partner feel about you working or getting qualifications?

Domestic Arrangements

1. What was domestic life like before coming here? Who did what? (eg. cooking, shopping, cleaning) Did relatives help?
2. What effect do you think immigration to New Zealand has had on your domestic life?
3. What about childcare and housework? Are these shared within the family? Do you try to get the children/husband involved? Do they object?
4. What effect does your involvement in paid employment have on your domestic life? Do your children/husband do some housework?

Family Relationships

1. What were family relationships like before coming here?
2. Tell me how do you think immigration to New Zealand have affected the quality of the relationship with your partner/spouse and with your children.
3. What are the issues that affect or cause strain in the relationship with your children/spouse?
4. What about the presence or lack of extended family, does this have an effect?
5. Have you kept in touch with your family and friends in your country? Have you been back? How often? Did you enjoy it? Did you feel you wanted to come back to New Zealand?
6. Have you encouraged your children to go to your country?

Language and Culture Retention

1. What importance do you give to the retention of the Spanish language for yourself and your children?
2. How has it been for you? How much involvement have you had in this area? What have you done to retain your language?
3. What has been helpful/unhelpful? What difficulties have you experienced trying to teach Spanish to the children?

4. How do you feel about your communication skills in English? How comfortable are you speaking English? How difficult has been for you to learn English?
5. What Latin American cultural activities do you get involved with? With whom? Where?
6. What about videos, food, poetry, reading? How do you get cultural material from Latin America?
7. How much involvement with other Latinos have you had over the years?
8. To what extent do you feel part of a "Latin American community"?
Are you as involved as you would like?
9. What changes do you think have occurred to your attitudes, values or behaviour a result of immigration? How do you feel about these?

Identity/Integration

1. How do you think New Zealanders see you?
2. When people ask you about your ethnicity, what do you say? How do you feel about being asked?
3. What do you answer as your ethnicity in official documents like the census?
4. Do you have New Zealand citizenship? How do you feel about it? does it make a difference to you?
5. Have your ideas about your identity changed since you came to New Zealand?

Integration

1. Where do you meet people? What sort of people you mix with in different areas?
(Social Network Map) e.g. Church, neighbours, schools etc. Who are the most important to you?
Who do you feel close to?
2. How much contact have you had with New Zealanders over the years? How much contact/friendship have you had with migrants from other areas?
3. What are your thoughts now about returning to your country?
4. How do you feel about being here now? Do you feel you belong here?
5. Who are you? Do you think you are a New Zealander or something else?

ADDENDUM

p.ii, line 14, 'participant' should read 'participants'

p.12, line 30, '1983' should read '1986'

p.14, line 3, '1990' should read '1991'

p.28, lines 3 and 9, '1994' should read '1991'

p.38, line 11, 'points out' should read 'point out'

p.42, line 3 and line 7, '1986' should read '1983'

p.55, lines 30 and 32, 'son' should read 'daughter'

p.56, lines 25 and 31, 'Anita' should read 'Alejandro'

p.59, line 30, 'the' needs deleting

p.76, line 4, '1994' should read '1991'

p.111, line 7, 'her' should read 'their'

p. 158, lines 8, 9, 10, "hook" should read "hooks"

p.165, line 10, insert:

Trlin, A. D. (1997). "For the Promotion of Economic Growth and Prosperity: New Zealand's Immigration Policy, 1991-1995, in Trlin, A.D. and Spoonley, P. (eds.) **New Zealand and International Migration: A Digest and Bibliography, No. 3.** Department of Sociology, Massey University, Palmerston North. (in press).

p.176, line 3, 'helped' should read 'help'