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**From the Rainbow Nation
to the
Land of the Long White Cloud:
Migration, Gender and Biography**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of**

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Sociology

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New Zealand.**

Carina Meares

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Abstract

This thesis contributes to and extends two well-established traditions in sociology: firstly, it uses a biographical approach to study the experience of international migration; and secondly, it generates theory from the lived texture of individual lives. Specifically, the research uses the Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM) to describe, analyse and theorise the gendered experience of migration from ‘the rainbow nation’ of South Africa, to New Zealand, ‘the land of the long white cloud’. The thesis follows and further develops BNIM’s sociobiographic approach, integrating a stronger sociological focus, and emphasising the feminist values of transparency, reflexivity and an attention to power differences between the researcher and her interviewees. In-depth interviews based on a single narrative-seeking question are conducted with South African migrants from several divergent groups, and are then used as the foundation for a process of intensive researcher-led group analysis. From this meticulous analytical process the researcher produces three detailed individual case studies. It is argued that in order to comprehend the significance of broad social phenomena such as migration and gender, it is imperative to have an appreciation of their meaning in the context of individual lives.

Noting the occurrence of migration-related disruption across each of the case studies, the thesis uses the concept of biographical disruption to generate an innovative analytic vocabulary and a model that together describe and represent the gendered biographical experience of international migration. The research also uses the analytic language and the model to illustrate the impact of migration on the gender dynamics of migrants’ intimate relationships. It does this by considering one of the pivotal tensions through which gender dynamics are reconstructed in the context of migration, the tension between migrants’ productive and reproductive responsibilities. The language and the model theorise the resolution of this tension in a number of ways, thus extending the terms of the debate about the impact of migration on gender dynamics beyond the current binary conceptualisation of emancipation or subjugation. The utility of the language and the model in their depiction of the overall biographical experience of migration, and the illustration of the effect of migration on gender dynamics is demonstrated in the thesis through their application to each of the individual case studies.

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Prologue

Introduction

Although migration has long been an important part of human history (Castles & Miller, 2003:4), an increase in the volume and significance of migration flows has made international migration a defining characteristic of social life in the late 20th and early 21st centuries (Piper, 2006:140; Benmayor & Skotnes, 2005:4; Castles & Miller, 2003:1-3). With respect to the increase in volume, the United Nations Population Division (2005) estimates that the number of migrants has more than doubled in the last thirty years to 191 million worldwide.¹ In terms of the significance of these increased flows, all contemporary sovereign states, it is claimed, now function either as points of origin, transit or destination for international migrants, and sometimes as all three (International Organization for Migration, 2005:13).

Furthermore, as an integral part of the globalisation process (Castles & Miller, 2003:1), international migration disrupts and realigns the demographic, economic and social structures of both sending and receiving countries (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003:3). This disruption and realignment ultimately constitutes the social transformation of individual nation states, affecting national identity, social cohesion and 'race'² relations (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999:151; Castles & Miller, 2003:3). Lastly, at an individual level, '[t]here can be few people in either industrial or less-developed countries today who do not have

1 The actual number of international migrants is likely to be far higher than this, for two reasons: firstly, the figures provided by many countries are not credible; and secondly, the total does not include the substantial number of undocumented migrants. Between 200,000 and 300,000 illegal migrants, for example, enter the United States and Northern Europe every year (Castles & Miller, 2003:4-5).

2 Like Anthias (1992:28), I reject the essentialist premises upon which the notion of 'race' are based, but believe it should be treated seriously because it is used so extensively in popular discourse to categorise people as part of a 'natural' group. In acknowledgement of this essentialism, it is written as 'race' throughout the thesis.

personal experience of migration and its effects; this universal experience has become a hallmark of *the age of migration*' (Castles & Miller, 2003:5, emphasis mine).

Almost half the international migrants in the world today are women (International Organization for Migration, 2005:394). In addition to increases in the volume and significance of international migration, the feminisation of migration has been identified as a key feature of contemporary global migration flows (Piper, 2006:40; Castles & Miller, 2003:9; Kofman, Phizacklea, Raghuram, & Sales, 2000:3). As Kofman and Raghuram (2005:150) note, '[w]omen and men circulate differently in an unevenly globalised economy'. Female migrant labourers, for example, make up the majority in movement between Cape Verde and Italy, the Philippines and the Middle East, and Thailand and Japan (Castles & Miller, 2003:9). Although the feminisation of migration has received considerable attention from the world's migration policy makers (International Organization for Migration, 2003:7), there is still insufficient gender analysis in the study of international migration (International Organization for Migration, 2005:15), and in the formulation of national and international migration policies (International Organization for Migration, 2003:7). Indeed, *migration* and *gender* have been identified as two of the main issues global society has to address (Piper, 2006:139).

New Zealand has also experienced an increase in the arrival of international migrants during recent years, and a corresponding escalation in the significance of migration as a social, economic and political issue (Bedford, Lidgard, & Ho, 2005:44-46; Bedford, Ho, & Lidgard, 2005:4). From the late 1990s, the overall objective of New Zealand's immigration policy has been to encourage historically high levels of immigration (Bedford, Ho et al., 2005:1), and high annual net migration gains have become a feature of this time (Larner, 2006:138). Skilled migrants from a wide range of source countries have settled in New Zealand, which has become a much more ethnically and culturally diverse place than it has ever been historically (Watts & Trlin, 2005:107; Larner, 2006:138). The increased significance of migration in the New Zealand context is exemplified by the prominence the issue assumed in the election campaigns of 1996 (McMillan, 2005:75-76) and 2002 (Spoonley, 2005:93-94; Skilling, 2005:108-110), both of which were dominated by the anti-immigration rhetoric of Winston Peters, leader of the New Zealand First party. His targets during these campaigns were

immigrants from northeast Asia (Bedford, Lidgard et al., 2005:44-45), while during the latest election in 2005, he targeted Muslim migrants, in particular those from the Middle East.

It was within this particular national and global context that I chose international migration and gender as the central topics of my doctoral thesis. I begin this prologue with a short personal biography that makes transparent my specific location within these broader contexts, and in particular those life experiences which inspired my choice of thesis subjects. Moreover, it seems appropriate to begin this work with my 'story', since it is through the medium of biography that I have attempted firstly to make sense of the experience of migration, and secondly to theorise the migration process in a way that accounts for the constitutive effects of gender, structure and agency. Next, I define several pivotal terms, such as 'migrant' and 'migration'. I also explain the significance of the images used in the title of my thesis, and clarify my preference for the capitalisation of labels for particular South African groups. I then outline the main aims of the thesis, after which I review the history of international migration to New Zealand. This review begins with the Anglocentrism of the early 20th century (Ongley & Pearson, 1995:773) and ends with the contemporary review of current migration law (Department of Labour, 2006). A short history of South African migration to this country follows. By way of conclusion, I outline the principal focus and content of each of the chapters that comprise the thesis.

My Story

My father migrated to New Zealand from southern Italy in the early 1950s, at the age of 19. Just over ten years later he met and married my mother, a Pakeha³ New Zealander from a Waikato farming family who was working as a dental nurse at the local primary school. My father was different from other fathers in the small forestry town of Murupara, and this 'difference' was a formative aspect of my childhood. He spoke with a distinct accent; he looked, dressed and moved differently; and he believed our family to be different from, and somehow better than, our 'Kiwi' neighbours. When I was

3 The Maori word 'Pakeha', according to Fleras and Spoonley (1999:83), refers to New Zealanders of a European background, whose cultural values and behaviour have been primarily formed from the experiences of being a member of the dominant group of New Zealand.

young, this difference had a positive effect on my life, and made me feel special. However, as I got older and began to identify myself as a Kiwi, the differences between my father and I became the source of considerable conflict. I became a feminist, while he held firmly to beliefs about the proper place of women and men that he had brought with him from strongly Roman Catholic post-war Italy.

In addition to being the daughter of a migrant, I have migrated several times myself, both as a child (to England), and as an adult with a family of my own (to Australia and South East Asia). My younger daughter was born in Australia, and my elder daughter identified herself as 'Asian' in the 2001 census after we spent several years in Indonesia and Singapore. I have lived through the contradictory emotions that migration often engenders: the excitement and sense of freedom that arise from new beginnings; and the simultaneous pain and grief that accompany final departures and farewells. In sum, migration and its consequences have been a defining feature of my life. My ongoing commitment to the values of feminism and my belief in the pivotal role of gender in society, together with a longstanding fascination with the process of migration, constitute the source of my personal motivation for the subjects of my thesis.

Terminology

The title of the thesis describes a migrant's journey from South Africa to New Zealand as the transition between *the rainbow nation* and *the land of the long white cloud*. Nelson Mandela, the first democratically elected president of South Africa, described his country as 'the rainbow nation' in recognition of its many ethnic, religious and tribal groups (Walker, 2005:45; Walrond, 2006). Correspondingly, the Maori name for New Zealand, Aotearoa, is usually translated as 'the land of the long white cloud' (J. Phillips, 2006). These images, I believe, illustrate an important aspect of each country's history and character, while the concept of a journey between them suggests the enormous transition required of those who make this move. In terms of the thesis' core idea of international *migration*, I have used the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (2003:8) definition which describes it as 'the movement of a person or group of persons from one geographical unit to another across an administrative or political border, wishing to settle indefinitely or temporarily in a place other than their place of origin'.

Similarly, I have used the neutral IOM notion of *migrant* throughout the thesis, rather than the commonly used *emigrant* or *immigrant*, both of which indicate the direction of a migrant's transition (International Organization for Migration, 2003:9). I use the words 'emigration' and 'immigration' only in those circumstances where the reader requires an understanding of the direction of the flow in order to make sense of the point I am making.

One of the challenges of writing about South Africa is deciding how to refer to the various peoples who comprise its culturally and ethnically diverse population. Although the naming of these groups still makes me feel uncomfortable, it was nonetheless important to make some basic distinctions between them, for two main reasons. Firstly, I wished to interview a group of South Africans who represented, as far as possible, the diversity of its inhabitants. In order to do this, I needed to distinguish the groups in some way. Secondly, it would be impossible to write about the history of South Africa without referring specifically to its various peoples. With this in mind, I have used the following terms: White (more specifically English-speaking, Afrikaans-speaking and Jewish), Black (which includes Africans, Coloureds and Indians), and Africans, Coloureds and Indians. The capitalisation of these labels is intended to convey the fact that they are political rather than natural distinctions (Frueh, 2003:4). While I use this system of capitalisation in my own writing, I have not altered the quotations of other authors.

The Aims of the Thesis

The aims of the thesis fall into four categories: those which are centred on the development of migration theory; several which are based on South African migration to New Zealand; some which relate to the field of gender and migration literature; and finally, four which are methodologically oriented. In this section, I briefly outline the aims contained in each of these categories in turn. With respect to the theorisation of international migration, the first objective is to develop migration theory that integrates gender as a key consideration. This contribution to theory development should theorise gender as it is conceptualised in contemporary gender and migration scholarship: as fluid, dynamic and relational; and as an integral part of the whole migration process.

The second aim in this category is to develop migration theory that balances the effects of social structure and individual agency, acknowledging the agency of male and female migrants, while simultaneously accounting for the powerful enabling and constraining influence of social structure. The last aim in this category is to extend the debate about the impact of migration on the gender dynamics of intimate relationships beyond the current dichotomous alternatives of emancipation/subjugation and gains/losses.

In terms of South African migration to New Zealand, the thesis has two main objectives. The first is to increase the level of knowledge and understanding of South African migrants' experiences of change and transition. The second is to augment our awareness of the effects of migration to New Zealand on the gender dynamics of South African migrants' intimate relationships. Turning to those aims related to the general literature on gender and migration, the first is to contribute to the small body of scholarship on gender and skilled migration to the developed world. The second is to extend the work on gender and skilled migration beyond its current focus on the 'productive sphere' of paid employment. The third objective in this category is to contribute a New Zealand perspective to the international literature on gender and migration, which has predominantly originated from the United States, the United Kingdom and Europe. Similarly, the fourth aim is to add to the relatively small corpus of scholarly work on gender and migration in this country.

The final series of aims is concerned with methodology. The first of these objectives is to use and further develop a qualitative methodology that adequately accounts for the effects of individual agency, as well as the impact of social structures and institutions. Correspondingly, the second aim is to use and develop a qualitative methodology that provides detailed, extensive data from which sociological theory about migration and gender may then be generated. The third aim in this final category is to integrate into the chosen method a high level of transparency, reflexivity and an attention to power differences, in line with my principles as a feminist. Lastly, this thesis aims to use an innovative qualitative methodology that is able to account for the contemporary theorisation of gender as fluid, dynamic and relational, and constitutive of the whole migration process.

The Recent History of International Migration to New Zealand

Although an explicit White New Zealand policy was never adopted in this country (Ongley & Pearson, 1995:773),⁴ exclusionary clauses and policies based on ministerial discretion effectively meant that migrants to New Zealand came predominantly from Britain throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. During this time ‘people of British birth and descent were allowed unrestricted entry while others required permits, the issue of which was at the discretion of the minister and could thus be manipulated to exclude certain groups’ (Ongley & Pearson, 1995:773).⁵ Exceptions to the preference for British migrants included the acceptance of 4,600 displaced persons from Europe after the Second World War; a small number of assisted migrants from the Netherlands, Austria, Denmark and West Germany; and settlers from those Pacific Island nations with which New Zealand had close economic and historical ties (Ongley & Pearson, 1995:773-774). It was not until the major migration policy review of 1986, however, that national origin was formally abolished as a factor in migrant selection (Bedford, Ho et al., 2005:1; McMillan, 2005:70; Spoonley, 2003:9).

The 1986 review resulted in the introduction of a set of new migration policies (Barnard, 1996:8) specifically designed to attract individuals from a range of countries who had the proven ability and finance to establish themselves and their businesses successfully in New Zealand. The first wave of these ‘business migrants’ came predominantly from Asia, particularly Hong Kong and Taiwan (Ongley & Pearson, 1995:775). Several years later, in 1991, the government introduced a points-based selection system that emphasised the development of New Zealand’s human capability base, and the selection of skilled migrants who could contribute to this growth in human capital (Spoonley, 2003:9; Bedford, Ho et al., 2005:1; Benson-Rea & Rawlinson, 2003:61; Lerner, 2006:137). This system measured and ranked a prospective migrant’s application according to her or his qualifications, work experience, age, ability to settle, and English language capability. The government established the minimum number of

4 Both Australia and Canada had ‘white’ policies with explicitly anti-Asiatic sentiments (Ongley & Pearson, 1995:771).

5 Unrestricted entry for British migrants ended during a major policy review in 1974 (Ongley & Pearson, 1995:774).

points required for a successful application, and thus managed the overall level of migration (Barnard, 1996:11-12).

Migration policy was subjected to considerable criticism during this time. There were concerns, for example, that some early business migrants did not make the investments they had agreed to as part of their admission to the country (Ongley & Pearson, 1995:775). In addition, selection mechanisms were criticised because they failed to match migrants to relevant labour market shortages, and allowed entry to settlers who were subsequently unable to find employment in their fields because their qualifications were not recognised by local professional associations (Spoonley, 2003:9). In response to these and other problems, migration policies underwent a process of fine-tuning, often with respect to the criteria for, and structure of, points' allocation, but also in terms of the requirements for English language skills (Firkin, 2004:47). In 1995, for example, changes were made to the English language requirements for those entering under the General Skills and Business Investment categories, and the points' system was adjusted to ensure that an annual target of 25,000 approvals per year was not exceeded (Bedford, Ho et al., 2005:2).

The period between 1987 and 1995 was also characterised by a significant rise in the number of permanent long-term arrivals, and a corresponding increase in the number of migrants from non-traditional source countries (Larner, 2006:138). Permanent long-term arrivals increased from 44,360 in 1987, to 67,591 in 1995 (Barnard, 1996:13). Between 1990 and 1995 migrants from Asia made up almost 50 per cent of the permanent residents arriving in New Zealand, and in the 1994/1995 year the United Kingdom lost its traditional place as the leading source of migration to New Zealand to Taiwan (Barnard, 1996:13). New Zealand's growing Asian population has been subjected to a process of intense racialisation (Firkin, 2004:47; Spoonley, 2005:93-94). This process began, according to Spoonley (2003:7-8), with a series of articles entitled 'The Inv-Asian' published in 1993 in Auckland's community newspapers (Spoonley, 2005:93-94), and continued during the general election campaigns of 1996 and 2002 (Spoonley, 2003:7-8).

In the 1996 campaign, Winston Peters, leader of the New Zealand First Party, attempted to mobilise public support for a reduction in immigration through a sustained attack on

migrants from northeast Asia (Bedford, Lidgard et al., 2005:44; McMillan, 2005:76). After his anti-immigrant speeches, Peters' support rose from 5 per cent to 29 per cent (Spoonley, 2003:8), and his New Zealand First Party ultimately received 14.4 per cent of the vote, allowing it to form a governing coalition with the National Party (McMillan, 2005:76; Bedford, Ho et al., 2005:3). In 2002, Peters again attacked levels of immigration and immigration policy (Bedford, Lidgard et al., 2005:44; Spoonley, 2005:94), and in the latest election campaign in 2005, he used public fear of Islamic militants and international terrorism to target New Zealand's migrant and refugee Muslim community. 'Throughout this period', according to Bedford, Lidgard et al. (2005:45) 'immigrants, especially those from Asia and Africa, have been made to feel unwelcome by Peters' populist anti-immigrant rhetoric'.

Over the last ten years, there has been a shift in emphasis in New Zealand's migration policy from a focus on numerical targets, towards one that stresses the quality of settlement outcomes (Bedford, Ho et al., 2005:1). In addition, there has been sustained and informed debate on migration-related issues, including several conferences,⁶ and the release of the Labour-led Government's 2003 report on population and sustainable development (Bedford, Lidgard et al., 2005:45). During this time, the points-based approval system has again been fine-tuned several times, and there have also been some substantive changes to the structure of the migration programme as a whole (Bedford, Ho et al., 2005:1). In the late 1990s, for instance, the National government struggled to achieve the net migration targets it had set itself, due to the effects of the Asian economic crisis, the waning interest in New Zealand's business migration scheme, and high levels of emigration (Bedford, Ho et al., 2005:7-8).⁷ As a consequence, policy changes introduced in 1998 focused on making New Zealand a more attractive destination for migrants, and included the abolishment of the English language bond⁸ and the streamlining of processes for new investors (Bedford & Ho, 1998:127).

6 These included the government-sponsored national population conference in 1997, and the national social policy research and evaluation conference in 2003 (Bedford, Lidgard et al., 2005:45).

7 Indeed, there was a substantial total net migration loss in the year ended March 1999, an election year in which the debate focused on the 'brain drain' rather than the 'Asian invasion' (Bedford, Lidgard et al., 2005:45).

8 Migrants who failed to reach a specified level of English language proficiency had previously been required to lodge a \$20,000 bond with the government (Bedford & Ho, 1998:128).

By 2001, the short-lived 'exodus' of New Zealanders had ended, and the numbers seeking residence had risen (Bedford, Ho et al., 2005:14). As a consequence, the years ending March 2002 and 2003 were characterised by unprecedented levels of permanent, long-term migration (Bedford, Lidgard et al., 2005:48). With respect to policy, the Government implemented 33 changes between 2000 and 2003, most of which were underpinned by their desire to improve migrants' labour market and associated settlement outcomes (Bedford, Ho et al., 2005:23). Then, in July 2003, the Government announced the introduction of the new Skilled Migrant Category (SMC), describing it as the most significant change in migration policy for more than a decade (Bedford, Ho et al., 2005:25). In the year following the implementation of the SMC, there was an increase of almost 10,000 migrant approvals (Department of Labour, 2005a:2). The proportions of migrants from the top four source countries (China, India, The United Kingdom and South Africa) also changed. Over the last three financial years, for example, approvals from China and India have declined from a high of 16 per cent each in the 2002/03 year, to 10 per cent and 7 per cent respectively in 2004/05. In contrast, approvals from the United Kingdom have risen from 14 per cent in the 2002/03 year to 31 per cent of residence approvals in the last financial year (Department of Labour, 2005a:18).

In April 2006, the current Minister of Immigration, David Cunliffe, announced the most comprehensive review of immigration law since the present Immigration Act was passed in 1987 (New Zealand Government, 2006). The aims of the review, he said, were 'to simplify and streamline the law to facilitate the entry of those migrants we want, and to enhance border security and tighten the law against those we don't want in New Zealand' (New Zealand Government, 2006). These objectives reflect several broad contemporary demographic, economic and social trends occurring in New Zealand and in other developed nation states. These include a heightened international focus on border security (Yuval-Davis, Anthias, & Kofman, 2005; Department of Labour, 2006; International Organization for Migration, 2005:14) related to the events of 9/11 and the subsequent 'War on Terror';⁹ increased levels of mobility and a rise in temporary migration (Piper, 2006:142; International Organization for Migration, 2005:14); and the competition between developed nations for skilled workers due to a general decline in

⁹ The focus on security may also be a response to domestic concerns about the porosity of New Zealand's borders.

fertility and an ageing population (Department of Labour, 2006:6; Piper, 2006:141; Spoonley, 2003).¹⁰ In sum, the review of New Zealand's immigration law, and the greater national and international trends reflected in its objectives, suggest that migration is currently of crucial importance to this country, and that it will continue to be so in the foreseeable future.

A Brief History of South African Migration to New Zealand

In this section, I provide a brief overview of the history and significance of South African migration to New Zealand. Further detail on this subject is contained throughout the thesis, particularly in the 'Migration History' segments contained in each of the three individual migration biographies. At the end of the first decade of the 20th century, there were just over 1000 South African migrants living in New Zealand, and the number remained at this level for the next 40 years (Walrond, 2006). During the apartheid years (1948-1994), and more particularly during the 1960s and 1970s, many liberal Whites left South Africa, and by 1986 the New Zealand community had grown to 2,685 (Walrond, 2006). Later, in the period of turmoil and uncertainty that both preceded and followed South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, there was an exodus from the Republic of around 400,000 skilled Whites (Walrond, 2006). At around the same time, New Zealand introduced a points-based system of migrant selection that favoured the permanent settlement of highly skilled migrants (Bedford, Lidgard et al., 2005:60). As a consequence, by 2001 South Africans comprised the fifth largest migrant group in New Zealand, and by 2004, 37,382 South Africans had been granted permanent residence in this country (Walrond, 2006).

10 Although the loss of skilled New Zealanders to other countries (commonly referred to as the 'brain drain') has often been cited as a justifying factor in the continued need for skilled migration, there has been a sharp reversal of the trend towards increasing permanent long-term losses of New Zealand citizens during recent years (Bedford, Lidgard et al., 2005:49, 64).

Conclusion

In this conclusion, I outline the central focus and content of each component of the thesis. While the titles of the first seven chapters, as well as the Prologue and Epilogue, reflect the overall biographical focus of my work, those of the last two chapters encapsulate the latter section's wider theoretical and analytical orientation. In Chapter 1, **The Gender and Migration Story**, I review and evaluate both national and international scholarship on gender and migration, and through this process situate my thesis within the small corpus of contemporary research on gender and skilled migration in the developed world. I begin the first part of this chapter by examining the three broad developmental stages of gender and migration scholarship, from the 'immigrant women only' phase (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003:6), through the dominant focus on gender and the household economy, to the current approach that considers gender a constitutive element of the whole migration process (Curran, Shafer, Donato, & Garip, 2006:200-204). After tracing parallel changes in the theorisation of gender during this time, I note that gender is conceptualised in my own work using Pessar and Mahler's (2003:813) dual notion of gender as *process* and *structure*.

Next, I claim that despite the fact that gender and migration scholarship has flourished since the 1970s, it remains marginalised in the wider field of migration studies (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:28; Curran et al., 2006:215). In the second part of Chapter 1, I argue that gender is pivotal to every aspect of the migration process (Curran et al., 2006:199), and present examples from several areas of gender and migration scholarship to support my position. I then discuss the emancipation narrative and paid employment, two central themes in the literature, before turning to the subject of migration theory. In this section I present explanations and criticisms of mainstream theorisations of migration, and note two alternative ways of thinking about international settlement; Giddens' structuration theory, and transnationalism. After reviewing the small number of New Zealand studies on gender and migration, I then discuss those research projects that have focused on the migration experiences of South African migrants to this country. I conclude the chapter by presenting the central research question on which the thesis is based, point out several ways in which the thesis addresses gaps in current scholarship, and locate my work within contemporary gender and migration research.

Chapter 2 is entitled **The Research Story**, and is the first of two chapters that deal with methodological aspects of the thesis. In this initial methodology chapter, I examine the theoretical background of the method used in the research, the Biographical Narrative Interpretive Method (hereafter BNIM), and present an argument for its use in the analysis and subsequent theorisation of gender and migration. I begin the chapter by outlining the main features of the narrative biographical approach. A section on BNIM follows, comprising an intellectual biography of the method, a discussion of a major European research project that used BNIM as its primary method, and an examination of two BNIM-based studies on migration. Next, I argue that BNIM constitutes the most appropriate method for this research for five main reasons: firstly, it is particularly suited to the analysis and description of *change* and *transition*; secondly, it is especially sensitive to different aspects of *context*; thirdly, its exhaustive analysis transmits the *lived texture of individual lives*; fourthly, it balances the effects of *individual agency* and *social structure*; and lastly, it is *flexible* enough to adapt to the specific needs of individual research projects.

The Research Story Continued is the title of Chapter 3. In this second methodological chapter I outline and discuss the various stages involved in the research process, and examine several important ethical challenges that arose along the way. I begin the chapter by looking at the preliminary phase of the project: the selection of participants; the distinct components of the BNIM interview; and the meticulous process of data transcription. Following this, I examine the different steps involved in BNIM analysis, from the creation of the initial analytical documents through to the facilitation of interpretive panels. Next, I discuss the particular ethical challenges I faced while working with BNIM, and conclude the chapter by explaining the presentation and generalisation of research outcomes as they appear in subsequent chapters. As well as descriptions and explanations of BNIM research procedures, this chapter also includes: my personal reflections and observations on the different research phases; specific illustrative working examples from each stage of the process; and explanations for several changes made to specific aspects of BNIM interviewing and analysis techniques.

The individual case studies based on Ellen's, Sam's and Lorato's interviews are contained in chapters 4, 5 and 6 respectively. Each chapter is divided into two distinct but inter-related parts: **The Migration History**, and **The Migration Story**. The

Migration History is an analysis of each migrant's life, including both the biographical events that comprise it, and the social and historical contexts against which these events take place. The Migration Story, in contrast, focuses on the principle themes in each migrant's narrative. Together, these components portray the biographical meaning of each unique migration. All the case studies begin with a signature quote taken from the relevant interview, one which typifies in some fundamental way the overall biographical meaning of their migration story. As noted in the ethical section in Chapter 3, the names used in each case study are pseudonyms, and references to specific dates, ages and other identifying characteristics have been removed in order to protect the confidentiality of the research participants.

Chapter 7 is entitled **Reflexivity – the Interview Story**, and in it I clarify my standpoint on this important subject, acknowledge the pragmatic consequences of this position for my work, and discuss several reflexive features of the interview phase of my research. I begin the chapter by making a brief statement in support of reflexivity, and then outline five important reasons for taking this point of view. Next, I translate my commitment to a reflexive stance into a list of reflexive priorities that has guided my decisions throughout the research process. Turning my attention to the reflexive aspects of the interview phase itself, I then explain the development of my thinking about this complex issue. In this latter section I discuss the way that gender, age and education may have impacted the three interviews chosen for further analysis. Lastly, I use the concept of defended subjectivity (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000b) to clarify the complex interpersonal dynamics associated with discussions about ethnicity, 'race' and apartheid during my interviews.

In the last two major chapters of the thesis, I use the data from Ellen's, Sam's and Lorato's BNIM interviews to generate sociological theory about the gendered experience of migration. This process of synthesis and theory generation begins in Chapter 8, entitled **Disruption, Continuity and Gender: The Biographical Meaning of Migration**. During the first part of the chapter I locate the origins of the concept of biographical disruption in the sociology of health and illness, and note the ability of both chronic illness and migration to disrupt an individual's biography. I then develop an analytic vocabulary based around the idea of biographical disruption. The introduction of the concept of *gendered biographical work* into this analytic language

constitutes a theoretical innovation with respect to biographical disruption, and contributes to a more accurate portrayal of the biographical meaning of the migration experience. In the second half of the chapter, I present an analysis of each case study using this analytic vocabulary, and formulate a generic model that represents the dynamic gendered processes involved in the overall biographical experience of migration. Lastly, I use the model to represent Sam's, Ellen's and Lorato's unique migration stories.

Chapter 9 is entitled **Employment and Household Management: an Analysis of the Impact of Migration on the Gender Dynamics of Intimate Relationships**. In it I use the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption and gender, and the model based on these concepts, to better comprehend and then graphically represent the effect of international migration on the gender dynamics of migrants' intimate relationships. I begin the chapter by noting that both the model and the vocabulary are premised on three pivotal developments in gender and migration scholarship: firstly, the notion that gender includes both women and men; secondly, the idea that gender is fluid, dynamic and relational; and thirdly, the view that women's and men's experiences are affected by other axes of social difference such as ethnicity, 'race' and class. I then point out that the idea of biographical currents, introduced in the previous chapter as part of the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption, facilitates the analysis of one of the pivotal tensions through which gender dynamics are played out in the migration context: the tension between migrants' paid employment and the management of their households.

Next, I use the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption and gender to examine the impact of migration on the gender dynamics in Sam's, Ellen's and Lorato's intimate relationships. After comparing each of these case studies, I formulate a generic model that represents the biographical impact of migration on the gender dynamics of intimate relationships, and then apply this model to the three individual analyses. I conclude these theory-generating chapters by arguing that the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption and gender, and the models developed from it, constitute a useful way of examining and representing both the overall biographical experience of migration, as well as more specific aspects of this experience of change and transition, such as the impact of migration on the gender dynamics of migrants' intimate relationships.

Indeed, the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption and gender, and the models derived from it, constitute one of the major contributions of my work. This and other contributions of the thesis are noted in the overall conclusion to the research, which continues the biographical theme of the majority of chapters in the thesis with its title, **Epilogue**. I begin this final section by returning to these original objectives, and using them as a foundation from which to reflect on the main contributions of the thesis. I then summarise the key findings of the thesis, before addressing two possibilities for future research, both New Zealand-based and policy-focused. Lastly, in the section entitled 'final thoughts', I suggest that BNIM, with its particular aptness for the analysis and description of change and transition, has considerable promise as a method of choice for research into the rapidly changing face of New Zealand.

Chapter 1

Literature Review – The Gender and Migration Story

Introduction

Women and gender were largely invisible in migration theory and scholarship before the advent of second wave feminism¹ in the 1970s (Kofman et al., 2000:3; Pessar & Mahler, 2003:812; Sharpe, 2001). Although ostensibly gender neutral, studies from this pre-feminist era tended to equate the term ‘migrant’ with ‘male’. When women were included in this work, they appeared in sections dealing with the family, and were classified as the ‘trailing spouses’ or ‘dependents’ of migrant husbands and fathers (Yamanaka, 2003:161; Mahler, 2001:586; Yeoh & Khoo, 2000:413; Cerruti & Massey, 2001:187). Since that time, however, there has been a ‘veritable tidal wave’ of scholarly work on women, gender and migration (Donato, Gabaccia, Holdaway, Manalansan IV, & Pessar, 2006:7). This wave comprises three distinct phases:² an initial flurry of historical and contemporary studies that incorporated gender by including the variable of sex in the collection of data, or focused exclusively on female migrants; a range of research that examined the household economy as a critical site for revealing the

1 Feminism is commonly divided into first-, second- and third waves (Colebrook, 2004:145). Second wave feminism is characterised by a concern with gender as the social representation of human bodies (Colebrook, 2004:81).

2 These phases reflect general trends in gender and migration scholarship. There are exceptions to this categorisation; most notably there remains a tension between those scholars who continue to focus exclusively on female migrants, versus those who apply a relational understanding of gender to their work (Donato et al., 2006:5-6).

relationship between migration and women; and more recent work that considers gender a constitutive element of the entire migration process (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:28; Curran et al., 2006:200-204; Donato et al., 2006:4-6).

This burgeoning literature on women, gender and migration has focused almost entirely on unskilled, disadvantaged migrants relocating from the developing to the developed world (Gold, 2003:127-128; Kofman, 2000:45; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003:13). Few studies in this field have examined the significance of gender in skilled migrations (Kofman & Raghuram, 2005:149), the experiences of professional migrant women (Raghuram, 2000:429-430; Purkayastha, 2005:181) or those who migrate within the parameters of the developed world (M. Phillips, 1999:238). Those which do exist have tended to be both quantitative and employment-oriented (see, for example, Boyle, Cooke, Halfacree, & Smith, 1999; Boyle, Halfacree, & Smith, 1999), examining the effects of migration on the professional lives of female migrants (Nilsson, 2001:500). This neglect of gender in the study of skilled migration extends to the growing scholarship on transnationalism (Pessar & Mahler, 2003:812),³ where little attention has been paid to the reproductive sphere, or to women as autonomous migrants, lead migrants, or transnational elites (Yeoh & Willis, 2005:212).

The purpose of this chapter is twofold: to review and evaluate gender and migration scholarship both internationally and within the New Zealand context; and through this process to situate my thesis within the small body of contemporary work on gender and skilled migration in the developed world.⁴ The chapter is divided into two sections. In Part One I review the three developmental phases of gender and migration scholarship, and then trace parallel changes in the conceptualisation of gender over this time. Next, I note that gender is conceptualised in this thesis as both *process* and *structure*, following the dual theorisation proposed by Pessar and Mahler (2003:813). Finally, I suggest that although research on gender and migration has flourished over the last thirty years, it continues to be marginalised within the larger field of migration studies (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:28; Curran et al., 2006:215).

3 Transnationalism is defined as a process through which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement (Glick-Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1992:1). This topic has in recent years become a well-studied sub-theme of migration scholarship (Piper, 2006:153).

4 This literature review focuses largely on sociological scholarship, but includes, where relevant, work from anthropology, geography, demography and history.

I begin Part Two by arguing that gender fundamentally organises the migration process (Curran et al., 2006:199), and then present examples from three disparate areas of gender and migration literature to support my view. Next, I discuss two prominent and interrelated themes in research on gender and migration, noting significant shifts in thinking on both these subjects, and illustrating these using a range of historical and contemporary examples from the literature. Following this I turn to the issue of gender and migration theory, presenting and evaluating mainstream and alternative explanations for international migration. I then review the small body of New Zealand literature on gender and migration, as well as local studies that have focused on the experiences of South African migrants. I conclude the chapter by presenting the broad research question that generated the thesis, and then situate my work within the wider context of the national and international scholarship in this vibrant interdisciplinary field.

Part One

From Women and Migration to Gender and Migration

Prior to the 1970s, women and gender were largely invisible in migration theory and literature (Knorr & Meier, 2000:9; Kofman, 1999:1; Mahler, 2001:586; Brettell, 2000:109).⁵ The migrant in mainstream scholarly work from this era was overwhelmingly portrayed as a male, while women, if they appeared at all, were conceptualised as passive ‘followers’ of fathers, brothers or husbands. Newly arrived in their country of destination, it was assumed that migrant women disappeared into the domestic sphere to perform the same gendered tasks of household labour and social reproduction that they had undertaken in their homeland. They were almost always presented as somehow detached from, or irrelevant to, the paid labour force, even though this assumption was usually unfounded (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003:5).

5 Although female researchers had studied immigrant women and engaged in gender analysis across the 20th century, their work remained outside those academic departments and foundations that defined theory and value in the study of human migration (Donato et al., 2006:7).

The tendency to ignore women or represent them as passive followers rendered their contributions to the collective migration enterprise invisible, from their input into resettlement decisions through to their productive and reproductive work pre- and post-migration. Over the last 30 years there has been some progress (Donato et al., 2006:6-7). Academic disciplines concerned with the study of migration have been influenced, to greater or lesser degrees, by feminism and feminist theory.⁶ Beginning in the 1970s, gender and migration scholarship has progressed through a series of three distinct developmental stages: an initial period characterised by an exclusive focus on migrant women; a second phase defined by its examination of the gendered dynamics of the household economy; and a third contemporary stage exemplified by its consideration of gender as constitutive of the whole migration process (Curran et al., 2006:200-204). I discuss these successive phases in the following segments, noting the significant shifts in thinking that characterise each of them.

Stage One: Women and Migration

During the first stage of gender and migration literature, feminist scholars working in migration-related fields attempted to redress the male bias of previous work by incorporating women into migration research. They did so in two distinct ways: firstly by adding women as a variable in quantitative studies; and secondly by focusing exclusively on the experiences of female migrants (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003:6; Mahler, 2001:586). These methods of incorporating women into migration scholarship have been called the ‘add women and stir’ and the ‘immigrant women only’ approaches (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003:6). Studies from this first stage examined the particular characteristics of migrant women, the timing and volume of their migrations, and their specific experiences of resettlement (Curran et al., 2006:200).⁷

Although this initial body of work rendered women more visible in migration research, and vividly portrayed the wide range of roles they played as both independent economic actors and family members (Kofman et al., 2000:27), it has since been extensively criticised by more contemporary feminist migration scholars. Firstly, they claimed that

6 These include sociology, anthropology and geography, among others. For a review and comparison of the degree to which different academic disciplines have integrated the concept of gender into their work on migration, see *International Migration Review*, 40 (1) (Spring 2006).

7 Examples of work from this stage include Phizacklea (1983), Morokvasic (1984), Boyd (1984), Foner (1986) and Simon and Brettell (1986).

focusing on women rather than gender produced scholarship that marginalised immigrant women (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003:6), presenting them as somehow deviant from the male 'norm', a 'special case' (Curran et al., 2006:201). Secondly, critics maintained that this approach encouraged methodological strategies that added women as a variable, rather than understanding and interrogating differences between men and women as constituent parts of an interrelated system (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2000:114; Donato et al., 2006:5-6). Finally, the exclusive focus on migrant women has been criticised because it was based on the theorisation of gender as a static, binary category, rather than a fluid, relational practice (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Cranford, 1999:108).

Stage Two: Gender, Difference and the Household Economy

The second phase of gender and migration scholarship is characterised by a focus on the household economy as the pivotal site for exposing the relationship between women and migration (Curran et al., 2006:201). Some researchers concluded that migration reinforced existing inequalities between migrant women and men (Tienda & Booth, 1991; Zlotnik, 1993; Man, 1995; Abyaneh, 1989; Abdulrahim, 1993), while others claimed that migration led to greater emancipation for migrant women, and possible improvements in their status (Pedraza, 1991; Pessar, 1986; Eastmond, 1993; Kibria, 1993; Hirsch, 1999). Yet others were more equivocal about the gendered consequences of migration, maintaining that it led to gains for migrant women in some areas of their lives, and losses in others (Bhachu, 1991; Hugo, 2000; Tienda & Booth, 1991; Pyke & Johnson, 2003). In addition to a dominant focus on the household, the second phase of gender and migration scholarship is exemplified by three significant developments: the turn to qualitative methods; the shift in focus from women to gender; and the incorporation of other axes of social difference (such as ethnicity, 'race' and class) into gender analysis. I discuss each of these developments in turn, and then review criticism of the stage's main focus on the household.

The Turn to Qualitative Methods

During the household economy phase of gender and migration scholarship, it became evident that there were two important limitations in quantitative migration research (Curran et al., 2006:201). Firstly, migration studies from this period demonstrated a

clear male bias, exemplified in the longstanding practice of interviewing only (or mostly) men. By focusing on the migration experiences of 'household heads', who were largely identified as men, such research contained little data on women (Zlotnik, 1995:229). Despite this fact, many highly-regarded quantitative migration studies, based almost completely on data from male migrants, made claims about the entire migrant population (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003:5). Secondly, the data collection methods in this work tended to neglect pre- and post-migration experiences and contexts (Tienda & Booth, 1991:69), thus rendering invisible non-migrants, who were frequently women. As a consequence of the male bias in quantitative migration research, by the mid-90s sociologists had effectively turned to qualitative methods in their research on the gendered dynamics of migration (Curran et al., 2006:201).

The Shift in Focus from Women to Gender

In addition to the move from quantitative to qualitative methods, sociologists (and others) shifted their lens from women to gender in their examination of the migration process (Curran et al., 2006:201; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003:7). Gender and migration scholarship, it was claimed, 'showed how migration processes are reciprocally related to the social construction of gender' (Curran et al., 2006:201), and demonstrated that migration outcomes cannot be understood without accounting for intra-household dynamics and the behaviour of both women and men (Lawson, 1998:39). Examples of such work include Hondagneu-Sotelo's (1994) research demonstrating the effects of migration on the gendered family relationships of undocumented Mexican migrants in California, and Kibria's (1993) book on the shifts occurring in the family lives of Vietnamese refugees in the United States.

Overall, these studies challenged the widespread assumption that migration decisions are derived from rational calculations based on equitable household relationships (Curran et al., 2006:202; Mahler & Pessar, 2006:33; Phizacklea, 1999:34; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994:94-95). 'Unpacking the household, and analyzing the hierarchies and power relations within it', Silvey (2006:68) claims, 'has been at the heart of feminist contributions to migration studies'. Household-focused research showed how gendered differences in power and access to resources at times facilitated male migration (Grieco & Boyd, 1998; Cerruti & Massey, 2001) and at others advantaged female migration

(George, 2001). Despite the progress represented by this work, however, the dominant focus on the migrating household meant that the effect of gender on other aspects of human mobility was largely ignored (Curran et al., 2006:202).

Gender and Other Axes of Social Difference

The second phase of gender and migration scholarship is also characterised by a greater awareness of the intersectionality of ethnicity, class and gender relations; and an increased understanding of the heterogeneity of the category 'woman' (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003:7). Early feminist frameworks that privileged gender over other axes of social difference were replaced by those that attempted to capture the simultaneity of gender, class and ethnic exploitation (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1999:565-568; Glenn, 1999:9). Anthias (2000:16), for instance, writing about the gendering of migration experiences, cautioned that 'the use of the gender category must avoid homogenising women's experiences and practices and must be undertaken in relation to how gender intersects with other social divisions, such as ethnicity, 'race' and class' (see also Andall, 1992; Brah, 1996; Piper, 2003; Calavita, 2006:121-122). In addition to an increased awareness of 'difference', there was also a shift away from the idea that all migrant women were victims,⁸ and that each category of diversity conferring disadvantage on them could be added cumulatively to form a 'sum of oppressions' (Anthias, 1992:79; Lerner, 1991:53). As Calavita (2006:122) notes 'additive accounts of migrant women's vulnerability are neither accurate nor strategically useful'.

The greater attentiveness to the concept of difference in gender and migration scholarship, and the increased focus on the complex interrelationships of gender with other axes of social difference, is epitomised in a range of studies. Zhou (2000:445), for example, describes how migrant women from working-class Chinese families contributed significantly to the family income after migration to the United States. As a consequence of their increased financial input, they were entitled to make major household decisions, and to insist that their husbands shared some of the household

8 This cumulative disadvantage (Purkayastha, 2005:183) was sometimes referred to as a 'double negative' (M. Boyd, 1984), or the 'double discrimination' of being female and foreign (Escriva, 2000). It was also called 'triple disadvantage' (Kosack, 1976; Rivera, Nash, & Trlin, 2000) when scholars added the variable of class oppression. Espin (1999:8) claims that migrant women have several 'mountains' on their back, for example, the 'heritage of tradition' and 'the oppression from outside'.

responsibilities. In short, their migration resulted in an overall improvement in their position in the family. Middle class Chinese women, in contrast, experienced a deterioration or permanent loss of their pre-migration status because of problems pursuing further education in their adopted country, and difficulties obtaining employment commensurate with their qualifications and experience.

Criticism of the Household Focus

The focus on households that typifies the second phase of gender and migration scholarship resulted in the ‘ghettoisation’ of gender in migration studies (Curran et al., 2006:202). Hondagneu-Sotelo and Cranford (1999) were among the first to identify this marginalisation, and called for the redirection of gender and migration scholarship into other areas of the migration process. In a more recent article, Hondagneu-Sotelo (2003:8-9) explains that it is not only meso-level social institutions such as families and households that are gendered, but also macro-level structures such as labour markets, governments and nation states. She goes on to claim that it is particularly important to focus on the gendered aspects of these larger structures in the contemporary environment, because ‘immigrant women from around the world migrate to many post-industrial societies for work as nurses, nannies, cleaners and sex workers. Particular types of societies’, she concludes, ‘create particularly gendered labor demands’ (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003:9).

Stage Three: Gender and Migration

The third and contemporary stage of gender and migration scholarship is distinguished by the incorporation of a gendered focus into the examination of every aspect of the migration process (Donato et al., 2006:6; Curran et al., 2006:204). In other words, recent sociological research extends beyond the boundaries of the household and examines: gendered patterns of migrant employment; gendered networks and their disparate effects on male and female migrants; migrants’ gendered relationships with the state and the larger formal and informal ties that link countries of origin and destination; and the gendered way that migrants influence, and are influenced by, community and civil society associations (Curran et al., 2006:203). In the following segments, I divide this work into two broad areas: gendered migrant employment and

networks; and gendered relationships with the state and political organisations. I illustrate both these areas of contemporary scholarship with several examples from the literature.

Gendered Migrant Employment and Networks

Research on migrant employment examines the complex ways that gender affects, and is affected by, migrants' paid and unpaid work (Espiritu, 1999; Menjivar, 1999; Cheng, 1999; Phizacklea, 1999; Hardill, 2002; Green, Hardill, & Munn, 1999; Salaff & Greve, 2003; Man, 2004; Raghuram, 2004; Kofman & Raghuram, 2006; C. Ho, 2006). Hardill (2002), for example, explores the interrelationship between gender and employment in skilled dual-career migrant households living in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. She describes changes in the structure of paid work, noting particularly those modifications affecting professional and managerial migrants. Hardill also points out the dynamic nature of the 'post-modern family', describing it as diverse, fluid and unresolved, with a broad range of kinship and gender relations. In most dual-career households, she claims, the husband or male partner's career is prioritised. For those professional couples with children, it is women rather than men who adjust their working hours to accommodate their families, and consequently put their careers on hold. 'Household migration', she concludes, 'ranks next to child rearing as an important dampening influence on the life cycle wage evolution of married women' (Hardill, 2002:8).

Migrant networks are also gendered phenomena, differentially affecting the lives of men and women (Curran & Rivero-Fuentes, 2003; Campani, 1993; Hagan, 1998; Miller Matthei, 1996; Silvey, 2003). Curran & Rivero-Fuentes (2003), for instance, compare the impact of family migrant and destination-specific networks on international migration between Mexico and the United States, and internal migration within Mexico. They suggest that migrant networks are more important for international moves than for internal moves, and that female networks are more important than male networks for resettlement within Mexico. For those migrating to the United States, they claim that male migrant networks are more important for prospective male migrants than for female migrants. They conclude that distinguishing the gender composition and

destination content of migrant networks deepens our understanding of how cumulative causation affects patterns of Mexican migration (Curran & Rivero-Fuentes, 2003:289).

Gendered Migrant Relationships with the State and Political Organisations

In addition to the analysis of gendered meso-level structures such as networks, researchers are also exploring the role of the state in gendering migration processes and experiences (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:39), a previously neglected aspect of migration scholarship (Pessar & Mahler, 2003:820-821). Huang and Yeoh (2003), for example, use a gendered lens to examine the central role of state policies and practices in the differential incorporation of male and female contract migrant workers into Singapore society. They study migrant men's and women's disparate access to legal protection; the diverse effects of state medical surveillance on men's and women's bodies; the different ways in which male and female 'skills' are valued; and differences in the efforts expended in controlling migrant women and men in public spaces. They conclude that 'while non-citizen contract workers in general occupy a marginal place in Singapore society...the "rules" of marginality are refracted through gendered lenses' (Huang & Yeoh, 2003:92).

In her recent review article on gender, migration and the law, Calavita (2006) examines the emerging literature on new migrants in Southern Europe, specifically Italy and Spain. 'While these new migrants to Southern Europe have much in common', she notes, 'gender critically shapes their daily realities' (Calavita, 2006:119). She points out that while women are largely confined to domestic work by state policies that encourage the immigration of women that will do 'women's work', this stereotype also works in women's favour by facilitating their access to legal job opportunities in a thriving sector of the economy (Calavita, 2006:120).⁹ She concludes that the state plays a fundamental role in (en)gendering migrant labour, firstly by triggering labour diasporas through colonial and postcolonial policies, and secondly through quota laws that channel migrant women into domestic service (Calavita, 2006:121).

Research on migrant political and community organisations has also been a focus of recent gender and migration scholarship (Curran et al., 2006:203-204). Goldring (2003),

⁹ The importance of gender notwithstanding, she also emphasises the multiplicity of migrant women's and men's experiences (Calavita, 2006:121-122).

for instance, explores the gendering of Mexican migrant political participation, in particular hometown associations. She argues that the politics of Mexican migrants living in the United States, whether oriented towards their country of settlement or their country of origin, are not gender neutral (Goldring, 2003:341). On the whole, she claims, hometown associations represent a privileged arena for men's country of origin-focused political activity, offering them the opportunity to exercise a form of substantive citizenship that enhances their status in relation to the Mexican state. Even though women are excluded from positions of agency and power in these Mexico-focused associations, she notes that they nonetheless engage actively in political and other organisations in their country of settlement (Goldring, 2003:353).¹⁰

Gender – From a Fixed Dichotomy to a Fluid Relationship

The shifts in thinking that distinguish each phase of gender and migration scholarship mirror parallel developments in the theorisation of sex and gender since the 1970s. Much of the early scholarship on women and migration, for example, was founded on second wave feminism's dichotomous conceptualisation of women's and men's fixed and contrasting 'gender roles' (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003:6).¹¹ This binary approach theorised gender as a set of opposing, ascribed¹² roles acquired during a process of childhood socialisation (Lorber, 1994:1). These roles were governed, it was claimed, by a set of static expectations about what constituted appropriate feminine or masculine behaviour (Kessler & McKenna, 1978:11). This conceptualisation of gender has been extensively criticised. Kimmel (2004:91), for example, identifies three main problems with theorising gender as contrasting male and female roles: firstly, it focuses on the differences between women and men, but is unable to account for the dissimilarities that exist between members of these two groups; secondly, it neglects women's and men's differential access to power and privilege; and thirdly, it assumes that only individuals are gendered and ignores the way that institutions reproduce inequalities between women and men.

10 See also Jones-Correa (2000).

11 Gender roles are also referred to as 'sex roles'.

12 An ascribed role is one over which individuals have no control (Kessler & McKenna, 1978:11).

This oppositional thinking was reproduced in the distinction made between sex and gender during the 1970s and 1980s (Colebrook, 2004:4-11);¹³ defining the former as the range of physiological differences between women and men, and the latter as the way cultures imbue these biological differences with disparate meaning, status and power (Pessar & Mahler, 2003:813; Cealey Harrison & Hood-Williams, 2002:15-20). In addition to theorising gender as a male-female binary and defining sex in opposition to gender, second wave feminist scholars¹⁴ rejected the idea of a collective humanity. They argued instead for the specificity of women, and the reconfiguration and re-evaluation of the female and the feminine (Colebrook, 2004:81). This era's privileging of women and femininity, and its unproblematic acceptance of the universality and primacy of these categories is reflected in two pivotal characteristics of the first stage of gender and migration scholarship: the virtually exclusive focus on the experiences of migrant women; and the treatment of 'woman' as a unitary group.

Contemporary sociological theories of sex and gender have moved away from stable, binary conceptualisations (Colebrook, 2004:76-88). It is now claimed, for instance, that the male-female sexual dichotomy falsely represents as dimorphic the great diversity of the human form (Connell, 1999; Lorber, 1996; 1999; Kimmel, 2004). Certain post-modern theorists have also questioned the ultimate biological 'reality' of sexual difference, suggesting instead that sex, like gender, is ultimately a performance (Cealey Harrison & Hood-Williams, 2002:176).¹⁵ Instead of being theorised as a set of opposing male and female roles, gender now tends to be conceptualised as fluid, relational and performative. This theorisation has largely been incorporated into recent gender and migration scholarship. As Donato et al. (2006:6) note in their latest review article, '[r]ather than viewing gender as fixed or biological, more scholars now emphasize its dynamic nature: gendered ideologies and practices change as human beings...cooperate or struggle with each other, with their pasts, and with the structures of changing economic, political and social worlds linked through their migrations'.

13 This relationship between sex and gender is also found in more contemporary sociological thinking (for example, Kimmel, 2004:3), and in recent scholarship on gender and migration (for example Mahler & Pessar, 2006:29).

14 Unlike their first wave counterparts, who based their claims for equality on the notion of a universal humanity (Colebrook, 2004:82).

15 See Butler (1993; 1990).

Shifts in the theorisation of sex and gender outlined in this section were part of a more general ‘linguistic turn’ in the social sciences (Donato et al., 2006:5). Modifications in thinking have also been made to second wave feminism’s prioritisation of gender oppression and its treatment of ‘woman’ as a unitary category. Challenged by women of colour, lesbian women, working class feminists and feminists from the developing world,¹⁶ feminist social theorists have attempted to incorporate pivotal ideas about ‘difference’ into the conceptualisation of women and gender (Cranny-Francis, Waring, Stavropoulos, & Kirkby, 2003:55-61). The effects of these particular theoretical changes on gender and migration scholarship were discussed earlier in this chapter, and are concisely summarised by Mahler and Pessar (2006:6) in the following quote, ‘gender cannot be viewed and analyzed in isolation. Rather, gender is dynamic and articulates with other axes of differentiation in complex ways’.

Gender as Process and Structure

Following Pessar and Mahler (2003:813), I have conceptualised gender in my thesis as both structure and process, as ‘a human invention that organizes our behaviour and thought, not as a set of static structures or roles but as an ongoing process that is experienced through an array of social institutions from the family to the state’ (Mahler & Pessar, 2001:442). Several contemporary theorists have conceptualised gender in very similar ways. Connell, for example, describes masculinity and femininity as gender projects, which ‘configure gender practices through time, transforming their starting points in *gender structures*’ (1999:465, emphasis mine). Similarly, Kimmel (2004:101) describes gender as an *institution* as well as constituting part of *individual identities*, claiming that ‘[w]e create and recreate our own gendered identities within the contexts of our interactions with others and within the institutions we inhabit’ (Kimmel, 2004:111). In the same way, Lorber (1999:436) defines gender as both *structure* and performance,¹⁷ while Wharton (2005:7-12) characterises gender as *process* and state.

A dual theorisation of gender accounts for four fundamental features of gender: firstly, that gender is fluid, and is continually being produced and reproduced; secondly, that

16 Andall (1995:204), for example, notes that ‘[t]he literature on minority women has challenged feminist notions concerning the globality of sisterhood by exposing the feminist movement’s focus on the experiences and concerns of white middle class women’.

17 In earlier work, Lorber (1996:146) defined gender as an institution.

gender is relational, and its production is dependent on our interactions with others; thirdly, that gender is not simply a characteristic of individuals, but also occurs at a structural level; and fourthly, that gender organises relations of domination and subordination. Butler (1990:33, emphasis in original) succinctly captures the notion of gender as process in the following quote, '[i]f there is something right in de Beauvoir's claim that one is not born, but rather *becomes* a woman, it follows that *woman* itself is a term in process, a becoming, a constructing that cannot rightfully be said to originate or to end'. Moreover, instead of conceptualising sex and gender in contradistinction to one another, in my thesis they are theorised as mutually constitutive. Like many contemporary social theorists, I believe that biological aspects of maleness and femaleness cannot be separated from gendered social processes and practices (Wharton, 2005:20-23).

The Marginalisation of Gender in Migration Scholarship

Despite the 'fundamentally healthy' (Donato et al., 2006:6) state of gender and migration scholarship, and the numerous reviews¹⁸ and edited collections¹⁹ that focus on this area, research on gender and human mobility remains marginalised within the larger field of migration studies (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:28; Curran et al., 2006:215).²⁰ This marginalisation, according to Mahler and Pessar (2006:28-31), is felt in various ways: through the delegation of gender issues to a single panel at a conference, usually on the last day; in the small numbers of male attendees at these panels; through the practice of writing only about female migrants and representing such work as 'gender analysis'; and in the undervaluation of the qualitative data that dominates the field. With respect to the latter form of marginalisation, Donato et al. (2006:11) note that researchers from positivist and theory-driven disciplines have difficulty accepting gender analysis because it is frequently theorised as fluid and relational, a conceptualisation that complicates its operationalisation in quantitative work. Similarly, Curran et al.

18 These reviews include Morokvasic (1984), Hondagneu-Sotelo and Cranford (1999), Pessar (1999b), Tienda and Booth (1991).

19 These edited collections include Simon and Brettell (1986), Willis and Yeoh (2000) and Hondagneu-Sotelo (2003).

20 This assessment of the position of gendered scholarship within migration studies echoes those of earlier researchers, such as Hondagneu-Sotelo (2000:113) and Harzig (2001:15).

(2006:215) suggest that '[m]igration survey data may not be capable of translating gender frames and concepts into measures and models'.

In a recent review article entitled *Mapping Gender and Migration in Sociological Scholarship: Is it Segregation or Integration?* Curran et al. (2006) present a systematic appraisal of recent migration studies published in four key sociology journals: *The American Journal of Sociology*, *American Sociological Review*, *Social Forces*, and *Demography* (Curran et al., 2006:205). Their analysis of research published in these peer-reviewed journals between 1993 and 2003 shows that only 23 per cent of migration articles contained gender content. 'This statistic', they claim, 'compares poorly with the gender content of mainstream sociology articles, which is well over 50 per cent in most years between 1993 and 2003' (Curran et al., 2006:215). Although the results of their investigation suggest that 'segregation' is the answer to the question they pose in the title of their article, they remain hopeful, they claim, 'that in the next 11 years, migration studies in sociology will be less gender segregated than the last 11 years'. The key to the greater integration of gender into migration studies, according to Donato et al. (2006:20-22), is an interdisciplinary approach and the use of a range of methods, both qualitative and quantitative. A willingness to tolerate methodological diversity and interdisciplinary dialogue, they claim, is crucial to the development of both gender analysis and migration studies (see also Mahler & Pessar, 2006:31-32).

A recently published study by Parrado and Flippen (2005) exemplifies the kind of mixed-method, inter-disciplinary approach that Donato et al. (2006:20) recommend. Their research project uses both qualitative and quantitative bi-national data to examine how the structures of labour, power and emotional attachments within the Mexican family vary by migration and residency in the United States. The most important finding from their work is that the association between migration and gender relations is not uniform across different gender dimensions. 'Our results', the authors claim, 'challenge an assimilationist, emancipating view of migration and gender that would predict a gradual and unidirectional increase in Mexican women's power associated with migration and US residence. Instead, the effect of migration on gender relations is highly variable, with gains in some realms offset by losses in others' (Parrado & Flippen, 2005:626).

Part Two

Why does Gender Matter?

Gender is one of the major principles shaping the unequal power dynamics of the social world (Cheng, 1999:40). As such, it fundamentally impacts on the interpersonal relationships and social institutions that organise the migration experience (Curran et al., 2006:199). It influences the dynamics within the family, determining who migrates and who remains in the country of origin (Anthias & Lazaridis, 2000; Cerruti & Massey, 2001). It contributes to the construction of the social purposes of migration for women and men (Gabaccia, 2001), and affects the sending and spending of remittances (Levitt, 2001; Mahler, 2001). Gender ideology shapes the labour markets of sending and receiving countries (Kofman & Raghuram, 2006; Raghuram, 2004), and influences government policies that facilitate the entry of some migrants while deterring the entry of others (Piper, 2006; Mahler & Pessar, 2006).

Ideas about appropriate productive and reproductive roles for women and men affect the distribution of work within families both pre- and post-migration (Espiritu, 2002; W. Lee, 2002). Moreover, differences in power based on age and gender influence the outcome of negotiations between family members over the sharing of paid and unpaid labour. 'In short', Cheng (1999:40) concludes, 'this important organizing principle of power shapes the particular contours of the migration process as well as the diverse experiences particular to people situated in different locations along social hierarchies'. In the following segments I present examples from three disparate areas of gender and migration scholarship to support my argument that gender matters to migration, and that it contributes substantially to the analysis and comprehension of this complex phenomenon (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:50). These areas are: gender and migration policy; gender, migration and family relationships; and gender and return migration.

Gender and Migration Policy

Although ostensibly gender-neutral, migration policies and practices are fundamentally affected by normative ideas about gender (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:39). In turn these

gendered legislative frameworks differentially affect the course and outcomes of women's and men's migration experiences (Fitzpatrick, 1997). Piper (2006:139) identifies three main reasons for the gendered impact of migration policies: firstly, the concentration of women and men in different migratory flows is based on gender-segregated labour markets at home and abroad; secondly, socioeconomic power structures are gendered; and thirdly, sociocultural definitions of appropriate gender behaviour differentially affect women and men in both countries of origin and destination. Gender and migration scholarship has shed light on each of these gendered causes and consequences of migration policies.

Iredale (2005:158-162) examines the gendered impact of different immigration policies around the world. She begins by dividing the approaches of immigrant receiving nations into five broad categories, noting that they are influenced by ideas about gender equity and attitudes to the roles of women and men in society. She concludes that the specification of occupations in selection points' mechanisms and an emphasis on recent experience in migrant selection criteria are likely to disadvantage migrant women (Iredale, 2005:164). Boyd (1990:92) also discusses the gendered effects of migration policies, noting how those that separate residence (for spouses of principal applicants) and employment permits (for principal applicants only) can result in female migrants being unable to engage legally in paid employment. As a consequence of this they become financially dependent on their husbands, or are employed illegally and become vulnerable to the abuses of their employers (see also Yamanaka & Piper, 2003; Ackers, 2004). Similarly, Kofman and Sales (1998:390) claim that migration policies which link the status of wives to their husbands can result in women remaining in abusive relationships in order to preserve their residence status (see also M. Boyd, 1990:95; Fincher, 1997:237).²¹

Gender and migration scholars have also undertaken gendered analyses of the migration policies of various individual immigrant receiving nations. These studies too have contributed to our understanding of the gendered causes and consequences of migration policy and practice. Fincher, Foster and Wilmot (1994:54), for example, point out that Australian selection processes 'rest either on definitions and understandings of skill that

21 See Phizacklea (1998:29; 1996:166-167) for a discussion of the effect of migration policies on disadvantaged migrant and refugee women.

are gender-biased, or on the expectation that women enter Australia as dependant family members'. In a later article, Fincher (1997:217) discusses the part that migration selection policies have played in Australian nation-building over the last five decades, and concludes that these policies are both gendered and racialised.

Thobani (2000:39) performed a gender analysis of Canada's immigration selection policies, noting the association of the family category with women and the economic category with men. 'The family category', she maintains, 'has...been ideologically constructed as a feminine one, with the consequence that the economic contributions made by its members are rendered invisible by the official categorisation'. Similarly, Fitzpatrick (1997:48) claims that migration policies in the United States are framed in disregard of adverse gender specific effects. She points out two separate legalisation programmes that operated to the distinct disadvantage of migrant women,²² both programmes making them more vulnerable to family violence. Despite the fact that Congress eventually softened the impact of this legislation, she maintains that it nonetheless continues to evince indifference to the compelling needs of migrant women (Fitzpatrick, 1997:48).

Gender, Migration and Family Relationships

A gendered analysis of migrants' family relationships also contributes substantially to our understanding of migration patterns and settlement experiences (Lam, Yeoh, & Law, 2002; T. Pels, 2000; Levitt, 2001; Dreby, 2006). Dreby (2006), for example, examines the experiences of Mexican mothers and fathers residing in New Jersey. She claims that although ethnographic data and interviews show that parents behave in similar ways when separated internationally from their children, women's and men's migration patterns and emotional responses to separation differ (Dreby, 2006:54). Such differences, she explains, are related to Mexican gender ideology, which venerates the mother-child relationship while associating fathers almost exclusively with financial provision. In other words, 'the cultural message is that moral mothers should reduce time away from children, whereas good fathers should prolong it if migration proves to be a lucrative economic venture' (Dreby, 2006:54). She concludes that gendered notions

²² These two programmes are: the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) and the Immigration Marriage Fraud Amendments (Fitzpatrick, 1997:48).

of what it means to be a 'good mother' or a 'good father' permeate contemporary Mexican parenting, even when families are disrupted by international migration (Dreby, 2006:57).

Espiritu (2001) focuses on the relationship between immigrant parents and their daughters in her research with Filipino families living in San Diego. She argues that gender is a key to understanding immigrant identity, and describes the way that adolescent girls assume the burden of their families' good character in the United States, as well as taking on responsibility for the moral reputation of their entire ethnic group. The policing of women's bodies, she claims, is one of the fundamental ways in which Filipinos can assert a form of moral superiority over the dominant group. As a consequence, young women face numerous restrictions on their autonomy, mobility and personal decision-making. 'Through the oppression of Filipina women and the denunciation of white women's morality', she concludes, 'the immigrant community attempts to exert its moral superiority over the dominant Western culture and to reaffirm to itself its self-worth in the face of economic, social, political, and legal subordination' (Espiritu, 2001:436; see also Espin, 1995; Dion & Dion, 2001; Pessar & Mahler, 2003).

Family relationships, with their intense loyalties and obligations, are also at the core of gender and migration research on ethnic enclaves and entrepreneurship. This work substantially altered the conceptualisation in mainstream migration scholarship that ethnic enclave employment and entrepreneurship were positive alternatives to racially discriminatory labour markets for immigrant men *and* women (Donato et al., 2006:11-12). Gilbertson (1995), for instance, compares the returns²³ of New York-based Colombian and Dominican women working in Hispanic-owned firms versus those working in other labour market sectors. She claims that migrant women do not benefit in any way from working in an ethnic enclave, rather, her results show that enclave employment provides women with very low wages, minimal benefits and few opportunities for advancement. In short, she concludes, 'enclave employment is most exploitative of women' (Gilbertson, 1995:668).

23 She considers both financial returns and those accruing from fringe benefits and skill acquisition.

Gender and Return Migration

Gender and migration scholars have identified substantial differences in male and female migrants' plans to return to their countries of origin (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:34), thereby contributing to the understanding of this particular aspect of the migration trajectory. Although most studies suggest that migrant women (of distinct nationalities and in various host nations) seek to prolong their stays abroad in order to maintain or increase the personal gains of their migration (Pessar, 1986; Goldring, 2003; Jones-Correa, 2000; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994), there are exceptions to this general trend (Fouron & Glick-Schiller, 2001; Gold, 2003). Pessar (1986:275; see also 2000; 1984; 1982) has undertaken extensive research with Dominican migrants in New York City, and claims that male and female migrants from this community have contrasting orientations to return migration. She concludes that women are more reluctant to return to their homeland because they 'fear that the gains they have made in replacing patriarchal domestic relations with more egalitarian ones, and in providing for their children's welfare will be severely reduced if [they] return as dependents to a more male-dominated, Dominican society' (Pessar, 1986:284).

Goldring (2001:507; 1996:304) too notes that Mexican men are more interested in returning to their homeland than Mexican women. As explained earlier in the chapter, she describes how migrant men participate actively in Mexican hometown associations, while migrant women are more involved in United States-based community activism (see also Jones-Correa, 2000). Fouron and Glick-Schiller (2001), in contrast, found that Haitian women *and* men living in New York City identify strongly with Haiti, and participate in various forms of long-distance nationalism. They stress the importance of cross-cultural data, as does Gold (2003:143). The latter author compares the settlement preferences of Russian and Israeli Jewish women living in the United States. While Russian Jewish women escape minority status through their migration and plan to remain in the United States, Israeli women are troubled by their new status as ethnic minorities, and seek to return home. Gold maintains that '[t]he study of gendered settlement decisions offers a valuable corrective to models of migration that either

ignore gender or understand migrant gender relations in terms of idealized cooperative family arrangements' (Gold, 2003:127).²⁴

Two Major Themes

The Emancipation Narrative

The effect of migration on the gender dynamics of family relationships has long been a major focus of gender and migration scholarship (Espiritu, 2002:47). During the 1970s and 1980s, this literature generally followed a modernisation narrative that described the trajectory of Third World women from male domination and oppression in their countries of origin to a new life of paid employment and emancipation in the West. As well as an increased level of power and autonomy within their families, migrant women's spatial mobility (Goldring, 1996:318), and their access to valuable social and economic resources (Pessar, 1999a:577-587) were also said to expand.²⁵ In this section of the chapter I discuss two important and interconnected themes in gender and migration scholarship: the emancipation narrative, and paid employment. I note significant changes that have occurred in the theorisation of both these topics, and use a range of historical and contemporary examples from the literature to illustrate these shifts.

An early example of scholarship that proclaimed the link between migration and emancipation for migrant women is Abadan-Unat's (1977) research into the effects of migration on the lives of Turkish migrant women living in Germany. The author claimed that '[m]igrant families become more egalitarian, their family relations become more open, [and] more emphasis is placed on achievement and independence of children. Women also come to exert more influence on decision-making' (Abadan-Unat, 1977:36). The causal relationship between international migration and the emancipation of women has since been reassessed by gender and migration scholars (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1999:565-566). More contemporary research into the impact of

²⁴ Similarly, Gmelch and Gmelch (1995:470) found significant gender differences in the satisfaction and readjustment of return migrants to Barbados, Ireland and Newfoundland. In all three societies, women were less satisfied than men to be 'home'. The greater dissatisfaction among women appears to stem from their limited employment opportunities and a range of other social factors.

²⁵ See Hirsch (1999:1341) on the link between mobility and power.

migration on the status of migrant women tends to acknowledge the many axes of difference that affect their position, both in their countries of origin, and in their respective countries of settlement.

This more recent body of work tends to suggest that while migration may lead to gains in some areas of migrant women's lives, it can simultaneously cause losses in others. As Anthias (2000:36) notes, '[t]he multi-faceted and complex nature of women's position does not permit us to see migration in simple terms as either leading always to a loss, or always to a gain, in social status' (see also Akpınar, 2003:428; Hugo, 2002:41; Y. Zhou, 2000:445-448). Similarly, Hirsch (1999:1347) concludes that '[t]here is not, and never will be, just one answer to the question of how migration affects gender'. Next, I present three studies that illustrate the diverse and sometimes contradictory effects of migration on the position and status of migrant women.

Kurien (1999) describes migration as a mixed blessing for Indian women in the United States. On the one hand, she says, migration and settlement lead to empowerment for women because the majority enter the workforce in the United States, and thus make important contributions to the economic welfare of their families. In addition, Indian women are seen as cultural custodians, with a critical role to play in the passing on of cultural and religious values. On the other hand, Kurien (1999:650) maintains that the image of the Indian woman as a 'virtuous and self-sacrificing homemaker' is central to the construction of the Indian community as a 'model minority'. Living up to this image, the author suggests, causes the suppression of dissent and diversity and the cover-up of the physical and sexual abuse of women in the local community. Migrant women victims of domestic violence are very unlikely to reveal their abuse to researchers. Those who do, she concludes, are thought of as 'traitors to the community' (Kurien, 1999:650).

Parrenas (2005) examines the constitution of gender in the families of Filipino women who migrate alone to the United States, the United Kingdom and the Gulf region. Despite the fact that migration increases their economic power with respect to their husbands, and places them outside their own domestic sphere, the allocation of reproductive work to women remains essentially unchanged by their departure. 'The division of labor in these households', the author claims, 'usually relegates nurturing

tasks to women: fathers minimize their housework; migrant mothers nurture children from afar; and eldest daughters and female kin bear the brunt of household work left behind by migrant mothers' (Parrenas, 2005:244). Parrenas (2005:243-244) describes this as a 'gender paradox', and concludes that while migration may result in women's increased economic power, it has not led to a more egalitarian division of labour in the family. Instead, women's migration has added to the household burdens of women left behind in the Philippines.

The negotiation of migrant women's gendered identities is also the subject of Yeoh and Willis's (2005) research on elite Singaporean women in China. Those women who leave Singapore as accompanying spouses,²⁶ they explain, find themselves giving up their careers to focus on domestic responsibilities after they arrive in China. They claim that migrant women are not so much 'de-skilled' as 're-domesticated' (Yeoh & Willis, 2005:211). The authors also describe the experiences of female 'lead' migrants, those who relocate to China as entrepreneurs in their own right. While migrant women who accompany their male spouses take up the responsibility for childcare and housework after arriving in China, the same does not follow for the male partners of lead female migrants. Instead, like the situation described by Parrenas (above), this reproductive work devolves onto other women: servants, secretaries or childcare workers (Yeoh & Willis, 2005:220). In short, international migration has not altered largely patriarchal norms which assign women responsibility for the maintenance of the home and the care of children.

Paid Employment

In scholarship on gender and international migration, paid employment is generally considered an intrinsic part of the migration-emancipation trajectory. It is viewed in the main as 'a positive, liberating experience because it gives women independent access to material resources, increases their bargaining power in the family, and makes domestic sphere gender roles more equitable' (Zentgraf, 2002:626). Bhachu (1991), for example, claims that British Sikh women's increased earning power encouraged joint decision-making at home, the formation of more egalitarian relationships between husbands and wives, and the increased involvement of men in domestic tasks and child-rearing.

²⁶ These women formed the majority in their study (Yeoh & Willis, 2005:214).

Critics have identified five problems with this particular view of migration and paid employment.

Firstly, the conceptualisation of paid work as a vital link between women's migration and their emancipation assumes that women have some power over the spending of their wages. This, however, is not always the case. In Kocturk's (1992) research on Turkish women in Western Europe, for instance, the author notes that '[h]er income is given initially to her father-in-law and later to her husband, and is used according to their wishes' (Kocturk, 1992:117; see also Brouwer & Priester, 1983:128). Secondly, this theorisation of paid employment makes two assumptions about migrant women's relationship to their families: it assumes that families are universal sites of oppression for migrant women; and that all female migrants wish to alter the gendered practices which take place within them (Gabaccia, 1991:61-71). Migrant women, however, may instead view the family as a refuge from societal discrimination, oppression and exploitation (Pessar, 1995; 2000; M. Lee, Chan, Bradby, & Green, 2002; Chell-Robinson, 2000; Moon, 2003).

Instead of using their increased economic power to change the gendered practices in their households, migrant women may in fact justify their participation in paid employment by conceptualising it as a gendered responsibility. In other words, employment may be defined as 'an extension of their family obligations – of their roles as mothers and wives' (Espiritu, 1999:642; see also Geschwender, 1992:504; Toro-Morn, 1995:723). Fernandez-Kelly and Garcia (1990), for example, describe how married, middle class Cuban women entered the paid workforce for the first time after their migration to the United States, becoming an important part of a family strategy to regain status lost through the process of migration. As soon as their families had accumulated sufficient capital, however, the wives cemented their return to the middle class through their permanent retirement to the domestic sphere (see also Pedraza, 1991).

Thirdly, theorising paid work as a catalyst for more egalitarian family relationships presupposes that migrant women are oppressed in their 'backward', 'traditional' societies. As Kadioglu (1994:537) comments, migration to the West from developing nations is often conceptualised as 'a development that relieves women from the

oppression that they suffer in their home societies. Western ways are therefore viewed as emancipatory and what follows is a perspective that clings to colonial ideology in stating that wage work is a gift offered to the migrant women of the Third World by the West in their struggle against oppressive traditions in their home societies' (see also Y. Zhou, 2000:445-447; Tienda & Booth, 1991:51; Gold, 2003:128; Walton-Roberts & Pratt, 2005:173-175). Similarly, Deutsch (1987) describes how Mexican women in the United States found that their activities actually declined in significance relative to men's. 'Arenas of female authority', she notes, 'such as food production, nonwage work, and kin and community affairs – for Chicanas became as they were in Anglo society, increasingly peripheral to the main concerns of subsistence in a centralised, male-dominated, and cash economy' (Deutsch, 1987:737).

Fourthly, the migration-paid employment-emancipation trajectory assumes that paid work outside the home is new to most, if not all migrant women. In fact, as Zentgraf (2002:632) notes, 'migration does not necessarily result in first-time wage employment for all groups of immigrant women'. Zhou (2000), for example, describes how Chinese women experienced virtually universal employment in their homeland. Their participation in the labour market, the author claims, 'does not represent a radical departure from their previous experience' (Y. Zhou, 2000:14). Finally, migrant women's entrance into paid employment may be the consequence of severe economic need, expressing vulnerability rather than strength in both public and private spheres. Indeed, as Fernandez-Kelly (1990:194) suggests about the Mexican women in her research, their entry into paid employment 'signals the collapse of reciprocal exchanges between men and women. Women deserted by their husbands are generally too economically marginal to translate their goals of gender equality and autonomy into socially powerful arrangements'.²⁷

Gender and Migration Theory

The invisibility of women and gender in mainstream migration scholarship extends to its theoretical foundations (Kofman et al., 2000:22; Bauer & Thompson, 2004:336). Migration theories can be broadly grouped into three main categories: those which focus

²⁷ See also Pedraza (1991:317), who describes this phenomenon as 'the imperative posed by survival'.

on the agency of individual migrants (neoclassical theory); those which attribute migratory movements to macro political and economic structures (structural theories); and those which incorporate an analysis of both these levels, and sometimes an intermediate or meso level (migration systems theory). In addition to these theorisations of migration, there are two others which merit attention: structuration theory, and transnationalism. In terms of the former, some migration scholars, including several gender and migration theorists, have proposed structuration theory (Giddens, 1984) as an alternative to mainstream migration theories. With respect to the latter, the transnational perspective arose in the late 1980s, and paid attention not only to migrant incorporation into new societies, but also to the ties they continued to maintain with their countries of origin (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:41). In this part of the chapter, I briefly discuss these different migration theories, noting where appropriate both mainstream and feminist criticisms of each.

Neoclassical Migration Theory

Neoclassical economic theories, which dominated the field of migration in the decades up to the 1970s (Kofman et al., 2000:22), explain migration with reference to macro and micro economic factors. According to these theories, people make calculated, rational decisions to migrate because of geographic differences in labour supply and demand. In other words, 'migration is the product of rational decisions made by individuals who sit down and weigh up the costs and benefits of a move, and migrate to the destination that maximises the net economic returns on migration' (Kofman et al., 2000:22). Mainstream critics of this approach claim that it neglects the historical causes of migrations, and downplays the role of the state (Castles & Miller, 2003:26), while feminist critics note the complete absence of women and gender from this conceptualisation of migration (Kofman et al., 2000:22).

Baluja (2003:19), for example, claims that the major flaws of the neoclassical model are that 'it treats women as men and cannot explain the difference between the migration patterns of men and women or the variation in migration patterns among women'. She points out that migrants 'do not act solely on the result of some mental calculus involving economic costs and benefits, but rather they take into account, consciously or subconsciously, the behaviors that are open to them according to the social and cultural

environment in which they live' (Baluja, 2003:23; see also M. Boyd, 1989:657; Pessar, 1999b:56). Kofman et al. (2000:21) list several non-economic factors that can lead to women's migration: marital discord and physical violence; unhappy and broken marriages; the impossibility of divorce in their homelands; the opportunity to escape gender discrimination and, finally, the chance to transgress the boundaries of their role as women. Neoclassical theories take no account of any of these motivations for mobility.

Structural Migration Theory

Structural migration theories locate the causes of migration in the world political and economic order, rather than with the actions of individual migrants (Grieco & Boyd, 1998:4; Massey & al., 1993:38; Kofman et al., 2000:23). According to these historicised political economy accounts, migration patterns are caused by 'objective social and spatial structures' (Goss & Lindquist, 1995:324), including the unequal distribution of economic and political power, and the labour demands of modern industrial societies (Kofman et al., 2000:23). Kofman et al. (2000:24) note the importance of structural factors in determining migration flows. With respect to the migration of women, for example, they claim that '[t]he explosion in the number of women from poor countries seeking to migrate in search of work is firmly linked to the feminization of poverty resulting from structural adjustment policies and, particularly, their impact on women's work in both the waged and unwaged sectors of the economy' (Kofman et al., 2000:24).

Mainstream migration scholars criticise the structuralist approach for viewing the interests of capital as all-determining, and paying inadequate attention to the individual desires and motivations of migrants (Castles & Miller, 2003). Feminist critics, in addition, claim that focusing on the relations of production ignores two areas which affect men and women differently: the household-paid work nexus; and childbearing and childrearing responsibilities (Grieco & Boyd, 1998:4). Structural migration theories have also been criticised because they treat migration as a universal response to global economic changes. There is ample evidence, critics believe, that capitalism incorporates men and women differently into labour markets, and that men's and women's reasons for migration are not always linked to the search for paid employment (Kofman et al., 2000:25). Lastly, feminists have also criticised this approach because it takes no account

of the agency of individual migrant women. As Kofman et al. (2000:25) point out, unless we acknowledge the interrelatedness of structural context and agency, 'migrant women will continue to be viewed as passive victims, helpless in the face of the impersonal cycles of international capital'.

Migration Systems Theory

Migration systems theory arose in response to some of the criticisms outlined above, and is part of a move towards a more inclusive and interdisciplinary understanding of migration processes (Castles & Miller, 2003:26). The basic principle of this theory is that migratory movements are the result of the interaction between macro and micro structures. Macro structures include the relationships between states, the laws of individual nations governing migration, and the circumstances of world economic markets. Micro structures, in contrast, 'are the informal social networks developed by the migrants themselves, in order to cope with migration and settlement' (Castles & Miller, 2003:27). Micro and macro structures, according to systems theory, are linked by what are known as 'meso-structures'.²⁸ The 'migration industry', consisting of recruitment agents, lawyers and smugglers, is an example of such a structure. It functions as a mediator between migrants and the political or economic institutions of sending and/or receiving countries (Castles & Miller, 2003:27-28).

Feminist migration theorists have criticised systems theory extensively, with particular reference to those theories that use the household or family as the principal migratory unit (Ellis, Conway, & Bailey, 2000:119-125; Kofman et al., 2000:26-28; Cerruti & Massey, 2001:188; Pessar, 1999b:56-57). The key criticism levelled at this model is that using the family or household as a unit of analysis ignores power differences which exist between family members. As Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994:94-95) succinctly explains,

[a]fter looking at dynamic relations inside the household to see how various types of migration are formed, it is virtually impossible to retain the image of a unified household planning and enacting a particular migration strategy in calculated reaction to capitalist market forces. Opening the household 'black box' exposes a

²⁸ This phenomenon has attracted increasing interest from researchers in recent years (Castles & Miller, 2003:27; see also Harzig, 2001:23; Faist, 2000).

highly charged political arena where husbands and wives and parents and children may simultaneously express and pursue divergent interests and competing agendas.

Structuration Theory

Several migration theorists, including those with a particular interest in gender, have proposed the use of Giddens' (1984) structuration thesis as a solution to the structure-agency dilemma in migration theory (Piper, 2003; Wright, 2000; Goss & Lindquist, 1995; Halfacree, 1995; Phizacklea, 1999; 1998). Instead of emphasising either the role of individuals (neoclassical theory) or the role of political and economic structures (structural theory) in the theorisation of migration, this thesis conceptualises agency and structure as both mutually dependant and co-constitutive. Goss and Lindquist (1995:335), for example, use structuration theory to analyse recent large-scale migration from the Philippines. Wright (2000:787) also uses the idea of structuration in her examination of migration in Southern Africa, claiming that it 'leaves analytical space for the role that Africans have played in constituting the migrant labour system, without overlooking the fact that the system in turn conditions and mediates their agency'. Moreover, she quotes Giddens in her claim that, 'structure is not as such external to human action, and is not identified solely with constraint' (cited in Wright, 2000:787).

Transnationalism

In recent years, the concept of 'transnationalism' has emerged as a conceptual addition to the theorisation of international migration (Piper, 2006). Treated largely as a contemporary phenomenon, transnationalism is in fact not new (Castles & Miller, 2003:30; Foner, 1997:355). Rather, political, economic and technological changes that have occurred worldwide in the last decade or two have intensified and accelerated their development (Glick-Schiller, 1999:94; Foner, 1997:369). Glick-Schiller et al. (1992:1) define transnationalism as

the processes by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement. Immigrants who build such social fields are designated "transmigrants". Transmigrants develop and maintain

multiple relations - familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political that span borders. Transmigrants take actions, make decisions, feel concerns, and develop identities within social networks that connect them to two or more societies simultaneously.

Castles (2003:30) warns that inflationary use of the term 'transmigrant' should be avoided, and notes that the majority of international migrants do not fit this pattern.

Temporary labour migrants who sojourn abroad for a few years, send back remittances, communicate with their family at home and visit them occasionally are not transmigrants. Nor are permanent migrants who leave forever, and simply retain loose contact with their homeland. The key defining feature is that transnational activities are *a central part of a person's life*. Where this applies to a group of people, one can speak of a transnational community (Castles & Miller, 2003:30, emphasis mine).

There is also considerable variation in the degree to which members of the same ethnic communities are able to engage in transnational practices. For example, Foner (1997) describes differences in transnational activity between Indian migrants from disparate class backgrounds. Wealthier members of this community, she notes, are more consistently transnational than their poorer counterparts (Foner, 1997:370).

Feminist migration theorists have extensively criticised the developing theory of transnationalism because, like mainstream migration theory, it has largely failed to take account of gender (George, 2001:31; Fournon & Glick-Schiller, 2001:541; Pessar & Mahler, 2003:812; Pratt & Yeoh, 2003:159). Elmhirst (2000:487-488) explains the centrality of gender to transnational processes in the following way. Firstly, she notes, there are differences in the ways that women and men experience transmigration as a material process. They have different rights and responsibilities in both the sending and receiving communities, and they respond to, rework and resist these in different ways. Secondly, conflict between migrant and local populations can be played out in cultural forms. In this situation, gender becomes an important cultural signifier, an 'ethnomarker', and again, this affects women and men differentially. 'In summary', she concludes, 'gender politics are crucial to understanding transmigration processes' (Elmhirst, 2000:488).

Gender and Migration – The New Zealand Story

Scholarship on gender and international migration originates largely in the United States and Europe (including the United Kingdom), but also, although perhaps more recently, in Asia, Canada and Australia.²⁹ There is, however, very little New Zealand-based scholarship on women and migration, and an even smaller body of work that examines migration from a gendered perspective. This is the case despite the fact that immigration is a highly active research field in New Zealand (Trlin, Spoonley, & Watts, 2005:v). Correspondingly, while there is some research that focuses on the migration experiences of New Zealand's growing South African community, there is none, to my knowledge, that examines these experiences with a gendered lens. In this section of the chapter, I review New Zealand scholarship on both women and migration, and gender and migration. I also briefly examine the research that has been undertaken with New Zealand's South African community.

Women and Migration

Among the earliest research on women and migration in New Zealand is Barker's (1979) book on the migration and settlement experiences of three groups of migrant women living in Christchurch. Using questionnaires and interviews with Pacific migrants, English-speaking migrants and non-English speaking migrants, the author describes various aspects of their lives, past and present. She concludes that the major areas of difficulty and common concern for these women are related to issues of status, identity, culture, social acceptance and the establishment of relationships with New Zealanders (Barker, 1979:75). Other New Zealand scholarship on women and migration includes Jansen's (1990) book on the personal narratives of ten migrant women, Fraser and Pickles' (2002) history of women and migration in New Zealand,³⁰ and Ip's (1990) collection of life stories of Chinese women.

In addition to these books, several articles and chapters in edited collections deal with particular groups of migrant women in New Zealand (Shameem, 1992), or focus on

29 I have made a deliberate attempt in this review to incorporate research from each of these different areas.

30 These groups include the Chinese, the Germans and the Irish. The authors also examine Maori internal rural-urban migration.

individual communities from the vantage point of one specific aspect of their experience. These aspects include: sexuality (Tupuola, 1996; 1998), communication patterns (Grant, 1996), employment (Pio, 2005), and adaptation to New Zealand life (Graves, 1984). Larner's (1991) research is an example of such work. She begins her chapter on Samoan migrant women in New Zealand by noting the paucity of research on Pacific Island women in the New Zealand labour force. Local migration researchers working in the political economy area, she claims, have tended to marginalise the experiences of women. They do this by failing to distinguish between men and women; by treating men as the norm and considering women only in so far as their employment experiences differ from that of men; or by ignoring women's unpaid, reproductive labour (Larner, 1991:52).

Despite the fact that Larner focuses on *women* rather than gender in this chapter, her work includes many of the distinguishing features of contemporary *gender* and migration scholarship. Firstly, Larner theorises gender as fluid and relational (Larner, 1991:53-55). Secondly, she recognises that migrant women are not passive victims of circumstance, but are capable of resisting and subverting gendered and cultural stereotypes. Thirdly, Larner acknowledges the effects of other axes of difference such as ethnicity and class on the position of the Samoan women in her study. Fourthly, by situating their experiences within the context of a gendered and culturally specific pattern of labour migration and settlement, she incorporates the effect of structures and institutions into her account. At the end of the chapter she concludes, in line with the work of other gender and migration scholars, that 'there is clear evidence of the way in which, over time, the participation of Samoan women in paid work has fostered changes in the household division of labour' (Larner, 1991:62).

Gender and Migration

As mentioned previously, there is very little scholarship on gender and migration in New Zealand. The following two studies are examples from this small body of work. Ip (1998) explores the gendered politics of Chinese migration to this country, and highlights the significant gendered population imbalance that existed for many years in the New Zealand Chinese community. This gendered disequilibrium, she notes, persisted until the 1970s when, for the first time, the ratio of women to men in the

Chinese community approximated that of the general population. Ip also considers the impact on Chinese migrant women of the interaction between local and Chinese constructions of womanhood (Ip, 1998:48-49), and the overall effects on this community of the racist migration policies that governed the entry of Chinese migrants into New Zealand (Ip, 1998:45-46). The synthesis of gender, ethnicity and cultural identity that characterises Ip's research is also a feature of Rivera et al.'s (2000) study of Latina³¹ migrants in New Zealand. The authors examine three main areas of Latina migrant experience: family relationships; the interaction between domesticity and paid work; and culture and language maintenance. They conclude, as do other scholars in this area, that Latina women's involvement in paid work post-migration has resulted in the creation of more egalitarian relationships with their spouses (Rivera et al., 2000:60).

Research on the South African Community in New Zealand

As noted earlier in this section, research on international migration is thriving in New Zealand (Trlin et al., 2005:v). The extent of this research activity reflects not only the intense public interest in migration issues, but also the high level of significance accorded the subject at a political level (Trlin et al., 2005:v). Although South Africans have featured in the top four source countries for international migrants to New Zealand for the last ten years (Bedford, Lidgard et al., 2005:64), they appear as a group in relatively few research projects. This may reflect the fact that South African migration has not been problematised in this country in the same way as migration from Asia, and has therefore not been subject to the same research scrutiny.³² Similarly, the paucity of research on this migrant group may be related to the general perception that South African migrants are somehow more linguistically and culturally 'like' than 'unlike' Pakeha New Zealanders.³³ Because the recent focus of migration policy has been migrants' successful entry into the labour market (Bedford, Ho et al., 2005:27), the limited focus on South African migrants may be also be due to the fact that research

31 Latinas are women of Latin American origin.

32 See Spoonley (2005), and Spoonley and Trlin (2004).

33 South African migrants may be considered similar to Pakeha New Zealanders because the vast majority are White (Walrond, 2006), and English-speaking (Statistics New Zealand, 2002:147).

efforts have concentrated on those groups of migrants whose language and culture make their economic (and social) integration more problematic.³⁴

Individual South African migrants have indubitably been included as subjects in various large-scale, New Zealand-based research projects focusing broadly on issues such as migrant employment (C. Boyd, 2003; Ethnic Affairs Service, 1996; Barnard, 1996; Oliver, 2000; Watts & Trlin, 2005; Firkin, 2004) and settlement experiences (Benson-Rea & Rawlinson, 2003; Dunstan, Boyd, & Chrichton, 2004; New Zealand Immigration Service, 2003; Wallis, 2006). The personal narrative of a South African migrant was also included in an edited collection of stories written by New Zealand migrants and refugees (Schoonees, 2005). The small body of research that focuses on South African migrants as a specific group falls into two main categories: that produced as part of the New Settlers Programme;³⁵ and other, individual efforts.

With respect to the New Settlers Programme, the first objective of this project is the longitudinal study of the settlement experiences of three groups of migrants to New Zealand: Indian migrants, South African migrants, and those from the People's Republic of China. This work has focused on the importance of personal connections in these migrant groups (Trlin, Henderson, North, & Skinner, 2001), their mental health (Pernice, Trlin, Henderson, & North, 2000), representations of these communities in the New Zealand media (Spoonley, 2005; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004), and their experiences of housing and settlement (Johnston, Trlin, Henderson, North, & Skinner, 2005). Data for these projects were collected via in-depth interviews³⁶ with a sample of approximately thirty new settler families from each group. In terms of individual research on the South African community, this work includes a project on the maintenance of the Afrikaans language in New Zealand (Barkhuizen & Knoch, 2005), and an article that examines the relationship between tenure, stress and South African migrants' coping strategies (Bennett & Rigby, 1997). Although gender was included in some of these projects as a male-female variable, none of them were undertaken from a gendered perspective.

34 According to Watts and Trlin (2005:107), evidence has been mounting that some migrants, particularly those from Asia, experience considerable difficulty finding New Zealand-based employment commensurate with their qualifications and experience.

35 The New Settlers Programme is concerned with the settlement of immigrants in contemporary New Zealand. See <http://newsletters.massey.ac.nz>.

36 These interviews were held annually between 1998 and 2002.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have reviewed and evaluated international and national scholarship on women, gender and migration. I began by outlining the three distinct phases of gender and migration research, listing the defining features of each stage, and describing contemporaneous developments in the conceptualisation of gender. After noting that gender is theorised in this thesis as both structure and process, I suggested that despite the veritable tidal wave (Donato et al., 2006:7) of gendered scholarship on migration since the 1970s, it continues to be marginalised within the broader field of migration studies. In the second half of the chapter I argued that gender fundamentally affects the migration process, and presented a range of studies which have contributed significantly to the way we understand the migration experience. I then discussed two important themes in gender and migration scholarship, before turning to the issue of migration theory. Lastly, I reviewed New Zealand work in this area, and examined the small body of local work on the South African migrant community. By way of conclusion, I present the main research question that motivated this thesis, and then situate my research within the small body of contemporary work on gender and skilled migration in the developed world.

I began this project with one broad research question: **in what way/s does migration impact the gendered practices and discourses of South African migrants to New Zealand?** I was particularly interested in the way that migration might affect those gendered practices and discourses that occur around parenting, paid employment, household labour, interpersonal dynamics, emotional adjustment and family obligations. Questions about these gendered practices and discourses constitute the foundation of my thesis. In the process of answering them, my work has contributed to a number of gaps in the literature that have been identified throughout this chapter. With respect to New Zealand research, for instance, this project contributes to the small body of work on gender and migration, and to the limited number of studies on the South African migrant community. In terms of the wider field of international scholarship on gender and migration, this research adds to the small but growing number of studies on skilled migrants moving to the developed world. Moreover, its analysis of both productive and reproductive spheres (Ackers, 2004:378), and its particular focus on gendered family

relationships (Kofman, 2004a:249), contributes to the largely employment-focused studies in this area.

Several characteristics of this thesis locate it firmly within the context of contemporary gender and migration scholarship. Firstly, by focusing on the complete migration biographies of South African migrants, it treats gender as constitutive of the entire migration process (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:28; Curran et al., 2006:200-204; Donato et al., 2006:4-6). Secondly, by theorising gender as both process and structure, it conceptualises it as contextual, relational, power-laden and dynamic (Donato et al., 2006:13). In line with this conceptualisation, the thesis analyses the migration biographies of both women and men. Thirdly, its biographical approach acknowledges the impact of both structure and agency on the experience of migration. As a consequence, migrant women (and men) are presented not as passive victims of circumstance (Anthias, 2000:35), but as active participants in their own lives. Further, this balancing of structure and agency offers the possibility of theorising migration in a way that accounts for the constitutive gendered effects of institutions *and* individuals. Lastly, although it examines migration from a gendered perspective, the thesis acknowledges the impact of many other axes of social stratification, as well as the heterogeneity of both 'men' and 'women'.

Chapter 2

Methodology – The Research Story

‘Social science deals with problems of biography, of history, and of their intersections within social structures...these three – biography, history, society – are the coordinate points of the proper study of man’ (Mills, 1959:159)

Introduction

Biography has a long and distinguished history as a literary genre, dating back at least as far as Augustine in the fourth century. Although it experienced a period of significant growth and development during the 1700s, along with the novel (Erben, 1996:161), it was not until the 19th century that biography was viewed from a social scientific perspective. Dilthey, who viewed life history¹ ‘as a whole, an object complete unto itself’ (Chanfrault-Duchet, 1995:210), was the first theorist to examine biography from this standpoint. He was also one of several European academics to influence the development of the ‘Chicago School’² during the first years of the 20th century (Apitzsch & Inowlocki, 2000:54; Chanfrault-Duchet, 1995:210; Miller, 2000:3-10). Thomas and Znaniecki’s *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* was also published in the United States around this time. This seminal work included a three hundred page volume on the life history of Polish migrant Wladek Wisznienski (Rosenthal, 2004:48; Miller, 2000:6; Breckner & Rupp, 2002:289). Inspired by this early scholarship,

1 Biography and life history are synonymous.

2 The first department of sociology in the United States was founded at the University of Chicago and became known as the ‘Chicago School’.

sociologists at the Chicago School used biography to enhance their studies of disadvantaged social groups, illustrating the processes of city life and giving voice to those who had previously escaped sociological attention.³

Miller (2000:6) notes that ‘the Chicago variant of the life history method was an action perspective in that it took account of both the influences of social structure in providing opportunities or constraints for the actor, along with the actor’s own ability to perceive these opportunities/constraints subjectively and react to them creatively’. Together with an interest in everyday people, a sympathy with their position, and the prioritisation of individual history over aggregate data, these characteristics still distinguish the biographical perspective today (Miller, 2000:5). The rise of quantitative survey research and data analysis in the period immediately after World War II effectively meant the end of life history research in the social sciences until the 1960s (Miller, 2000:6-7). At this time, the inability of sociological theory to account for the massive cultural and political upheavals of the era,⁴ and the concurrent backlash against the dominance of quantitative methodology culminated in a resurgence of interest in biography (Davis, 2003:5; Miller, 2000:6-7).

Since that time, the biographical approach has been enjoying increasing popularity in the social sciences (Fischer-Rosenthal, 1995:259; Rosenthal, 2004:48; 1993:59; Roberts, 2002:73-74,167; Miller, 2000:10; Wengraf, Chamberlayne, & Bornat, 2002:246). Chamberlayne and King (2000b:9) note that this prominence ‘may well lie in [its] aptness for exploring subjective and cultural formations, and tracing interconnections between the personal and the social’. Similarly, Miller (2000:10) claims that contemporary biographical methods demonstrate ‘a commitment to a holistic approach which emphasizes breadth of content, an interest in questions of process and the interplay between personal and public history’. He identifies three current approaches to the biographical perspective, which he calls the *realist*, the *neo-positivist*

3 Davis (2003:5) also points out that these studies were criticised for ‘their impressionism, their lack of scientific rigor, and their neglect of the lives and crimes of the powerful’.

4 These included both the women’s movement and the Black liberation movement.

and the *narrative* (2000:10).⁵ BNIM, which is the method of interviewing and analysis used in this research, belongs to the narrative approach to biography.

This chapter is divided into two parts: the theoretical background of the method, and an argument for its use in the examination of gender and migration. In Part One I begin by briefly outlining the major features of the narrative biographical approach; like the recent resurgence of interest in biography within the social sciences, there has also been a corresponding turn to narrative enquiry (Denzin, 2001:23). A segment on BNIM follows. This section contains: an intellectual biography of the method, tracing the theoretical contributions of several pivotal influences; a discussion of the Social Strategies in Risk Societies research (hereafter SOSTRIS),⁶ a Europe-wide investigation into social exclusion that utilised BNIM as its principal method; and an examination of two BNIM-based migration research projects,⁷ which together establish a precedent for using the method in this specific area of scholarship.

In the second part of this chapter, I argue that biography generally, and BNIM specifically, is the most suitable approach to this research for five main reasons. Firstly, both migration and gender are processes of *change* and *transition*, and sociobiographic⁸ methods are particularly suited to the analysis and description of change over time. Secondly, BNIM analysis is especially sensitive to the different aspects of *context* involved in the research process, including the social and historical context against which the processes of migration and gender evolve in an individual's life, and the specific context within which each interview takes place. This meticulous consideration of context was vital for my adequate understanding and interpretation of both migration and gender, and was particularly important in this project given my outsider status.⁹ Moreover, BNIM's sensitivity to the interview context is congruent with my personal

5 Miller acknowledges that in delineating these approaches, he is using an ideal-typical format whose border researchers often cross according to the needs of their specific research endeavours.

6 SOSTRIS is a research project that formed part of the European Commission's Fourth Framework TSER (Targeted Socio-Economic Research) programme focusing on social exclusion and social integration in Europe (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999).

7 A further BNIM-based migration project is currently being undertaken in Germany (Boldt, 2006).

8 Chamberlayne and Rustin (1999:18) refer to BNIM as a 'sociobiographical method'. They note that '[t]he defining quality of a sociobiographical approach is...that it is both biographical (concerned with individuals) and sociological (concerned with societies)' (Rustin & Chamberlayne, 2002:3).

9 Insider/outsider status can be viewed using a number of different criteria, such as age, gender or education (Kirkman, 2001:55). In this instance I am referring to my status as a born and bred New Zealander, which sets me apart from my interviewees who were all born and brought up in South Africa.

research values. As a feminist, I believe that it is important to be transparently reflexive about the way that the subjectivity of the researcher, the interviewee and others,¹⁰ can impact the different stages of the research process.

Thirdly, BNIM uses an exhaustive analysis process that produces nuanced, detailed and intimate case analyses that transmit the *lived texture of individual lives*. In order for me to comprehend broad social phenomena such as gender and migration, and then make a theoretical contribution to this field of scholarship, it was first necessary to have an appreciation of their meaning in individual lives. The creation of wider sociological understanding from individual biographical data is precisely the kind of inductive process of knowledge creation that characterises BNIM. Fourthly, BNIM achieves a balance between acknowledging the enabling and constraining effects of *social structure*, while simultaneously recognising the often less visible ability of even the most vulnerable *individual* to react to their environment creatively. Lastly, the *flexibility* of this method allowed me to adapt the different interviewing and analysis techniques to suit the purposes of my specific research endeavour. I conclude this chapter by arguing that BNIM has the potential to enable researchers to contribute to the development of migration theory in ways that overcome two of mainstream migration theory's main deficiencies: its inability to balance the effects of structure and agency, and its longstanding neglect of gender.

Part One

The Narrative Biographical Approach

'Individual life journeys can be viewed as luminous 'traces' of the social elements through which they pass. These are rendered visible through the subjects they have formed. Segments of narrative produced by subjects can be interpreted within broader patterns of thinking on which they draw. In this way the larger social discourses that have given meaning to different phases of a life journey can be identified and described by researchers. Memories of a transition between life in one time and space and a new life in another can

10 This includes, for example, those involved in the various analysis groups integral to BNIM.

illuminate both these settings, and what it means to make a life journey between them' (Rustin & Chamberlayne, 2002:10, *emphasis mine*).

The technique of narrative interviewing derives its name from the Latin word *narrare*, to report or to tell a story (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000:60). Various theorists have attempted to define the essential features of a narrative: from Aristotle, who characterised it as a sequence in time with a beginning, a middle and an end; through to Labov, who theorised the six universal elements of story grammar; and Nair, who conceptualised five elements of narrative grammar (Horsdal, 2004:2). Summing up all these ideas, Horsdal (2004:3) claims that narrative involves a temporal sequence which includes the progression between one situation and another.¹¹ Narrative has been described, moreover, as the kind of text through which the meaning of an experience is most likely to emerge, distinguishing it from language forms such as description or argumentation (Rosenthal, 2004:53; Breckner & Rupp, 2002:295). This characteristic of narrative, Wengraf (2001:116) claims, provides a convincing argument for the use of narrative methods because '...they present to the researcher embedded and tacit assumptions, meanings, reasonings and patterns of action and inaction'.

The narrative approach is also concerned with the development of the narrator's perspective during the telling of all or part of the life story (Miller, 2000:12). In other words, the purpose of analysing a text is not to work out what really happened at the time, but instead to understand the narrator's present perspective and the principles guiding their choice of stories (Rosenthal, 1993:67-68; Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000:72). This textual analysis takes place within the context of both the narrator's social positioning, and the social environment of the interview itself. Miller (2000:12) notes that '[t]he interplay between the interview partnership of interviewee and interviewer is at the core of this approach'.

Unlike neo-positivists and realists who attempt to eliminate, reduce or control the effects of the subjectivity of both narrator and researcher, the narrative biographical approach considers this 'the very stuff of analysis' (Rosenthal, 1993:64-65; see also Breckner, 1998:92; Bauer & Thompson, 2004:347). Within this perspective, life stories are considered to have evolved out of the interaction between the narrator and the

¹¹ Breckner (1998:92) also defines the narrative form in this way.

interviewer, and this process is rendered an integral and transparent part of the subsequent analysis. Erben (1996:160; see also Chamberlayne & King, 1996:97; Roberts, 2002:87) makes a similar point when he claims that ‘the consciousness of the interpreter is always necessarily implicated in the analysis of the text’. He notes that an awareness of the authorial voice within textual analysis has resulted in the biographical method being increasingly referred to as ‘auto/biography’.

History of BNIM

Intellectual Biography of BNIM

‘As a method of giving full, open-minded attention to a narrative text, this is unrivalled’ (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:26).

BNIM belongs to the narrative tradition described above. It was first developed after the Second World War by Gabriele Rosenthal and Wolfram Fischer-Rosenthal, who collected life stories and family histories from both perpetrators and survivors of the Holocaust, and their descendants (Hollway & Jefferson, 1997:5; Wengraf, 2001:112; Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:26). The particular interviewing and analysis techniques of BNIM were developed in the context of several major influences. These included: the narrative-style interviewing of Labov and Waletzky (1967) and Schutze (1977; 1992); the grounded theory of Glaser and Strauss (1968) which was based on the principle of abduction developed by Charles Sanders Peirce in the 19th century; the structural hermeneutic analysis of Oevermann (1979); and finally, the phenomenological sociology of knowledge of Schutz (1964) (Wengraf, 2001:112; Rosenthal, 2004:53). A brief summary of the contribution to BNIM of each of these theorists follows.

Firstly, Labov and Waletzky (1967) claimed that stories found in everyday dialogue possessed a grammatical structure which consisted of six key sequential elements. These comprise: an initial brief summary of events; a description of the background to the story; a ‘complicating event’; the new situation which arises as a consequence of this narrated action; an evaluation of the significance of the incident; and finally, a ‘coda’, such as ‘and that’s my story’ (Wengraf, 2001:114-116; Horsdal, 2004:2). The breaking down of interview texts into their sequential components, and the recognition

of the coda as the end of an interviewee's story are integral to BNIM interview and analysis protocols.

Secondly, Fritz Schutze proposed, in a 1977 manuscript, a systematisation of narrative interviewing technique for the purposes of social research.¹² This technique included a move away from a question-answer schema to one where narratives are elicited, encouraged and sustained by the interviewer. He also suggested several different steps for the analysis of narrative interviews: from an initial detailed transcription of the interview; to the separation of the narrator's statements into different types of text; to a subsequent analysis of text segments by a group; and finally to the comparison of individual cases (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000:69-70; Davis, 2003:8; Rosenthal, 2004:57; Rosenthal & Bar-On, 1991:109). Schutze's narrative interviewing techniques, his systematic group analysis of interview data, and his comparison of cases are replicated in BNIM.

Thirdly, the formulation of hypotheses, which constitutes an integral part of the analytical procedure of BNIM, is derived from the 'grounded theory' or 'emergent theorising' (Wengraf, 2001:256) approach of Glaser and Strauss (1967) (Rustin & Chamberlayne, 2002:8). This method is in turn based on the principle of abduction developed by Charles Sanders Peirce in the 19th century (Levin-Rozalis, 2004:4; Chamberlayne & King, 2000a:213).¹³ 'Abduction', as Peirce (cited in Ackermann, 2002:97) notes 'makes its start from the facts, without, at the outset, having any particular theory in view'. Fourthly, the influence of Oevermann's structural hermeneutic analysis, or objective hermeneutic textual analysis as it is sometimes described (Chamberlayne & King, 1996:99), can be found in three aspects used in BNIM analytical processes. These are: the explicit and systematic procedures involved in individual case reconstruction; the way that BNIM researchers attempt to distance themselves from research material and consider different interpretations of the text; and the incorporation of collaborative group analysis into the research process (Chamberlayne & King, 1996:99-100; Rosenthal, 2004:54-55; Rosenthal & Bar-On, 1991:109).

12 Although this document remains unpublished and has not been translated into English, it was circulated widely and became the focus of a method community in Germany during the 1980s (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000:59-60).

13 For a comparison of abduction, induction and deduction see Rosenthal (2004:53-54).

Finally, Alfred Schutz was a major influence in the development of the phenomenological sociology of knowledge (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003:216). This intellectual tradition focused on the analysis and description of everyday life, with particular emphasis on the way that individuals make sense of their social world (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003:217; Schwandt, 2003:297). It constituted part of the reaction against the then dominant philosophy of positivism,¹⁴ a pivot of mainstream sociology of the time (Schwandt, 2003:293). The influence of phenomenological sociology can be felt in the sensitivity of biographical analysis generally, and BNIM specifically, to the lived experience of the individual. As Gultekin, Inowlocki and Lutz (September 2003:[1]) note, '[b]iographical analysis is an interpretive research approach to understand how individuals partake in social contexts and make sense of them'.

BNIM and SOSTRIS

'The SOSTRIS project contends that the time has come to start from individual lives to understand processes of social transformation' (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:12).

The first phase of the SOSTRIS project used BNIM to investigate the experience of social exclusion in seven European nations: France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom (Rustin & Chamberlayne, 2002:1; Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:6; Rustin, 1998a:112). Several categories at risk of social exclusion were chosen: the early retired, single parents, ethnic minorities and migrants, unqualified youth, and ex-traditional workers. Small teams of researchers from each of the seven countries involved in the research undertook life history interviews with six people from each of the categories of social risk just listed.¹⁵ The aim of SOSTRIS 'was not to establish the attributes shared by large populations, and the causal correlations between them, measured statistically, but instead to investigate in some depth the experiences of

14 Giddens (1996:760) defines positivism as 'a philosophical position according to which there are close ties between the social and natural sciences, which share a common logical framework'. More specifically, it can be described as 'a doctrine in the philosophy of science...characterized mainly by an insistence that science can only deal with observable entities known directly to experience' (Abercrombie, Hill, & Turner, 1994:322).

15 Those researchers most familiar with BNIM interviewing and analysis techniques led training sessions so that the work in each location would be undertaken on a commensurable basis. In total, the sample comprised 252 individuals (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:18).

relatively small numbers of individuals...subject to social risks' (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:43).

Chamberlayne and Rustin (1999:20-21) outline four main reasons for their choice of an individualised, or 'microsociological' strategy of investigation in the SOSTRIS project. Firstly, they note that the significance of the six broad categories of social risk depends, ultimately, on their consequences for individual lives. Secondly, the authors believe that the complex causes and meanings of exclusion were best explored through case studies. Thirdly, they claim that BNIM facilitated their investigation of life strategies developed in response to risk, allowed them to follow these over time, and helped them to identify those strategies most conducive to either success or failure. Finally, the authors maintain that social policy researchers need to pay attention to the ways in which people respond to conditions of risk, because 'individuals are not merely passive victims of fate...the strategies of response available to them, and the ways these are facilitated or otherwise by public policy, is relevant to outcomes'.

All the interviews were transcribed and analysed according to the procedures of BNIM, a process that Chamberlayne and Rustin (1999:26) describe as both 'meticulous' and 'labour intensive'. One of the principal benefits of the method, they claim, is that it 'ensures that every inference and implication that is drawn from the material is grounded in the evidence of particular detail' (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:26; see also Rustin, 1998a:112-113). In addition to this textual analysis, Rustin (1998a:113) points out that '[e]ach narration provided by our subjects leads us on a journey into a specific social structure and culture as this individual recounts his or her experience of it. To understand these narratives, we are obliged to 'make sense of' the context described, drawing on whatever conceptual and cultural resources we have available'. This contextual analysis, Chamberlayne and Rustin (1999:28) note, was greatly assisted by the collaborative international nature of the SOSTRIS project, where data analysis workshops were regularly attended by members of all seven national research teams.

The benefits of this co-operation, the authors (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:28) suggest, were twofold. Firstly, without the contribution of local members' knowledge, participants from other nations would have had little capacity to understand findings framed in unfamiliar social contexts. Secondly, the process of group-based hypothesis

generation helped make explicit those assumptions that had previously been implicit in national team members' understandings of data from their own countries. The 'results' of the interpretive phase of the SOSTRIS analysis were presented in a series of working papers¹⁶ covering each category of social exclusion. These papers comprised various individual case presentations, a summary of similarities and differences between the cases, and a comprehensive analysis of the social and historical context of each contributing nation. In the final report, the authors utilise the concept of 'life journeys' to identify typical patterns in the experience of social risk and opportunity in contemporary Europe. 'Our research', they claim, 'aimed to capture the particularity and lived texture of our subjects' lives, at the same time as defining aspects of them which can be seen as typical within a particular social context and history' (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:44).

In the second phase of the SOSTRIS project each national team investigated a small number of social agencies that were believed to be making innovative responses to social exclusion (Rustin, 1998a:112; Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:6). A sociobiographical approach was also used as the principal method of interviewing and analysis in this organisational phase of the project. Within a framework decided at cross-national meetings, each team was free to decide exactly how such an approach might be realised in an organisational context (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:75). Ultimately, a combination of background archives, narrative interviews with personnel and participant observation was used. Each team presented their results as case studies, from which common themes were then drawn. The SOSTRIS team's successful adaptation of BNIM to both the study of individuals at risk of social exclusion, and the investigation of innovative organisations, is an example of the way the method can be modified to suit the specific purposes of individual research endeavours.

BNIM and Migration Research

'Since Thomas and Znaniecky's [sic] classic study on migration The Polish Peasant in Europe and America...the field of migration was studied through individual narrations' (Fischer-Rosenthal, 1995:259)

16 The findings of SOSTRIS are presented in a series of Working Papers published by the Centre for Biography in Social Policy at the University of East London (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:133).

BNIM-based migration research is part of the tradition established by Thomas and Znaniecki (1958) during the early years of the 20th century. Contemporary theorists also argue for a biographical approach to the analysis of migration. Hoerder (2001), for example, calls for a life course approach to migration research, while Bauer and Thompson (2004:334) claim that migration is an area in which life history evidence has been recognised as having a special power. Breckner (2002:214), moreover, maintains that ‘it is mainly the biographical context in which the dynamics of the migratory experience develops’. The particular strength of life history methods in the study of migration perhaps lies in the way they illuminate processes of transition,¹⁷ in this case the transition between countries. As Rustin and Chamberlayne (2002:2) note, it is the experience of transition from one social milieu to another ‘that the sociobiographical method is best adapted to describe and analyse’. They go on to argue that biographical methods’ particular suitability for analysing transitions makes them a valuable means of exploring aspects of contemporary social life, which is increasingly characterised by individuals’ experience of change.

In this section, two BNIM-based migration research projects are outlined: firstly, the Italian National Report from SOSTRIS Working Paper 4 (Spano, 1999); and secondly, Firkin’s (2004) research on the narratives of professional migrants living in New Zealand. Both outlines conclude with an argument about the most important benefits of a biographical approach to each individual project. In addition to establishing a precedent for using this method in the context of migration research, these studies illustrate many of the qualities discussed in the next section: BNIM’s suitability for analysing and describing processes of *change and transition*, its careful attention to *context*, its vivid portrayal of the *lived texture of individual lives*, its balance of *structure and agency*, and finally, its *flexibility*. In short, these studies exemplify those characteristics of BNIM that have made it the most suitable method for my own examination of gender and migration.

The Italian National Report comprises a chapter in the SOSTRIS working paper on ethnic minorities and migrants. The first part of the report contains an analysis of 20th century migration to Italy, including the Italian legislative framework, the ethnic

17 Similarly, Rosenthal (2004:50) notes that biographical research looks at social phenomena in the process of becoming.

composition of the migrant population, the sectors of the Italian labour market in which migrants are concentrated, and the differences between migration to northern and southern Italy. After providing this social and historical background, the author presents five migrant case studies, each comprising three parts. These are: a brief chronological outline of the main events in the migrant's life (the life in brief)¹⁸; a description of their told story (self-presentation); and an interpretation of the relationship between the two (reconstruction of the case). A comparison of the cases follows these individual analyses. The author concludes by arguing that the biographical approach is particularly suitable for migration research because the meaning of the migration experience is rendered comprehensible *only* in the context of the individual's biography. A migrant, she says, 'is an actor whose reality isn't confined to the present but has its roots in the past...The migratory experience doesn't obliterate all that' (Spano, 1999:28).

Firkin's (2004) research on professional migrants is part of a larger project designed to explore and explain the changing dynamics of the labour market within the context of broad contemporary economic changes in New Zealand. Specifically, Firkin uses BNIM to explore migrants' experiences of non-standard work.¹⁹ He interviewed thirteen Auckland-based migrants from a range of ethnic and professional backgrounds, asking them for the stories of their migration-related career transitions. For example, he asked one of the migrants to '[t]ell me the story of how a (chartered accountant) from (Korea) comes to be working as a (taxi driver) in New Zealand?' (Firkin, 2004:8). In his final report, Firkin presents twelve BNIM case studies,²⁰ each comprising two parts: firstly, a section outlining the principal events of the migrant's biography (the lived life); and secondly, a segment on the way each interviewee presented their story (the told story).

In order to make sense of the material in these case studies, Firkin undertook a thematic analysis of the transcripts (2004:46). He then drew on, and further developed, biographical concepts from the field of health and illness. At the end of the project, Firkin (2004:80) concludes that 'biography becomes a way to bridge the distance between individual experience (the micro-level) and structural descriptions (the macro-

18 The actual titles as they appear in the report are presented in brackets.

19 Non-standard work can be defined as that which is no longer characterised by certain features that have been regarded as standard in terms of hours, tenure, relationships or location (Firkin et al., 2003/4:3-9).

20 One of Firkin's interviews was undertaken with a migrant couple, rather than an individual (Firkin, 2004:41).

level) without necessarily having to lose detail and significance by favouring either extreme'. Firkin's statement, along with Spano's earlier comment on achieving a nuanced understanding of the migration experience through individual biographies, succinctly express two of the main reasons that I chose to use BNIM as the principal method in this thesis. In the second part of this chapter, these particular characteristics of BNIM, and others which make it the most appropriate method for this research project, are listed and discussed.

Part Two

Why Biography and Why BNIM?

*'Both migration and gender are – separately – two areas in which oral history and life story evidence has been recognised as having a special power. This is because, through charting the experiences of individuals, it allows us to connect on the one hand the **transitions** that they experience through migration between cultures; and on the other hand, the often-hidden connections and differences between men's and women's experiences in work and family life' (Bauer & Thompson, 2004:334, emphasis mine).*

I first became aware of BNIM when my supervisor²¹ and I were invited to participate in a series of analysis groups during Firkin's research on professional migrants. My initial interest in this project was due to its subject matter rather than its methodology, but this quickly changed. I came to realise that BNIM, or some adaptation of it, had considerable potential as a research method in my specific area of research interest: gender and migration. My personal experience of learning and thinking about BNIM began with my participation in those first analysis groups. It continued in the intensive period of reading, reflection and discussion that followed, during the BNIM training course I attended, and throughout the various phases of research involved in the completion of the thesis. Over the course of this learning experience, I have come to understand that five pivotal features of BNIM have made it the most suitable method for

21 Associate Professor Ann Dupuis.

my research. Each of these characteristics is discussed in some detail in the following segments.

Processes of Change and Transition

Methodologically, BNIM is particularly suited to research projects focused on the analysis and description of processes of change and transition (Wengraf & Chamberlayne, 2006:5). As Rustin and Chamberlayne (2002:9) note, '[t]he biographical interpretive method is like other life-history methods: it is primarily interested in processes of change in individual lives over sequences of time'.²² The concept of transitions was pivotal, for example, in determining the choice of a sociobiographical approach in the SOSTRIS project. This methodological decision was justified by Rustin and Chamberlayne (2002:2, emphasis in original) in the following way, '[b]iographical studies of individual citizens are a valuable means of exploring the conditions of life in rapidly changing societies. In particular, these studies can illuminate the experiences and problems of *transitions* from one social situation and milieu to another, transitions that are increasingly both expected and demanded of citizens'.

The particular suitability of sociobiographic methods for describing and analysing processes of change and transition was also of central importance in the decision to use BNIM for my thesis. This is because the two principal subjects of investigation and analysis in the research, migration and gender, are both *processes of change and transition*. While the most obvious migratory transition is geographical, migration can also result in other experiences of transformation and change. It may, for example, involve transitions in career, in economic status, in family relationships, and in the everyday routines and practices of family life. As I outlined in the previous chapter, gender, too, is a process (Kimmel, 2004:111; Mahler & Pessar, 2001:442; 2006:29), one that is fluid, dynamic and relational. Ultimately, the concept of biographical *transitions* in migration and gender is the theoretical foundation for the models developed and presented in Chapters 8 and 9 of the thesis.

²² Similarly Miller (2000:74) notes that 'a biographical approach is indicated where the area of interest is...the effects of change across time...' See also Breckner and Rupp (2002:216).

Social and Historical Context

The way that BNIM takes account of social and historical context was an important factor in my choice of a sociobiographic method for the thesis. A thorough consideration of context was vital for four reasons. Firstly, it was important because it was only possible for me to understand the meaning of a participant's migration experience when I had an adequate comprehension of their social, political and economic background.²³ Wengraf et al. (2002:261; see also Wengraf, 2000:143) note that '[t]he sociobiographic approach complements [interview material] by researching the historical background and providing contextual-historical material that makes further sense of the particularities of each case'. Bornat and Walmsley (2004:42) make a similar point, claiming that the value of using a biographical approach lies in the opportunity it provides to take both the whole life *and* wider socio-economic and historical contexts into account in the analysis of data. In a migratory context, this understanding can only be achieved through an adequate appreciation of the social and historical environment in both the nation of origin, and the country of destination. Zentgraf (2002:629) argues that it is vital to take *both* these aspects of context into consideration in order to make sense of a migrant's experiences.

The second reason is closely related to the first. In addition to being integral to my comprehension of the meaning of an interviewee's migration, the consideration of context was also essential in order for me to understand their particular *gendered* migration experience. As Kimmel (2000:102) suggests, an individual's gendered experiences are inevitably related to the complex matrix of their social and cultural environments over time. Similarly, Lawson (1998:44) claims that 'case study evidence can reveal the dynamic and context specific power relations operating in households and the ways in which these vary according to the cultural construction of gender relations, political-economic macroforces operating and the like'. In terms of research into the processes of both migration and gender, then, a contextualised analysis was imperative if I were to have an awareness of, and appreciation for, my interviewee's specific gendered migration experience. Bauer and Thompson (2004:346) make a similar point, arguing that the analysis of text alone has limitations in advancing a researcher's

²³ Lawson (1998:39-40), for example, notes that 'understanding gendered migration requires culturally and contextually specific research...gendered migration is produced in specific ways in particular local contexts that are constituted by historically specific social, economic and political relations'.

understanding of gender and migration. Textual analysis, they claim, *must be clearly situated within the migrant's social and historical context.*

Thirdly, in addition to BNIM's consideration of context being crucial to the thorough analysis and description of the processes of gender and migration, it is also of particular significance in this thesis given my outsider status. As a New Zealander, extensive research into the social, economic, political and historical environments of the peoples of South Africa was necessary in order for me to undertake a sensitive biographical analysis of the gendered migration experiences of my research participants. Over and above my independent investigation of the social and historical background of my interviewees, a further manifestation of BNIM's consideration of context can be found in the participation of individuals from diverse backgrounds in the process of group analysis. In my research, the involvement of a South African migrant in this collaborative aspect of the analysis process was integral in improving my understanding of my participants' specific gendered migration experiences.

In short, situating research material within its appropriate social and historical context is one of the main aims of BNIM analysis. During this process, 'researchers work to establish the larger context of each fragment of material. Questions continually have to be asked about what a fragment of life history is part of, and also about in what respect it is representative of its kind, and what its kind might be' (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:27). This process of contextualisation is based on the part-whole mode of analysis developed by Thomas Scheff (1997). '[A] primary task of qualitative analysis in social research' according to this thesis, 'is to establish how specific fragments, elements or moments of a social process can be made sense of by location within their relevant context' (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:27).

Finally, BNIM, and other narrative biographical methods, incorporates the context of the interview and analysis process into the interpretation of the interviewee's life story (Roberts, 2002:87; Gunaratnam, 2004:208; Rosenthal, 1993:64). Wengraf (2001:305-306) describes the consideration of this aspect of context as one of the four *implicit* components of biographical research, and argues that it is best made *explicit* in any research presentation. As a feminist, I wished to use a method that was openly reflexive, accounting *explicitly* for my impact on the research process and the differences in power

between me and my interviewees. This feature of BNIM, therefore, was a significant factor in determining my choice of the method. In examining this facet of context, the researcher attempts to account for: the similarities and differences in status²⁴ between herself and her interviewees, and the possible effects of these on the interview text and its analysis; the narrative and analytical consequences of the interview dynamics;²⁵ and the possible effects of the researcher's own biography on the interviews, the analysis and the subsequent interpretation of the case studies.

The Lived Texture of Individual Lives

Like the authors of the SOSTRIS project, I was interested in exploring the gendered meaning of migration at an individual level,²⁶ rather than mapping the broad patterns of women's and men's migration experiences. The degree of detail that characterises BNIM analysis, and the scrupulous representations of the lived texture of individual lives that defines BNIM case presentations, was of pivotal importance in my choice of the sociobiographic method for this thesis. As Firkin (2004:7) suggests, this kind of detail is easily lost, hidden or distorted in statistical or other aggregated research methods. Similarly, Rustin and Chamberlayne (2002:3) claim that '[t]he purpose of the sociobiographical approach is to avoid the over-generalisation and abstraction of many other social research methods'. Moreover, in order to comprehend the significance of broad social phenomena such as migration and gender, it is imperative firstly to have an appreciation of their meaning in the context of individual lives (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:20). Kofman (2000:47) notes that biographical accounts are fulfilling exactly this function in gender and migration scholarship, capturing the diverse aspirations, strategies and experiences of both skilled and unskilled migrants.

The in-depth interviewing, meticulous transcription, and lengthy systematic analysis to which transcripts are subjected in BNIM result in the presentation of a relatively small number of detailed case studies (K. Jones, 2001:98; Wengraf & Chamberlayne, 2006:62). While these individual analyses cannot achieve statistical significance

24 The status of an individual includes factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, class and education.

25 As Buckner (2005:63) notes, BNIM 'allows for interpretation of the data based on the performance of the interview as well as its overt content, giving an alternative perspective on the biographical material that they introduce'. See also Gunaratnam (2004:208).

26 Zinn (2005) notes that migrants' perception of their experiences is a neglected part of migration scholarship.

(Wengraf, 2001:95-104; Chamberlayne & King, 2000a:217), they can, nonetheless, 'be a fertile source of sociological ideas and insights' (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:21). As Rustin claims (1998b:70), case studies have always been an important source of discovery in sociology, from the 'thick descriptions' of Clifford Geertz to the ethnographies of Paul Willis. An understanding of the social world, he goes on to suggest, has been accomplished as much through the luminosity of single cases as it has been through the application of abstract general propositions or laws. He also argues that case studies are essential to human understanding because they are able to explore and represent the self-reflection, decision and action in human lives (Rustin, 1998b:70). In this thesis the three interviews which were analysed and presented as case studies provided the foundation from which broader sociological knowledge was generated.

BNIM's mode of developing theory from data,²⁷ of showing how a single life history sheds light on the social patterns and processes of other lives (Rustin, 1998b:69; Chamberlayne & King, 2000a:215), contrasts with the usual sociological practice of assigning meaning to individual lives by framing them within previously established sociological categories (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:28). Rustin (1998a:113) describes the process this way,

...[o]ur interpretive method seeks to place our subjects' narratives and their component fragments onto broader maps of typical social experience. One can see this as 'plotting' the itineraries traced out by our subjects' narrated lives on to a larger, emergent map of the larger society and the typical life trajectories of which it is made up.

The development of theory in my thesis has progressed along these inductive lines. Using the individual case studies as a foundation, I drew broader theoretical conclusions about the meaning and process of gendered migration, and expressed these as a series of models, which I arrived at by developing an analytic vocabulary based around the

27 This method of theory development is analogous to the Grounded Theory approach of Glaser and Strauss (1967) (cited in Rustin & Chamberlayne, 2002:8).

concept of biographical disruption. In this way, as Rustin (1998b:69) proposes, I created original knowledge of social processes from the study of individual life stories.²⁸

In addition to the particular suitability of BNIM interviewing and analysis to the representation of the lived texture of individual lives, one other closely related feature of the method influenced my decision to use a biographical approach. Through its focus on the particularity of individual experience (Gunaratnam, 2004), BNIM enables the researcher to avoid what is known as ‘categorical thinking’. As Knowles (1999:130) argues with reference to the category of ‘race’, ‘[c]onsideration of individual lives...brings endless variation to racial categories making it possible to take into account important differences between occupants of the same categories’.²⁹ This feature of BNIM was important in my own work because it allowed me to avoid the homogenisation of women’s and men’s experiences and practices (Anthias, 2000:16), and thus move beyond the representation of migrant women as victims of double (M. Boyd, 1984:1093; M. Zhou & Nordquist, 1994:192) and even triple (Rivera et al., 2000:62; Wittebrood & Robertson, 1991:171) disadvantage. Also and importantly, the process of engaging with individual biographies allowed me to recognise the sometimes unique ways in which different categories interact with one another to affect an individual migrant’s overall biographical experience (Gunaratnam, 2004:208).

Structure and Agency

One of the most important features of the biographical approach is its ability to transcend the theoretical barrier between society (structure) and the individual (agency) (Chamberlayne, 2004:24; Miller, 2000:xii). As Fischer-Rosenthal (1995:259) notes, ‘the notion of biography does not reproduce the split between individual and society, but rather structures both spheres’. Moreover, in their definition of biography, Fischer-Rosenthal and Rosenthal (translated by Lisanne Ackermann, and cited in Ackermann, 2002:95) claim that biography ‘offers one the opportunity of approaching the solution to one of the fundamental questions in sociology, that is, the relationship between the

28 Chamberlayne and Rustin (1999:28) describe a similar process in the final report of the SOSTRIS project, explaining that ‘[w]e found ourselves able to elaborate models of a particular kind of social action from the data of an individual life story’.

29 Biography may, for example, help overcome some of the problems associated with categorisation outlined by Yuval-Davis, Anthias and Kofman (2005:530), in particular the way that categorisation can ‘fix’ the notion of a particular group.

individual and society'. This characteristic of biography was an important factor in my decision to use BNIM for this research. I wished to present a balanced view of migrants as active agents operating within the limiting and enabling structures of both sending and receiving societies. Chamberlayne and Rustin (1999:21) make a similar claim with respect to the SOSTRIS project, noting that '[i]ndividuals write their own social scripts, in the circumstances in which they find themselves, and attention needs to be given to the ways and conditions in which individual responses...are made'.

Accounting for the agency of individuals is particularly important in this project given the tendency in some migration literature to view migrants, and migrant women in particular, as passive victims of fate. Anthias (2000:35), for example, maintains that '[s]ome attempts to gender migration have tended to overemphasize the role of structures and constraints and at times have produced an impression that women are victims of circumstances'. One example of this overemphasis is the tendency to view migrant women as the victims of double or triple disadvantage, as outlined above. Anthias continues, 'the narratives of women migrants, whilst referring to the enforced response to economic hardship, also talk about migration as an escape route from patriarchal structures as well as a motivation towards economic improvement for their families'. I argue, like Inowlocki and Lutz (2000:316), that single case biographical analysis is able to account for migrant women's acts of resistance in their struggles with conditions of social constraint, thus recognising that their identity comprises much more than that of victim.

The Flexibility of the Method

The BNIM process of interviewing, analysis and presentation can be modified in various ways, thus lending itself to a variety of research purposes. In his step-by-step guide to BNIM practice, for example, Wengraf (2001:145) suggests a variety of alternatives to 'standard' BNIM procedures. This flexibility was an important consideration in my choice of the method for two reasons. Firstly, the learning and developmental character of a PhD thesis necessitates a degree of flexibility as the research, and the researcher, grow and change. Secondly, the integration of gender into the analysis, and the prioritisation of my feminist research values, required considerable flexibility in my chosen method. The specific modifications that were made to BNIM

interviewing and analysis techniques will be noted and discussed in the next chapter. At this point, however, three examples of BNIM research are briefly presented in order to illustrate the flexibility of the method, and the broad areas of research these projects cover.

The SOSTRIS project, which has already been discussed at some length, successfully modified BNIM in order to examine risk and exclusion, and then innovative social organisations across Europe. The latter part of the project in particular required substantial adaptation, including: the use of background archives; interviews with personnel and users; and participant observation (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:75). Subsequently, the method was again customised during the investigation of the pioneering model of health promotion used at the Bromley by Bow Centre (Chamberlayne, 2005b; Froggett, Chamberlayne, Buckner, & Wengraf, 2005; Wengraf, 2002; Buckner, 2005) in the United Kingdom.³⁰

The researchers involved in the Bromley by Bow project incorporated elements of observation, visual mapping and participatory action research into their use of BNIM. Moreover, their interest in individuals' 'inner worlds' led to the inclusion of a psychodynamic form of reflexivity during the data analysis stage of the project (Buckner, 2005:60). Hollway and Jefferson (2000b; 1997; 2000a; 2000c) applied a psycho-social³¹ understanding of subjectivity to their BNIM-based research on anxiety and the fear of crime. They modified both the interview and analysis process of the method to suit the purposes of their research, their belief in the use of both biographic and demographic data, and their strong association with psychoanalysis.

Conclusion

BNIM's ability to transcend the theoretical barrier between structure and agency renders it particularly useful in the development of migration theory.³² As discussed in Chapter 1, migration scholars continue to struggle with the problem of balancing structural effects such as the economic differences between sending and receiving countries, so-

30 This was one of the social organisations originally examined as part of the SOSTRIS project.

31 Hollway and Jefferson (2000b:24) explain that their notion of the defended subject is simultaneously psychic and social.

32 Bauer and Thompson (2004:343) note the potential of oral history to modify migration theory in terms of gender.

called meso-level influences such as recruitment agencies, and the impact of individual agency, where migrants respond to these conditions and organisations creatively, even those who are ostensibly most disadvantaged. Like Giddens' structuration theory, biography offers a way of conceptualising migration that privileges neither agency (as neoclassical theory does) nor structure at either the macro- (like structural theory) or the meso level, and in fact captures the way that structures and individuals can be both causes and effects of one another (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:27). In other words, biography provides an alternative way of theorising migration that 'bridges the theoretically constructed gap between an inner and an outer sphere' (Fischer-Rosenthal, 1995:259).

BNIM's capacity to portray the particularity of lived experience also facilitates the development of migration theory that accounts for the complex inter-relationships of gender, class, ethnicity, and other axes of difference. This characteristic of BNIM has the potential to overcome mainstream migration theory's longstanding neglect of gender. While more recently developed theories, such as migration systems theories, have attempted to better account for the effects of structure and agency, they have nonetheless continued to ignore the impact of gender on migration processes. The three case studies presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 of this thesis, and the subsequent development of theory outlined in Chapters 8 and 9, reflect my own attempt to theorise gendered migration processes. I am not proposing here that the biographical approach holds *the* answer to the enduring problems of conceptualising the causes and consequences of migration. Rather, I am suggesting that it offers migration researchers the possibility of theorising migration in ways that avoid two of the major inadequacies of mainstream migration theory: its inability to effectively account for the intricate relationship between migrants and their respective environments; and its longstanding neglect of gender.

Chapter 3

Methodology – The Research Story Continued

We have developed a concept of individual life-trajectories as taking shape in a field framed by aspirations...resources...and opportunities...The interaction between these different shaping dimensions of a life, and in particular between its subjective and its externally-given elements, can only be captured through study of the life as a whole. In particular, if one views lives as invariably 'self-created' to a degree, through activities of understanding, interpreting, remembering, and choosing, then one has to grasp lives from the point of view of the subject, as well as from 'outside' via 'snapshots' or descriptions of social facts and processes (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:45).

Introduction

The **Research Story** continues in this second methodology chapter, where I outline and discuss the various research stages involved in the completion of the thesis, and examine several significant ethical challenges that I encountered along the way. The chapter comprises three main parts. In Part One, I focus on the preliminary phase of the research story, namely the selection of research participants, the BNIM interview protocol, and the transcription process. In Part Two, I examine the various components of BNIM analytical practice, from the creation of the two main analysis documents through to the logic of datum by datum predictive analysis and the facilitation of multi-

member analytical panels. Finally, in Part Three, I discuss the particular ethical challenges I faced in working with BNIM. I conclude with a brief explanation of the presentation and generalisation of research outcomes as they appear in forthcoming chapters.

In addition to descriptions and explanations of BNIM interviewing and analysis techniques, Part One and Two comprise three major components. Firstly, I include my personal reflections and observations on the different research phases and, where relevant, my comments on the theoretical premises on which these phases are based. Secondly, I incorporate specific examples from each stage of the research process in order to clearly illustrate how these processes operate. These examples are taken from a variety of research documents, including interview transcripts, BNIM modifications of these original transcripts, and the electronic record of various analysis groups. Thirdly, where modifications of BNIM interviewing and analysis techniques were made, these are noted and explained.

Part One

The Selection of Participants

Why South Africans?

South Africa has been a significant source of migration to New Zealand since the early 1990s (Barkhuizen & Knoch, 2005:218). Over the past three years this trend has continued, with South Africa consistently in the top five source countries for residence approvals: in 2002/03 and 2003/04 it was fourth; and in 2004/05 it was third (Department of Labour, 2005a:18). Most migrants from South Africa have settled in the greater Auckland area, particularly in Howick, in the east of Auckland, and in various suburbs on the North Shore (census data from Statistics New Zealand, cited in Barkhuizen & Knoch, 2005). As a resident of the North Shore, my own life has been increasingly affected by this particular migration. I come into contact with South African migrants at the university, at my children's school, at the medical centre, and through the many small interactions individuals engage in through the course of their

daily lives. These personal connections, the overall significance of South African migration to New Zealand as a whole, and a long-time fascination with South Africa were important factors in my decision to interview this particular migrant group.

Two other attributes of New Zealand's South African population also influenced my choice: their almost universal ability to speak English,¹ and their status as skilled migrants.² With respect to the first quality, most South African migrants speak English fluently and competently, often in addition to other languages. While BNIM *has* previously been used with translated transcripts (Ackermann, 2002; Riemann, September 2003), my own experience as a competent speaker of another language led me to believe that working with translations inevitably creates a further level of distance between the interviewees' words and the researcher's (and the analysis group's) interpretation of them. Wengraf (2001:48) also notes that the use of translators raises issues about the adequacy of the final translation.

I acknowledge that the interpretation of meaning is never a straightforward process, regardless of whether the interviewer and the interviewee speak the same language. The intent of the speaker when she uses a particular word is not necessarily what the listener ultimately understands. As Hollway and Jefferson (2000b:11) note, '[c]urrent theories of language and communication stress that any kind of account can only be a mediation of reality. Hence there can be no guarantees that different people will share the same meanings'. However, the *translation* of an interviewee's transcript adds yet another dimension to this, one which I felt would be better avoided. In terms of the second quality of South African migrants mentioned above, New Zealand's points' system for the selection of migrants virtually guarantees that those who enter the country are both well-educated and 'skilled'.³ Lastly, as noted in Chapter 1, there is a dearth of international scholarship on gender and skilled migrants, and a lack of New Zealand research on South African migrants. By choosing to work with the South African migrant community, I am also contributing to these neglected areas of the literature.

1 98 per cent of South African-born migrants speak English (Statistics New Zealand, 2002:147).

2 Only three per cent of South African-born migrants over 15 years of age have no formal qualifications (Statistics New Zealand, 2002:173).

3 Migrants are categorised as 'skilled' or 'unskilled' in migration policy. Skilled workers are generally taken to be those who possess a tertiary qualification, or have equivalent experience (Iredale, 2005:155).

The Selection Process

Even though the small number of case studies characteristic of BNIM cannot achieve statistical significance, Wengraf (2001:96) argues that it is nonetheless important to select interviewees carefully, and to make clear the way in which they were chosen. With this in mind, the rest of this section is focused on making transparent the decisions involved in this early phase of the research project.⁴ I selected participants through a process of snowball or chain sampling, which Patton (cited in Wengraf, 2001:102) describes as a purposive sampling method that identifies cases of interest through people who know which cases are good examples for study, or good interview subjects. This process involved consulting a Jewish South African friend, various South African (and other) members of staff at the university, and one of the participants who had already been interviewed for this project.⁵ In requesting their assistance, I asked them to consider the individual's openness to discussing their migration experiences through stories, and the ease with which they might find the time to see me for two sessions each lasting between one and three hours.

In total, I interviewed six South African migrants (this figure includes the pilot interview), all of whom lived in Auckland at the time of the interview. They were chosen on the grounds of variation in gender, marital status, age, family configuration, length of time in New Zealand, and ethnicity. Because migrants to this country are selected according to a system of points which privileges education and labour market experience (Firkin, 2004:47), the majority of migrants tend to be well-qualified, successful members of the middle class. I did not, therefore, attempt to achieve diversity in terms of class or education. Selecting participants on the basis of differences in these criteria, I believe, created the greatest possibility of diversity within the parameters of my small sample size. Chamberlayne and King (2000b:16-17), and Jones (2001:99), who used BNIM in their respective research projects, also selected their relatively small number of interviewees on the basis of diversity.

4 In the interests of maintaining confidentiality, participants' biographical characteristics are discussed here only in very general terms.

5 As a result, two of the interviewees were slight acquaintances. Neither of these interviews, however, was chosen for in-depth analysis and case presentation.

With respect to gender and marital status, I interviewed men and women, both married and unmarried. As Hirsch (1999:1347) notes, we need to go beyond examining gender as if it only structured relationships between married couples, and we need to acknowledge that it is not possible to understand gender without interviewing both women and men. My sample included four women and two men, five of whom were married, and one who was not.⁶ In terms of age, my respondents ranged from a young man in his early 20s, to a woman in her early 50s. Five out of six of my interviewees were living in traditional nuclear families at the time of the interviews, each with their respective spouse, and one or two children. The remaining respondent lived alone. All my research participants migrated to New Zealand between 1994 and 2001, and had therefore been living in the country for periods of between three and ten years. While most interviewees arrived with permanent residence status, others came with work visas that were converted into permanent residence after the requisite conditions were fulfilled.

In terms of 'ethnicity', I also sought diversity amongst my interviewees. The six participants came from South Africa's English- and Afrikaans-speaking communities, the Indian, Coloured and Jewish communities, and the African community respectively. New Zealand census data does not break down the South African migrant population into different ethnicities, so there are no accurate figures on the ethnic composition of New Zealand's South African population.⁷ I chose these particular groups in consultation with local members of the South African community, who suggested that such a combination of ethnicities would best account for South Africa's diverse population. It was particularly important to me to interview an African member of South Africa's migrant community, for two reasons. Firstly, I felt that a collection of stories from the people of 'the rainbow nation' would be incomplete without one from its largest 'ethnic group',⁸ and secondly, that failing to record such a story would in some way replicate the invisibility of many Africans during the apartheid era.

6 None of my respondents were married to each other.

7 Walrond (2006), however, claims that the vast majority of South African migrants in New Zealand are White, and that there are also smaller numbers of other groups.

8 Africans constituted 77 per cent of the total population of South Africa in 1996 (Thompson, 2000:297).

The Interview Process

A Brief Overview

BNIM is usually based on two interviews separated by a period of between one and four weeks (Wengraf, 2001:119). The first interview is divided into two parts: an initial segment that consists of a single question followed by the interviewee's 'story'; and a second session that follows almost immediately afterwards and comprises several narrative-seeking questions based on the content of the initial narration. The purpose of the first part of the interview is to encourage participants to answer the single question according to their particular frame of reference. The interviewer then asks a series of narrative-seeking questions to further develop the primary narration. During the period of analysis following the first interview, the researcher formulates a series of questions based on the requirements of their particular project, and these are posed during the second interview. The format of this latter interview may include, but is not necessarily restricted to, narrative-seeking questions, and is completely structured by the interviewer's concerns (Wengraf, 2001:119-121). With the prior consent of the narrator, both the first and the second interviews are audio taped. In the following section, the two parts of the first BNIM interview, and the second interview, are referred to as the first, second and third sessions respectively.

The Interviews

After obtaining the contact details of prospective interviewees from the personal sources mentioned previously, I made arrangements for each of them to receive the Information Sheet (see Appendix 1). They were asked to read through the document, to take their time and consider whether or not they wished to participate in the project, and to let me know if they had any questions. At this point only one potential participant decided not to take part. She explained that she did not have time to contribute, but that she did have a friend who was interested in participating; this friend eventually became one of my interviewees. Once the others had worked through this process, and had agreed to take part, dates, times and locations were negotiated. Where possible, each of these factors was decided by the interviewee, for three reasons. Firstly, I wanted them to feel comfortable in telling me their stories, and an environment of their choosing offered the

best possibility of this. Secondly, all of the interviewees were very busy people, and I wished to make the research process as convenient as possible for them. Thirdly, where practicable I wanted to shift the balance of power in the research relationship towards my interviewees.

The interviews occurred between August and December of 2004. In most instances they took place at the dining room table in the participants' own residences, but on a few occasions the interviewee preferred to come to my home. In all but one case I had not met the participants prior to their interview.⁹ After my arrival (or theirs), there was a brief 'settling in' period, during which I talked about the background to my work and the source of my interest in migration. This introduction focused particularly on my father's relocation to New Zealand from Italy after World War 2, and my own experiences of international resettlement. While my status as a New Zealander made me an outsider in relation to my interviewees, my previous migration experiences yielded some common ground between us, and provided a foundation for the ongoing establishment of trust and rapport during the interview. After this initial period, we discussed the Consent Form (see Appendix 2), which each interviewee subsequently signed and dated. At this point of the interview, the audio equipment was switched on, and the first BNIM question was posed.

The Single Narrative-Seeking Question

The initial narrative question in BNIM involves an open invitation to the interviewee to tell the story of their life, or a particular aspect of it. After asking this first question, the interviewer listens attentively and takes notes where appropriate in order to ask follow-up questions in the second part of the interview. The interviewer must refrain from making any comment other than to offer non-verbal or paralinguistic signs of active listening (such as 'mmm', 'yes' or 'I see'), and explicit encouragement to continue (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000:63). It is very important that the interviewee be given every opportunity to continue without interruption until they themselves give a clear indication that they have finished, such as 'and that is my story'. 'The art and the skill of the exercise', Hollway and Jefferson (1997:5) claim, 'is to assist narrators to say more about their lives...without offering, at the same time, interpretations, judgements,

9 I had met the interviewee with whom I conducted the pilot interview on several prior occasions.

or otherwise imposing the interviewer's own relevancies'. They go on to comment that while ostensibly straightforward 'it required discipline and practice to transform ourselves from the highly visible asker of our questions to the almost invisible, facilitating catalyst of the interviewees' stories' (Hollway & Jefferson, 1997:5; see also Wengraf, 2001:113).

The idea of narrative interviewing, Jovchelovich and Bauer (2000:60) claim, is conceptually motivated by 'a critique of the question-response schema of most interviews'. In the latter mode of interviewing, they explain, the researcher imposes structure in three different ways: firstly, by selecting the themes and topics addressed in the interview; secondly, by ordering the questions in a specific way; and thirdly by framing questions using their own language (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000:61). BNIM, in contrast, is based on an open invitation to the interviewee to tell their 'story'. It elicits, they suggest, a less imposed rendering of the interviewee's perspective, one that is 'revealed in stories where the informant is using his or her own spontaneous language in the narration of events' (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000:61; see also Breckner & Rupp, 2002:294; Rosenthal, 2004:52).

BNIM's initial question can take various forms. The more classic version asks the interviewee to tell the story of their lives, but initial questions can also be focused on a particular time of life, a specific historical time, or on special issues or topics. Regardless of these differences in focus, however, initial narrative-seeking questions should always offer interviewees the opportunity to begin their story at a place of their own choosing, the freedom to provide whatever background information they consider necessary, and the autonomy to decide when and how to end their story (Wengraf, 2001:121-122). In my own research, the initial question took the following form, and was delivered in full to each interviewee without modification.

Please tell me your migration story. You could start around the time that the idea of migration became personally important for you, and tell me how it all developed, up until now. Begin wherever you like. Please take all the time you need, we've got about two hours. I'll listen first, I won't interrupt. I'll just take some notes about the experiences that have been important for you.

The First Session

Hollway and Jefferson's (1997:5) claim that it takes both discipline and practice to become a 'facilitator' rather than 'asker' is certainly an apt description of my own experience as a BNIM interviewer. I found it very challenging to surrender a large degree of 'control' over how the interview progressed because it meant that I had to suppress my habitual predilection to 'rescue' people from uncomfortable or painful situations. In normal circumstances this tendency causes me to intervene when distressing experiences are being retold, and to fill silences with words in order to alleviate the discomfort these gaps often generate. Managing the first interview was also very difficult because in addition to changing the way I responded to people, I also had to pay careful attention to their stories, make notes that would provide the basis for questions in the next part of the interview, and support the interviewee with active listening and empathy. In addition to the anxiety I felt about managing these multiple tasks, I was also worried that my interviewees would find the single question 'strange' or counter-intuitive, and as a consequence be unable to respond to it with any fluidity or depth.

Over the course of the six BNIM interviews that I conducted during the research, I came to appreciate how difficult it is to listen *attentively*, and how rarely this occurs in everyday life. My inclination to intervene during silences or painful stories diminished over time, particularly once I realised that my lack of intervention had several very positive outcomes. It made me a better listener because I did not have to think about formulating my own 'rescuing' responses to the interviewee's story. In addition, letting the interviewee make their own way through these difficult parts of the interview maintained their focus on their own stories, rather than their concentration being disturbed by my own comments. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, a lack of intervention on my part allowed the interviewee to complete or resume their stories as they desired, without being influenced in some way by my overt attempt to resolve their/my discomfort. I am not suggesting here that the absence of a verbal response from me facilitated a 'true' rendering of the interviewee's story in any essentialist sense, merely that my silence eliminated one of the most directive and obvious ways in which I could have affected the stories I was being told.

The Gestalt

Despite my anxiety about the participants' reactions to the single question, all but one of them responded easily and fully to my request for their migration stories.¹⁰ I was both excited about, and fascinated by, the distinctive, unique narratives generated at each interview. I am certain that I would not have acquired such an intimate and acute sense of the *whole* story of my interviewees' migration experiences had I asked them to answer a series of questions reflecting my own perspective and research agenda. This notion of *wholeness*, or *gestalt*, is one of the main theoretical principles of BNIM (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000b:34), and provides the rationale for the interviewer's minimal role in the first interview. In this approach, 'the significance of the single event or part of a life can only be understood in relation to the whole, and the whole in relation to parts' (Chamberlayne & King, 1996:98; Breckner & Rupp, 2002:294). It is therefore the task of the researcher to elicit intact the gestalt of the narrator during the BNIM interview, rather than destroy it through the pursuit of their own agenda (C. Jones & Rupp, 2000:277).

Based on my experience with BNIM, I strongly agree that the whole of an interviewee's story is able to convey a sense of that individual's gendered migration experience that cannot be replicated by cumulative knowledge of the separate events that comprise it. From this, I concur with Breckner and Rupp (2002:294) when they claim that every story has a gestalt, and with Hollway and Jefferson (2000b:34), who define the idea of gestalt as 'a whole which is more than the sum of its parts'.¹¹ Furthermore, I believe that the structure of a biographical narration demonstrates a pattern that can be perceived by the researcher in a way that may not be available to the interviewee him- or herself (Chamberlayne and King 1996:98; see also Rustin 1998:13).¹² I would add, however, that I am not proposing that the gestalt of a life story exists in any objective sense, to be discerned by different researchers as the same essential and unchanging pattern. My position on this issue is congruent with that of Hollway and Jefferson (2000b:97), who

10 The interviewee who responded guardedly, however, also reacted the same way during the second interview, when the format was a more conventional question-answer schema. From this I concluded that his sense of unease was not generated by the method of interviewing, but by the nature of the interview process with me. This transcript was not one of the three chosen for further analysis.

11 Alternatively, Jones and Rupp (2000:277) describe gestalt as a 'frame of reference' or a 'system of relevancy'.

12 The ethical issues related to this particular aspect of gestalt are discussed in the last part of this chapter.

admit that 'we are creating, not 'truths' about a person, but an account which is methodologically, empirically and theoretically convincing'.

The Second Session

After the interviewee has come to the end of their initial narration in a BNIM interview, the interviewer takes some time to formulate a series of narrative-seeking questions from the notes taken during the first part of the interview (Wengraf, 2001:119). The purpose of these questions is to generate more narrative, which, as previously explained, is the kind of language through which the meaning of an experience is most likely to emerge (Breckner & Rupp, 2002:295; Rosenthal, 2004:53). I agree with Wengraf that the break between sessions is helpful; I found it particularly useful during the first interviews, when I was unfamiliar with the technique of constructing narrative-seeking questions. On more than one occasion, however, this break between BNIM sessions proved unworkable because the interviewee continued to talk to me throughout this period. While I believe that this issue may have been successfully resolved had I been more assertive about the need for a period of quiet reflection at this point, I think that Fischer-Rosenthal and Rosenthal (cited in Wengraf, 2001:119) are correct in their assertion that such breaks may constitute an interruption in the development and maintenance of a spirit of co-operation and trust in the interview.

In constructing the narrative-seeking questions for the second part of the interview, the researcher takes into account two important factors, each based on the premise of maintaining intact the gestalt of the interviewee's story. Firstly, the questions must reflect the original order of the topics as they were introduced by the participant. For example, if the interviewee talked about a pivotal incident in their childhood, followed by another that took place in their teenage years, the researcher would need to ask questions about the first event before they moved on to the second. It should be noted at this point, however, that the researcher does not need to ask questions about every subject the interviewee introduces in their original narration. Using the previous example, the interviewer may be interested only in the incident that occurred during the interviewee's teenage years, and would therefore begin with a question related to this event.

Secondly, the researcher puts her questions together utilising, as far as possible, the words and phrases of the interviewee. Again using the previous example, if the interviewee referred to a 'mate' in her or his telling of the initial story, the researcher would also need to use this term in formulating her question, rather than 'friend', or indeed any other term. In short, during the second part of the initial BNIM interview, the researcher asks narrative-inducing questions using the interviewee's own words and phrases, maintaining the original order of the topics as the interviewee introduced them during their story. Like the first part of a BNIM interview, the second session is difficult because the researcher has to manage multiple tasks: continued note-taking; the formulation of follow-up questions using the correct sequence and language; and finally, attentive and empathetic listening.¹³

Overall, I found this second session by far the most challenging. This was due, I think, to the fact that many of my interviewees' initial narrations focused on the retelling of painful, often violent experiences that had taken place in their homeland. Following the template of BNIM interviewing, I was required to begin the second session by asking for more narrative about these traumatic experiences. Theoretically, I could have chosen to ignore these first stories, but I did not, as I believed that they were critical¹⁴ to my understanding of the interviewee's migration experience. Asking these first questions often made me feel quite uncomfortable, for several reasons. It was difficult because the wording felt contrived and 'unnatural'. Moreover, it was demanding because I was worried that my interviewees would perceive my focus as somehow voyeuristic. Lastly, it was uncomfortable because my concentration on stories of violence and injustice in South Africa could easily have been interpreted by the interviewees as my attempt to see their migration in simplistic terms as an escape from 'bad' (or racist, or violent) South Africa to 'good' (or non-racist, or peaceful) New Zealand.

After this second BNIM session had come to an end, I asked each interviewee if they would like to add anything further to their migration stories, and once they had made these last contributions, the audio-recorder was turned off. While this signalled the end of the BNIM-based part of the interview, I found that most interviewees wished to begin

13 Similarly, Wengraf and Chamberlayne (2006:22) describe session two as a 'constant multi-tasking operation'.

14 From my current perspective, this turned out to be true in each of the three cases that were subjected to BNIM analysis.

a *conversation* about migration. As a result I spent between ten minutes and an hour talking to them about their particular migration, my own various resettlements, and the nature of the migration experience in general. This more casual interaction offered me the opportunity to further develop my relationship with the interviewees, to clarify certain biographical details which remained unclear after their narrations, and to talk about the timing and nature of the next interview.

Debriefing

At the end of the first two sessions, the interviewer spends as much time as necessary 'debriefing' (Wengraf, 2001:142-143). This process has two distinct stages: an immediate post-interview debrief, and a later session that occurs the first time the researcher listens to an audio-tape of the interview. The first phase involves taking notes on *anything* that comes to mind about the interview as soon as possible after it has ended. This might include, for example, a description of an interview's location and its specific inter-personal dynamics, a list of questions which remain unanswered, or comments on the interviewer's responses to the content of the session. During the second phase, the researcher listens carefully to the interview tape, stopping whenever necessary to make thorough notes on the memories and thoughts that are provoked by this first re-hearing. This flow of stimulated ideas, Wengraf (2001:209) claims, decreases substantially on subsequent hearings, making a meticulous debriefing at this point particularly vital.

Jones (2003:65) claims that these initial debriefings were central to his comprehension of the interviews in his research on informal caring in the United Kingdom. The notes from these sessions, he writes, became crucial documents for later reflection and analysis. Wengraf (2001:142) too emphasises how important the post-interview debriefing process is to the researcher's developing understanding of the interviews. 'You need to think of your 'product' from the interview field', he suggests, 'as being composed of two sorts of materials, both of which are necessary...interview-tapes *and* debriefing-notes' (Wengraf, 2001:142, emphasis mine). I undertook both the debriefing phases described above for all six of my interviews, and found the process very helpful, as Wengraf suggests, in furthering my overall understanding of the interviews.

Specifically, these debriefing sessions helped me to crystallise, and then to put into words, feelings and impressions that had arisen over the course of the interview. Later, reading and re-reading these notes (in conjunction with the verbatim transcripts) allowed me to recall vividly and in great detail the way the interview had transpired, to the point that I could almost ‘relive’ them. Ultimately, these observations became part of the material considered during the group analysis of the three chosen case studies. Towards the end of the research, when I was putting together the case presentations and writing the reflexive chapter (Chapter 7), I also used them as sounding boards, checking and re-checking that what I was writing accounted for those initial impressions. This acknowledgement of those first thoughts and feelings does not imply, in any essentialist sense, that they were ‘true’. Rather, it suggests that, like the interview transcripts, they merited analysis, interpretation and incorporation into the final research outcomes. An excerpt from my post-interview debriefing notes is contained in Figure 1.¹⁵

Figure 1 Excerpt from Debriefing Notes: Interview 2

After the initial question she spoke for 45 minutes, I know because I remember the tape clicking over and being surprised at how fast the time had gone. She spoke quietly, quickly and expressively, using her hands a lot to illustrate what she was saying. Her bracelets jangled as she spoke, and the fabric of her jacket rustled. She was very well groomed, even though she apologised for how she was dressed, explaining that she had just been to the gym. Racism and prejudice were dominant themes in her narrative, related to experiences that took place in South Africa, but also here in New Zealand.

The Third Session

Whereas sessions one and two usually take place within the same interview and are governed by the ‘relevancies’ of the interviewee, the third session occurs some time later and is structured around the agenda of the researcher (Wengraf, 1998:121).¹⁶ Before this later interview takes place, the researcher undertakes a preliminary analysis of the interview and the debriefing material derived from the first two sessions. From

¹⁵ Volante (2005) also used excerpts from various BNIM analysis stages in her PhD thesis.

¹⁶ The second interview is optional (Wengraf, 2001:144). The researcher may find that she has acquired adequate data from the first two BNIM sessions.

this assessment, a set of questions is designed with the specific purpose of furthering the interviewer's own research goals. This third session might include, for example: questions designed to clarify or complete the researcher's knowledge of the interviewee's biographical data; questions formulated to elicit more information about particular topics mentioned in the participant's initial interview; or questions introducing new subjects previously unexamined by the interviewee. While the researcher may decide to construct questions designed to elicit more narrative, she may equally choose not to do so (Wengraf, 2001:120).

Five out of six of my interviews were conducted according to the timing outlined above, with sessions one and two occurring during a first interview, and session three taking place at a later date.¹⁷ Lorato, however, had so little free time that I conducted all three sessions during the space of an afternoon in order to accommodate her. While this particular way of organising the sessions undoubtedly had various negative consequences in terms of a lack of time for my own contemplation and reflection, more positively, this modification allowed me to complete our interviews in the least disruptive way for my interviewee. My willingness to be flexible in this instance was also related to my commitment to interview a member of South Africa's African community as part of my research. Ultimately, I feel that this commitment was justified, both because of the importance of including a range of South African 'voices', and because Lorato's migration story differed in critical ways from all the others in the thesis.

Based on the interview and debriefing data from my pilot interview, I constructed a set of standard questions (see Appendix 3) designed to address my specific research interest in gender and migration. I used this set of questions with each interviewee during session three, although I modified it according to the particular content of each participant's previous interview, and their individual biographical data. For example, if a particular topic had been dealt with at length during session one and/or two, I left out questions from the list which dealt with that subject, or changed the question to focus on an aspect of the issue that had not previously been covered. Similarly, several of my questions covered issues related to children or parenting, or to particular intimate

¹⁷ I undertook all three BNIM sessions with individual participants before moving on to begin the same process with the remaining interviewees. In this way I was able to concentrate exclusively on one interviewee at a time.

relationships, and these were omitted or modified where they were not biographically relevant to the interviewee.

The Transcription Process

The first step in narrative analysis, according to Schutze (cited in Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000:69), is the production of a detailed transcription of the interview. Wengraf (2001:213) also stresses the need for a meticulous, verbatim transcript (complete, with nothing omitted), claiming that it is essential if the researcher is to analyse the interview as a communicative interaction. I decided to transcribe the three sessions of my pilot interview because I believe, as Jovchelovitch & Bauer (2000:69) do, that researcher participation in the transcription process is useful for achieving a degree of intimacy with interview data. In addition, I had little previous transcribing experience, and felt that my involvement in this stage was important for my development as a researcher. The decision to transcribe only these initial sessions was also a pragmatic one, as BNIM analysis is long and time-consuming and there were, as a result, many other demands on my time. My involvement as a transcriber nonetheless turned out to be far greater than I had initially planned, as I also had to make substantial alterations to those interviews that were professionally transcribed.

I found the transcription of these three initial sessions to be a protracted process, because the accents of my interviewees were sometimes difficult for me to understand, and because of the frequent pauses I made to note ‘theoretical memos’¹⁸ (Glaser 1978, cited in Wengraf, 2001:210). It was also slow because, as Wengraf (2001:221) notes, transcription is not a purely mechanical process, but instead ‘involves complex decisions as mediation occurs between the speakers and the eventual readers of transcribed words’. In my transcripts, such mediation included the creation of sentences and paragraphs using the usual conventions of capital letters, commas, and full stops. I also used a number of transcription symbols to represent pauses, differences in volume, and several other features of verbal speech that go beyond the simple written word. Lastly, I attempted to achieve a level of detail in my transcribing which would facilitate

18 ‘Memos are the theorizing write-up [of ideas about codes and their relationship] as they strike the analyst while coding. Memos lead, naturally, to abstraction or ideation’ (Glaser, 1978:83, cited in Wengraf, 2001:211, emphasis in original).

the various stages of BNIM analysis, as well as providing nuanced excerpts to illustrate my final analyses and case presentations.

The final transcription of each session took the following form (see Figure 2). Line numbers were included in the column on the left, and numbers were inserted at the bottom of each page so that I could locate exactly where in the transcript I was on later readings. To the right of the actual verbatim transcript I included debriefing notes and theoretical memos made on first and subsequent hearings.¹⁹ In Figure 3, I present a list of symbols²⁰ used in the transcription process, along with explanations for other textual devices used to make the transcriptions clear and easy to read. These symbols and explanations also apply to the various excerpts included as examples throughout the thesis.

Figure 2 Excerpt from Transcription: Interview 3

Line Number	Transcript	Notes
10	<i>my best friend was a black guy, and that</i>	I was anxious because
11	<i>was huge problems, cause we, I used to</i>	Sam was my first male
12	<i>walk my dog to the park every afternoon</i>	interviewee, and I had the
13	<i>and we used to meet, and mmm, I'm not</i>	idea that men might not
14	<i>proud of this but we used to smoke</i>	find it as easy as women
15	<i>cigarettes, naughty boys [laughs]</i>	to tell stories about
16		themselves.
17	<i>[laughs]</i>	We sat in the dining room,
18		across the table from one
19	<i>And, ah play soccer, but, you know, when the</i>	another, with the tape
20	<i>time came to wanting to go to a movie, or</i>	recorder between us on
21	<i>wanting to go out for a meal or something, we</i>	the table. Sam maintained
22	<i>couldn't go together, and ah that, that also</i>	eye contact throughout the
23	<i>worried me, it just was a worry in the back of</i>	interview; I felt he was

19 Alterations have been made to some of the excerpts included in this part of the thesis in order to protect the confidentiality of the interviewees.

20 Some of these symbols are taken from Silverman's simplified transcription symbols (cited in Wengraf, 2001:217).

24	<i>my mind, in the front of my mind really, um,</i>	sincere and I instinctively
25	<i>[clears throat] [2]...</i>	liked him...

Figure 3 Transcription Symbols

<i>italics</i>	All transcripts, and direct quotes taken from individual transcripts, are presented in italics
bold	Words that are emphasised through volume or vehemence are presented in bold
[]	Empty parentheses represent the transcriber's inability to hear what was said
[2]	Numbers in parentheses indicate the length of pauses, in seconds, between words
red	My words appear in red script
[verbal hesitation]	This symbol represents a speaker's attempt to begin a word an indiscernible number of times without completing it
-	A dash at the end of part of a word indicates the abrupt shut-off of the sound in progress
[laughs]	This symbol represents laughter
[in/outdrawn breath]	A discernible indrawn or outdrawn breath is represented by this symbol
[plain text]	Part of an interviewee's quote that appears in plain text in parentheses is there to give a <i>sense</i> of the interviewee's words without revealing certain details that might compromise participant confidentiality. For example, rather than quoting <i>I worked as an accounting teacher at Takapuna Grammar School for five years</i> , I would instead write, <i>I worked [in the teaching profession] for [several] years.</i>

Part Two

The Analysis Process

Background and Overview

BNIM methodology and analytic practice are founded on the distinction between the lived life and the told story (Wengraf, 2000:145).²¹ The lived life is composed of the interviewee's biographical data arranged in chronological order, while the told story constitutes the way they present their life, or a particular part of it, in their interview. This includes the events they decide to include in their story, and the way they choose to talk about them (Wengraf, 2000:145; 2001:232). Both these components of biography, according to Rosenthal (1993:61), always come together, and are 'continuously dialectically linked and produce each other'. The final aim of BNIM analysis is to understand the relationship between these two biographical elements. This is accomplished by discerning the pattern of the lived life and the told story, and then establishing the way in which these two patterns are related. The sociobiographic approach, as previously explained, complements these analyses by researching the social and historical contexts of an interviewee's life (Wengraf et al., 2002:260-261; Breckner & Rupp, 2002:295).

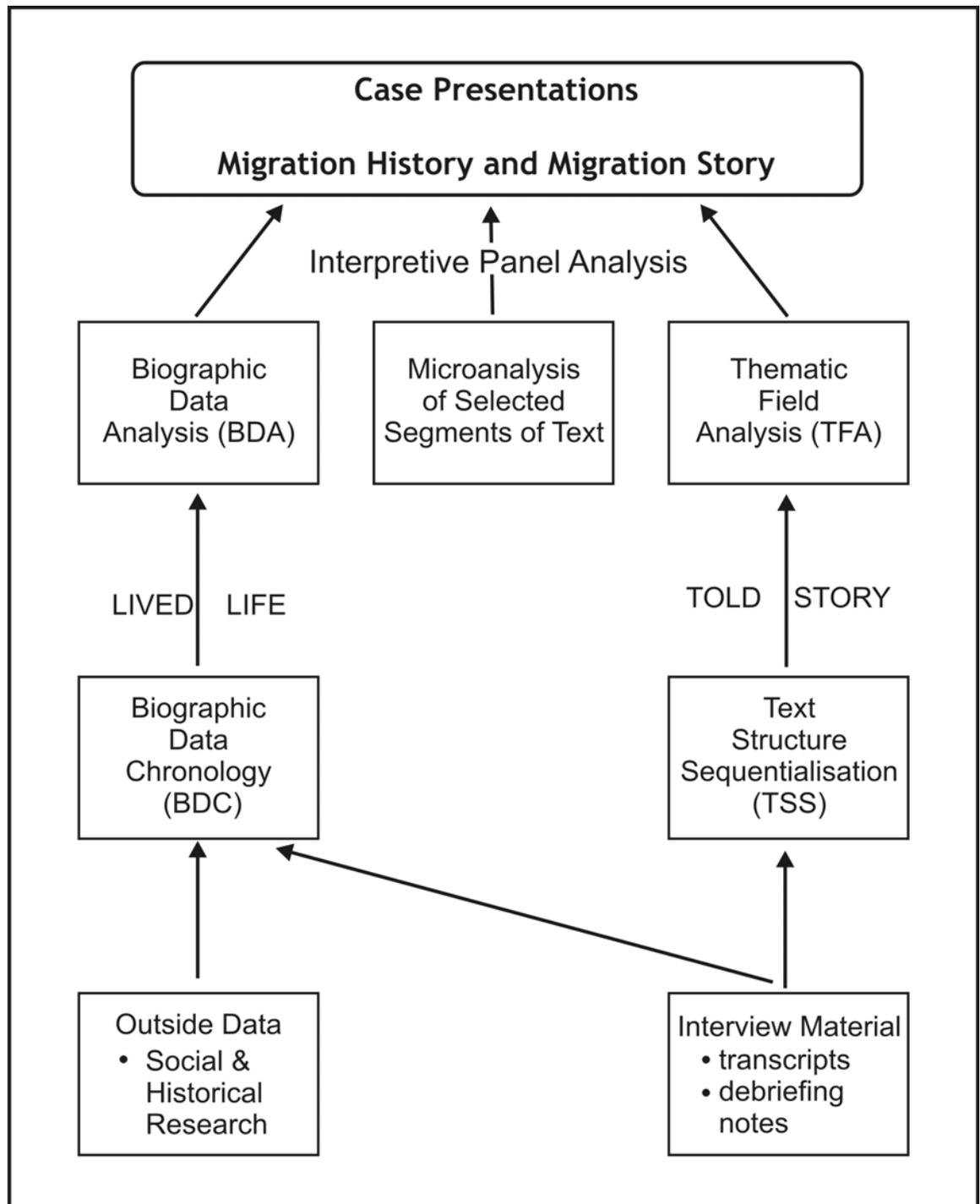
The analysis phase of BNIM, unlike the more 'fluid', implicit approaches of some qualitative methods, involves a 'formalized process in which each step...is made explicit' (Chamberlayne & King, 1996:98; see also Wengraf, 2001:232; 2000:149). Wengraf (2001:233) describes these steps as progressing from the relatively mechanical, 'where the procedure is logically tight', through to craft-based artistry, which, he claims, is 'more determined by the individuality of the researcher and the sociality of the analysing team'.²² I begin this analysis section with a diagram (Figure 4) that provides a sense of the progression of these various stages of BNIM analysis.

21 I also use the terms life history and life story.

22 He claims that 'the inevitable artistry of interpretation can realize its full value only when placed squarely in relation to a solid and reliable craft base' (Wengraf, 2001:234).

Similarly, it also illustrates the order in which each of the phases are explained and discussed in the remainder of the chapter. Lastly, the diagram demonstrates how each analytical phase fits into the larger picture of BNIM research practice.

Figure 4 Stages of BNIM²³



²³ This diagram represents the flow of BNIM as it has occurred in my own research. The specific ways in which it differs from other BNIM work is detailed in the relevant sections of this chapter.

The Creation of the Biographical Data Chronology (BDC)

Life events abstracted from interview material (and other sources, where relevant) are organised chronologically to create the BDC (Rosenthal, 1993:68; Chamberlayne & King, 1996:99; Wengraf, 2001:236). These data reflect the ‘lived life’ or ‘migration history’ component of the interviewee’s biography. Because my initial BNIM question asked for my interviewees’ *migration* stories rather than the story of their lives, the biographical data extracted from the interview varied widely between my participants, depending on which life events they considered relevant to their migration experience. Some of my participants anchored their migration stories in events from their childhoods and early lives, while others began in the period immediately pre- or post-arrival in New Zealand. In order to maintain my focus on my interviewees’ migration experiences, I sought clarification of biographical details only where I believed that this would contribute to my understanding of this aspect of their lives.

Figure 5 Excerpt from BDC: Interview 1

Interview One	Biographical Data Chronology
195-	Parents married
195-	Sister born
196-	Interviewee born
198-	Left school
198-	Started work
199-	Married

The Creation of the Told Story Sequentialisation (TSS)

In the same way that the researcher develops a concise version of the interviewee’s *lived life* by creating the BDC, they then generate a condensed technical description of the structure of the *told story* referred to as the TSS (Wengraf, 2001:239). As mentioned previously, these documents constitute the substance of analysis for subsequent BNIM

panels. Unlike the production of the BDC, which is a relatively straightforward exercise, the construction of the TSS is a complex process, which, as Wengraf (2001:239) maintains, ‘requires quite a lot of work to be understood and more to be operationalized and used in practice’. In the creation of the TSS, the researcher breaks down the interview text by dividing it into a sequential list of discrete segments. A new segment is created with a change of speaker, a change of topic, or a change of ‘textsort’. A list of these textsorts and their definitions²⁴ is presented in Figure 6.

Figure 6 The DARNE Textsorts

Description	The assertion that particular entities exhibit certain qualities or characteristics
Argumentation	The development of an argument or the justification for taking a particular position
Report	The recounting of a sequence of events, actions or experiences from some distance, with little detail
Narrative	The recounting of a sequence of events, actions or experiences in full detail
Evaluation	The interviewee’s opinion of a particular aspect of their story

The rationale for developing the TSS according to these changes in text is explained by Rosenthal (1998:4-5). ‘We assume’, she says, ‘that it is by no means coincidental and insignificant when biographers argue about one phase of their lives, but narrate another at great length, and then only give a brief report of yet another part of their lives or describe the circumstances of their lives in detail’ (Rosenthal, 1998:4-5, emphasis mine). Making these distinctions, Wengraf (2001:239) claims, is the first step towards understanding the interviewee’s perception of the events and actions included in the lived life component of their story. The generation of a TSS requires of the researcher the skill to recognise changes in textsort, topic and speaker, and the ability to create a TSS of appropriate detail and length for subsequent group analysis. While I found the former skill quite straightforward, I developed the basics of the latter only after

²⁴ This list is a modified version of that presented by Wengraf (2001:243-244). See also Chamberlayne and King (1996:99).

attending the training course on BNIM analysis run by Tom Wengraf and Prue Chamberlayne in London. I then built on these basic skills by facilitating my own analysis groups using self-generated TSS documents. An excerpt from a TSS is presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7 Excerpt from TSS: Interview 3

Page number/line	Speaker/Textsort	Summary of Topic/Quotation
Topic		Being White and Jewish in South Africa
1/1-6 1	I: Initial question	Tell me your migration story... Start around the time migration became personally important for you... Begin wherever you like... Take all the time you need
1/8-17 2	S: ARG/Eval	<i>When I was [a child] I saw sort of these policemen really beating up a black lady...at the time I was with um our [1] home helper, um who was black, and we were watching this together and we were both quite shattered</i>
1/19	I: Interactive Remark	Yeah
1/21-25 3	S. ARG	<i>Why I'm starting so far back is just to explain that I felt quite [1] uncomfortable, and, and quite prejudiced in a way being white in South Africa</i>
1/27	I: Interactive Remark	Yeah, yeah
1/29-2/14 4	S: EVAL/Rep I: various interactive remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Africa a lawless, third world police state • From an early stage didn't feel patriotic • Best friend was a Black guy, which caused huge problems • Used to meet in the park every afternoon and smoke cigarettes [laughs]

BNIM Interpretive Panels

'[C]reating a space in which the individual researcher and others dialogically develop their hypothesising, in which each has a different life experience and defends themselves differently from reality enables an interpretive panel to be less defended and more insightful than any one of its members' (Froggett & Wengraf, 2004:117).

Datum by Datum Analysis

The aim of datum-by-datum analysis is to construct as many hypotheses as possible, each of them able to adequately account for the event (in the case of the BDC), the topic/textsort (in the case of the TSS) or the piece of text in question (in the case of a microanalysis). This formulation of multiple hypotheses ensures that the researcher remains open to a range of alternative explanations for the datum, and neither overlooks nor neglects those that are not immediately obvious to her (Breckner, 1998:93). BNIM interpretive panels are not, however, a substitute for the researcher's own analytical thinking, rather they function as a starting point for individual work that continues long after the last analysis group comes to an end. Moreover, the researcher is not bound in any way to adhere to the ideas generated by the panel, only to consider them in conjunction with other components of the analysis.

The BDC and the TSS, together with small pieces of text chosen by the researcher, are interpreted in BNIM analysis using a process of emergent theorising initially developed by Glaser and Strauss (1968, cited in Wengraf, 2001:256; see also Rustin & Chamberlayne, 2002:8). In this process, the members of an interpretive panel examine a biographical event, a piece of text, or a topic/textsort and propose an explanation for that datum in the form of a hypothesis. They do this from a position of ignorance about what follows the life event, the fragment of text, or the topic/textsort in question. Wengraf and Chamberlayne (2006:48, emphasis in original) note that *'[t]he future-blind method of the researcher simulates the future-blind acting/experiencing subject, and*

thus enables us to ‘reconstruct’ for ourselves...the predicaments, opportunities and ‘decisions’²⁵ of the...subjectivity in question’.

The datum under consideration by the panel, datum A, is part of a larger sequence of data: the BDC, the TSS or the fragment of text. From each of the explanatory hypotheses put forward by the panel about datum A, a prediction is made about what later data might reasonably be expected to follow if the hypothesis turned out to be true. All the explanatory hypotheses about datum A are then tested by examining datum B in the sequence, and checking whether it contains any evidence *for* or *against* them. ‘Some of the alternative explanatory hypotheses’, Breckner (1998:93, emphasis mine) explains, ‘will be *falsified* by the subsequent data and will be dropped. Others will not be falsified by the subsequently following data and will therefore be kept in play as possible explanations of the whole sequence of data’. These remaining hypotheses may be *strengthened* or *confirmed* by later data; those that are neither are ultimately disregarded as there is not sufficient evidence to support them. After considering how the hypotheses about datum A are affected by the content of datum B, hypotheses are then formulated about this piece of datum, and so on.

This process is summarised by Chamberlayne and King (2000a:213) as ‘generating hypotheses contained in a given unit of empirical data, progressing to hypotheses as to the further developments, and then testing these with the empirical outcome’. The purpose of this procedure, they go on to note, is to reconstruct the range of possibilities open to the interviewee in a certain situation, within a particular social and historical context (Chamberlayne & King, 2000a:213-214). The researcher is able to achieve a better understanding of the action an individual takes (whether this constitutes a life event, the choice of several words, or the introduction of a new topic/textsort) if they have an appreciation of those alternatives that were *not* taken. In other words, ‘[t]he fuller the sense of the foregone possible alternatives, the more precise a meaning can be given to the alternative that actually occurred’ (Wengraf, 2001:257).

25 The word ‘decision’, Wengraf and Chamberlayne (2006:46) explain, leaves completely open the question of whether the selection between alternatives was conscious, unconscious, or somewhere on the spectrum between these two alternatives. He notes that Rosenthal (1993 and later) uses the word ‘selection’ to avoid any implication of a completely conscious choice.

BNIM Analysis Training

During the time that I was creating my first TSS and BDC documents, I was notified of an upcoming course on BNIM analysis run by Tom Wengraf and Prue Chamberlayne at their London home. Daunted at the prospect of facilitating my own interpretive panels, and confused about the later, less formalised analysis stages, I decided to go. My attendance at the course made an enormous difference, I believe, to the way I faced the subsequent challenges of BNIM analysis. I was able to participate in a series of interpretive panels, exchange ideas about different aspects of the process with others undertaking BNIM-based work, obtain the opinions of experienced BNIM researchers on specific aspects of my own research, and ‘model’, to some extent, the kind of skills involved in facilitating panel analysis.

Choosing Three Case Studies

I decided to fully analyse three of my six BNIM interviews.²⁶ I chose these migration stories because together they represented both the diversity of the group’s experiences, and many of their shared qualities. Moreover, I decided to focus on three cases because I wished to avoid the kind of binary thinking encouraged by the consideration of only two (Wengraf & Chamberlayne, 2006:62). I chose Ellen as my first case. In terms of diversity, she was older than the other migrants I had interviewed, and had experienced a severe illness in her immediate family soon after their arrival in New Zealand. On the other hand, like most of the migrants in my sample, she had fled the increasing violence in her homeland, and had faced with strength the difficulties and losses associated with her resettlement in New Zealand.

I facilitated six interpretive panels, each three hours long, in the analysis of Ellen’s migration story: two groups were held to analyse the BDC (this process is called a biographical data analysis or BDA), three were devoted to the analysis of the TSS (this procedure is referred to as a thematic field analysis or TFA) and one focused on the examination of small segments of text (this is called microanalysis). These individual processes are outlined in detail in the next section. I worked through these different

²⁶ This is typical of much BNIM-based research. In SOSTRIS, six interviews were conducted in each country for each category of risk, but only one or two were analysed in full. BNIM PhDs have presented one case (Snelling), three cases (Ackermann, Volante) and seven (Jones) (Wengraf & Chamberlayne, 2006:62).

analysis groups over a period of several weeks, moving on to my next case only when the sessions devoted to Ellen's interview transcript were complete. I found this period of intense focus on one individual case very helpful. I developed a great sense of *intimacy* with each successive migration story, and was able to maintain a sense of *clarity* about the overall purpose of each different stage I worked through.

Both my second case, Sam, and my third case, Lorato, were chosen on the basis of *difference* from the cases I had analysed before them.²⁷ I chose Sam because of his gender, and because, unlike Ellen, he had decided to migrate after a personal experience of violence in South Africa. I chose Lorato because her migration story differed on so many levels from both Ellen and Sam, and indeed from the stories of all my other interviewees. She had not migrated to 'escape', as the others had, but rather to further her career and improve her family's quality of life. Although six interpretive panels were necessary in the analysis of Ellen's migration story, I was able to work through the BDA, the TFA and the microanalysis in both Sam's and Lorato's cases using only three analysis groups, one devoted to each individual phase. This was partly due to the fact that I had become more skilled at facilitating the analysis groups, but was also attributable to my decision to construct the TSS using only session one of the interview transcript in the latter two cases.²⁸

The remaining three interviews nonetheless performed several important functions. They enabled me to get a sense of the diversity²⁹ of individual migration experiences; they gave me a sense of those feelings and experiences which appeared to be common to all of them and they served, together with the case studies, as the foundation for the generation of theory which is contained in Chapters 8 and 9. A brief biography of each of these cases follows.

Arun

Arun is an unmarried, Indian South African man in his early twenties who arrived in New Zealand with one of his parents (his parents are divorced) in the late 1990s. The decision to migrate, he said, was made by his parent, and was motivated by their desire

27 Ackermann (2002:92) also chose her three cases in this way.

28 This is explained more fully in the segment on the TFA.

29 Jones (2001:99) claims that undertaking a larger number of interviews than those he analysed fully allowed him to include demographic diversity in his preliminary and exploratory research.

to secure for him a better, safer future and a quality education. In the years since his arrival he has completed secondary school, gained a university qualification, travelled overseas and begun a professional career.

Lisa

Lisa is a Coloured woman in her early forties who migrated to New Zealand with her husband and teenage children in the early years of this century. She and her family decided to come to New Zealand, she explained, after one of them had experienced an armed carjacking. Her post-migration experiences have included considerable difficulty re-establishing her career as a professional; significant financial hardship; and illness and loss amongst her extended family and close friends.

Jane

Jane is an English-speaking White South African woman in her early forties who arrived in New Zealand with her husband and young child in the mid-1990s. Their decision to migrate to New Zealand was made after a violent crime was committed in their neighbourhood. They wanted, she explained, a safer life for their child. Since they left South Africa they have added to their own family, been joined by several members of their extended families, and have moved on from the financial uncertainty of their early days in this country.

Biographical Data Analysis (BDA)

The aim of the BDA, according to Breckner (1998:93), is ‘to reconstruct the societal...contexts an individual has lived through’. This part of the analysis also builds a picture of the sequence of events in an interviewee’s life, noting those that seem particularly crucial or important, and those that appear to constitute turning points. During the BDA, the researcher puts aside her knowledge of the told story (Wengraf, 2001:259; see also Breckner & Rupp, 2002:297), and does not provide the panel with any information about future biographical events. ‘This ensures’, Breckner (1998:93) maintains, ‘the free multiplication of hypotheses about possible future data’. The interpretive panel then works its way through the interviewee’s biographical data one at

a time, generating as many hypotheses as possible that answer the following questions:³⁰

1. How could this event be experienced in relation to the context of the individual?
The context includes factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, personal development, class, and family configuration.
 - This is called an *experiential* hypothesis
2. How could the [growing] sequence of events shape the lived life?
 - This is called a *shaping* hypothesis
3. For each suggested hypothesis, what event might be expected to come next, or later in the life?
 - This is called a *following* hypothesis
4. Given the data that does come next, which hypotheses are falsified, confirmed, strengthened or unchanged?
5. What new hypotheses are suggested?
6. Do any hypotheses arise which are relevant to the whole life, or a phase of the life, rather than just one piece of data?
 - This is called a structural hypothesis

³⁰ This is a modified version of Breckner's (1998:93) BDA questions.

Figure 8 Excerpt from BDA: Interview 6³¹

Key

- Experiential or shaping hypotheses are labelled H1 onwards
- Following hypotheses are labelled FH1 onwards
- Structural hypotheses relate to the whole life, or a phase of the life
- The biographical datum is presented in the shaded box. The relevant year and the number of the datum in relation to the whole BDC appear on the left, and the related biographical event is located on the right
- Numbers presented in brackets refer to the number of the datum that provided evidence for the strengthening/weakening/confirmation or refutation of the hypothesis
- Hypothesis disconfirmed through lack of evidence
- Hypothesis strengthened
- Hypothesis confirmed
- Hypothesis refuted
- Hypothesis weakened

199- 6	Left job at the University and migrated to Australia with husband and son
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Contextual note: the family may have been freed to migrate by the political changes in South Africa in the 1990s. Their education would have facilitated their migration to Australia, as their points' system is very similar to ours – encouraging educated/business migrants who can contribute to the growth of the country.

H1. Lorato experiences loss and grief at leaving SA

FH1. She returns as soon as she is able (7)

FH2. The grief passes with time and she gets used to Australia

31 Most of the excerpts in the rest of this chapter are taken from the analysis process of interview 6. This was the last interview subjected to BNIM analysis, and provides the clearest example of these complex processes.

FH3. The loss and grief she experiences places considerable strain on her relationship with her husband

H2. Lorato and her family form part of a chain migration and join other family members/friends in Australia

FH1. The migration is experienced as an adventure

FH2. The migration leads to a reliance on family and friends already in Australia

H3. Their migration is motivated by trauma experienced in SA

FH1. They experience on-going psychological difficulties

FH2. They never return to South Africa (7)

H4. Finding appropriate employment in Australia is difficult (7)

FH1. They are forced to spend some time in jobs outside and below their experience and qualifications (9, but in New Zealand)

FH2. The employment difficulties cause significant stress and unhappiness in the family (9, but in New Zealand)

FH3. They never feel settled in Australia

H5. Finding appropriate employment in Australia is easy (7)

FH1. They settle quickly into life in Australia

FH2. Their careers develop as they had planned (7)

H6. They experience racism in Australia

FH1. They have unpleasant experiences in their search for employment and housing

FH2. They decide to leave Australia (8)

FH3. They feel like outsiders

H7. They experience Australia positively

FH1. They decide to stay (8)

FH2. They become Australian citizens

I worked with Breckner's (1998:93) original BDA questions for the first session. During later groups I made some adjustments to the wording, emphasis and structure of the questions, although I did not alter their larger sense or purpose. I did this for two reasons. Firstly, I wished to make the questions as simple and as clear as possible. Secondly, BNIM terminology can be daunting and confusing for those who are unfamiliar with it, and the changes I made were an attempt to minimise these feelings as much as possible for panel members. In addition to changing the questions, I included as part of the introduction to each group the following instruction '[d]on't worry too much about BNIM terminology, the important thing about the group is *the process of generating ideas about the individual's life*'.³²

After the notes made during the BDA are transcribed, the researcher writes a narrative summary of the biographical material. This document incorporates the *events* of the lived life, along with the *themes* and *issues* that surfaced during the BDA (see Figure 9). She then illustrates the lived life in terms of identifiable phases, such as 'birth and childcare' and the turning points which divide these phases, such as 'migration to New Zealand'. This document provides a sense of the 'flow' of the lived life (see Figure 10). Finally, the researcher considers the following question, 'how might an individual with this migration biography tell the story of their migration?' In answering this question, she makes a list of as many possible 'migration stories' as she can (see Figure 11). After doing this, the researcher moves on to consider the interviewee's told story in the Thematic Field Analysis.

Figure 9 Excerpt from a Narrative Summary of the BDA: Interview 4

Ellen's early life can be described as conforming, at least superficially, to the pattern of a White South African wife and mother within a relatively privileged, well-educated sector of the Afrikaans-speaking community. She completes a university degree, marries Edward in her early 20s, and has three children. Her life is set apart from this regular, conventional pattern, however, by decisions which suggest that her life is not what it seems. These decisions imply a pattern of difference, motivated ultimately by a search for security and belonging.

³² Appendix Four contains the agenda I used for the facilitation of a BDA.

Figure 10 Excerpt from ‘phases and turning points of the lived life’: Interview 6

- Birth – early 20s - **Education** - Primary, secondary and tertiary education.
- Early 30s - **Family Life in South Africa** - Stable period of married life, including the birth of first child. Developing university career
- Mid-30s - **Migration and Return 1** – Migrated to Australia with husband and son, only to return to South Africa to work in previous employment after she is unable to find an appropriate job in Australia
- Mid-30s - **Migration and Return 2** – Migrated to New Zealand with husband and son, only to return to South Africa [pregnant] to work in previous employment after she is unable to find appropriate work in New Zealand
- Late 30s – **Birth and Childcare** – Gives birth to daughter and cares for her
- 40s – **Retraining and Sole Parenting** – Rather than continuing to seek appropriate employment, Lorato retrains. She has sole responsibility for her children most of the time, as her husband works elsewhere.

Figure 11 Excerpt from ‘possible told stories’: Interview 6

1. **A Story of Heroic Struggle:** Lorato’s story may be one of struggle towards personal fulfilment with regard to her professional development. In this version she **narrates** or **reports** the story of her various migrations, and **argues** about the need for these moves in the light of her failure to meet her career expectations.
2. **A Story of Failed Dreams:** Lorato’s migration story might be told as one of great expectations and subsequent failed dreams, as each successive migration failed to live up to its promise. In this story Lorato **argues** that each migration resulted in failed dreams, and evaluates each experience of migration as disappointing.
3. **A Story of Growth and Development:** Lorato could tell her story as a journey undertaken by her and her husband before they return to settle down in South Africa. In this story Lorato **argues** that all the learning (formal and informal) associated with the migration experience is preparation for their return to South Africa as more developed human beings, ready to contribute to the future of their new democracy. The ‘development’ might be exclusively career-oriented, but may also refer to personal qualities. Part of this story might also include ‘growth and development’ stories about their children.

Thematic Field Analysis (TFA)

The overall purpose of the TFA is to uncover the underlying structure of the interviewee's account (Chamberlayne & King, 2000a:214); in the case of this thesis the TFA sought to reveal the biographical meaning of each interviewee's migration story. According to Rosenthal (1993:61), 'thematic field analysis involves reconstructing the subject's system of knowledge, their interpretations of their lives, and their classification of experiences into thematic fields. Our aim', she says, 'is to reconstruct the interactional significance of the subject's actions, the underlying structure of the subject's interpretations of her or his life, which may go beyond the subject's own intentions'. Specifically, the researcher and the interpretive panel work together to determine the flow of *thematic fields* that occurs below the surface of the told story, and this in turn is used to establish the *gestalt* or the *underlying principle* of the interviewee's migration story (Wengraf, 2001:272-273).

The TFA develops according to the same datum-by-datum predictive procedure as the BDA. Whereas in the BDA hypotheses are formulated about lived life data ordered chronologically in the BDC, in the TFA hypotheses are generated about each segment of the told story as it has been organised in the TSS. The interpretive panel works through the segments of the TSS one by one, formulating as many hypotheses as possible that answer the following questions:³³

1. In which thematic field is the single sequence embedded?
2. What might the hidden agenda be?
3. Why is the interviewee talking about the topic using this specific kind of text?
4. What might come next in the interview if the hypotheses about questions 1-3 turned out to be true?
5. What, if any, hypotheses about the thematic field of the whole story suggest themselves at this stage?

It took me some time to grasp the meaning of a 'thematic field'. Like other BNIM novices, I conflated the concept of uncovering a 'thematic field' with the more prevalent qualitative practice of determining the explicit *themes* of a text (Wengraf &

33 These questions are based on those presented by Breckner (1998:98).

Chamberlayne, 2006:49). This conflation persisted even though I was able to differentiate between the two practices intellectually, and define the process clearly during the introduction to my first TFA panel analysis. In fact, it was only during a lengthy case review at the end of all the group analyses that I realised that I had been thinking the concept of thematic field, but putting into action the idea of a theme. The members of my first TFA panel analysis also found the notion of a thematic field difficult to understand, a problem which was no doubt connected to my own unrecognised confusion. I made a decision at that time to change the wording of the TFA questions for subsequent groups, believing that I could determine the thematic fields in a text without using the term directly. To this end, I constructed and used the following set of questions to generate hypotheses:

1. Why is the speaker talking about this topic now?
2. Why are they talking about it in this way?
3. What might come next in the story?
4. How might the speaker talk about it? For example, what textsort might they use?
5. Is there any sense so far of the 'bigger picture' or a 'hidden agenda'?
6. What effect does this datum have on previous hypotheses?
[strengthening/weakening/falsifying/confirming]

Figure 12 Excerpt from TFA: Interview 6

Key

- Hypotheses are labelled H1 onwards
- Following hypotheses are labelled FH1 onwards
- Thematic Field Hypotheses are labelled TFH1 onwards
- The TSS segment is presented on the right of the shaded box.
- The speaker's initial (L=Lorato) and the textsort appear in the centre of the box
- The number of the segment in relation to the rest of the TSS appears in the left of the shaded box, along with the relevant page and line numbers
- Numbers presented in brackets refer to the number of the datum that provided evidence for the strengthening/weakening/confirmation or refutation of the hypothesis

- Hypothesis disconfirmed through lack of evidence
- Hypothesis strengthened
- Hypothesis confirmed
- Hypothesis refuted
- Hypothesis weakened
- **Structural Hypotheses appear in bold**

2/9-2/14 3	L: REP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just completed her first year of study in New Zealand • Husband tired of not developing in his job and wanted to specialise
2/16	I: Interactive Remark	Yes

H1. Lorato's focus on her husband's career aspirations implies that this is important to her
 FH1. Lorato will report on efforts being made for the family to reunite (4) (5) (6)
 FH2. Lorato will argue about the good health of the relationship in spite of frequent separations (4) (5) (6)

TFH2. There is a theme here of **'equality'** between Lorato and her husband

TFH3. The theme of **'restlessness'** or perhaps **'dissatisfaction'** was also suggested at this point

H2. Lorato's narrative focus on her husband's employment in the last segment suggests that the employment focus is in fact, a quality of them as a couple rather than just Lorato herself

FH1. Other narratives/reports will be focused on the topic of her husband's employment/their employment aspirations as a couple (4) (5)

Structural Hypothesis D: that the maxim ‘work = life’ is the organising topic of the whole TSS

This hypothesis is certainly implicit in Lorato’s story as she is completely focused on employment for more than half the initial narrative. Even the second half of her narrative, which is focused on racism in New Zealand, is ultimately an argument for why she could not get a job here.

In addition to modifying the TFA questions, I changed two other features of my technique in response to the first TFA groups: the analytical content of the TFA, and the composition of the BDA and the TFA panels.³⁴ I will explain each of these changes in turn. Firstly, during these preliminary groups we covered the whole of Ellen’s first interview; in other words, her initial narrative (session 1) *and* her replies to my narrative-seeking questions (session 2). The analysis of the second session was both difficult to manage and relatively unproductive. Because that section of the interview is comprised of a series of narrative probes and the interviewee’s responses to these, the hypotheses put forward about what might come next in the text quickly become mechanical. The group suggested either that the question had been fully answered therefore the interviewer would ask a new question, or they proposed the content and the textsort of the next part of the narrator’s answer. During the remaining TFA sessions, therefore, the panel worked with TSS based *only* on the interviewee’s response to the initial question (i.e. the content of the first session).

Secondly, I provided the panel members of the first TFA session with Ellen’s biographical data, the narrative summary of her BDA, and a document showing several different ways of constructing the phases and turning points of her lived life. Using these documents, the beginning of this initial TFA session focused on formulating hypotheses about the possible forms of Ellen’s told story. After this had been done, we moved on to consider the TFA itself. I had originally thought that including various group members in the developing analysis would increase the positive benefits of BNIM’s collaborative approach. Instead I found that this way of organising the analysis created an environment where the group sought to provide the ‘correct’ answer to the TFA questions, rather than to proliferate new and different ways of thinking about the

³⁴ Jones (2001:113) found the TFA sessions unhelpful in his research, and instead focused on microanalysis.

data. In addition, when new members joined the group, considerable time was spent satisfying their curiosity about what had gone before. As a result, in the analysis of the last two cases, I organised the groups so that members attended either the BDA or the TFA sessions.

Microanalysis of Verbatim Text

The last part of the group analysis process in BNIM is the microanalysis of small segments of verbatim text. Like the BDA and the TFA, microanalysis is a way of exploring the relationship between past experiences and their representation in text (Rupp and Jones, cited in Chamberlayne, Bornat, & Wengraf, 2000:288; Wengraf, 2001:292). The rationale for microanalysis is succinctly expressed by Scheff (cited in Wengraf, 2001:294), who claims that '[v]erbatim excerpts from discourse, one might argue, are microcosms, they contain within them, brief as they may be, intimations of the participants' origins in and relations to the institutions of the host society'. Also like the BDA and the TFA, the analysis proceeds through the generation of hypotheses about each small part of the selected text. The following questions are addressed by the panel:³⁵

1. What is the speaker experiencing?
2. What might happen next in the segment if the hypothesis about question 1 were true? [What specific words? What topic? What textsort?]
3. What effect does this datum have on previous hypotheses?

I facilitated microanalysis sessions for each of the three interviews that were chosen for in-depth analysis. Even though I had been concerned beforehand that participants might find the process too 'literary', these groups were without exception very productive and creative. The feedback I received from panel members stressed how surprised they were at the number and depth of hypotheses generated from such small text segments. I chose several pieces of text from each interview for microanalysis, although there was time at each session to analyse only one of these. In addition to the segments being puzzling or contradictory in some way (Wengraf & Chamberlayne, 2006:52), I also chose the excerpts according to their ability to shed light on some overtly gendered aspect of the

35 These questions are a modified version of those suggested by Wengraf (2001:292-293).

interview. In the fragment of analysis in Figure 13, for example, Lorato is talking about the responsibility she had for taking care of her infant daughter.

Figure 13 Excerpt from Microanalysis: Interview 6

Key

- Hypothesis disconfirmed through lack of evidence
- Hypothesis strengthened
- Hypothesis confirmed
- Hypothesis refuted
- Hypothesis weakened
- **Text fragments appear in bold, after the numbered segment**
- Hypotheses are labelled H1 onwards
- Following hypotheses are labelled FH1 onwards

Segment 2

Some responsibility

H1. Lorato is talking about responsibility in the sense of some form of employment (3) (4) (5)

FH1. for... (3) (4) (5)

H2. Lorato is using the word 'some' as a qualifier, implying she doesn't have complete responsibility and that she in fact shares this responsibility with someone (3) (4)

FH1. Along with my husband/another colleague (3) (4)

H3. Lorato is talking about a sense of responsibility towards someone or a group of people (3) (4) (5)

FH1. Towards my home community (3) (4) (5)

H4. Lorato is talking about her responsibility for her children (3) (4) (5)

FH1. for my daughter/son (3) (4) (5)

H5. Lorato is talking about having some responsibility for the decision to migrate (3)
(4) (5)

FH1. for the decision to come to New Zealand (3) (4) (5)

Segment 3

Of looking for my girl

H1. Lorato is talking only about recent years, as her daughter is very young (4)

FH1. She is referring to the responsibility she has for day-to-day care of her daughter [looking out for/caring for/looking after] (4)

FH1a. while... (4)

FH1b. and my boy (4) (5) (6)

FH2. Perhaps she is talking about the way she can provide for her daughter with her new career (4-10)

Facilitating Panel Analysis

Over the course of several months, I facilitated 12 three-hour-long interpretive panels. The initial groups were all held in a seminar room provided by the university, while the last meetings took place in my own home around a large dining room table. I used a series of outsized adhesive sheets of paper to record the panel's hypotheses, and by the end of each session the walls of the room were covered with our work. Electronic versions of these notes were made later. Fourteen friends and colleagues participated in

one or more interpretive sessions. While I attempted to recruit a range of different people, I was more successful in some respects than in others. Members of the groups were predominantly female, and came almost exclusively from some kind of academic background. These similarities notwithstanding, participants came from a range of academic disciplines (mathematics, psychology, sociology, education, anthropology and social work); ages (early 20s to mid-60s); countries of origin (the United Kingdom, Sri Lanka, the United States, New Zealand, Canada, Germany and South Africa); and marital and family configurations.

I prepared carefully for individual analysis sessions, assembling props, ordering food and drink, and compiling an agenda adapted to the purpose and attendance at each group (See Appendix Four). Posters detailing the list of questions to be posed of each datum were adhered to the wall, so that they could be clearly seen by the whole group. I found that this helped to keep the group's focus on issues relevant to the analysis. I followed the email advice of other BNIM researchers (Kip Jones, Prue Chamberlayne and Tom Wengraf) in providing refreshments during the sessions. The food served a practical purpose in ensuring energy levels were maintained over the three hours, and also functioned as a 'thank you' to group members for generously giving up their time to help me with my work. I believe that the level of information I provided to my panels before the analysis began, in terms of background about the method, and explanations for particular facets of the group process, was greater than that generally given by BNIM researchers. I was motivated to work in this way by the academic composition of my groups, and a belief that the 'learning' associated with the panels, like the food, served as a form of compensation to those attending the sessions.

Many of the panel members had not met prior to the analysis groups. As a consequence one of my first priorities as a facilitator was to generate a positive, supportive environment in which the participants would feel comfortable sharing ideas. In keeping with the narrative character of BNIM, I began the sessions by asking each contributor in turn to introduce themselves with their own 'story'.³⁶ In addition to these story-based introductions, I attempted to encourage a constructive atmosphere during each group by outlining my own expectations during the early part of the meeting. Specifically, I

36 Kip Jones (2001) began his analysis sessions in the same way. I did this before each group, with the exception of those where all the participants had worked together in previous sessions.

suggested '[l]et's listen positively to everything that's said, it isn't necessary to argue about the merits of opposing interpretations. The important thing is to have as many different ideas as possible'. Overall, I think that the groups worked very well together, and I was given a lot of positive feedback about how much panel members had enjoyed participating. Once I had grown accustomed to the challenges of facilitation, I too found the interpretation sessions both enjoyable and stimulating.

In spite of the preponderance of women from academia, the members of my interpretive panels came from a wide variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds,³⁷ and possessed a range of skills, life experiences and perspectives. Their diverse contributions to my research fell into two main areas. Firstly, they helped me to think about my interviewees and their migration stories in ways that were outside my frame of reference and comfort zone. Secondly, they gave me insight into the dynamics of the interviews themselves, thereby increasing my ability to be reflexive about my impact on each interview. Echoing these thoughts, Froggett and Wengraf (2004:98) note that '[t]he involvement of other people of varied class and ethnicity introduces different perspectives and lines of enquiry and greatly aids the [researcher's] understanding of [her] own internal dynamics and habits of reflection'. In my opinion the BNIM interpretive panel is one of its most valuable analytical tools.

Ackermann (2002:99-100) and Volante (2005:104) both emphasise the importance of having someone 'like' the interviewee as a member of the analysis group. Ackermann, for example, stressed the value of including participants from Guatemala in her research on refugees from that country. Their contribution, she wrote, gave her insight into the meaning of particular events and individual action patterns. In her work on nurses' narratives of learning, Volante also noted how helpful she found the contributions of a community health nurse in her study of a nurse from that professional background. The participation of a South African migrant on several of my own panels, someone 'like' my interviewees with respect to ethnicity, also contributed greatly to my own research. Like Ackermann, I found that this member's involvement gave me a much better sense of the possible meaning of certain events and actions. As noted in the previous chapter, these contributions helped to mitigate the effects of my status as an ethnic outsider.

37 Froggett and Wengraf (2004:118) note that culturally homogenous panels suffer from important limitations. Kazmierska (2004:188) stresses the value of group analysis, especially when the groups are composed of people from different social worlds or cultures.

The consequences of this friend and colleague's attendance at several sessions was not, however, exclusively positive. There was often a sense of discomfort and unease during these groups, a series of awkward interpersonal moments that were redolent of those that had taken place at various stages of my interviews. As mentioned previously, the conceptualisation of individuals as defended subjects has been very helpful for me in 'untangling', or 'decoding' the complicated dynamics that occur during interviews and group sessions. On reflection, I believe that the disquiet of both situations was generated by anxiety about the same issues: ethnicity, racism and apartheid. If I had possessed this insight at the time, and if I had had greater experience in the facilitation of groups, I may have been able to transform these difficult moments into opportunities for discussion and learning. Ultimately, however, these dynamics inhibited the panel members' contributions, as attempts were made not to offend or upset others, and to reduce personal anxiety over these issues.

I invited at least three participants to all my interpretive panels.³⁸ On two occasions a group went ahead with only two members because of unexpected illness, but the remaining sessions ranged in size from three to six. I found that the most dynamic and productive groups had an attendance of between three and five individuals in addition to myself, and I attempted to have this number present whenever possible. The facilitation of interpretive panels was very challenging for me, for several different reasons. I had had no previous experience facilitating groups, and had only very limited exposure to the intricate workings of a BNIM interpretive panel. In addition, the process of future-blind hypothesis generation requires that the researcher suspend her knowledge of the interviewee and the content of the interview during the interpretive session. I found this suspension of awareness and the corresponding maintenance of silence about these subjects particularly difficult.

My discomfort, on reflection, operated on two distinct levels. On one hand, I found it very challenging not to satisfy the curiosity of panel members who often asked questions about the interviewee and their interview in the process of considering different hypotheses. In these situations I found it difficult to judge whether further information provided *context* to the following discussion, or *forestalled* it by

38 While Wengraf recommends a minimum of two panel members, I have found that the dynamics of a group this small are very difficult. In my limited experience, three participants enable a much more creative, productive session.

eliminating a whole range of possibilities. On balance, I think that there were several occasions during which I revealed more about an interviewee or an interview than was helpful. I also believe that this tendency diminished as I accumulated more experience in the facilitation of BNIM panels. On the other hand, I found it hard to maintain my silence when individuals in the group put forward hypotheses which reflected badly, and in my opinion unfairly, on particular interviewees. For example, during one session a member of the panel introduced the possibility that a sequence of biographical events in the interviewee's early life may have led to the formation of racist beliefs and attitudes. She was so convinced that this was the case that she emailed me after the group to restate her position.

I found it very difficult in this situation not to present a forceful argument to refute her suggestion, even though I knew that the purpose of the group was the proliferation of *all* hypotheses, not just those I agreed with. In fact, one of the main purposes of the group, as has been mentioned previously, is to raise issues which, as defended subjects, we may have cause to suppress or ignore when working on our own. I imagine that my protectiveness towards my interviewees, developed over the course of the interviews, may have sometimes inhibited a more open consideration of what were, ultimately, legitimate *possibilities* for consideration. This situation demonstrates quite clearly the value of the group process in guarding against 'the 'narrowing' of the horizon of potential meanings discovered in the text' (Chamberlayne & King, 1996:100; see also Kazmierska, 2004:189). It also suggests, however, that interpretive panels are only as insightful as the researcher allows them to be, through her own willingness to consider opinions different from her own, and her ability to be reflexive about her own subjectivity.

The Final Stages of Analysis

The final stage of BNIM analysis commonly takes the form of a *case history* and/or a *structure of the case* (Wengraf, 2001:284). A case history comprises a description of the evolving relationship between the lived life and the told story, and can be represented as a narrative or a diagram. In generating the case structure, the researcher aims to formulate the *principle of connection* between the lived life and the told story, thus making sense of the actual connections established in the case history. While this latter

phase constitutes a frequent end-stage of BNIM analysis, Wengraf (2001:296) acknowledges that ‘there are good reasons to think that it may be quite rare that such a principle exists’. Before attempting any concluding analytical tasks, however, the researcher first summarises the separate results of the BDA and the TFA, constructing a diagram of the structured phases of the lived life alongside the structure of the initial narration (Wengraf, 2001:286-289). An excerpt from this analytical phase is presented in Figure 14.

Figure 14 Excerpt from the Comparison of the Lived Life/Told Story: Interview 4

Biographical Data Analysis	Thematic Field Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born late 40s into an Afrikaans-speaking family descended from the French Huguenots. • Until early 20s – Lived with family in South Africa. Studied at University. Married Edward. • Early 20s - Travelled to Europe with Edward for several months. • Mid-20s – mid-40s – Settled family life in South Africa. She and Edward have three children. There is increasing turmoil in South Africa as the White minority government finds it difficult to suppress the demands of the Black majority. The family decides to send their youngest son to an English-speaking school. • Nelson Mandela elected. Family granted New Zealand residency. Travelled to New Zealand for a ‘look-see’ 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Migration was a long-term project (<i>Wide-ranging report with argumentation</i>) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Tour of Europe b. Change in South Africa inevitable c. Choice to stay or leave inevitable II. The decision to migrate was difficult and complicated (<i>Description of position of Afrikaans-speaking people, with reporting and argumentation</i>) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The ‘push’ of violence b. The ‘pull’ of family, peer group and history c. No second passport as escape route d. Family III. Fear of violence (<i>Argumentation</i>) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Fear of backlash against the Whites

The generation of a case history/case structure is not the only form of final analysis a BNIM research project can take. As outlined in the previous chapter, BNIM is a flexible method, and its various phases of interviewing and analysis can be selectively used and/or modified by the researcher according to the particular requirements of her project. This final stage, however, whether it takes the form of a case history/case structure, or indeed an analytical phase devised by the individual researcher, marks the point at which BNIM analysis moves from ‘craft’ to ‘art’ (Wengraf & Chamberlayne, 2006:55). This transition is accompanied by a shift in thinking away from the formalised ‘tasks’ of previous BNIM analytical phases, towards a more holistic conceptualisation of ‘the whole case’ (Chamberlayne, 2005a:2).

Thinking in this way, Chamberlayne (2005a:2-3) suggests, involves paying scrupulous attention to some or all of the following details: interview relationships; inconsistencies between the lived and told stories or between self-evaluations; key moments and patterns in the story; shifts in a story’s protagonists;³⁹ and finally, the interview’s silences and omissions. ‘In order to think of the whole’, she claims, ‘we usually need to understand the working of the parts’ (Chamberlayne, 2005a:2). Intrinsic to this process of thinking about the whole case is a consideration of the particular purpose of individual research projects. For me, this conceptual evolution marked the beginning of a long period of intense deliberation. I had to decide whether the sociological understanding of gender and migration was best furthered by the generation of case histories and case structures, or by some other final analytical phase.

At the end of this time, I decided that focusing on the *migration history* and the *migration story* of each interviewee, rather than the relationship between these two facets, was the best way of furthering sociological understanding of gendered migration processes. King (2000) made a similar choice in her BNIM-based research on the experience of home-based caring in West Germany. In this project the researchers stop short of case reconstruction, focusing instead on ‘uncovering more localised structural elements across the accounts’ (King, 2000:311). Although I include some discussion in my case studies on the relationship between the lived life and the told story, I do so only

39 For example, the researcher notes a shift from ‘I’ to ‘we’, or vice versa. This shift in story protagonists is a feature, for example, of Ellen’s migration story.

insofar as it contributes to our overall understanding of the gendered migration experiences of the interviewees.

In the final stage of my analysis, and the subsequent construction of the three individual case studies (Chapters 4-6) and the Reflexive Story (Chapter 7), I focus on fulfilling four main objectives: firstly, to describe the gendered processes of *change and transition* in each migration story; secondly, to pay meticulous attention to the social and historical *context* of the migrant's life and the *context* of our interviews; thirdly, to represent vividly the *lived texture of their migrations*; and finally to accurately account for the *impact of their respective environments* whilst simultaneously acknowledging the ways in which *the migrants themselves exert influence over their own lives*. In short, four of the five characteristics of BNIM that made it the most suitable method for this thesis also provide the theoretical foundation for the final stage of my analysis, and the presentation of my project's research outcomes.

Part 3

The Ethics of Working with BNIM

Introduction and Overview

Most ethical research guidelines can be reduced to a collection of common principles: do no harm; ensure participation is voluntary; preserve the anonymity or confidentiality of participants; avoid deceit; and analyse and report data honestly (Davidson & Tolich, 1999:376). Within a New Zealand context, however, a consideration of the smallness of our population needs to take precedence over all these ethical principles (Tolich, 2001:10). 'If this feature of New Zealand society is acknowledged,' Tolich (2001:10) claims, 'those other ethical issues will automatically be thought through before any research is begun'. My research has been affected by the small size of New Zealand's population, and an adherence to each of the common principles listed above. Those which have represented particular challenges during the course of this thesis, however, fall into three main categories: the imperatives to avoid deceit, to do no harm, and to

preserve the confidentiality⁴⁰ of participants. In this section I discuss each of these subjects in turn, before making a comment on the ethical obligation to ‘give back’ to the research community.

Avoid Deceit

This ethical principle impacted the research in two important and similar ways, both of which concerned my attempt to balance the requirements of the research with the interests of the interviewees. As previously explained, BNIM’s single narrative-seeking question is designed to elicit the interviewee’s story with minimum researcher direction and influence. During the preliminary stages of interview planning, I decided to maintain this fundamental tenet of the method by omitting the word ‘gender’ from all written and verbal descriptions of the project. This included the preliminary thesis title, the Information Sheet (Appendix 1), the Consent Form (Appendix 2) and the various verbal interactions I had with each interviewee about the thesis. I believed that revealing my gendered research focus would have irrevocably altered the content of the migration stories I was told. I explained the reasons for these omissions in my application to the university ethics committee:

Gender is a major focus of this research project. As a subject, gender is both a loaded and a contested term. By this I mean that the subject of gender can raise strong feelings when it becomes the topic of discussion, and that the meaning of the term is constantly under debate in popular discourse. I feel that the disclosure of gender as a focus of this project would irredeemably affect the way that interviewees construct their stories about migration. They could [for example] build their ‘stories’ within a framework of what they imagine ‘gender’ to be, or in terms of what they believe might be most ‘useful’ to me as a researcher. Either way, this would inevitably alter the content of the ‘stories’ [and] the nature of my analysis...

Hollway and Jefferson (2000b) faced a similar dilemma in their project on anxiety and the fear of crime. In order not to constrain their research topic by defining it too

⁴⁰ Confidentiality and anonymity are related but distinct concepts. Anonymity refers to the expectation that final research outcomes cannot be linked with the participant. Confidentiality, on the other hand, applies to the expectation that information revealed by the participant will not be divulged to others. It is the latter concept that is relevant here.

narrowly, they devised a very open interview format, and deliberately did not specify the ideas they were wishing to test out. They explain their ethical choice in this way:

[I]t is important not to prejudice the research by signalling, in the framing of the information, the researcher's expectations. Where this is done, researchers may get the answers that they already have in mind, and common or dominant discourses do not get challenged or disrupted (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000b:86).

They go on to explain that although they were led by the interests of the research in presenting their interview format in this 'general' way, they could think of no good reasons why this might negatively impact their research participants. Similarly, I too prioritised my research interests in this area, and could determine no valid reasons why the omission of the word 'gender' might negatively impact the interests of my participants. Although the participants were not specifically debriefed at the end of the second interview about the omission of the project's gendered focus, the gendered component of the research was incorporated into the report that was issued to the participants at the completion of the thesis (see Appendix 5).

The second issue is very similar, but only became apparent to me in retrospect, during the analysis and writing stages of the thesis. At this point and after some reflection, I came to believe that I should have provided my interviewees with more information about the processes of biographical analysis and case presentation in my information sheet (Appendix 1). Like Kazmierska (2004:185), I think that participants are not usually aware that biographical researchers analyse not only their life history, but also their 'told story'. I am not suggesting that I should have provided the interviewees with detailed explanations about the complicated procedures of biographical analysis. This would, in my opinion, have constituted an unwarranted burden on the participants, and would almost inevitably have affected the way the interviewees told their story. This was, in fact, exactly the kind of effect I was attempting to avoid by omitting the word gender from my written and verbal explanations of the project. Nonetheless, I think that the interviewees should have been made aware, in simple terms, that I was interested in their migration histories, *and* their migration stories, and that both of these would constitute the focus of analysis by a small group of researchers.

Do No Harm

Like the imperative to avoid deceit, this ethical issue impacted the research in two separate areas: firstly in the context of the interviews, and secondly, in terms of the presentation of research outcomes. I discuss the interview-related issue first. The telling of personal stories can be an emotional experience. As Rosenthal (2003:915) notes, '[w]hen we conduct biographical interviews, we particularly have to take into consideration the considerable psychological effects telling one's life story can have'. Moreover, I was also aware that a large number of South Africans had chosen to migrate because of the elevated levels of violence in their homeland. Some of these migrants had experienced this violence firsthand. In planning the interviews, therefore, I had to prepare for the possibility of distress related to the telling of their stories, *and* for the possibility of distress caused by the relating of such violent experiences.

In deciding how best to deal with these contingencies, I considered first Hollway and Jefferson's (2000b) idea that distress is not necessarily conflated with harm. Psychoanalysis, they argue, is actually based on the idea that well-being depends on making the causes of distress conscious, 'where they can be discovered not to be threatening to the survival of the self' (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000b:98). While I agree that experiencing distress is not necessarily harmful, and may even ultimately benefit the interviewee, the main purpose of my interviews was not therapeutic, and I am not a therapist. As a consequence, I decided that my first responsibility with respect to the imperative to do no harm was to avoid causing my interviewees *distress* if at all possible. With that in mind, I was careful to emphasise the protections outlined in the Information Sheet and the Consent Form: the right to stop the interview at any point they wished; the right to ask for the tape to be turned off; and the right to withdraw their consent at any time up to a month after the interview had occurred.

While the purpose of my interviews was not intentionally therapeutic, I also considered the possibility that my participants might experience the interview process in this way. Several researchers have noted the therapeutic and/or empowering effects associated with the telling of one's story (Espin, 1999:39,43; Gardner, 2002:61; Snelling, 2005:142; Rosenthal, 1998; O'Neill & Harindranath, 2006:46). Rosenthal (2003:915) goes so far as to suggest that '[c]onducting a biographic narrative interview is already a

kind of psychological intervention'. It has certainly been my own experience that the 'talking through' of difficult experiences with an empathetic listener can be both therapeutic and liberating. The key here is the ability to listen *empathetically*, and this, I decided, was my next responsibility with respect to the avoidance of harm. While ostensibly a simple exercise, active, empathetic listening is in fact quite rare (Wengraf, 2001:128). The characteristics of this kind of listening are: an attentive listening posture; a degree of eye-contact; non-verbal sounds of attentiveness such as 'hmmm'; allowing the interviewee pauses and silences to think through their story without interruption; and the 'mirroring' of their strong emotions (Wengraf, 2001:128).⁴¹

The parameters of BNIM interviewing, which encourage the participant to approach their story according to their own agenda, provide a strong foundation for this kind of active, empathetic listening (Snelling, 2005:134). Wengraf and Chamberlayne (2006:88) claim that BNIM interviewing is in fact 'more manifestly ethical' than most other social research interviews because the interviewee has complete control over what is talked about. 'BNIM interviewees', they claim, 'typically experience being interviewed as relatively therapeutic and beneficially uncoercive' (Wengraf & Chamberlayne, 2006:94). While I agree that BNIM's interviewing technique redresses *in some way* the power imbalance between the researcher and her interviewee, (Snelling, 2005:134), and can thus be experienced by the participant as empowering, I do not believe that the issue is that simple or clear-cut.⁴² There remains the possibility that interviewees experience some degree of 'silent coercion' to co-operate with the researcher, leading them to tell more of their story, and/or to tell it more 'truthfully' than they might otherwise. This might be related in some way to differences in status between the researcher and her participants, (differences in class or education, for example) or indeed a pressure felt by the interviewee because of the official nature of the interview itself.

41 'Mirroring' reassures the interviewee that you accept the emotions they are expressing. If they express anger, a mirroring response might be 'you still feel really angry about this' (Wengraf, 2001:128).

42 Bornat and Walmsley (2004) introduced the idea of a research matrix as a way of locating different biographical approaches as more 'top-down' or 'bottom-up'. They claim that 'the use of the matrix is 3a (sic) helpful caution, a restraint perhaps: a reminder that claims to speak for people, to 'give back' or to 'provide a voice' are only at one end of a continuum that also locks into professional interests, structural constraints and limits on resources' (Bornat & Walmsley, 2004:231-232).

This brings me to my final responsibilities with respect to the avoidance of harm during the interview process. My first obligation, I decided, was to make every effort to shift power into the hands of my interviewees. In addition to the use of BNIM's single narrative-seeking question, these measures included allowing the interviewees to choose the location of the interview, the use of everyday rather than academic language in interview documents and my own speech, and the sharing of my personal experiences of relocation as part of the introductory process. Lastly, in order to protect the participants as much as possible from the silent coercion previously mentioned, I included a caveat in the consent form which allowed my interviewees to withdraw their consent for the use of their stories up to a month after the date of their interview. Although I had made every effort to avoid distress on the part of my participants, my final responsibility to them was to plan adequately for the possibility that they might nonetheless experience some discomfort during the telling of their story. Part of my preparation for the interviews, therefore, was the compilation of a list of professional counsellors that I could recommend to my interviewees should it prove necessary.

The ethical imperative to do no harm again became relevant during the generation of my final research outcomes. The possibility of harm arises at this point should the interviewee discover a portrayal of themselves that goes beyond their own 'self-theory' (Wengraf & Chamberlayne, 2006:89). There has been considerable debate around this issue in BNIM circles,⁴³ although it is of course relevant to a range of qualitative methodologies. Hollway and Jefferson (2000b:99) point out that if harm and distress are conflated, 'the 'no harm to participants' principle effectively precludes any interpretive work which assigns motives other than those admitted to by the parties themselves'. They argue that the researcher's greatest obligation is to represent the truth, 'to reflect back a reality which is not compromised by dependence or avoidance. To strive after this as the basis for an ethical relationship in research,' they conclude, 'is to pursue the values of honesty, sympathy and respect' (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000b:99).

Although Wengraf and Chamberlayne (2006:89) also note that 'any 'depth understanding' of defended individuals means our research coming to see 'beyond' their defences', they acknowledge that researchers need to consider a range of ethical issues

43 BNIM researchers and others contribute regularly to this debate via a BNIM email list. The address is BIOGRAPHIC-NARRATIVE-BNIM@JISMAIL.AC.UK.

before they decide how to present their final research outcomes. I also believe that the researcher's imperative to present her findings fully and honestly should be tempered with a consideration of other ethical issues. Before deciding on the format of the three individual case presentations and the subsequent theoretical and reflexive chapters, I considered the following ethical factors: the implications of my *sociological* approach to BNIM; the repercussions of my focus on the interviewees' *migration* experiences as opposed to their entire life history; and finally, the *tone* of my work.

The sociological approach I have taken to BNIM means that the case presentations and comparisons contained in the following chapters focus largely on the *external* dynamics between the interviewees and their environments. While such an approach certainly acknowledges the existence and impact of inner world phenomena such as emotion, it makes no attempt to analyse with any intimacy the connections between an interviewee's inner and outer worlds, and thus maintains a certain 'distance' between the interviewee and the interpretation of her or his story. A more psycho-dynamic approach would have encompassed the participants' *inner* worlds, diminishing or removing this 'distance'. Projects with this 'psycho' focus are more likely to produce the kind of case presentations that challenge an interviewee's self-perception, and may thus be perceived as disturbing or harmful by research participants (Wengraf & Chamberlayne, 2006:94).

In addition, I have concentrated on one particular aspect of my interviewees' lives rather than their whole life history, a focus that assists in maintaining this 'distance'. In short, although I have presented three 'whole cases' with the level of detail that such presentations involve, my sociological approach and my focus on migration have maintained some distance between the interviewee and the analysis of their migration stories. This means, I believe, that there is only a relatively small possibility that my interviewees might find such presentations upsetting or harmful. Finally, I have attempted to present each of the case studies in a respectful and balanced way, helped in this endeavour by the input of the members of my panel analyses. As Wengraf and Chamberlayne (2006:94, emphasis in original) note, '[t]he *unconscious tone* of what you write and present is vital'. In addition, they suggest that careful attention be given to the details which are included or left out of case presentations (Wengraf &

Chamberlayne, 2006:94). I discuss this issue more fully in the next section, which deals with the issue of confidentiality.

Maintain Confidentiality

Several factors came together during this thesis to make the ethical imperative of maintaining confidentiality particularly challenging. Firstly, I wished to present the rich data I had acquired during the interview and analysis stages as a series of detailed case studies. One of the most important features of these case presentations was the placing of each individual's migration history against its relevant social and political background. This particular form of presentation, while emphasising the lived texture of individual lives, and the social context within which they take place, can make ensuring confidentiality very difficult (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000b:90-91; Kazmierska, 2004:187). The following demographic factors added to this challenge: New Zealand's small population (Tolich, 2001:10); the relatively small South African migrant community in Auckland; and finally the even smaller groups of South Africans defined by their language and ethnicity.

The solution to this predicament at first appeared to be the changing of significant biographical details, thus rendering each participant unrecognisable. After attempting this, I realised that in altering the number of details necessary to ensure confidentiality I had also lost, somehow, the overall 'meaning' or 'sense' of the individual analyses. In changing the years of an interviewee's birth, or their arrival in New Zealand, for example, I also lost the ability to anchor their lives within the appropriate social and historical context. Unable to find a way of maintaining the integrity of each analysis while preserving the participants' confidentiality, I presented my dilemma to the university ethics committee during one of their regular meetings.

It was suggested at this time that rather than *change* biographical details, such as the year of an interviewee's birth, their profession or the number and gender of their children, I might instead *obscure* them by making them non-specific. For example, a nurse, a doctor or a physiotherapist might all reasonably be portrayed as medical professionals. Equally, an interviewee's birth date, or the year they arrived in New Zealand might be described as occurring over several years, say in the early 1990s, for

instance, rather than one year in particular. In this way, the political, social and economic details included in my analysis of the migration history are rendered sensible, while at the same time preserving the confidentiality of each participant. This is the method I have used in presenting the case studies contained in subsequent chapters. While these measures will not, I believe, prevent the participants from recognising themselves, they will, in my opinion, prevent them being recognised within their own small communities.

'Giving Back' to the Participants

Because I did not approach the South African migrant community as a wider entity at any point during my research, my obligation to 'give back' was focused on the six participants who had told me their migration stories. I published a report (see Appendix 5) which comprised an introduction, a copy of the acknowledgements as they appear at the beginning of the thesis, an outline of the key findings of my work, and an explanation of the conceptual frameworks I developed. At the end of the report I included an invitation to provide feedback about the report, and both an email address and a phone number where I could be contacted. I felt that this invitation allowed my participants the freedom to respond to my work (should they choose to) in the way they found most comfortable. These reports were sent, together with a thank you card, to each of the interviewees. In addition, it is intended that future articles and presentations on the thesis continue the process of dissemination amongst academics and policy-makers.

Finally, there are several important points to make with respect to ensuring confidentiality during the process of group analysis. Each analysis group was presented with only fragments of each case, either the biographical details of the BDC, the extracts of text and/or topics from the TSS, or the few words that comprised the microanalysis. They possessed, therefore, only a *partial* view of each case. In addition, all the names and identifying details of the interviewees had been changed or were omitted. Lastly, the members of each panel were reminded that 'I'm sure you're all aware of the ethical issues involved in this kind of work. Let's remember that this is an interview with an individual from Auckland and that although the names have been changed we still need to be respectful of this person's privacy' (see Appendix 4).

Conclusion

The Presentation and Generalisation of Research Outcomes

[S]ocial science cannot remain on the surface of social becoming, where certain schools wish to have it float, but must reach the actual human experiences and attitudes which constitute the full, live and active social reality beneath the formal organization of social institutions' (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1958:1834).

I have used the extensive data generated during the different phases outlined in this chapter to make sociological sense of the biographical meaning of migration for Ellen, Sam and Lorato. These three individual case studies are presented in Chapter 4 (Ellen), Chapter 5 (Sam) and Chapter 6 (Lorato). In keeping with BNIM's dual focus on the lived life and the told story, each case is presented in two parts. The first part, called **The Migration History**, comprises an analysis of each migrant's biographical events, placed against the social and historical context of their life in South Africa, and their subsequent life in New Zealand. The incorporation of this socio-historical material is intrinsic, I believe, to our developing comprehension of each migration story, and is a distinguishing characteristic of the sociobiographical approach to BMIM used in my thesis (Wengraf et al., 2002:260-261).

The second part of each case presentation, called **The Migration Story**, contains the analysis of the respective migration stories. These sections focus on the main themes in each narrative, and capture the biographical meaning of the individual migrations. In all the case studies I briefly discuss the relationship between the migrant's lived life (the Migration History) and their told story (the Migration Story). This aspect of each case is touched upon only briefly in my analyses, and is incorporated only to the extent that it furthers our sociological understanding of the biographical meaning of migration. All the case studies begin with a signature quote taken from the relevant interview, one which typifies in some fundamental way the meaning of their migration story. I complete these individual analyses and case presentations in Chapter 7, where I undertake a reflexive analysis of the interview dynamics in the three cases, with particular reference to the anxiety engendered by the subjects of apartheid and racism.

As I outlined in Chapter 2, the case studies presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 constitute the foundation for the generation of wider sociological understanding about the processes of gender and migration. As I later argued in the conclusion to the same chapter, the use of a biographical approach has offered me the opportunity to develop an individualised theory of migration processes that avoids two of mainstream migration scholarship's most significant deficiencies: its inability to adequately account for the complex relationship between migrants and their environments, and its longstanding neglect of gender. My own contribution to migration theory begins in Chapter 8, where I introduce and further develop an analytic vocabulary based on the sociological concept of biographical disruption, and then use it to make sense of the similarities and differences between the three case studies. In addition, I develop a model representing gendered migration processes, and use it to illustrate the gendered migration experiences of Ellen, Sam and Lorato. Finally, in Chapter 9 I apply the same model, and the data from session three of the interviews, to one particular aspect of the migration experience, namely the impact of migration on the gender dynamics of intimate relationships. The model and the session three interview data are used to exemplify this specific aspect of Ellen's, Sam's and Lorato's migration experiences.

Chapter 4

Ellen

...the first idea of migration came a very, very long time ago...

The Migration History

Superficially, Ellen's biographical trajectory is that of an educated married woman from a long-established Afrikaans-speaking community. Within this conventional biography, however, several events suggest a pattern of **difference**. For example, her decision to spend time in Europe after completing her degree, the length of time she and her husband spent in Europe and ultimately their decision to migrate to New Zealand in late middle age. It is important to take into account that each of these decisions reflects not only Ellen's individual path, but is inextricably intertwined with the life course of her husband of more than 30 years, Edward. An examination of these events suggests an overall pattern in Ellen's biographical trajectory of **the struggle for security and belonging**. This sense of struggle is particularly acute between the early 1980s, when she and Edward make concrete plans to retire in South Africa, and the late 1990s, when Edward finds employment in New Zealand and recovers from a life-threatening illness. There are three crucial turning points in Ellen's life which also reflect her **struggle for security and belonging**. They are: her trip to Europe with her husband after their graduation from university; her migration to New Zealand; and the diagnosis of Edward's serious illness soon afterwards.

Ellen was born in the late 1940s into a White, Afrikaans-speaking family, descendants of the French Huguenots who arrived in South Africa in 1688 (Giliomee, 2003:10). These French Protestants had escaped to the Netherlands after the French government reversed its policy of tolerating Protestantism, and arrived along with Dutch settlers in the early years of European settlement on the Cape peninsula (Thompson, 2000:35). Within a generation the Huguenot community was speaking Dutch rather than French,¹ and by the end of the following century the language spoken by both groups had been modified into a distinct language which became known as Afrikaans. In 1948, even though they constituted no more than 12 per cent of the population, the Afrikaners, as they became known, won political control of South Africa through the election of the National Party (Thompson, 2000:186; Frueh, 2003:40).²

Ellen's early years took place against a background of increasing Afrikaner political and economic power. State institutions and corporations came increasingly under Afrikaner control, and Afrikaners were appointed to both junior and senior positions in the civil service, the army and the police. The government also instituted policies which assisted Afrikaners to close the economic gap between themselves and English-speaking South Africans. Determined to maintain White supremacy in South Africa, the National government also passed legislation that promoted the complete segregation of South Africa's four officially classified 'racial groups': Whites, Coloureds, Indians and Africans (Giliomee, 2003:503-507; Thompson, 2000:188-190; Davenport & Saunders, 2000:378-379; Frueh, 2003:41). This policy became known as 'apartheid', a coined word which means, simply, 'apartness' (Thompson, 2000:186).

In the mid-1950s, the government undertook a series of forced removals of non-White communities as part of their plan to divide urban areas into zones where members of one specified 'race' alone could live and work. As a part of the same policy, the government attempted to herd Africans into various Homelands,³ except for those who were required to remain in cities (or on the periphery) as labour. This meant that

1 The Huguenot community were settled among Dutch immigrants, requiring them to learn, worship and communicate in Dutch (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:22). By 1750 no one under the age of 40 could still speak French (Giliomee, 2003:11).

2 Only White and Coloured South Africans were eligible to vote in this general election (Thompson, 2000:182, 190-191). The Afrikaner population constituted 55 per cent of the electorate (Thompson, 2000:155).

3 Also known as Bantustans (Frueh, 2003:41).

Africans were prohibited from visiting areas outside the Homelands for more than 72 hours without a special permit, and could be arrested if they did not produce the requisite documents (Thompson, 2000:193; Giliomee, 2003:511). It is likely that Ellen's family employed at least one African domestic servant to help with the running of the household (Thompson, 2000:200; Frueh, 2003:163). While some of these women lived with their employers' families, others travelled tremendous distances to and from work, leaving their own families early in the morning and returning late at night.

In addition to being separated into the four legally recognised 'racial groups' for their education, White children were further divided into 'Afrikaans-speaking' and 'other Whites' in public schools. This policy was implemented to defend and promote Afrikaans culture (Thompson, 2000:196). Ellen would, therefore, have attended an Afrikaans-speaking primary school, secondary school, and university.⁴ In the early 1970s, she completed her university studies and married Edward, a White Afrikaans-speaking professional descended from that same early settlement of Protestant Huguenots. It was not unusual for White, Afrikaans-speaking women of Ellen's class and generation to attend university before marrying and starting a family in their early 20s. Few women pursued a career after marriage, however, devoting their time instead to raising their children, running their households with the help of Black domestic staff, and pursuing charitable ventures run mostly through the Protestant churches. Although some young people did travel after completing their studies, this was a relatively uncommon experience, and tended to be for short rather than extended periods of time.

Soon after their marriage and graduation, Ellen and Edward went to Europe for several months. They visited Holland and England, where for the first time they heard views critical of South Africa, and particularly of the system of apartheid. In South Africa, tight controls existed over all communications media. The South African Broadcasting Corporation, with its monopoly over radio and television, functioned as an 'instrument of official propaganda' (Thompson, 2000:198). Ellen and Edward had, therefore, only been exposed to views which supported and promoted the policy of apartheid. This trip was a critical turning point in Ellen's life. In order to understand the impact of this event

4 In 1959 legislation was introduced to segregate universities by 'race' (Giliomee, 2003:510), however university apartheid was never total because White universities were obliged to take Black, Coloured or Indian students whose own universities did not include certain faculties (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:680).

it is worth considering that ‘most Afrikaners experienced little but the Nationalist world perspective from cradle to grave: at home, in Afrikaans-language schools and universities, in Dutch reformed churches [sic], in social groups, on radio and television, and in books and newspapers’ (Thompson, 2000:198). Given this inward-looking environment, Ellen and her husband’s choice to travel – both in terms of the decision itself, and in terms of the length of time they stayed away, is a significant sign of **difference**.

Their European trip was eventually cut short with the discovery that Ellen was pregnant. After returning to South Africa, she gave birth to their first child. In the mid 1970s, Ellen gave birth to a daughter, who was followed some years later by another son. While her children were growing up, Ellen was able to combine the role of motherhood with the development of her creative career through the assistance of a Black domestic helper. A workplace was set up in their home, and eventually she started her own business selling her work in high-end markets. In this aspect, too, Ellen’s life is different from the lives of other women of her class and generation.

These were increasingly turbulent years in South Africa. Black resistance to apartheid became more difficult for successive governments to suppress (Thompson, 2000:204-213, 228-230), and the tide of international opinion began to turn against South Africa (Thompson, 2000:213-220, 223, 230-235; Davenport & Saunders, 2000:533-540). The economic boom of the 1960s and early 1970s was followed by a sharp recession, exacerbated by the enormous cost of administering the complex network of apartheid laws (Thompson, 2000:221). During this time, levels of foreign investment plummeted, the unemployment rate rose, and the annual inflation rate increased from 11 per cent in 1983 to over 18 per cent in 1986 (Thompson, 2000:234). The level of unrest in South Africa continued to increase, and in the end the government imposed an annually renewed, indefinite state of emergency (Frueh, 2003:107) and arrested hundreds of anti-apartheid activists. ‘The emergency regulations gave every police officer broad powers of arrest, detention and interrogation, without a warrant; they empowered the police commissioner to ban any meeting; and they prohibited all coverage of unrest by television and radio reporters and severely curtailed newspaper coverage’ (Thompson, 2000:235).

Amidst this turmoil, Ellen and her husband, together with several close friends, bought a small farm in one of South Africa's rural regions with a view to retiring there in the future. Then, a few years later, Ellen and Edward decided to send their youngest son to an English-speaking nursery school. They did this in spite of criticism from their immediate social group, which included Ellen being labelled an 'Ingles Mom' [English Mom]. The latter decision is yet another example of **difference** in Ellen's biographical trajectory. Considered together, these two decisions are representative of the momentous **struggle** going on in Ellen's life at this time. On the one hand, she and Edward made a decision which represented a long-term commitment to their country of birth; on the other hand, they acknowledged the impending change in South Africa by breaking a centuries-old family tradition of education in the Afrikaans language.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, rather than descending into civil war as many had feared and predicted, South African leaders negotiated a peaceful transition from White minority rule to full democracy. The presidency of South Africa passed from de Klerk, an Afrikaner who led a government of White supremacy, to the leader of an African nationalist movement who had spent the better part of 30 years in prison. On May 10 1994, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was elected as the first President of the new democratic South Africa (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:568). In spite of this peaceful transition to democracy, however, South Africa was still 'an exceptionally violent society' (Thompson, 2000:267). The annual murder rate was 98 for every 100,000 people [almost ten times that of the United States], while the incidence of rape and serious assault in South Africa was the highest in the world (Thompson, 2000:267).⁵

Soon after Mandela's election, Ellen, Edward and their youngest son applied for and were granted their New Zealand residency after a processing time of only a few weeks. They then made a trip to New Zealand; firstly to spend some time looking around and deciding where they might like to live; and secondly to have their passports stamped.⁶ There was significant South African migration during the decade of their arrival; the population resident in New Zealand grew from only 5652 in 1991, to just over 26,000 in 2001 (Barkhuizen & Knoch, 2005:218). As noted earlier, although South Africans have

5 During the same period in New Zealand, the rate of homicide per hundred thousand was just over two (Barclay, Tavares, & Siddique, 2001:11).

6 The immigration law of the time allowed migrants four years from the date of the residency stamp in their passport to decide whether to make their migration permanent.

settled all over New Zealand, most have made their home in Auckland; particularly in suburbs on the North Shore, and in Howick, which is situated in the east of the city (Barkhuizen & Knoch, 2005:218).

After their visit, Ellen and Edward returned to South Africa and stayed for some time before finally deciding to migrate in the late 1990s. During this period, President Nelson Mandela admitted for the first time that crime in South Africa was ‘out of control’ (Frueh, 2003:139). Frueh (2003:140) notes that ‘crime affects the daily life of every South African, altering established patterns, imposing restrictions on movement, and adding both material and psychological costs to a range of activities that used to be significantly more free’. Also during this time, Ellen and Edward’s elder son, and their daughter, were granted New Zealand residency on the strength of their individual applications.⁷ Ultimately, however, only their sons migrated, while their daughter decided to remain in South Africa. Again, the events of this time suggest a significant **struggle** was taking place. On the one hand, there were multiple links to ‘home’ through family, friends and a sense of history and belonging; while on the other there were less tangible hopes and dreams about the benefits a new homeland might offer. The fact that it took Ellen and Edward so long to make their final decision to migrate further emphasises the sense of **struggle** apparent during this time.

For Ellen, the act of migration itself is also a sign of **difference**. Firstly, it is different in that she and Edward were the only ones from their immediate circle of friends and family who chose to migrate. Secondly, it is different because they were older than most other South African migrants arriving in New Zealand. Similarly, Ellen and Edward were at a different stage of their lives than other recent migrants. While most new arrivals from South Africa tend to be young parents with small children (Rule, 1994:33), Ellen and her husband were in late middle age with two adult children. Thirdly, it is different because they spent some time in South Africa after being granted permanent residence, rather than leaving immediately for New Zealand. Finally, the fact

7 They were too old to be considered dependants under New Zealand immigration law.

that their daughter chose to remain in South Africa also set Ellen apart from the ‘whole nuclear family’ path of most other migrants.⁸

Ellen, Edward and their sons arrived in New Zealand in the late 1990s, settling in Auckland. They bought a modest [by their own standards] home, choosing to live in an area where significant numbers of South African-born migrants have settled (Barkhuizen & Knoch, 2005:218). Around this time New Zealand experienced a general election. As noted in the Prologue, this election campaign was notable for the high level of antagonism directed towards new immigrants by the leader of the New Zealand First party, Winston Peters (E. Ho & Bedford, 1996:126; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004:24-28; Spoonley, 2005:93-94). Although Peters’ campaign was interpreted as being directed at Asian migrants (Spoonley, 2003:7/8), it must have been uncomfortable for all migrants living in New Zealand at the time. Also during this period, following several years of moderate growth, the economy began to slow (Easton, 1997:256). Both the New Zealand dollar (Jesson, 1999:20) and various share markets across Asia (Jesson, 1999:100) collapsed. By the late 1990s, the New Zealand economy was officially in recession (Jesson, 1999:20). The economic and political environments, therefore, presented significant challenges for Ellen and her family during their first years of settlement.

Ellen and Edward’s elder son was the first member of the family to gain employment, finding a job in his area of training and expertise. For the first few years after the family’s arrival in New Zealand, he continued to live at home, assisting his parents financially and in other ways. Their youngest child went to the local intermediate school, then the local college, before entering university. Edward was not able to find employment in his field for several years, but he did complete some small projects from home. The difference between Edward’s experience of the labour market in New Zealand, and that of his son, is an example of a wider trend; the younger migrants are when they arrive in New Zealand, the better their employment outcomes are likely to be (C. Boyd, 2003:23).⁹ Generally, the New Zealand labour market at this time could be described as both flexible and precarious (Spoonley, 2003:14), the result of a decade of

8 Although many families migrate without their parents, and experience significant anxiety over their wellbeing in the home country, it is less usual to migrate without one of your children.

9 Labour force participation rates for migrants aged between 55 and 64 are very low (C. Boyd, 2003:45).

neo-liberal reforms. There was no state-sponsored post-arrival support; the expectation being that skilled immigrants must rely on their own abilities and experience to enter the labour market (Spoonley, 2003:14). Ellen was employed for a short time in a job unrelated to her qualifications and experience, but subsequently obtained part-time teaching work in her own area of expertise close to home.

Some months after arriving in New Zealand, Ellen experienced a severe disruption to her security with the diagnosis of Edward's life-threatening illness. Because they had purchased private health insurance several weeks beforehand at their elder son's insistence, Edward experienced no delays in treatment. During this difficult time, Ellen and Edward returned to South Africa briefly to celebrate a family wedding. Ultimately, after a lengthy period of recuperation, Edward recovered his health. He also eventually found employment in his area of training and expertise. Finally, several years after their arrival in New Zealand, Edward and Ellen returned to South Africa for a holiday, spending time with their family and close friends. At this point in her biographical trajectory, there is a hint of some kind of resolution in Ellen's **struggle for security and belonging**.

The Migration Story

Ellen's story is one of migration as a **long-held possibility**; a possibility that appears during times of political turmoil and violence, and disappears in periods of relative calm. *Every time there was a riot or something, she says, then you would think about it.* Once the decision to migrate has been made, however, Ellen presents the migration project as **irreversible**, *I just know I could never go back and live there even if my daughter has children and I become a widow.* She begins the interview by saying *...the first idea of migration came a very, very long time ago when we were still...* She then traces the ebb and flow of this idea over time, from its inception during the tour she and her husband took of Europe; through the years of family and professional life in an increasingly turbulent South Africa; to the difficult early days of settlement in New Zealand.

In the same way that the biographical events of Ellen's lived life suggested a pattern of **difference** from her South African peers, elements of her told story add to this theme.

She comments that, *I always wondered, [] if you know, if it was our travels, you know, what shaped my husband, and the fact that maybe, maybe we're more liberal.* Similarly, the **struggle for security and belonging** which emerged from the pattern of Ellen's lived life is reflected in the way she tells the story of her migration; *I must tell you honestly, she says, I always feared that there was going to be a backlash of revenge against the whites.* Ellen's story is also the story of her husband Edward; beginning with her first statement, *when we were still...*, and ending with her last, *...so that is our migration story.*

Ellen locates the beginning of her migration project in her trip to Europe in the early 1970s. She and Edward spent time discussing the politics of their homeland with people in Europe, *we were in a lot of debates there...that was, I think, a very big influence on us.* They were also exposed to alternative perspectives on South Africa in the European media, *we listened to a lot of news broadcasting about South Africa and got a different view of the, of the situation there.* Ellen presents this trip as a major turning point in their lives: firstly, the way they thought about their homeland was forever changed, *you saw it from a different perspective;* secondly, the way they thought about their own future was radically altered; *we always knew we had to make the choice whether we want to um, whether we Eurocentric or Africa-centric.* These changes in thinking were to have a profound impact on many aspects of Ellen and Edward's lives, including the decision they made 20 years later to migrate from South Africa to New Zealand.

Although the trip to Europe changed the way that Ellen thought about her homeland, events from her childhood had already caused her to feel some discomfort about the policy of apartheid. She says, *the coloureds were still not so segregated from us, I can remember that there was a stage that we rode the bus together, and I as a child could never understand, cause the, the...coloureds to me is, is one thing that always, always sat into my conscience.* The Coloureds, she says, spoke the same language as her own community, and followed the same religion. From her perspective as a child, the disappearance of Coloureds from her community was wrong, *that's big, big ah injustice that was done to them;* whereas she comments about the Blacks, *when we were smaller children we realised that they spoke a different language, they're culturally very different to us, and one didn't question that much.* It is interesting to note the way that Ellen uses 'we' in this sentence; suggesting a broad consensus of views among her peers

about the way that ideas about ‘difference’ can be used to justify ‘separation’. Her use of ‘we’ also serves to avoid personal ownership of the sentiments expressed here, an effect that is reinforced by the way she goes on to use the third person ‘one’ to further distance herself from the position of silent acquiescence.

Ellen’s feelings of childhood guilt about the way that the Coloureds were treated under apartheid became a more general awareness of its extensive injustices during her time in Europe; *you can’t have a small white minority ruling a big, you know a big min-, majority like that for long, it’s, it’s, it’s just not fair and it’s just not possible*. Ellen’s new doubts about the justice and sustainability of apartheid forced her and Edward to look at their future differently; they believed that at some point they would have to choose whether they were *Eurocentric* or *Africa-centric*. Framing it in this way suggests that for Ellen the choice is between two aspects of her and Edward’s history and identity; their origins in Europe on the one hand, and their 400 year association with Africa on the other. Describing the choice in this way is also interesting given their final decision to migrate to New Zealand, it perhaps reflects Ellen’s view of New Zealand as somehow a ‘European’ country. Repeating these ideas later in the interview, she describes their final decision to migrate as having to decide whether *we Eurocentric first of all, and then we decided we were, and then that is that, that’s the day we started putting things in action and coming*.

The changes in mindset that occurred as a result of Ellen and Edward’s trip to Europe affected many aspects of their lives thereafter. Ellen says *it did influence us in also the way we brought up the children; I think we brought them up much more, um, less prejudiced, um, than we were brought up*. Ellen and Edward allowed their children, she says, to treat the Coloureds *absolutely as their equal*, and the children were taught to be very respectful of the people who worked for their parents and the servants they employed over the years. [This is a distinction that Ellen herself makes]. Ellen believes that as a consequence of the way they raised their children; *they grew up with very little problem of mixing, and, and, and relating*. Her daughter’s immediate superior, Ellen notes, is a Black man, and she has no difficulty operating within the altered ‘racial’ dynamics of the new South Africa.

More than 20 years passed between Edward and Ellen's trip to Europe in the early 1970s and their eventual migration to New Zealand. How does Ellen explain this long period between their first thoughts about migration and their final, permanent move? *Family, she says, was always a very strong pull, our parents, and also, your whole history and the peer group.* There are several important ideas in this statement. Firstly, Ellen refers to the pull of family as one of the forces that kept them in South Africa, specifically their parents. Next, she mentions their history; a reference to the fact that both she and Edward are descended from the Huguenots, who arrived in South Africa in the 17th century (Giliomee, 2003:xiii). Fleeing religious persecution, this group became part of the Afrikaans-speaking community, whose identity 'was forged by their complex and turbulent history and their love for the language they spoke and the harsh but beautiful land in which they lived' (Giliomee, 2003:666). In short, Ellen and Edward's connection as Afrikaans-speaking people to the land of South Africa was strong. Referring to this relationship later in the interview, Ellen notes that *lots of Afrikaans [indrawn breath] ah people, [1] elected to stay... even now our friends they say they're South Africans, they're Africa orientated, they love the bush and the wild animals, and they've got, just as much right to stay.* Finally, Ellen mentions the pull of their peer group, their friends, colleagues and neighbours. They were, she said, the only ones from their group to leave South Africa, *and our friends thought we totally, totally loco.*

In summary, the pull of family, history and peer group kept Ellen and Edward in South Africa for more than 20 years after they first contemplated the idea of migration. The strength of the pull, however, was not only about the intensity of Ellen's feelings for her family, her history and her peers, but also about how much they each contributed to her sense of self; *if you're away from your home, people take you at face value, you've got no history, you, you've got nothing, you, it's just you, [1] and it's your family and your friends that anchor you, that's, th- the- they shape you, that's who you are.* The importance Ellen places on the connections to her history and her friends can be seen in the final part of her interview, where she talks about how happy she was to re-establish an old friendship from her childhood; *so I got that bit of history, that the reason I can still talk back about, you know reminisce about the, how we both felt that the, the unjust, the coloureds were, and treated... so that to me is a great comfort.*

Considering the strength of Ellen and Edward's ties to their family, friends and history, how does Ellen explain their ultimate decision to leave South Africa for New Zealand? Although the idea of migration, she says, had arisen after violent incidents from the early 1970s onwards; in 1994, when Nelson Mandela was elected, their trepidation about what the future might bring led to their final decision to migrate. Their fear centred around two major areas: the threat of violent retribution by Blacks against White communities, *I must tell you honestly, um, I always feared that there was going to be a backlash of revenge against the whites*; and the fear of what a democratic South Africa with its affirmative action policies might mean for the future of their White, Afrikaans-speaking youngest son, *I think [1] towards the end it was really that swung us to a great extent to decide on his future, um what it was gonna be, as an Afrikaans speaking person and a white male*. The **struggle for security and belonging** is particularly prominent at this point in Ellen's story.

In addition to her fear of violent Black retribution on White communities, Ellen also mentions the fear she and others had that South Africa might descend into civil war; *at that stage people thought there might be, ah, violence, or ah, war, I mean it could of easily happened I mean it was really narrowly averted*. Frueh (2003:141) also notes these fears; and comments more generally about the fear of violent crime in South Africa '[w]hile all South Africans have some reason to be fearful, fear seems particularly powerful among Whites...' (2003:140). Ellen believes that these fears have, in fact, been realised to some extent, *in a way it is happening*, she claims, *because a lot of murders are taking place and farms are being taken, they don't even get into the news anymore*. Similarly, she recalls an evening spent with old friends on a return visit to South Africa early in the new millennium; *as the evening went on and as the wine flowed, she says, the stories came out, they would then voice their fears, and know of people that had been killed or raped, I have three friends that have [been] raped, and so that is, you know then the stories would come out, and then they would voice their worries about um, [1] what is gonna happen with their old age*.

Once Ellen and Edward made the decision to leave South Africa and settle in New Zealand, Ellen presents her migration project as irreversible; *I never, even when I thought my husband was gonna die, I was not gonna take [my younger son] back to South Africa, it's like, it's just a decision I made, this is, this is where we are now, and*

my husband too never, never in our darkest moment did we say should we pack up and go back. It just didn't occur to us, you know, we were here for the long haul, [] we just, you know, sort of trusted that he would get a job, he would get um, ah you know healthy again, and it all happened, so that is our migration story. The first part of this statement is interesting not only for the sense of determination and inner strength that comes through, but also for the repeated 'I' statements that dominate the first few phrases. Although she includes Edward in the second half of the segment, this is an adamant personal declaration of her own intention to remain in New Zealand, come what may. This determination, and the emphatic 'I' rather than the 'our' and 'we' of other parts of Ellen's interview, is repeated in a later statement she makes, *I'm really made the decision that we, we would stay here, that, that is, that I could never, [indrawn breath] I just know I could never go back and live there even if my daughter has children and I become a widow I can't, I've, I've, I've, I wouldn't say I've cut my ties but, I'm here now, I'm i-, very much for the now.*

The repeated use of 'I' in each of the above quotes, and her insistence on remaining in New Zealand even if she were to end up living alone, suggests that migration and the early years of settlement have led to personal growth and change for Ellen. After talking about the way that family, peers and history caused them to remain so long in South Africa before migrating, she is now adamant that she would be at home in New Zealand as either a widow or a long-distance grandmother. Later in the interview she alludes to this personal growth when she talks about catching up with her friends in South Africa, *I feel that, even though we could pick up and talk immediately, it feels to me that I've travelled a very, I've [indrawn breath] without sounding condescending now I feel they've not s-stagnated, but they sort of very much the same, and that where as I feel that we've gone through such a lot that, that I've just gone ahead, in life's travel, oh I don't know what you want to ever want to call it.* Similarly, Ellen talks about the emancipatory effect that migration can have; *nobody knows what you've done*, she says, *whether you were good or bad, it's, you have to really create your, you know, write your own story again.*

Contained in Ellen's assertion about the irreversibility of their migration project, *we just, you know, sort of trusted that he would get a job, he would get um, ah you know healthy again*, and also in her presentation of migration as a personal growth

experience, *we've gone through such a lot*, is the sense of their migration as a series of significant obstacles. These include the years it took for Edward to find work in New Zealand, Ellen's search for balance and fulfilment in her work and home life, and perhaps most devastating, the diagnosis of Edward's life-threatening illness some months after their arrival. Again the **struggle for security and belonging** is a feature of Ellen's story, *we didn't have a very good story, um, um, coming here, in the sense of, my husband ...found it very hard the i-, [verbal hesitation] the economy was little bit on the down side here, and he found it very hard to break into the [labour market], he went, he hardly ever g-, got an interview, the fact that he was almost over 50, and had quite an accent, and he just, he just struggled, so he had to um, he worked sort of on his own, and then ah, we were here about a year, and when he was diagnosed with [a life-threatening illness], so that was quite a blow.*

Ellen portrays Edward's search for employment as *extremely hard*. She talks about how difficult it was financially and emotionally for both of them, but specifically mentions how stressful it was for her husband to spend some years in financial limbo when he was so mindful of the need to save for their retirement, *and I think for my husband, she says, that's very hard*. This employment-related financial difficulty compounded three other significant losses: the loss of Edward's successful, well-established business in South Africa; the loss of Ellen's thriving company; and finally the financial loss incurred in the process of moving from South Africa to New Zealand, *you give up a lot of um, you do give up a lot of money, it, you do, you do, you go a few steps backward*.¹⁰ Ellen's own search for meaningful work was also difficult. She describes how she felt about the supervisor in the first job she found in New Zealand, *she was really horrible to me, um she had me crying in the toilets one day, I found it very, because at, at that stage one was very vulnerable and very unsure*. Ellen eventually found work teaching in her own field near her home, *I must say [it's] the nicest place to work for too, you know, we've got good resources and it's very pleasant*.

Over and above Ellen's search for fulfilling work, she faced the challenge of balancing a new configuration of paid employment and home responsibilities. *In South Africa*, she says, *you could, I could go to my [workshop for]...you know, the whole morning, and*

¹⁰ Because of the comparatively low value of the South African currency, migrants' net wealth decreased significantly after their migration to New Zealand (Walrond, 2006).

then have the afternoons off for the kids for their activities, and the house was immaculate because I had someone doing it. In New Zealand, where employment structures are substantially different, they were no longer able to employ household help. Ellen's responsibility for maintaining her home thus changed from a coordinating and supervisory role to one where she was personally responsible for undertaking the physical maintenance of their household. *That was also quite an adjustment,* she comments, *cause I sometimes resent the time I spend cleaning the house versus doing some, you know [of my own work], which is very frustrating.* Ellen now rarely has the energy or time to spend developing her own work-related interests.

The diagnosis of Edward's serious illness came several months after their arrival in New Zealand. Ellen notes how fortunate they were to have taken out medical insurance some months before, *so we didn't have to go on that long list.* She describes the support they received from medical staff during Edward's treatment as *wonderful* and *fantastic*. Ellen also talks about the way Edward's illness affected different members of their family. In an emotional segment, she suggests that Edward's illness and his difficulty finding employment constituted a significant blow to his sense of self, and to the two of them as a couple, *I think for him it was terrible, cause it was a double blow of, of not, not really earning a big income, [it] was very hard for him, um, cause it's a double blow...a very emotional thing, and it, and it affects both of us.* Her younger son, she says, was a teenager when his Dad was diagnosed. She describes him being *in mortal fear* that his father might die, but says that she and Edward were not completely aware of just how deeply the experience had affected him, *we didn't quite realise, you know, what he went through cause the insecurity of being here, and, and of everything and then having his father being ill.*

The pattern of **difference** suggested in Ellen's biographical trajectory is reflected in the way she positions herself and Edward as different from their peers in her migration story. She notes that their decision to travel to Europe was unusual in their peer group; *in South Africa at my, our age group, it wasn't so common to go overseas and tour around,* and so too was the length of time they spent overseas; *I think we in our peer group were the only ones that really did that for such a long time.* Ellen also presents their political position as different from their friends; *we also were actually more liberal*

in our politics. Finally, she talks about the approbation she endured after she and Edward decided to send their youngest son to an English-speaking nursery school.

Ellen's migration story as a whole is 'constructed' to convey the message that their decision to come to New Zealand was the right one. This sense of the underlying 'argument' of Ellen's story is created through a series of 'resolutions', each of which involves a 'happy ending'. For example, with respect to Edward's employment she says, *after [several] years he got a job... and then after that it was so easy*. About Edward's anxiety over their financial situation, she notes, *I think he's much better now, and he's, I mean he's much more relaxed about everything and not so anxious anymore*. She resolves the story of Edward's serious illness in this way, *he's been, now he's been [well] for seven years, so I mean that is a, in that sense it was wonderful*. In addition to the resolution of individual incidents, Ellen also conveys the 'rightness' of the migration decision through more global assessments; she evaluates the migration experience as ultimately positive for all the members of her family.

She does this with their elder son, *he's got a vast group of mixed, you know ah Kiwis and South African friends, and he's very, very, very settled now*; their daughter who chose to remain in South Africa, *she's very settled*; and their younger son, *now he does extremely well at university, and he's got friends, and he's very settled now and a real little Kiwi*. She 'resolves' Edward's migration story with reference to his reaction to a return trip to South Africa, *he never said he wanted to go back and that's true, but he did often question whether he wasn't too hasty, um you know and too negative about things happening in South Africa, that you know, he sort of, I think he, he anguished about that a lot, but when we went back to South Africa... it's like, [1] it, it was so good for him cause it was absolute closure, he, he spoke to his other colleagues and friends and he looked around and we went and visited all the family and friends, and I think Edward now you know, is, is so at rest now, after we came back, that he realised we did the right thing, that we scored so much in other things not in money, but in other things that for our old age we're so much better off here, and, than we would have been back home*.

In summary, Ellen's story is about migration as a **long-held possibility**, one which appears during times of violence and political turmoil, and disappears in periods of

relative calm and prosperity. Once the decision to migrate has been made, however, it becomes **irreversible**. Ellen's migration story is also the story of her husband, Edward, tracing their migration trajectory from its inception during their trip to Europe, through their family years in South Africa, to their arrival and difficult early years in New Zealand. The pattern of **difference** and the **struggle for security and belonging** suggested by the events of Ellen's lived life are also important features of her told story. The hint of resolution to their struggle that emerged from Ellen's lived life is strengthened in her told story. She carefully resolves into a happy ending the stories of each family member, her elder son and her daughter are *settled*, her younger son is *a real little Kiwi*, and Edward is *so at rest now*. The resolution to her personal story, however, is more subtle. It appears in her repeated determination to remain in New Zealand, as she says, *I just know I could never go back and live there...I'm here now, I'm i-, very much for the now.*

Chapter 5

Sam

...the real reason why we immigrated...

The Migration History

Sam's biographical trajectory consists of two distinct but interconnected patterns, the **search for success** and the **search for security**. On the one hand, events in Sam's biography suggest the dominant pattern of a **search for success**. An ambitious young man from a well-established Jewish community, he leaves school and enters the business world, marries his childhood sweetheart and has two children, then becomes the director of a large company in his late 20s. Equally, however, Sam's life suggests a **search for security**, a quest related to a series of traumatic events which together form a **cycle of disrupted security**. The cycle begins when Sam is a small child; he and his Black servant¹ witness the police beating of a Black woman found in their neighbourhood without the correct paperwork. Other incidents involving 'race', politics and violence follow. Intertwined with the themes of violence and racism in these events is a strong suggestion of **loss**. Some incidents suggest lost innocence and the loss of a

1 The word 'servant', rather than the word 'maid', is used in this thesis. The former term, in my opinion, most accurately reflects the power differences between employers and their domestic staff. Where a generic term is more appropriate, the phrases 'domestic help' and 'household help' are used to refer to those employed by relatively wealthy families in South Africa (and elsewhere) to undertake domestic work and childcare. Other words are used only when they are contained in the interviewees' own stories.

sense of safety, while others involve lost relationships: his favourite relative, his best friend, and his closest adult friendships.

During Sam's life in South Africa, the two patterns in his biography, the **search for success** and the **search for security**, coexist in an uneasy and ultimately unsustainable equilibrium. This equilibrium is destroyed during the most significant disruption in Sam's biography, the armed hijacking of his family. Following this traumatic event, Sam and his family must decide whether to move to a new city, or to leave South Africa altogether. This decision might be conceptualised as a choice between the two biographical patterns in Sam's life, where the path to success is represented by internal migration, and the path to security by a move away from his homeland. Ultimately, Sam prioritises the **search for security** and migrates to New Zealand with his immediate family, and various members of his extended family. Here too there is an enormous sense of **loss**. He loses his successful career and everything associated with it; he loses many of his family, friends and colleagues; and finally, he loses the large, cohesive South African Jewish community to which he and his family belonged. After Sam's migration the two biographical patterns in his life, the **search for security** and the **search for success**, are able to co-exist more harmoniously.

Sam was born into a Jewish family in the late 1960s, part of a community with a long history in South Africa. The first Jews arrived at the Cape of Good Hope together with other White settlers in 1652 as employees of the Dutch East India Company (Horowitz & Kaplan, 2001:5). These first Jewish South Africans came from Holland, Germany and England, but were non-practising because all employees of the company were compelled to worship in the Dutch Reformed Church (Horowitz & Kaplan, 2001:5). During the 19th century, the first practising Jewish communities were established, firstly in Cape Town in 1841, and subsequently throughout the Colony (Horowitz & Kaplan, 2001:5).² In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, 'the character of South African Jewry was forever changed' by the arrival of some 70,000 Jews from Eastern Europe (Horowitz & Kaplan, 2001:5-6). Not only did most of these new migrants come from Lithuania and Byelorussia, but the majority of them came from only a few places within these regions. Together with the curtailment of Jewish migration that took place during

2 South Africa was known as the Cape Colony at this time (Horowitz & Kaplan, 2001:5).

the 19th century,³ this shared Eastern European heritage created a homogenous, cohesive and unified Jewish community in South Africa (Horowitz & Kaplan, 2001:6).

The first part of Sam's biography is dominated by a **cycle of disrupted security**, with a resulting emphasis on the biographical pattern of the **search for security**. His childhood years were spent in a South Africa completely divided along racial lines. The system of apartheid, as explained in the previous chapter, segregated the population into four officially classified 'racial groups' (Thompson, 2000:188-190). The Jews, as White South Africans, were as prosperous as the middle and upper classes in Europe and the United States, owning cars, living in substantial houses and apartments, and employing Black servants. They had access to excellent public services: schools, hospitals, recreational facilities and public transport (Thompson, 2000:200). White people at this time could also depend on relative political, economic and social stability, and crime in White areas was kept at an extremely low level by the security police (Horowitz & Kaplan, 2001:12; Frueh, 2003:134-135).

The Black majority however, experienced high levels of crime (Frueh, 2003:135), unemployment,⁴ poverty, malnutrition and disease (Thompson, 2000:195). 'Wherever White encountered Black', Thompson (2000:200-201) notes, 'White was boss and Black was servant'. The movement of Black South Africans was also severely constrained by apartheid legislation, as previously outlined (Thompson, 2000:193; Giliomee, 2003:511).⁵ In the early 1970s, when Sam was a small child, he and his Black servant witnessed the police beating and arresting a Black woman found in his neighbourhood without the correct documentation. This event is the first in a series of racist and often violent incidents which form a pattern of disrupted security in Sam's early life. The theme of loss in Sam's biography also begins at this point with the loss of both his childhood innocence and his sense of safety.

Resistance to apartheid was not confined to members of the disenfranchised majority in South Africa, Whites too identified with the struggle (Thompson, 2000:204). Within the Jewish community there were also dissenters (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:689-670).

3 The Quota Act of 1930 and the Aliens Act of 1937 effectively stopped Jewish immigration apart from a few thousand Jewish refugees from Germany (Horowitz & Kaplan, 2001:6).

4 In 1977, 26 per cent of Black South Africans were unemployed (Thompson, 2000:195).

5 Every year, more than 100,000 Black South Africans were arrested for being in urban areas without the correct paperwork (Thompson, 2000:193).

The involvement of Sam's favourite relative in the organisation of a Free Peoples' Concert in the mid 1970s led to the second disruptive episode in Sam's early biography. After being identified by cadets from the local police academy as one of a group of students involved in putting together the concert, Sam's young relative was picked up and then tarred and feathered. Afterwards, rather than spend time in jail for his involvement, he moved to Europe, where he still lives. Again, there is considerable loss associated with this incident for Sam. Rather than the loss of innocence and sense of safety related to his witnessing of the beating, however, this time Sam lost an important member of his extended family.

The next event in the pattern of disrupted security that characterises Sam's early life took place at primary school. A boy from an Afrikaans-speaking family called Sam a 'bloody Jew-boy'. After his parents complained to the headmaster, both boys were spoken to and the issue was resolved. In spite of the resolution, however, this incident too is suggestive of loss. In this case, the loss is again connected to Sam's sense of personal safety – perhaps it served as an awakening to the possibility that he too might be identified as a dangerous 'other', in the same way as the Black woman who was beaten and the relative who was tarred and feathered. Although Sam's early personal life is characterised by a cycle of disrupted security, in South Africa more generally these years were notable for the absence of overt political dissent; a situation brought about by the fierce clampdown on resistance to apartheid during the early 1960s (Thompson, 2000:210-211, 218; Frueh, 2003:47). This state of affairs changed irrevocably, however, after the 1976 Soweto⁶ uprising.

This unrest began in the townships outside Johannesburg when Sam was a child. Angry about a plan to force all Black students to receive 50 per cent of their tuition in the Afrikaans language, junior secondary school students⁷ in the region coordinated a march. They carried signs with slogans such as 'Afrikaans is an oppressor's language' and sang and chanted as they walked. Before the students arrived at the soccer stadium where they were going to hold a rally, 48 policemen arrived. They lined up across the street the students were marching along and opened fire, killing two marchers and injuring 12. In the days that followed, the violence in Soweto intensified, and protests

6 Johannesburg's SOuth WEstern TOWnships (Frueh, 2003:65).

7 Thirteen-, fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds (Frueh, 2003:5).

spread to other parts of the country (Frueh, 2003:66-68). According to official figures compiled by a commission of inquiry in 1997 more than 500 people were killed, most of them Black South Africans (Thompson, 2000:213). 'By 1978', Thompson (2000:221) claims, 'the apartheid state was in trouble'.

The final disruptive episode in Sam's early life occurred against this background of increasing social and political unrest. In the early 1980s, Sam's best friend was a young Black boy called Matthew, the son of the home helper employed next door. Matthew was being brought up alongside the employer's own son, who was several years younger. Sam and Matthew got together every day after school in the park. This situation came to an end, however, after complaints were received about Matthew living with a White family. As a consequence of the complaints he was forced to leave the neighbourhood, and Sam never saw him again. Once more, this event is permeated with a sense of loss. In the same way that Sam had previously lost his favourite relative, he now loses his best friend.

After this incident, the balance between the **search for success** and the **search for security** shifts, and for several years the **search for success** assumes a greater role in Sam's life. While still at secondary school he began a romantic relationship with the young woman who was to eventually become his wife, Miriam. In the early 1990s, his daughter was born; followed several years later by a son. After leaving school, Sam entered the business world, and within ten years he had become the director of his own successful company. He was earning an excellent income, enjoying his lifestyle and his family and looking forward to further significant career advancement. The path to success that dominates this time, however, was not without its own losses. Sam lost his closest friends when several members of his extended family moved away from his hometown to another South African city.

The 1980s were turbulent years in South Africa. There was significant Black resistance to apartheid, and successive governments found it increasingly difficult to maintain control (Thompson, 2000:228-230). Reforms of the system, including a new constitution (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:496-506) and the elimination of some segregation laws (Thompson, 2000:227), failed to appease a Black majority clamouring for change. International opinion too had turned against the South African government,

conditions there were condemned by the Commonwealth in a 1986 report and a range of sanctions were imposed against South Africa by the United States, the European Community, and all the Scandinavian countries (Thompson, 2000:233-234; Davenport & Saunders, 2000:536). The economic situation also deteriorated, inflation and unemployment rose and real growth declined (Thompson, 2000:234). By 1985, after several years of vigorous resistance to the apartheid regime, including strikes, demonstrations, sabotage and boycotts, the government imposed an annually renewed, indefinite state of emergency (Frueh, 2003:107). ‘The government’, Thompson (2000:235) claims, ‘had resorted to legalized tyranny’.

After the imposition of the state of emergency, the South African government attempted to re-establish control over the Black population with arrests, detentions and treason trials. Troops from the South African army were deployed in townships across the country to augment the police (Thompson, 2000:235). Despite these efforts, however, the deteriorating situation forced the government into negotiations with Black political organisations at the end of the 1980s (Thompson, 2000:240). Over the next five years, South Africa went through unprecedented social and political change: the lifting of the ban on the ANC⁸ and other political organisations; the release of Nelson Mandela after 27 years in prison; the drafting and approval of an interim constitution; and the first democratic elections (Thompson, 2000:241-264). Finally, in a peaceful transfer of power, Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as the first democratically elected President of South Africa (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:568).

Although the transition to democracy itself was peaceful (Horowitz & Kaplan, 2001:12), South Africa remained ‘an exceptionally violent society’, leading the world in rates of homicide, rape and violent assault (Thompson, 2000:267). The end of ‘race’-based policing methods meant that White South Africans were exposed to levels of crime not previously experienced in their communities. Car hijacking,⁹ claims Horowitz (2001:16), was particularly common at this time, and it was Sam’s experience of this kind of violent attack which disrupted his biography. One afternoon, Sam was parked in

8 The African National Congress, founded in 1912 (Thompson, 2000:156), was a radical opposition movement to apartheid (Thompson, 2000:198). Its leaders have included two Black Presidents of South Africa, Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki.

9 In 1995 there were about 17,000 incidents of car hijacking in Johannesburg alone (Horowitz & Kaplan, 2001:16).

the driveway of a relative's home; in the back of the car were his daughter and a young female member of his extended family. Sam was talking to his relative through the car window when he heard the sound of heavy boots approaching. He looked up to see one of four young Black men loading a gun. Holding this young man by his shirt, with the end of the gun pressed into his own belly, Sam told him that they could have his car, but that first they must let the children go. The children were allowed to leave, and the young men got in the car and drove away. This event was a crucial turning point in Sam's life.

During this period of disruption, the **search for security** dominates Sam's biography. After the hijacking, Sam believed that he and his young family should relocate to a city within South Africa where he had identified a significant business opportunity. Miriam, however, along with other members of the Jewish community, thought that moving cities in South Africa was like 'choosing the top deck on the Titanic', or 'climbing the mast of a sinking ship' (Horowitz & Kaplan, 2001:11). In spite of Sam's preference, however, a family decision was eventually made to migrate to New Zealand. He and Miriam made a reconnaissance journey there shortly afterwards, and Sam found that he liked both the scenery and the people. The following year, only a few months after the hijacking, Sam and his immediate family, together with several members of their extended family, left South Africa permanently and made new homes in Auckland.

They arrived in New Zealand in the late 1990s, along with many other South African migrants.¹⁰ Sam and his family then joined the small New Zealand Jewish community of 5000 (Levine, 1999:2). The economic situation in New Zealand presented Sam and his family with some challenges. In 1997, the economy had begun failing, and by 1998 it was officially in recession (Jesson, 1999:20). Sam, however, was able to obtain work in his area of expertise, his experience reflecting the generally easier path to employment of non-visible migrants from English-speaking countries (Spoonley, 2003:11). Both Sam and his wife had hoped to enter the paid workforce in New Zealand by employing paid domestic help. After their arrival, however, they discovered that the system of domestic service as it operates in South Africa does not exist in New Zealand.

10 Between 1996 and 2001, more than 14,000 South African migrants arrived in New Zealand (Barkhuizen & Knoch, 2005:218).

Miriam, therefore, stayed at home full-time for several years to take care of their younger child.

There is considerable **loss** associated with Sam's migration experience. His flourishing company, and the business opportunity he had identified in South Africa, were gone. Gone too was the large house, the household help, and the extensive networks of friends and family. Finally, Sam had to cope with the loss of the large, cohesive South African Jewish community, together with its extensive kosher services. Sam's **search for security**, however, was largely resolved by his migration to New Zealand, while his **search for success** was facilitated by the significant economic boom New Zealand (and other Western countries) experienced after the recession of the late 1990s (Saunders, 2005:6). Moreover, several years after their arrival, Miriam entered the paid workforce, fulfilling a long-held plan for both of them to be involved in paid employment. At this stage in Sam's biographical trajectory there is a strong sense that the **search for success** and the **search for security** are able to coexist more harmoniously than at any other time in his life.

The Migration Story

Sam's story is one of **reluctant migration**. After the armed carjacking, he still believed that the best option for his family was to relocate to another South African city. He says, *I had a good business opportunity...I was saying, look, we're going to a safer place, our currency's the same, um, most of our friends had already moved... so it just worked well*. His wife Miriam, however, believed that moving internally was *like going to the top deck of the Titanic*; and that the family would be better off living outside South Africa. There is some **ambivalence** in Sam's story about the migration decision and his part in it. Sam describes the decision to migrate to New Zealand as a *family decision*, but also as one that *wasn't really my choice*. The sense of **reluctance** in Sam's migration story is reinforced by his claim that he sees himself as a *semi-refugee* rather than a migrant, someone whose migration was *almost forced*. A migrant, he believes, is someone who leaves their own country to better their life, whereas, he says, *we immigrated to a worse, harder situation than we were coming from in every other*

aspect than that it was safe. Sam's **reluctance** to migrate and his **ambivalence** about the migration decision constitute the dominant underlying themes of his told story.

The two patterns suggested by Sam's lived life, the **search for success**, and the **search for security**, are also fundamental features of his told story. The **search for success** is focused on employment and finance, and its significance can be seen in the way Sam talks about his career, *I was a director of a rather large...company at a young age, and...financially doing brilliantly.* It is also evident in the following statement, where Sam describes his feelings about the business opportunity that he turned down in order to migrate, *that was hugely exciting to me, and a big career move and would have been a really, really big move for me.* The sense of regret Sam expresses here is part of a recurrent theme of **loss** in Sam's migration story. The **search for security** also plays a vital role in Sam's narrative. Significantly, his story begins with, and focuses on, several disturbing and sometimes violent events that together constitute a **cycle of disrupted security**. The **search for security** is grounded in these important life events, and is also the core reason Sam gives for his migration, *that's why we moved, really, is ah for you know the safety really.* Although Sam's story contains elements of a search for financial security (an area which overlaps the **search for success**) and also of a search for religious security, it is the **search for physical security** which predominates.

The precarious balance between the **search for success** and the **search for security** suggested by events in Sam's lived life is also evident in his told story. Similarly, in both the lived life and the told story, the armed hijacking serves to disrupt the relationship between the two patterns. However, conceptualising the migration decision as a choice between the **search for success** in South Africa, and the **search for security** in New Zealand, does not account for the complexity of the relationship between these two patterns as it is portrayed in Sam's told story. Sam believed that he and his family could be both safe *and* successful by relocating within South Africa, a view that was not shared by other members of his family. The decision to migrate, however it was arrived at, was a **reluctant** choice for Sam, and one about which he remains **ambivalent**. According to Sam's told story, it appears that the search for security is largely resolved by his migration to New Zealand, and that the two patterns in his life are able to co-exist more harmoniously post-migration than at any other time in his life.

Sam begins his narrative with an incomplete statement about his **identity**; *basically living in South Africa*, he says, *and being born as a white South African...* Later in the story, however, Sam makes several claims about his identity that might be considered conclusions to this original uncompleted statement. All of these contain similar sentiments. He feels, he says, *uncomfortable, privileged and prejudiced* being a White man in South Africa. He is *not very patriotic*. *I didn't feel South African*, he says, *I've always felt that I'm Jewish first...I see myself in the diaspora, and ah, so you know [the] most important thing is to abide by the law of the country, but my Jewish identity is and my Jewish way of life will be, you know, that's how I live my life wherever I am*. This is what makes him, he says, *a different South African*. The two main ideas about identity in Sam's story; that his position as a White man in his country of birth caused him discomfort, and that his primary source of identity was Jewish rather than South African, serve to distance himself from the system of apartheid in South Africa. The events Sam chooses to include in the initial part of his narrative, and the way that he talks about them also have this effect, establishing his revulsion of apartheid specifically, and racism more generally.

In the first of these events, Sam and his [1] *home helper, um, who was black*, witness the beating of a Black woman who was in their neighbourhood without the correct paperwork. *When I was [a child]*, he says, *I saw sort of these white policemen really beating up a black lady*. He goes on to explain that *seeing that, sort of, didn't make me feel good... I felt like here I've got a privileged upbringing, and I could see [1] white people abusing black people in, in my street*. There are three important points to note about this event and the way Sam talks about it. Firstly, it is significant that he begins his migration narrative by retelling the story of this particular event. The story is brief, but in it he mentions his age three times, suggesting that this was an extremely important time in his life. This idea is reinforced when he ends the retelling by referring to the incident as *a seed*, although he doesn't immediately explain what he means by this. Later in his story, however, he partly attributes his career in business to this experience of violence and racism, *and that was one of the causes*, he says, *from when I was [a child]...you know, seeing that black woman in the suburb, I was quite excited to...be able to [do business with]...everyone*. Both the content of this story, and the way Sam tells it, reinforce his presentation of himself as an egalitarian non-racist.

Secondly, the pause before he says *home helper*, and the *um* which follows, suggest a certain discomfort with the phrase. In choosing to use this term rather than others which have more servile connotations, such as ‘maid’ or ‘servant’, Sam appears to be presenting himself as someone who values the ideals of egalitarianism. His later comments about his own privilege and the abuse of Black people in his neighbourhood reinforce this, as does the following statement about the effect of the event on him and his servant, *we were watching this together and we were both quite shattered*. Sam aligns himself with his Black *home helper* here, in opposition to the White people who are committing the violence, a solidarity which is repeated in their shared reaction. Interestingly, this is the only time Sam refers to a *home helper* in his narrative, later preferring the word ‘maid’. When he describes their employment and living conditions, for example, he says, *a maid is someone who worked, basically work almost seven days a week, live on the property and have a, a little room in the back of the house...not to the same standard as the house*. Sam’s subsequent use of ‘maid’ rather than ‘home helper’ appears to be a reversion to the vocabulary of his homeland and explains, perhaps, the discomfort he appeared to experience when using the former phrase. It also reinforces the idea that Sam’s original use of the term ‘home helper’ was intended to give the impression of a more egalitarian attitude than that suggested by the use of the word ‘maid’.

Thirdly, Sam uses the phrase ‘sort of’ twice in this story. He says, *I saw sort of these white policemen*, and then, *seeing that, sort of, didn’t make me feel good*. Sam repeats this phrase at several other points during his interview: when describing life in South Africa, *it’s sort of living in a third world country*; talking about his identity, *I sort of didn’t feel very, I didn’t feel South African*; referring to his experience of anti-Semitism at school, *that sort of happened*; describing the way he reacted to the armed gunmen, *I sort of calmed them down*; and finally when referring to the decision to leave South Africa he says, *we just sort of decided let’s go*. In each of these instances Sam is talking about a significant life event, about which it might be assumed he has strong feelings. By using ‘sort of’ in this way, Sam maintains a certain distance from the emotional impact of the stories he is telling. Laughter is another feature of Sam’s story-telling that has the same effect. When he is talking about the hijacking, for example, he says, *I saw the guy loading his gun...you know, they were young kids, and ah, I sort of calmed them down [laughs]*.

In the next part of Sam's told story, he talks about his best friend Matt, a Black boy of the same age who lived with the White family next door. Matt's mother was employed by the family as a servant, and Matt was being brought up alongside their young son. Sam and Matt spent all their time at the local park, *smoking, dancing, talking, listening to music, playing soccer*. There were problems, however. Matt could not, for example, spend the night at Sam's house. *It was awkward...Sam says, because where would he sleep? In my room or in the maid's room? or you know, this stupid crap*. Nor could they go to a movie or out for a meal together; *and ah that, that also worried me*. In addition, he says, *a lot of ah my white friends would ostracise me for having a black friend, you know...I remember them saying how can you be friends with them? You're a black lover...* During the boys' teenage years, he describes how *the neighbours complained about Matt living in a white person's house, and he had to go, so literally the guy exited out of my life*. Sam never sees him again, although he talks about how he *tried to get hold of him, but um, just haven't had any luck, you know*. Here too Sam presents himself in opposition to racism and apartheid.

When asked about an initial brief reference to anti-Semitism, Sam tells the story of an incident that took place at school. The class bully, who, he says, was *a lot bigger than me...called me a bloody Jew boy*. Sam's parents are shocked and disgusted by this outburst. He says, *my parents freaked...they said no, that's not going to happen at school*. Both boys are called in to the headmaster's office, and Sam describes what happened in this way, *Billy, you are not allowed to call him a bloody Jew boy [laughs]. Sam, stop starting with Billy, you know what I mean? It was very fair*. Later in the interview Sam talks about another traumatic event that occurred when he was a child. His favourite relative was involved in organising a Free Peoples' Concert, after which, he says, *a whole lot of police students from the police school thought they're going to teach these young radical students a good lesson, and they picked him up and his mates, and basically, literally tarred and feathered them*. His relative was forced into exile in Europe to avoid a jail term; *and, so that, that had an impact on, on my, on my childhood*.

The initial part of Sam's story focuses on these childhood events, all of which are united by a common theme of **loss**. The witnessing of the police beating with his servant constitutes a loss of innocence and a loss of security; Sam uses the powerful word

shattered to describe how he and his home helper felt afterwards. Next, Sam experiences the loss of his best friend, Matt, an episode of anti-Semitism, and finally the loss of his favourite relative. In addition to **loss**, the beginning of Sam's story is also about **identity**. Sam's primary identity, he maintains, is Jewish, rather than South African. *Patriotism*, he says, *isn't a...big thing in my life*. This distancing of himself from a South African identity, and the stories he tells about his early experiences, convey a strong message of disassociation from the racist policies of his homeland.

Up until this stage of his narrative, Sam appears to be working towards a point where his abhorrence of apartheid, and his lack of a strong South African identity, would lead him towards a decision to leave his homeland. At the end of this part of his story, however, he refers to *the real reason why we immigrated...* and from this point onwards it is clear that Sam's story is not about migrating to escape a racist South Africa. Why then does he devote the first part of his narrative to a series of traumatic childhood events interspersed with statements about his identity as a Jew? Rather than functioning as the beginning of his migration story, the first section serves more as an introduction to Sam himself, explaining and justifying his relationship to his homeland, and making clear his non-racist values and his Jewish identity. Sam himself argues early in his story, *why I'm starting so far back is just to explain that I felt quite [1] uncomfortable, and, and quite prejudiced in a way being white in South Africa*.

The *real* story of his migration, Sam says, starts with the armed hijacking of his family. He begins this part of his story by saying, *the real reason why we immigrated*, and finishes with, *that's why we moved, really, is ah, for, you know, the safety really*. He talks about his successful career and his plans to move his family to another city. *It was safer*, he says, *more cosmopolitan, um, less political and less violent*. In addition to this, the move offered Sam the chance of significant financial success and career advancement. Everything changed, however, when he was hijacked one Friday night in his relative's driveway, with his daughter and another member of his extended family in the back of the car. He recalls, *I heard these boots coming up to the, the car, and I looked out the window and I saw the guy loading his gun...I remember holding the guy by his shirt, saying, look mate, have my car it's not a problem, it's yours, but you ain't going anywhere until those children are out of it...I felt this gun in my stomach...by some miracle, he let the children out*. This event was the turning point in Sam's life.

Although Sam had mentioned being afraid at other points in his story, from the time of his hijacking fear becomes a major driving force in his narrative. Firstly, he is afraid that he or his family might be injured, killed or raped. Of the latter fear he says, *you hear terrible stories of them, you know, raping and attacking young girls*. Talking about the period immediately prior to his departure, he goes on to reveal, *I felt particularly scared, and thinking shit, I hope we just don't get killed between now and the time that we leave, so I remember that feeling of really being extremely paranoid and scared*. Secondly, he is afraid that he will not be able to support his family as well as he always had in South Africa. He explains his concerns in this way, *I felt a lot of fear...I've proved myself in South Africa...I believe that in South Africa, like if you were white you had an advantage, and if you were Jewish and you were white you had a huge advantage...so I thought, coming to a country where it's an even playing field...where do I fit in really?*

This part of Sam's story is also about **loss**, mirroring the theme that was such a feature of the beginning of his narrative. The lost sense of **security** caused by the hijacking might be thought of as an extension of similar childhood losses, rather than some new phenomenon. In this instance, however, the potential losses, of his life or the lives of his immediate family, are so much greater than those described in the first part of Sam's story. The losses related to Sam's **search for success** are also significant. Firstly, he *felt huge loss*, he says, *because I felt that I'd kind of always been a good earner*. The move to New Zealand meant a leap into the unknown, where Sam would need to function without the powerful networks of the Jewish community. He says, *in South Africa I would always have owned a company, but if I didn't and I needed a job there's no ways I'd ever look in a newspaper, I'd, someone would know someone who'd say give that [] boy a break! You know [laughs] um, so you lose that*. Migrating to New Zealand also meant the loss of the business opportunity about which he says, *this is when I'm gonna cream it*. These losses are integral to the sense of **reluctance** and **ambivalence** that characterise Sam's migration narrative.

After he tells the story of the hijacking, Sam presents a series of arguments supporting his decision to migrate to New Zealand. In spite of the strength of these arguments, however, Sam's **ambivalence** about the decision is apparent. For example, he begins by saying, *at that point I thought, hang on, this is a bit irresponsible living here cause*

you're kind of comfortable...and earning lots of money, and ah life's good and you're surrounded by your family and friends... Although the purpose of this statement is ostensibly to use the hijacking as a way of justifying his decision to leave South Africa, he sounds as if he is, in fact, presenting an argument for remaining there. He follows this with a list of reasons for leaving: *it just felt very unsafe, our liberties were... badly infringed upon, my children couldn't walk to the dairy, I had concerns about health care and about tertiary education.* He then says, *I just thought sherbet, any minute if we stay and God forbid if myself or any of my kids get shot or worse, raped or ah violently attacked, um, we just sort of decided let's go.* Tellingly, he then adds *at the time what was interesting is I was dead keen to go to* [another South African city].

There is **ambivalence**, too, in the way Sam talks about how the migration decision was made. On the one hand he says, *so we made a family decision to immigrate all of us*, then later, *it wasn't really my choice, my choice would have been to stay.* He claims that he was motivated to leave South Africa by his concerns about the violence there, and about the state of the health and education systems, then he says, *I actually think I was wrong, I think things are turning out quite good in South Africa at the moment.* He adds, *my main thing about the migration...it was like a-, almost forced*, before noting that *it was a choice, and I'm grateful.* A final feature of Sam's story that reinforces the themes of **ambivalence** and **reluctance** is his almost exclusive focus on his pre-migration life. He first mentions New Zealand when he describes how quickly they migrated, noting that within only a few months they had uprooted their entire South African lives and made a home in Auckland. Following this, he spends some time explaining the reasons he and his wife chose New Zealand, ending with, *my wife and I came for a ten day [1] drive and look see, and um, I loved New Zealand, you know, I thought it was awesome.* Other than these brief mentions, Sam's migration story is all about his early life in South Africa and the events leading up to his departure.

In summary, Sam's migration story is characterised by **reluctance** and **ambivalence**. He begins with narratives about a series of troubling events which occurred during his early life in South Africa. Interspersed between these are claims about his identity and values. From this 'introduction' we understand that he sees himself as a Jew in the diaspora, and that he finds the system of apartheid, and racism more generally, abhorrent. Later he states that the real reason for his migration to New Zealand is to

keep his family safe after they become victims of an armed carjacking. The two patterns suggested by the events of Sam's lived life, the **search for security** and the **search for success**, are also significant in his told story, although the relationship between them after the carjacking is more complex than the events of his biography suggest. Sam does not see the migration decision as a choice between **security** in New Zealand and potential **success** elsewhere in South Africa. Rather, he believes that he and his family could have had both by remaining in their homeland. Sam says that the migration decision was *a family decision*, but one that *wasn't really my choice*. Regardless of how it was arrived at, however, it is a decision that Sam made **reluctantly**, and one about which he still appears to feel considerable **ambivalence**.

Chapter 6

Lorato

...we came here with the hope that I'll get a job...

The Migration History

Lorato's migration is a crucial turning point in her biography. The **struggle for professional fulfilment**, however, dominates both her early life in South Africa, and her post-migration life in Australia and New Zealand. Coupled with this dominant pattern in Lorato's biography is a sense of her tremendous personal **strength** and **determination**. Many obstacles stand in the way of Lorato's first steps towards success: the system of Bantu education that was designed to prepare Africans for a subordinate place in society; the inadequate funding and neglect of African schools; and the ongoing political violence and disruption associated with the crumbling apartheid state. She overcomes these obstacles, however, and develops an academic career that culminates in the leadership of her university department. Migrating to Australia with her husband and son, and then on to New Zealand, Lorato faces a new **struggle for professional fulfilment**. The barriers to her success this time prove intractable. After several years of searching for employment in her field of expertise, during which she takes time out to give birth to and raise her infant daughter, Lorato changes direction and decides to follow her childhood dream and retrain as a medical professional. At this point in her biography, her **struggle for professional fulfilment** is ongoing.

Lorato was born into a Setswana-speaking African family in the 1960s. One of nine children, she grew up dividing her time between an urban township, where she was born, and a rural village. Her birthplace, located near one of South Africa's main cities, was the site of vigorous resistance to apartheid during the 1980s and 1990s. This resistance resulted in often bloody protests, strikes and boycotts (Thompson, 2000:229; Giliomee, 2003:613). During the years immediately before the first democratic election in 1990, the township of her birth was also the site of many violent clashes between rival opposition political parties, the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) (Marinovich & Silva, 2000:85-86; Thompson, 2000:250). Lorato was sent to boarding school in the rural village to escape the school boycotts, violence, and social disorder taking place in this urban environment.

The apartheid state in South Africa subjected Africans to restrictive laws governing every aspect of their lives: where they could live, how they could make their living, and even where they could sit in a bus or a public place. Describing the relationship between apartheid and the African population of South Africa, Giliomee (2003:512) writes, '[a]partheid was one of the most extreme systems of state intervention in the lives of its subordinate population ever designed. It turned Africans into foreigners in their own country, who could not own land except in the 13 per cent designated to them, could not move without their passes, could not resettle in another district in the common area¹ without a permit and could not do skilled work. They could be arrested at any moment and there was always some law under which they could be charged and found guilty'. Three aspects of apartheid in particular were to have a far-reaching impact on Lorato's life: the policy of forced removal of Africans into Homelands and segregated townships, the quality of education for Africans under apartheid, and the turbulent and often violent transition to democracy that took place during the 1980s and early 1990s.

The Homelands Policy was an integral part of the strategy of separate development on which the system of apartheid was based. During the 1950s and 1960s, the government created eight (eventually ten) Homelands out of what had previously been African reserves (Thompson, 2000:191). Each Homeland, governed by an Urban Bantu Council (Giliomee, 2003:531), was meant to develop into its own 'nation', where the population

¹ The common area comprises all land not included in the Homelands (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:488).

could enjoy all the rights denied them in the rest of the country. In 1971 the Bantu Homelands Constitution Act empowered the government to grant independence to any Homeland (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:432; Giliomee, 2003:606), a process which they likened to the decolonisation of European empires that was occurring during the same period (Thompson, 2000:191). Accordingly, the Homeland in which Lorato spent some time growing up was granted 'independence' in the late 1970s. From the time of their formation, the government attempted to herd most Africans into the Homelands, except for those whose labour was required by Whites (Thompson, 2000:193). This policy saw the population of the Homelands increase dramatically, from 39.7 per cent of the African population in 1950, to 52.7 per cent in 1980 (Thompson, 2000:195).²

The residents of independent Homelands lost their South African citizenship, although the sovereignty of the Homelands was not recognised by any foreign country (Thompson, 2000:191-192; Davenport & Saunders, 2000:479). Nor were the Homelands ever economically viable. For many years, Whites were forbidden to invest directly in them (Giliomee, 2003:561), and the Homeland Councils were forced to depend on subsidies from the central government in Pretoria (Thompson, 2000:192).³ As the number of people living in the Homelands increased, the land was able to support a smaller and smaller proportion of them. In order to survive, many African families relied on wages earned by male family members who became migrant labourers in the great industrial complexes of the southern Transvaal.⁴ Thompson (2000:201) notes the importance of African women in this situation, '[u]nder apartheid, African women, many of them heads of households as a result of the persistence of male migrant labour, held the fabric of African society together'. In spite of this pivotal role, however, Frueh (2003:163) claims that Black women generally were at the very bottom of the social hierarchy. 'What might be called the transitive property of violence and humiliation', he says, 'meant that Black women often bore the brunt of apartheid' (Frueh, 2003:163).

Large numbers of Africans living in cities outside the Homelands were also transferred by the government to new segregated satellite townships. Lorato's parents experienced

2 The density of the population in the Homelands in 1980 was 23.8 per square mile, far greater than the density for all South Africa, including the Homelands, which was 9.1 (Thompson, 2000:195).

3 After independence, these subsidies were classified as 'foreign aid' (Giliomee, 2003:606).

4 The area around Pretoria and Johannesburg (Thompson, 2000:149).

this upheaval when they were forcibly removed in the mid-1950s from one of the few townships where Africans could own land (Thompson, 2000:194). The removal of the Black populace, which left over 1000 'unlawful' residents homeless (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:396), 'was hailed by government officials as a victory for social engineering' (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:652). In a report called *Forced Removals in South Africa*,⁵ it was estimated that between 1960 and 1982, more than three and a half million people had been moved, many of them under some duress (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:467). Living conditions for Africans in the Homelands and the townships were difficult. Thompson notes that '[p]ublic services for Blacks were characteristically inadequate or non-existent. In the Homelands, women still walked miles every day to fetch water and firewood; in the towns, people crowded into single-sex compounds, leaky houses, or improvised shacks. Schools, hospitals, and public transport for Blacks were sharply inferior. Electricity, running water, public telephones, sewage systems, parks and playing fields were rare' (Thompson, 2000:201).

The education system for Africans, initiated in 1953, was known as 'Bantu education' (Giliomee, 2003:508). Based on the assumption of an inferior potential in African minds, it was explicitly designed to prepare them for a subordinate place in South African society (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:674). Dr. Verwoerd (Minister of Native Affairs, 1951-1957; and Prime Minister 1958-1966), who was responsible for the development of a number of apartheid policies, publicly referred to Bantu education as 'education for a menial place in society' (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:449). This 'menial place' was also gendered. African women, for example, were trained for work in their own communities as nurses and teachers, while men were prepared for life as policemen. As well as being designed to produce certain kinds of gendered workers, education for Africans was inadequately funded (Giliomee, 2003:509). As late as 1986, the government was spending seven times as much educating a White child as they were on the education of an African child (Thompson, 2000:227). The education level of teachers in African schools was also less than that of teachers in White schools. A 1978 report⁶ revealed that while nearly all White teachers had had 12 years of schooling and a third had degrees, only 2.45 per cent of teachers in African schools had degrees, and

5 The report was published in 1983 by a group of researchers calling themselves the 'Surplus People Project' (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:467).

6 The report was produced by the De Lange Commission (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:489).

almost 20 per cent had only six years of education (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:674). The tertiary education system for Africans was characterised by similar disparities and imbalances. Thompson (2000:266) describes African universities as 'grossly inadequate', noting that only six per cent of the African population had some form of higher education.

Lorato's education at school and at university took place during a time of great social unrest in South Africa. This meant that in addition to having to overcome the obstacles presented by the inadequacies of the education system, she also had to negotiate her way through the upheaval of the social environment in which she lived. The sense of Lorato's personal **strength** and **determination** is particularly strong at this point in her biography. The first significant disturbance took place in June 1976, when Lorato was a child. Thousands of students in Soweto protested against the imposition of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in Black schools (Frueh, 2003:66-68). After several students were shot by police, violence broke out, spreading to other townships and the campuses of Black universities in the days and months that followed. A little over a year later more than 600 people had been killed (Giliomee, 2003:580). Although the issue of Afrikaans was the catalyst for the protest at Soweto, Giliomee (2003:579) claims that 'other deep-seated causes were unemployment, poverty, the state of black schools, the pass laws and the insecurity engendered by the Homelands policy'.

The next period of significant disturbance took place between 1984 and 1986, when Lorato was in her late teens. This time the unrest occurred in and around Lorato's own neighbourhood. Angry at the high prices for rent and electricity imposed by local councils, residents of townships called for a boycott of work and school (Frueh, 2003:105). Riots broke out, and shops and public buildings were destroyed. Following the subsequent police crackdown, the protests quickly spread to other parts of the country. Price (1991:192-193) says of this time '[t]he insurrection of 1984-1986 gripped virtually the entire black population outside of remote rural areas. While the young comrades⁷ were its militant vanguard, the insurrection drew support and participation from virtually the entire social spectrum of black South Africa'. The state responded to this urban uprising with severe repressive measures, detaining some 8,000

⁷ The word 'comrade' was generally used for those involved in the anti-apartheid struggle (Frueh, 2003:127-128).

activists, and declaring a state of emergency that was to last in some form until the beginning of 1990 (Giliomee, 2003:613-614; Frueh, 2003:107; Davenport & Saunders, 2000:508). It was during these years that Lorato began her academic career.

Significant reform of the apartheid system took place in the late 1980s as the government attempted to placate the international community and its own increasingly rebellious Black majority. By 1986, the government had repealed the pass laws⁸ and eliminated some of the segregation laws including the bans on multiracial political parties and inter-racial sex and marriage (Thompson, 2000:226-227; Giliomee, 2003:613). Neither these reforms, however, nor the state's violent suppression of dissent, were sufficient to quell Black demands for the removal of apartheid and the introduction of full democracy. Shortly after his election as President, de Klerk 'concluded that the best hope for his people⁹ was to negotiate a settlement from a position of strength' (Thompson, 2000:246). During the next four years, negotiations took place which culminated in South Africa's first democratic elections in late April 1994 (Thompson, 2000:247-264). Throughout this period, however, Lorato's community was again the site of violence and upheaval (Giliomee, 2003:632). This time the conflict was between Africans, local supporters of the ANC on one side, and IFP supporting migrant workers on the other. Lorato's neighbourhood had the highest death toll of any township during this time (Marinovich & Silva, 2000:85-86).

On the 10th May 1994, Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as President of South Africa (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:568; Giliomee, 2003:647). Shortly afterwards, Lorato married Tebogo, a medical professional and a respected member of a prominent family in the region. Together they worked with several non-governmental organisations and the Christian church in their local community. Lorato took on the role of counsellor in the church for those families affected by HIV and AIDS. In the 1990s the AIDS epidemic was hitting Africa harder than any other continent; the HIV positive population of South Africa grew from 36,000 to 750,000 between 1990 and 1995 (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:664). By the year 2000, over four million people in South Africa were HIV positive, more than any other country in the world (Thompson, 2000:293). It was also around this time that Lorato and Tebogo's first child was born.

8 These laws were designed to limit the influx of rural Africans into the cities. They were prohibited from visiting urban areas for more than 72 hours without a special pass (Thompson, 2000:193).

9 The Afrikaners.

Lorato and Tebogo faced new challenges after the end of apartheid. On the one hand, their skills and education were in high demand. Thompson (2000:283) notes that '[v]irtually any African, Indian or Coloured adult who had managed to acquire a decent education was assured of a well-paid job'. On the other hand, the economic consequences of democratisation and the pressure of the AIDS epidemic put them both under considerable stress. Lorato, in her position as head of her university department, had to manage several other academic subjects in addition to her own. Because of the AIDS epidemic, she often had to cover for staff members who were themselves sick, or who needed to take time off to care for sick or dying family members. For Tebogo, work in the health field was also stressful. In addition to the massive impact of AIDS, budgets were cut for the maintenance of large hospitals, and pay levels for those in the medical profession decreased. Many left South Africa, while those who remained worked for unreasonably long hours to cover the resultant shortages of staff (Davenport & Saunders, 2000:665).

In the last years of the 20th century, Lorato and her family left South Africa and migrated to Australia, joining the 75,700 other South Africans already living in the country (Susskind, 2002:22).¹⁰ Tebogo began work immediately in his profession, but Lorato was unable to find employment in her area of expertise. It is at this point in her biography that she experiences a significant disruption in her **struggle for professional fulfilment**. The following year, still unable to find a job in her field, Lorato accepted an offer from her previous employer in South Africa to return for several months to her old job. They had been trying unsuccessfully to fill her position since her departure for Australia, and offered her a good financial package to return temporarily. Thompson (2000:283) notes that universities had great difficulty recruiting Black faculty members at this time. Lorato returned to South Africa with her young son for some months, while Tebogo remained in Australia. On her return, they decided to continue the search for suitable employment for Lorato by moving to New Zealand. Unlike the majority of migrants from their homeland, however, they did not settle in Auckland's northern or eastern suburbs (Barkhuizen & Knoch, 2005:218), moving instead to the South Island, where Tebogo had an offer of employment.

10 The South African community in Australia is so substantial that Afrikaans has been recognised as a community language (Susskind, 2002:22).

Lorato maintained her search for employment in her field, but was invited to attend only one interview. Watts and Trlin (2005:115), noting the results of a recent EEO¹¹ survey on human resource practitioners, claim that there is substantial evidence of discrimination against candidates with non-New Zealand accents, and those from different cultures. Their claim is supported by a number of other studies. Oliver (2000:30), for example, maintains that ‘the greatest barrier to professional migrant employment was employers’ attitudes, especially stereotyping of these cultures and a negative attitude towards employing people other than native English speakers’. Basnayake’s (1999) study of professional Sri Lankan migrants, and Pio’s (2005) more recent research on well-qualified Indian women migrants examine the issue from the migrants’ perspective. More than 50 per cent of the Sri Lankan migrants in Basnayake’s (1999:5) research claimed that they had faced discrimination while seeking employment in New Zealand. Although the word ‘discrimination’ is not used in Pio’s (2005:1285) report, her participants were ‘united by the brushing aside of their years of experience by employers in New Zealand who primarily wanted Kiwi experience’ (see also Firkin, 2004). Lorato too is culturally different and speaks with a non-New Zealand accent; her experience mirrors that of many of the migrants in these studies.

After some months of searching, Lorato lowered her expectations and accepted a job as a cleaner in a local school. Soon afterwards, she decided that her time would be better spent adding to her family, and she became pregnant. Later, during the first few months of her pregnancy, Lorato was again offered work by her previous employer, who was still unable to fill her position. She accepted, and worked until the final weeks of her pregnancy in South Africa, before returning to New Zealand to give birth. After her daughter was born, she spent the next year at home taking care of her children. At this point in her life, Lorato changed direction in her **struggle for professional fulfilment**. She decided that, rather than continue to search for work in her field of expertise, she would change career and follow a childhood dream of becoming a medical professional. She moved to Auckland at the beginning of 2004, after being accepted into the course of her choice. Her children accompanied her, but Tebogo, who had decided to undertake further training, accepted a job in his chosen discipline in another South Island city.

11 The Equal Employment Opportunities Trust is a not-for-profit organisation tasked with providing EEO information and tools to employers and raising awareness of diversity issues in New Zealand workplaces.

Throughout the first year of her professional training, Lorato took care of her children on her own, as Tebogo was able to visit only infrequently. Again, there is a sense here of Lorato's enormous personal **strength** and **determination**. At the end of that year, Tebogo was able to transfer to a hospital in the North Island, from where he could make more frequent trips to see his family. At this stage in Lorato's biographical trajectory, the **struggle for professional fulfilment** is ongoing.

The Migration Story

Lorato's story is one of migration as a **strategic stepping stone to a better life**. *You come with these high hopes, she says, thinking that, you know, my life will change...that...things will be better.* Her narrative focuses mostly on her career and the long search for appropriate employment; but also, to a lesser degree, on her belief that **racism** is the reason this search took so long and was ultimately unsuccessful. The repetition of two key phrases throughout Lorato's story reinforces this dual focus. She begins the interview by saying *first and foremost...we came here with the hope that I'll get a job*. The words *I'll get a job* are repeated all the way through her narrative, almost like a mantra, *I hoped that I'll get a job by coming here...I still hoped that I'll get a job...I still hoped that I'll get a job but I couldn't get a job...I still hoped that I'll get a job*. Similarly, the phrase *black and white* recurs throughout Lorato's story, *it's not in black and white but they do practise it...but here it's not in black and white...people are doing something contrary to what is in black and white...it was in black and white*. Although her narrative focuses almost exclusively on her unsuccessful search for employment, and her explanations for this failure, migration as a **strategic stepping stone to a better life** for her and her family is the dominant underlying theme of her told story.

The pattern suggested by the events in Lorato's lived life, the **search for professional fulfilment**, is also a fundamental feature of her told story. Indeed, most of her narrative is devoted to this subject. After her initial assertion that she and her family migrated to New Zealand so that she could get a job, Lorato traces the developments in her career following her departure from South Africa. She explains how she and Tebogo managed their careers during the first years of their migration, living for long periods apart while

Lorato worked for her previous employer in South Africa, and Tebogo worked as a medical professional firstly in Australia, and then in New Zealand. She goes on to tell the emotional story of her decision to have a second child, a decision that was made out of despair at the difference between her position as head of a university department in South Africa, and her job as a cleaner in a local school in New Zealand. She says, *I decided that I'll rather increase my family you know, and do something meaningful with my life, rather than doing that.* Lorato mentions briefly that she took time out to take care of her infant daughter, commenting that after a year *the girl is now a grown up, so I should start doing something about my career.* It is at this point, she explains, that she gave up on the possibility of getting a job in her area of expertise in New Zealand. Instead, she says, she would study to become a medical professional, *because in my mind I always had passion for []*.

Lorato's lived life was imbued with a sense of her personal **strength** and **determination**, and this is also an important characteristic of her told story. There are, however, some important differences between them in meaning and derivation. The sense of personal **strength** and **determination** in Lorato's lived life, for example, was derived from the **search for professional fulfilment** in her early years in South Africa, as well as her time in Australia and New Zealand. The same sense of **strength** and **determination** in her told story, however, is related almost completely to her **search for professional fulfilment** post-migration, as this time period is the nearly exclusive focus of her story. The impression of personal **strength** and **determination** in Lorato's narrative is also more nuanced. Her told story contains elements of **optimism** and **self-confidence**, for example, interwoven with the notion of **strength** and **determination**. When Lorato talks about combining her two careers, for instance, she says, *I'm thinking that there's nothing that stops me from being a-, [an academic and a medical professional]...the sky will be my limitations, you know.* Later, while talking about her future in her new profession, she claims, *there'll be a room for me somewhere.* Lorato's told story also suggests personal **resilience**. She says, *I'm thinking that with the course that I'm pursuing...if I can't be offered a job I can always start my own practice, and in any case...the other plan is if I can't get a job here I can still go back to South Africa, and there's a shortage of [] there.*

Lorato's focus on the **search for professional fulfilment** in her told story, and the way she talks about her career in her narrative, suggest that it is a crucial aspect not only of her migration experience, but also of her identity. In the following extract from her interview, where she is talking about her decision to have another baby, the strong relationship between her career and her sense of self is particularly clear. She says, *I just got tired of sitting you know, just staying at home being a house wife, I ended up taking a very, very mean job working as a, as a cleaner at, at one of the schools in, in []... Yeah, so I was just imagining I mean from, a lecture room, to cleaning you know, yeah I know it was a job but, you, [breathing quickly, emotional] I remember the other time I was crying as I was sweeping... I couldn't just spare my tears they were just coming, and that's when I decided that I'll rather increase my family.* The enormous sense of **grief** Lorato expresses here at the **loss** of her career and everything associated with it is an indication of just how strong the connection is between her career and her identity. Although unemployment and underemployment¹² characterise the lives of many recent migrants to New Zealand, Lorato's sense of self is so tied up with her career that she tolerates neither situation for long. As she explains, after being an unemployed 'housewife', she takes on a job as a cleaner, and after a period of underemployment as a cleaner, she decides to have a baby. Indeed, after she has taken time out to raise her infant daughter, she decides to retrain as a medical professional rather than risk further under- or unemployment.

Other examples from Lorato's interview also demonstrate the strong connection between her career and her identity. She refers, for instance, only to employment-related differences between her pre- and post-migration life. She says at one point, *what I've realised about me is I've changed drastically in terms of the career, yeah because um, I mean I've spent about nearly 12 years in [academia], when I left South Africa I was the head of...department at the university...and then now I'm in []*. Lorato's references to her past life in South Africa are also almost completely employment and career-related. For example, her only allusion to her education in South Africa occurs when she explains why she was unable to pursue a medically oriented career when she left school. She says, *there was one guy that I contacted who told me I have to be doing sciences,*

12 Edgell (2006:115-116) identifies three different kinds of underemployment: time-related, education or skill-related, and low pay or income-related. The underemployment experienced by Lorato falls into the education or skill-related area, where the individual is employed below their educational or skill level.

and I wasn't doing sciences...in high school there was only one class for the sciences, yeah, then the rest will be like the arts, yeah...irrespective of how, what potentials you had.

Lorato's tendency to discuss her past with almost exclusive reference to her career extends to the period she and her family spent in Australia. She says about this time, *we were quite stable...in Australia, it's only that ah, we, I wanted to establish myself as well, in terms of getting a proper job, and ah, doing things the way we had actually planned...* In addition to illustrating how Lorato focuses only on employment-related aspects of her time in Australia, this statement is worthy of note for two other reasons. Before discussing these, however, it is important to define what Lorato might mean when she is talking about a 'proper job'. In light of her told story as a whole, and particularly the part where she decides to have another baby rather than continue with a cleaning job, it might be assumed that in referring to a 'proper job' she means one that is commensurate with her qualifications and experience.

The first interesting feature of Lorato's statement is contained in the phrase, *I wanted to establish myself as well, in terms of getting a proper job, and ah, doing things the way we had actually planned.* It suggests that she and Tebogo had a family migration plan, and that a 'proper job' for Lorato was an intrinsic part of this plan. Lorato's entire migration story, in fact, is based on an adherence to this strategy. When the plan is disrupted by a long period of unemployment and a short interlude of underemployment, Lorato reverts to a tactic that had proved successful in her early life in South Africa – education. Her unswerving pursuit of a 'proper job', firstly in academia and then through further tertiary study, reinforces the impression of Lorato's tremendous personal **strength** and **determination**. The idea of a migration plan also constitutes an important aspect of the dominant underlying theme of her narrative, migration as a **strategic stepping stone to a better life**. Lastly, Lorato's determination to get a 'proper job' further emphasises the link between her career and her sense of identity.

Secondly, the extract is worthy of note because it implies that the migration project was planned as a career-focused assignment for both her **and** Tebogo. This idea is reinforced throughout Lorato's narrative, where she tells the story of her husband's professional development alongside her own. She begins by saying, *my husband as well he thought,*

he was just getting tired of not developing...then he thought he wanted to specialise...Next, she explains the difficulty Tebogo had gaining entrance to a specialist training course, before completing his story this way, then he thought ah, if maybe we go back to South Africa he wanted to be of, ah, e-, of a good use, so he thought of []. In addition to telling parallel stories about their respective career development, Lorato also presents herself as an active participant in her husband's 'job story'. Talking about the way that Tebogo chose his specialty, she recalls, I said to him, 'you know what honey, you need to do something anyway at the end of the day, I think it will be better if you do something that will beee, um, effective when we get back to South Africa'... and then after a month when I have even forgotten that we did talk about it, then he brought it up, he said 'you know what, I think I've made up my mind that I want to be, to get into [].

As well as presenting their migration project as a shared career enterprise, Lorato also describes the way she and Tebogo feel about their current respective careers using the same word – 'passion'. Tebogo, she says, wanted to return to South Africa with skills that would assist in fighting the AIDS epidemic, *so he thought of [], and then this is what his **passion** is*. Lorato begins the story about her own passion for her career in this way, *the **passion** developed when I was still very young actually...I used to [take care] of the old, elderly people in my village*. She goes on to explain why it was impossible to pursue a career in a medical profession after she left school in South Africa, and then talks about her decision to train as an adult student in New Zealand. She says of this decision, *I thought you know, there's something that I know I have to fulfil in my life before I die, [laughs]...I started like look-, searching for some information in terms of [] then um... I thought this is just one sacrifice that I can do in my battle for looking for a job, then I'll rather settle for this*.

Lorato's presentation of herself as a collaborator in her husband's 'job story'; her description of their mutual 'passion' for their respective careers; and the way she talks about their migration as a shared project; suggests that **equality** is an important characteristic of their relationship. She describes, for example, how painful it was to lose her status as a financial equal, *it was a stressful situation for me you know, being financially independent all of a sudden now I have to be dependent on my husband...it was very, very hard yeah, it was very, very hard*. Lorato's loss of monetary independence is one aspect of a greater financial pressure that she and Tebogo

experience as migrants, particularly once Lorato began her studies. In spite of numerous attempts, Tebogo is unable to secure a position in Auckland, where Lorato must study, so they are forced to live apart. *Technically, she says, we have one wage, ah, maintaining two homes...he still has to pay rent where he is, he still has to buy his own food, we still have to buy our own food here, and pay for the mortgage, and on top of that I'm a student, and I've got to take the children to after school care...it's very hard to be a migrant here in New Zealand.* Extended family expectations are an additional stress, as Lorato explains, *when you get successful you have to remember your siblings... people keep on hoping that you'll send money.* Her personal **strength** and **determination** are again apparent in this part of her told story.

In addition to financial pressure and the loss of her economic independence, Lorato talks briefly about how arduous it is to manage her family and her study largely on her own. She says, *I don't have support structure...it's been very, very, hard being a full-time mum and a full-time student.* By far the greatest difficulty in the story of Lorato's migration, however, is her unsuccessful search for appropriate employment in New Zealand. Although she does not explicitly mention her emotional response to these events, her pain and grief are manifest in the following excerpt; *you know when you hoping for a newspaper to come and you hoping for something will come out this time...and then something comes out, but you take effort, you apply, and the next thing be, when you expecting to be called for an interview, they even return your, your CV [laughs]...it was like I was going round in circles, yeah, in the same way I applied, applied, applied I had...[indrawn breath] I [sigh] yeah, like I was just going round in circles hoping for something that wasn't there...* Her attempts to make sense of this process constitute the secondary focus of her story, that **racism** is the reason she could not find a job in her field of expertise in New Zealand.

Lorato introduces the subject of racism at the end of her migration story, after she has described her unsuccessful job search and her decision to retrain. She says, *my experience to talk about New Zealand specifically...my own o-, opinion...I think ah, New Zealand has got a subtle racism, it's not in black and white but people do practise it.* Lorato's choice of the words 'black and white' to describe the absence of legislated racism in New Zealand also suggests the black and white of racial conflict and discrimination. Thematically, the 'black and white' motif is repeated throughout

Lorato's told story. Also implicit in this excerpt is a comparison between racism in New Zealand and racism in apartheid South Africa. At a later point Lorato makes this comparison explicit, claiming that in South Africa, *we knew when we were growing up that, I mean there are toilets for white, there are toilets for coloured...for Asian people, for blacks...but here [1]... it's not in the policies but people still practise it.* Racism in New Zealand, she says, is *about who you know more than what you can do...and it becomes worse when you are a black person...* She concludes that *South Africa was better, because we knew that...the government was practising it openly.* In light of the fact that Lorato lived most of her life constrained by the severe 'race'-based restrictions of apartheid, her stated preference for this kind of racism is an indication of just how painful and disruptive her New Zealand experience has been.

Two arguments dominate Lorato's discussion of racism, each supporting her contention that her unsuccessful search for a 'proper job' in New Zealand can be explained by racism. In the first of these arguments, she claims that the results of a research article she studied in a psychology tutorial *computed what I was always thinking, you know.* The authors concluded that *it's easier for white people to travel around the world...the other white community accept them with ease than a black person...coming into a western world.* In the second argument, she claims that in spite of the fact that all the Zimbabwean migrants in New Zealand are well-educated; *most of the whites have got decent jobs here, compared to those black Zimbabweans,* who are mostly employed, she says, in rest homes. Alongside these arguments Lorato tells several stories where she and her family are confronted by the ignorance or racism of some New Zealanders. She seems uncertain about whether these incidents might be construed as one or the other, saying, *you tend to ask yourselves, is this ah another racism in another form, or is it ignorance, or what?*

Nonetheless, Lorato presents all these stories as part of her larger argument for the existence of a 'subtle' New Zealand racism. She introduces the first of these anecdotes in response to a question that had no obvious connection to racism or ignorance. When she was asked about her husband's job, she began immediately to talk about an episode where Tebogo experienced racism in his workplace. One of his clients, she explains, said, *I don't want to be treated by a black [medical professional].* Even though the workplace administration ultimately supported her husband, telling the patient *you'll be*

treated by this person or you'll walk out of the building, Lorato presents this story in the wider context of a culture of racism in New Zealand. She continues, *some people think that we live in the jungles...sometimes you buying grocery, you've got some things, somebody will be offering to give you lessons on how to cook rice...my goodness [laughs]*.

The incident Lorato talks about in the greatest detail, however, occurred at church. A teenager was trying to touch my boy's hair and touch him, because I think it was the first time she was seeing a black person. The young girl then asked Lorato whether she ever got bitten by mosquitoes. Somewhat taken aback by the question, she thought the child was joking, and answered her by saying *no, I don't get bitten by mosquitoes because my skin is black...my skin is made of rubber and my blood is black*. Later on, the young girl's mother approached Lorato and asked about the exchange, saying *what did you say to my daughter?* When she remembers the conversation, Lorato tells the mother *my goodness I was just joking!* Her disbelief at the fact that she had been taken seriously in this situation is palpable in her reaction. She is disbelieving, too, when she is asked, *did you buy clothes when you came here?* She wonders, she says, *if they think I came naked all the way from Africa in the plane or what?* Overall, there is a sense of great discomfort, and possibly even outrage, in Lorato's retelling of these incidents; perhaps because she believes that the questions imply that she and other Black people are primitive, or ignorant, or less than human. The queries may also serve as a bleak reminder of demeaning apartheid-era stereotypes, or as a negation of her identity as an educated, professional Black woman.

In summary, Lorato's story is about migration as a **strategic stepping stone to a better life**. Her narrative, however, is focused largely on the greatest obstacle to such a life, her long and ultimately unsuccessful search for a 'proper job'. Lorato's told story also focuses, to a lesser degree, on her belief that **racism** is the reason behind her unproductive job search. The repetition of two key phrases throughout her narrative, *I'll get a job*, and *black and white*, reflects this dual focus. The pattern suggested by the biographical events in Lorato's lived life is also a fundamental characteristic of her told story. Indeed, most of her narrative is devoted to her **search for professional fulfilment**. Similarly, Lorato's narrative, like her lived life, is imbued with a sense of her personal **strength** and **determination**. In addition, however, her told story also

contains elements of **optimism, self-confidence** and **resilience**. The dominant, career-focused segment of Lorato's told story is characterised by two major features: the strong connection between her career and her identity; and the presentation of her migration as a shared, career-focused project. The subordinate section on racism is also defined by two principal attributes: the construction of an argument about racism in New Zealand; and the sense of outrage and disbelief associated with this. In focusing on her career and on New Zealand's 'subtle racism', Lorato's migration story constitutes, perhaps, the very first **stepping stones to a better life** for her and her family.

Chapter 7

Reflexivity – the Interview Story

Introduction

'If we view the possibility of achieving 'objectivity' as a futile goal, the essential task seems to be to carefully and selfconsciously identify the influence of one's subjectivity on the research process' (Kirkman, 2001:54) .

It is now widely accepted within contemporary feminist and other critical discourses¹ that knowledge is linguistically constituted, and grounded in specific historical and social contexts (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003:416; D. Pels, 2000:2). The shift in the conceptualisation of knowledge from something that is *found*, to something that is *made*, is sometimes referred to as the 'reflexive turn' in the social sciences (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003:416). In addition to changing the way we think about the creation of knowledge and meaning, the reflexive turn signalled a radical shift in the way researchers are perceived, and perceive themselves, in relation to their work. Rather than neutral, value-free arbiters with 'a disinterested and dislocated view from nowhere' (Code, 1995:38), contemporary social researchers tend to acknowledge that they have an effect on their work, and that in turn their work has an impact on them (Cutcliffe, 2003:136). In recognition of this mutually constitutive relationship, social researchers generally, and feminist researchers particularly, attempt to locate themselves reflexively in the same critical plane as those they are studying (Harding, 1987:8).

¹ These include post-modern, post-structural, hermeneutic and interpretive discourses (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003:416).

While I acknowledge that there is ongoing debate over the various forms and definitions of reflexivity (Cutcliffe, 2003; Lynch, 2000; D. Pels, 2000), as well as its overall scope and limitations (Cutcliffe, 2003; Lynch, 2000), it is not my intention here to engage with these wider epistemological and philosophical discussions. Instead, the purpose of this chapter is twofold: to clarify my personal position on reflexivity, including the pragmatic consequences of this standpoint for my work; and to discuss several reflexive features of the interview phase of my project. The chapter consists of three parts. In Part One, I make a brief statement in support of a reflexive stance, and outline five reasons for taking this position. I then translate my commitment to reflexivity into a list of reflexive priorities that has guided my thesis thus far. Next, I turn my attention to the reflexive aspects of the interview process, explaining the development of my thinking on this complex issue. In Part Two, I discuss the possible effects of gender, age and education on Ellen's, Sam's and Lorato's interviews. Finally, in Part Three, I focus on the complex interpersonal dynamics associated with exchanges about ethnicity, 'race' and apartheid, using the concept of defended subjectivity (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000b) to make sense of this particular characteristic of my interviews.

Part One

Reflexivity

In Support of a Reflexive Stance

Despite the lack of consensus over the ultimate meaning and value of a reflexive stance (Lynch, 2000; D. Pels, 2000), and the ongoing debate over the limits to absolute reflexivity (Cutcliffe, 2003:139; Mauthner & Doucet, 2003:425),² I strongly believe in the value of accounting for myself in my work. Like Pels (2000:3), 'I still presume that it is both feasible and important to talk about something and simultaneously talk...about the talking itself; and that it is better for your epistemological health to be reflexive

2 The impossibility of complete reflexivity is related to the effect of time and the ultimate limits to our self-awareness. Firstly, aspects of reflexivity are temporal, in that we may only have access to particular realisations about our research after it has been published (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003:415). Secondly, our ability to reflect on our thoughts and feelings is at best partial, because of our inevitably incomplete self-awareness (Cutcliffe, 2003:139; Mauthner & Doucet, 2003:425).

rather than non-reflexive'. The five reasons for my commitment to reflexivity fall into two distinct but related categories: the ethical imperative to represent my research *honestly*; and my desire as a feminist to acknowledge the complex *power* relationships that exist between the researcher, her interviewee(s) and her readers.

Five Reasons

Firstly, research that is written reflexively offers the various stages of the investigative process up for scrutiny, allowing readers to arrive at their own informed decisions about the knowledge claims researchers make. Secondly, reflexive research attempts to make transparent the researcher's personal motives and the impact of her emotional responses on her work. Thirdly, a reflexive stance accounts for the way that different facets of a researcher's status, and/or that of her interviewees, might impact the research outcomes she presents. Fourthly, reflexive researchers recognise that methods themselves are not neutral, mechanical procedures, but rather subjective, interpretive processes based on the epistemological assumptions of those who develop them, *and those who use them*. Finally, while reflexivity does not equalise power differences between the researcher, her participants and her readers, it does enable the researcher to reflect critically on them, and to consider their possible impact on her work.

Reflexive Priorities

My commitment to reflexivity is based on the five reasons just outlined, and has translated into a pragmatic effort to account for the following factors in my work: the *epistemological assumptions* associated with my chosen method and my own theoretical perspective on these; my reasons for using this particular method in my investigation of migration and gender; the decisions I made during the different phases of *data collection, interpretation, analysis and presentation*; the particular *interpersonal and institutional contexts* of my research; the nature of my *conceptions of subjects and subjectivities*; my *social location* with respect to gender, age, education and other axes of social difference; and finally, my *emotional responses* to my interviewees (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003:416-418; Cutcliffe, 2003:138-144). These factors, and their often complex interrelationships, have been considered throughout the thesis.

Reflexivity - The Story So Far

During this process of reflection, deliberation and accounting, I noticed that all three interviews chosen for further analysis had several reflexive features in common. Some of these shared characteristics related to the impact of different aspects of *social location* on the interviews, such as age, gender and education. The remaining collective quality, a sense of discomfort and unease around discussions about ethnicity, 'race' and apartheid, was much more difficult to account for. It was only after I conceptualised myself and my interviewees as 'defended subjects' (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000b) that I was able to 'untangle' some of the complicated threads of our interactions. I have written my account of these reflexive features and dynamics as a stand-alone chapter in the latter part of my thesis for two reasons. Firstly, these features have only made sense in the twilight phase of my work, and in this respect they stand apart from earlier reflexive elements. Secondly, although the interview context and its dynamics are normally incorporated into individual case studies in a BNIM project, the *shared* nature of these features across all three interviews merited a more *integrated* approach.

Part Two

Reflexivity and Social Location

The narrative approach recognizes that the responses given by an interviewee can vary depending upon the interview situation...a source of this variability can be the interplay between the statuses of interviewee and interviewer and their perceptions of each other (Miller, 2000:142).

Gender

Gender, I believe, had considerable impact on the dynamics of all three interviews on which my case studies are based. In my interview with Ellen, for example, our shared gender created the space for her to talk about issues such as the reorganisation of home and work responsibilities that occurred after her migration. She began by telling me how much time she had to devote to her own work in South Africa because the housework

was taken care of by paid domestic help. Comparing this with her later life in New Zealand, Ellen said, *here's a total different ballgame, you got to, to, to do everything...I sometimes resent the time I spend cleaning the house.* Our common gender identity also, I think, made possible the following comment on the generational differences between Ellen and her daughter, *my daughter studied [], she's... very, very ambitious...I think her generation is, is very much you know, more professional...the housekeeping is not that important, and the roles are more equal with their husbands.* Shared gender, as well as our common status as educated women, had a similar impact on my interview with Lorato. It generated, I think, a space for the sharing of gender-related issues, such as the effect on Lorato's life of becoming financially dependant on her husband after their arrival in New Zealand.

My interview with Sam was also influenced by gender. I think that he downplayed the emotional impact of many of his stories by using laughter, strong language, and the repetition of the phrase 'sort of'. When he was talking about his childhood, for instance, he said, *I was brought up like good and bad, and you, you, you trying to be a good person, but you see the whole like society being that awful, or being evil, [laughs], so you're kind of trying to think, where do I fit into this?* Later, when he was telling me about the violence that characterised the last years of the apartheid regime, and expressing his equal high regard for 'good' Blacks and Whites, he said, *my whole feeling was, there's so many cool white people, and so many cool black people, let's get rid of the bastards and [laughs]...and live a happy life!* Lastly, in relating the story of the racist violence he witnessed as a child, he said, *I saw sort of these white policemen really beating up a black lady.* Perhaps, in line with common Western masculine stereotypes, Sam wished to present an overall image of strength and control in his narrative. It is also possible that the emotional aspect of Sam's migration story, downplayed though it was, existed during the interview only because he was talking to a woman, rather than a man.

Age

Age also significantly influenced the dynamics of the interviews, particularly with respect to their level of formality. Sam and Lorato are approximately the same age as I am; as a consequence we had a range of life experiences and expectations in common,

and my interviews with them were quite informal and relaxed. Ellen, in contrast, is almost 20 years older. This age difference felt quite significant, especially when she spoke about the generational disparities between her and her daughter. I realised that there were parallels between Ellen's lived experience and that of my mother, and between Ellen's daughter and me. An awareness of the differences in our ages and experiences affected the language I used during the interview, causing me to speak much more formally than I normally would.

The sense of formality in my interview with Ellen was increased, I believe, by her composed, reserved manner. She spoke softly and evenly, raising her voice only slightly in emphasis. For example, when she was talking about the consequences of migration, she said, *if you're away from your home people take you at face value, you've got no history, you, you've got nothing, you, it's just you*. Even in circumstances where she was describing very difficult, painful or emotional experiences, Ellen's words were reserved. Talking about her husband's life-threatening illness, for instance, she said, *we were here about a year, and when he was diagnosed...so that was quite a blow*. Again speaking of Edward's illness she said, *I don't know how, how much stress and, and [1] genetics played a role...cause he got it fairly young and he got it fairly virulent, I mean it was [1] quite bad [indrawn breath]*.

The effect of the age difference between Ellen and me was mitigated, however, by our shared status as parents. Ellen talked at length about her children in the interview, and after the tape was finally turned off, we had a long conversation about the difficulties of parenting teenagers. She described some of the differences between raising young adults in South Africa and New Zealand; because of the age differences between her children she had parented teenagers in both countries. The other factor which seemed to diminish the significance of the age difference was the fact that I too had been a migrant. This shared experience was established at the beginning of the interview when we were talking through the information sheet, and was, I believe, an important factor in generating rapport. When Ellen said that after migration *nobody knows what you've done, whether you were good or bad, it's, you have to really create your, you know, write your own story again*, I remembered how many times I had myself said exactly the same thing.

Education

Education generally, and my status as an academic particularly, had an important effect on the dynamics of each interview. In my opinion Lorato and Sam both attempted to present a ‘balanced view’ of their migration stories as a consequence of their academic audience. Lorato’s argument for the existence of a ‘subtle racism’ in New Zealand, for example, and her acknowledgement that she may in fact have experienced ignorance rather than overt racism, both suggest that she was attempting to present a balanced view of her situation. Indeed, she ended the first part of her interview by saying, *I do understand New Zealand is a very small country, you know and um, I don’t have a problem if the local people are given a job, at a, because it will be very unfair for, for expatriate to get jobs at the expense of the local people, but I do have a problem when the, the advert says we are looking for this particular qualifications, or particular this, and you come with those things, and somebody is far less qualified, you know, and is given a job based on the colour of their skin.*

Sam also attempted to present a balanced view during his migration story. For example, he explained that, because *Jews aren’t the most loved people*, they were sometimes exposed to racist comments, such as, *if someone’s being mean or miserly, they’ll say don’t be a Jew, you know*. There was a difference, he claimed, between *stuff like that*, and *people who really do hate Jews*. Subjecting his own behaviour to the same standards, he noted, *maybe I’m a bit naughty, like I’ve got nine Asians ah working for me, with me, and often I’m with them and driving and I say, you drive like a bloody Asian, you know, don’t park like an Asian!* Perhaps the most startling example of Sam’s desire to present a balanced view is found in the story of his hijacking. *I got hijacked, um, one Friday night...and the next thing I heard these boots coming up to the, the car, and I looked out the window and I saw the guy loading his gun*. Suddenly, in the midst of talking about this terrifying scenario, where he and most of his immediate family were facing possible injury, rape and death, he said, *and these guys were kids also, you know, they were young kids.*

My status as an academic also affected Ellen’s interview. Rather than a sense of her presenting a ‘balanced view’ in her narrative, there was instead a ‘gravitas’ about the way she told her migration story. When I asked about Edward’s difficulty finding

employment, for example, she talked about the economic effects of his unemployment, saying, *I know you were thinking for the human side, but the economics also influence your human side*. Ellen was referring, I think, to the way I asked for ‘real life experiences’ in the information sheet. The way she raised the subject of my initial interview request suggests an attitude of responsibility towards the task of the interview, towards me as interviewer, and towards other migrants who might at some point benefit from her contribution. This sense of seriousness and responsibility might go some way towards explaining Ellen’s original willingness to be interviewed, even though, as she later told me, she usually spent her mornings doing housework and resting in order to be ready for busy afternoons working.

Part Three

Reflexivity and the Defended Subject

Untangling the Tension around Ethnicity, ‘Race’ and Apartheid

In addition to the shared impact of gender, age and education on the three interviews chosen for further analysis, the remaining common reflexive feature was a marked sense of tension around discussions on ethnicity, ‘race’ and apartheid. In this section I attempt to ‘untangle’ the dynamics around this discomfiture by using the idea of defended subjectivity and the central premise of *anxiety* on which it is based. I begin the section, therefore, by introducing these concepts and situating them within the discipline of psychoanalysis. I then discuss two related features of this aspect of my research: the way that the subjects of ethnicity, ‘race’ and apartheid dominated all my interviews; and the fact that the establishment of each interviewee’s position on these topics comprised such a pivotal component of their respective migration stories. Finally, I suggest that the latter characteristic of my interviews, and the discomfiture that characterised exchanges about these topics, can be better understood by considering the complex relationships between the following factors: commonly held stereotypes of South Africans in New Zealand; my own ethnicity as a Pakeha New Zealander; dominant discourses around ‘race’, racism and ethnicity amongst educated people in this country; and the attempts

made by my interviewees and me to negotiate these issues without generating undue *anxiety*.

The Defended Subject

As mentioned earlier in the thesis, Hollway and Jefferson (1997; 2000b; 2000a; 2000c) used the concept of defended subjectivity to better understand the relationship between gender and the fear of crime. Rather than the self-knowledgeable and potentially transparent self implicit in most social scientific research, they argue that research participants, and their interviewers, are always engaged in unconscious defences against anxiety (Wengraf, 2000:144).³ The notion of defended subjectivity is based on the psychoanalytic premise that anxiety is inherent to the human condition, and that individuals attempt to defend themselves, largely unconsciously, against this anxiety (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000b:19). Although the concept of defended subjectivity is more detailed and complex than this,⁴ I wish to use the basic idea of *defences against anxiety* in this chapter to shed some light on the awkwardness that characterised interactions about ethnicity, 'race' and apartheid.

Ethnicity, 'Race' and Apartheid

The subjects of ethnicity, 'race' and apartheid dominated all my interviews, and the establishment of each interviewee's position on these controversial topics constituted a fundamental part of all their migration stories. Ellen, for example, talked about the way she and her husband arrived home from their trip to Europe in the early 1970s with a different view of their homeland. The new ideas they brought home, she said, influenced the way they brought up their children, *I think we brought them up much more, um, less prejudiced, um, than we were brought up*. She positioned herself and Edward as different from other Afrikaans-speaking South Africans: because of their trip to Europe; because they sent their youngest son to an English-speaking nursery school; because of their more liberal political ideas; and because they were the only ones from their group to leave South Africa. In short, Ellen presented herself and Edward as

3 This particular notion of subjectivity has increasingly been used by biographical researchers in the United Kingdom (Chamberlayne, 2005b:1-2) to shed light on the relationship between interviewers and their subjects and to examine the interpersonal dynamics in BNIM analysis panels (Froggett & Wengraf, 2004).

4 For a more detailed explanation of defended subjectivity see Hollway and Jefferson (2000b:19-21).

believers in the fairness of a democratic South Africa, and as different, politically and otherwise, from their peers.

The establishment of his position on ethnicity, 'race' and apartheid also dominated Sam's migration story. He devoted the entire first part of his interview to stories about several difficult childhood experiences. The incidents he chose to include, and the way he talked about them, quickly built an image of Sam as strongly anti-apartheid and anti-racist. He explained his choice of stories in this way, *why I'm starting so far back is just to explain that I felt quite [1] uncomfortable, and, and quite prejudiced in a way being white in South Africa cause I felt like here I've got a privileged up bringing, and I could see [1] white people abusing black people in, in my street.* Later in the interview he further emphasised his anti-apartheid stance by disclaiming his South African identity, *my whole life I sort of didn't feel very, I didn't feel South African, I've always felt that I'm Jewish first, which is a, a way of life and ah whatever country I happened to live in I'd abide by the laws, but ah you know, patriotism isn't a, y'know, a big thing in my life.*

In addition to presenting himself as anti-racist and anti-apartheid, Sam also positioned himself as an egalitarian. The earliest example of this occurred during the story about the beating of the Black woman in his neighbourhood. He said of this incident, *at the time I was with um our [1] home helper, um, who was black.* His choice of the phrase 'home helper' rather than the more usual 'maid' or 'servant' suggested that he was uncomfortable with the connotations of servility these words can have. After deciding on 'home helper', however, he used the phrase only once, reverting later in the interview to the word 'maid'. This is due, I believe, to the rapport that developed during the course of the interview, a rapport which allowed Sam to relax as the interview progressed, and to use the term with which he was most familiar.

Although Lorato's migration story was also dominated by the establishment of her position on issues of 'race' and ethnicity, the focus of her argument was slightly different from that of Ellen and Sam. Rather than presenting herself as anti-apartheid, Lorato's argument about 'race' and ethnicity centred on establishing that racism lay behind her inability to obtain 'proper' employment in New Zealand. It seemed very important to her that I understood her position, and that I was convinced by her arguments. Three features from this aspect of her interview reinforce this impression.

Firstly, after claiming that people in New Zealand practise racism, she said, *I don't know if you do understand what I'm trying to say*. Even though I assured her that I did, she launched immediately into yet another argument supporting her case.

Secondly, Lorato made it very clear that she had done everything in her power to obtain employment, the implication being that she herself was not at fault. She said, for example, *I used the local newspapers, I used the internet, I used [1] like some employment agencies*. Later she talked about a woman who had assisted her with her curriculum vitae, explaining that, *she altered my CV and she didn't even do much job in my CV because she said 'your CV is so good, you know'*. Thirdly, Lorato repeatedly backed up her claims about New Zealand racism with supporting evidence: a piece of academic research, for example, and her well-educated Black friend who was also unable to find work in New Zealand. In summary, ethnicity, 'race' and apartheid were dominant subjects in all my interviews, and the establishment of each respondent's position on these issues constituted a major element of their migration stories.

Stereotypes, Discourses and Anxiety

The dominance of ethnicity, 'race' and apartheid in my interviewees' migration narratives can largely be explained, I believe, by their absolute centrality to South African life, and by their lesser but nonetheless significant position in New Zealand society. It is not as straightforward, however, to make sense of why the establishment of their positions on these topics constituted such an important focus of their migration stories, nor why the interview dynamics between us during mention of these issues were so uneasy and awkward. In order to make sense of the latter phenomena, I think it is necessary to look at the interaction of the following crucial factors: the general attitudes and expectations of New Zealanders about South Africa and South Africans; my own ethnicity; contemporary discourses around 'race', racism and ethnicity amongst educated New Zealanders; and finally, the attempts made by myself and my interviewees to negotiate these contentious issues without causing ourselves or each other undue anxiety. I discuss each of these factors in turn.

New Zealand and South Africa

There is a long history of contact between New Zealand and South Africa, from the South African War⁵ (Walrond, 2006) at the turn of the 20th century; through long-standing sporting relations, particularly in rugby (McIntyre, 1999:28-31); to the arrival in this country of thousands of South African migrants from the early 1990s (Barkhuizen & Knoch, 2005:218). One of the most influential points of this contact, in my opinion, was the 1981 Springbok Tour of New Zealand, when South Africa's national rugby team played a series of provincial and test matches across the country. The tour sparked bitter debate and division nationwide, and caused a number of often violent protests.⁶ Ultimately, it became a defining event in the history of New Zealand, one whose legacy continues to be felt today.⁷ Part of that legacy, I believe, is the abiding association of South Africa and White South Africans (especially Afrikaans-speaking South Africans) with the support of apartheid. In short, I think that many New Zealanders harbour an enduring stereotype of the racist South African.⁸

My Ethnicity

I am a Pakeha New Zealander, daughter of an Italian migrant father and a third generation Pakeha mother. As I mentioned in the Prologue, my father's 'difference' was one of the defining features of my early life. In addition, a significant part of my father's 'migration story', shared with me as I grew up, comprised several personal experiences of racism, particularly during the early years of his settlement during the 1950s and 1960s. These experiences have, I believe, made me sensitive to issues of social justice, particularly in relation to ethnicity.

5 This was also called the Boer War (1899-1902), and involved the participation of soldiers from New Zealand (McIntyre, 1999:28).

6 The tour caused one of only three civil strife crises in New Zealand history (McIntyre, 1999:28).

7 The 25th anniversary of the 1981 Springbok tour of New Zealand took place recently, and was marked by a variety of newspaper and magazine articles reflecting on the larger significance of the event. For an example of this coverage see Gregory Fortuin's (2006) article.

8 For a personal illustration of the effects of this stereotype, see Bell (1995:19-21). Walrond (2006) also notes that many White South Africans are assumed by New Zealanders to be racist.

'Race', Racism and Ethnicity in New Zealand

Contemporary New Zealand society is, in my opinion, saturated with competing discourses about 'race', racism and ethnicity. We talk, for instance, about the merits of 'race'-based funding and welfare; the value and relevance of the Treaty of Waitangi;⁹ the positive and/or negative consequences of immigration and emigration; and the rights and responsibilities of refugees. Discussions on these subjects figure prominently in our personal interactions, our many forms of media, and the various policy-making and legislative structures of our government. Amongst educated groups in this country the expression of racist ideas, I believe, has become the modern-day equivalent of making a public declaration of heresy. In proposing this analogy I am not suggesting that it is either a positive or a negative development. Instead I wish to point out that this dominant non-racist (or anti-racist) discourse among educated New Zealanders has a significant impact on the way members of this group interact with one another, and with other people.

Negotiating Stereotypes and Discourses

In my opinion, the sense of discomfiture that characterised the dynamics of my interviews during discussions on ethnicity, 'race' and apartheid, and the prominence of each interviewee's positioning of themselves with respect to these issues in their migration stories, can be attributed to anxiety over the process of negotiating the stereotypes and ideologies discussed above. With respect to my own position as interviewer, my anxiety took two different but related forms. Firstly, in my interviews with Sam and Ellen, I was anxious that I not be perceived by them as one of those New Zealanders who believe that South Africans are generally racist people. This sense of anxiety was also impacted by discourses around the 'proper' impartiality of an academic stance, the required 'passive' positioning of a BNIM interviewer, and my personal beliefs about the importance of suspending judgement on other peoples' lives.

Secondly, in my interview with Lorato, I was anxious to be perceived as a non-racist. This anxiety was exacerbated by a sense of culpability, as a Pakeha New Zealander, for

9 Signed in 1840, the Treaty of Waitangi is New Zealand's founding document. It constitutes an agreement between Maori, the indigenous people of this country, and the British Crown.

the many negative consequences of colonialism worldwide. Logically, of course, I know that I have no personal responsibility for events that took place before I was born. Nonetheless, I feel a kind of ‘collective culpability’, a sense of having lived a privileged life at the expense of those in the developing world. Interestingly, this statement has echoes of Sam’s feelings about growing up White in South Africa, *I felt, he said, quite [1] uncomfortable, and, and quite prejudiced in a way being white in South Africa*. As our interview progressed, and Lorato began to talk about her experience of ‘subtle racism’ in New Zealand, these feelings of anxiety increased. Not only did I wish to convey a sense of myself as a non-racist, but I felt a strong desire to distance myself from the ‘racist New Zealanders’ of Lorato’s migration story.

With respect to my interviewees, I think that Sam and Ellen wished to make clear their respective positions on ethnicity, ‘race’ and apartheid in order not to be associated with the stereotype of the racist South African. While Sam achieved this to some extent by emphasising his Jewish identity, and telling stories that illustrated his abhorrence of apartheid, Ellen, in contrast, stressed the various ways in which she and Edward were different from their Afrikaans-speaking peers. The negotiation of this stereotype was perhaps particularly prominent in this rendering of their migration stories because of my identity as an academic, and the discourses surrounding ethnicity, ‘race’ and racism amongst educated New Zealanders. It is nonetheless my belief that the establishment of Sam’s and Ellen’s positions on these issues would be an integral part of their migration narratives in the context of any New Zealand audience.

Our Stories, Our Selves

The anxiety associated with the process of negotiating these stereotypes and discourses was exacerbated, I believe, by the fact that stories about our lives also encapsulate, to a greater or lesser extent, a strong sense of who we are as individuals. Fischer-Rosenthal (1995:257, emphasis mine) also makes the link between our stories and our identities, arguing that '[a] life-story entails what a person goes through in the process of living his or her life, the significance of interactions with others, and, last but not least, *the development of his or her embodied self*'. When we communicate our stories, in other words, we are also presenting a version of ourselves. Hollway and Jefferson (2000b:23) make a similar connection between the concepts of identity, anxiety and life story,

suggesting that we invest in particular discourses when these support our identity, and thus protect ourselves from the experience of anxiety.

This final link between story, identity and anxiety helped me to make sense of the emphasis Lorato placed on racism in her migration story. New Zealand's 'subtle racism' she claimed, explained her long-term inability to find work in this country commensurate with her qualifications and experience. Her investment in this discourse supported her ongoing identity as a successful, educated, professional woman, and thus protected her 'self' from the anxiety associated with her experience of unemployment. I am not suggesting here that Lorato's explanations of her situation were untrue, rather that the connections between story, identity and anxiety can help us understand the particular stress she placed on this aspect of her migration story. The dominance of 'anti-racist' discourses amongst educated New Zealanders might also have impacted the content and presentation of this facet of Lorato's story, in that she may well have expected a more sympathetic hearing of her argument about racism from a member of this group.

Conclusion

In its most elementary form, reflexivity presupposes that, while saying something about the 'real world', one is simultaneously disclosing something about oneself. In refusing to separate knowledge of things 'out there' and knowledge of the self 'in here', the reflexive knower, while reading the Book of Nature, simultaneously writes a piece of his or her autobiography (D. Pels, 2000:2).

In this chapter, I have reflected on the various and complex effects of social location and subjectivity on Ellen's, Sam's and Lorato's interviews. Firstly, I examined the possible impact of gender, age and education on the content and presentation of my participants' migration stories. Secondly, I used the concept of defended subjectivity, and the central premise of anxiety on which it is based, to shed light on the interpersonal dynamics occurring during discussions about ethnicity, 'race' and apartheid in each of my interviews. I conclude this chapter by briefly considering the impact of these reflexive processes on me as a developing researcher, thus acknowledging the mutually

constitutive relationship that exists between a researcher and her work (Cutcliffe, 2003:136).

The thinking and writing of this reflexive chapter have been very challenging for me as a researcher. There are several important reasons for this. Firstly, reflexivity is both an *intellectual* and an *emotional* exercise, a process that involves the 'whole person'. Because the emotional component of research practice is so routinely ignored and 'written out' of our work, representing this kind of holistic thinking has often felt very uncomfortable. Secondly, a reflexive stance involves a level of critical self-examination and introspection that is at once difficult to achieve and occasionally painful or unsettling. The acknowledgement of my feelings of anxiety about being considered a racist, for example, was a difficult phase in the writing of this chapter. Thirdly, accounting clearly for intuitive leaps and creative thinking, or, as May (cited in Cutcliffe, 2003:143) puts it, 'the magic in method', is a demanding process. The writing of this reflexive chapter has been part of my attempt to account for part of this 'magic' in my own work.

Chapter 8

Disruption, Continuity and Gender: The Biographical Meaning of Migration

Introduction

Much of the scholarship on international migration tends to focus on the disruptive effects of the migration experience. Indeed, as Breckner (2002:217) notes, '[o]ne of the most discussed features of migration is its association with biographical discontinuities and transformations, constituting turning points or even ruptures'.¹ All three case studies presented in previous chapters certainly contain elements of migration-related disruption. Lorato, for example, experienced considerable disruption after leaving South Africa. Her migration to Australia and then New Zealand disrupted her successful career and her sense of financial independence. For Sam and Ellen, however, the disruption in their lives was the cause of their migration, as well as a consequence of it. Ellen's trip to Europe, for instance, disrupted the way she felt about her homeland, and sowed the seeds of a migration which was to occur more than 20 years later. Sam's experience of the armed carjacking constituted the beginning of his migration trajectory, disrupting his sense of safety and his plans for a profitable business venture in South Africa.

1 Manderson and Rapala (2005:357) also comment that '[i]mmigration results in particular disruptions and disjunctions, unlike those that occur in the course of lives lived in relatively stable cultural and geographic settings'.

From this brief overview, it is clear that disruption is an important shared characteristic of all the case studies, constituting both a cause and a consequence of migration. Shared, too, are the feelings of grief and loss associated with the various disruptions, and the strength and determination required to recover from them. Equally, however, there are facets of each case that are exemplified by continuity rather than disruption. Lorato's struggle for professional fulfilment, for example, characterises both her pre- and post-migration existence. Sam's Jewish identity is an important feature of his life in South Africa, and his life in New Zealand. Lastly, Ellen's struggle for security and belonging is an important aspect of her biography both before and after her migration. An analysis of the dynamic interplay of disruption and continuity in the three case studies provides a basis from which to examine the differences and similarities in the biographical meaning of their migration experiences. In order to do this it is necessary first to discuss the provenance of the concept of biographical disruption, and the varied ways in which the idea, and others closely associated with it, have been theorised over time.

The first part of this chapter begins by locating the origins of biographical disruption within the sociology of health and illness. This body of scholarship is especially appropriate given the potential of both migration and chronic illness to disrupt an individual's biography.² After tracing the development of biographical disruption in this field, in particular an increasing emphasis on meaning and context, I then turn to the relationship between biographical disruption and migration. In the process of this theoretical discussion, I develop an analytic vocabulary based around the concepts of biographical disruption and gender, introduce the concept of gendered biographical work, and then use these ideas to make sense of the biographical meaning of migration as it is expressed in Lorato's, Ellen's, and Sam's migration stories.

Various contextual aspects provide the foundation for these individual case analyses, and for the discussion of differences and similarities between the cases that follows. These contexts include: the experience of migration itself; the life stage during which migration occurred; the degree to which the migration was perceived as voluntary or involuntary; and the pivotal experiences and projects developed before, during and after

2 The similarity between the disruptive effects of migration and those of chronic illness has been noted by both Firkin (2004) and Riemann and Schutze (1991).

the move. The chapter culminates in the formulation of a series of models that utilises the analytic language of biographical disruption and gender to represent the dynamic processes involved in the biographical experience of migration. This series constitutes a generic model, followed by individual models representing Sam's, Ellen's and Lorato's unique gendered migration stories.

Biographical Disruption and Biographical Work

The idea of **biographical disruption** was introduced in the United Kingdom by Bury (1982), and became a pivotal concept in the developing sociology of health and illness (Williams, 2000:40-41). Bury (1982:169) studied problems associated with the beginning stages of rheumatoid arthritis, and concluded that 'illness, and especially chronic illness, is precisely that kind of experience where the structures of everyday life and the forms of knowledge which underpin them are disrupted'. Such experiences, Bury claims, are characterised by three specific kinds of disruption. Firstly, there is the disruption of taken-for-granted beliefs and behaviours, and the breaching of common sense boundaries. Secondly, there are disruptions in the explanatory systems people normally use, which result in a 'fundamental re-thinking of the person's biography and self-concept' (Bury, 1982:169). The final disruption, he notes, occurs when the person confronts their altered situation, and mobilises their resources in response.

Corbin and Strauss (1987), like Bury, also focus on the effect of chronic illness on biography. Their work contains two important ideas: a dynamic theorisation of the concept of biography; and the notion that a biography can be repaired after the disruption of an illness through a process called **biographical work**. Biography, they claim, is composed of three major dimensions: conceptions of self,³ biographical time, and the physical body. They call this the BBC chain,⁴ 'because it is the combination of the three working together that gives structure and continuity to a biography' (Corbin & Strauss, 1987:253). The method of repairing this chain after the disruption of an illness they call biographical work (Corbin & Strauss, 1987:264). Corbin and Strauss outline four distinct but overlapping categories of this kind of work, each occurring

3 This idea refers to personal identity, 'a self-classification of who I am over the course of my biography' (Corbin & Strauss, 1987:252).

4 Biographical time, body and conceptions of self (Corbin & Strauss, 1987:260).

simultaneously and feeding directly into the others. They include contextualising, which involves the incorporation of the illness trajectory into the biography; coming to terms, where the individual achieves some degree of acceptance and understanding of the effect of the disruption on their lives; identity reconstitution, during which the changes in biography are integrated into the individual's identity; and biographical recasting, where the individual may experience new directions in their biography (Corbin & Strauss, 1987:265).

The term 'biographical work' is used by Corbin and Strauss (1987)⁵ to describe the process of repair that is undertaken after a biographical disruption. In addition to its association with disruption and repair, however, biographical work is a term that is also used widely in biographical studies to describe a more general process of biographical sense-making. Fischer-Rosenthal (1995:256), for example, describes biographical work as 'the interpretive work of orienting one's self over a life-time and in the midst of social change'. Similarly, Riemann and Schutze (1991:339) define it as 'the work of recalling, rehearsing, interpreting and redefining'. Over and above this symbolic process of interpretation and synthesis, biographical work has also been conceptualised as a more practical activity.⁶ Wengraf (2002:248), for instance, claims that biographical work 'can involve changing oneself, one's practice', as well as 'one's self-understanding and relationships'. Fischer-Rosenthal (1995:260) hints at this more practical facet of biographical work in the following, '[i]t is my contention that individuals who live in the turmoil of a changing society, coping with losses of all kinds, escaping or migrating,⁷ actually do biographical work in order to find a practical orientation and to survive'.

Bury (1991:455-456) uses the notion of **legitimation**, rather than biographical work, to refer to 'the process of attempting to repair disruption, and establish an acceptable and legitimate place for the condition within the person's life'. He acknowledges that the term is used within sociological literature generally to denote the way authority is made credible, and he believes that the term, as he uses it, retains these associations.

5 Other researchers also use the term biographical work in this way, for example Carricaburu and Pierret (1995:70) define biographical work as 'what a person must do to face a new situation'.

6 This idea comes from Firkin (unpublished) and various discussions with this author.

7 Chamberlayne (2002:276) also maintains that social transitions such as migration require a great deal of biographical work.

Carricaburu and Pierret (1995:70), however, claim that the idea of legitimation should be replaced with biographical work because the former term has too many other sociological connotations. They use Corbin and Strauss's (1987:260) concept of the BBC chain, and their notion that biographical work involves putting this chain back together. In their research on asymptomatic HIV-positive men, they conceptualise biographical work as both a symbolic and a practical activity. They describe the way that these men mobilise cognitive and material resources to deal with the biographical disruption caused by their infection (Carricaburu & Pierret, 1995:76-78).

Corbin and Strauss's (1987:265) categories of biographical work, and Bury's (1982:169) aspects of biographical disruption, also describe both symbolic and practical biographical changes. For example, the process of contextualisation described by Corbin and Strauss (1987:265) involves the symbolic integration of the illness trajectory into the individual's biography, as well as the incorporation of more practical, physical limitations imposed by the illness. Similarly, Bury refers to the mobilisation of both cognitive and material resources in his three aspects of disruption (Carricaburu & Pierret, 1995:76). When the term biographical work is used in this chapter, it will denote a general sense-making process that includes, but is not exclusive to, a response to some kind of biographical disruption. It will also incorporate a sense of both symbolic and practical activity.

Biographical Disruption: A Developing Concept

There have been significant theoretical developments around the idea of biographical disruption since it was first introduced. Bury's (1991:453) review of research in the field of chronic illness stresses the need to consider **meaning** and **context** in relation to the experience of biographical disruption. He distinguishes two types of meaning: the practical consequences of the disruption itself, and its symbolic significance for the individual (Bury, 1991:453). The context, according to Bury, is the social setting in which the disruption occurs, 'including the resources – physical as well as social, temporal as well as financial, medical as well as cultural – available to individuals as well as families' (Williams, 2000:43). Bury's consideration of meaning and context

marks the beginning of a disturbance of the direct theoretical correlation between illness and disruption.

Carricaburu and Pierret (1995) contribute to the development of this idea in their study of asymptomatic HIV-positive men. The authors argue that rather than disrupting the men's biographies, the experience of HIV reinforced particular aspects of their identities. For those men in the study who had haemophilia, for example, the diagnosis of HIV represented a continuation of their biography, since they were accustomed to arranging their lives around illness. The gay men in the study tended to experience HIV infection as disruptive on an individual level, but because of their political activism around issues of HIV and AIDS, their positive HIV status tended to reinforce their identity as gay men (Faircloth, Rittman, Young, & Gubrium, 2004:245). Carricaburu and Pierret (1995:82) describe this process as **biographical reinforcement**, and argue that the onset of an illness does not necessarily lead to the disruption of a person's life, but can instead result in some degree of **biographical continuity** and the reinforcement of certain aspects of identity.

Williams (2000) also argues that chronic illness does not always lead to biographical disruption. He claims that '[p]rejudging the issue of illness as biographical disruption cannot...be justified. Instead, *timing* and *context, norms* and *expectations*, alongside our *commitment* to events, anticipated or otherwise, are crucial to the experience of our lives, healthy or sick' (Williams, 2000:51-52, emphasis in original). With respect to timing, for instance, Williams gives the example of those who experience chronic illness from birth or early childhood. He notes that the lives of these individuals may appear, from the outside, to be profoundly disrupted, but that 'phenomenologically and existentially speaking, it remains the case that these biographies have not, in any real or significant sense, *shifted*. Continuity rather than change remains the guiding principle here' (Williams, 2000:50, emphasis in original). With regard to context and expectations, Williams refers to the situation of elderly working-class residents in the East End of London. Their belief that experiencing a stroke was 'not that bad' 'contrasted markedly with the commonsensical view...that the condition shatters lives' (Williams, 2000:50). He concludes that 'biographical disruption cannot simply be assumed or 'read-off' as a standard response, with similar effects, to a similar event, illness-related or otherwise' (Williams, 2000:54).

Faircloth et al. (2004) undertook extensive qualitative interviews with stroke survivors from three different ethnic groups in the United States.⁸ They too conclude that the sudden onset of an illness like stroke ‘does not necessarily result in biographical disruption’ (Faircloth et al., 2004:256). As Williams (2000) and Bury (1991) suggest, they take into account the context within which the veterans experienced their illness, and conclude that their age, the other illnesses from which they suffered, and their knowledge of stroke, all contributed to the way that their illness was integrated into their biographies (Faircloth et al., 2004:257). As well as a consideration of these factors, however, Faircloth et al. (2004:256) note that ‘[t]he significance of the illness process will depend upon how issues are taken into account in one’s biography’. In short, it is vital to consider not only the context within which each individual operates, but also how they make sense of this within their own biography (Firkin, 2004:72).⁹ In response to their results, they developed the concept of **biographical flow** as a way of better explaining the impact of chronic illness on biography. They maintain that ‘instead of disrupting a biography, an illness such as stroke can be integrated with various social contingencies in constructing a biography that continues to flow across time and space’ (Faircloth et al., 2004:256).

Biographical Disruption and Migration

According to Bury (1991:169), biographical disruption comprises three different aspects: the disruption of taken-for-granted assumptions about the world and the breaching of common sense boundaries; the disruption in the individual’s explanatory systems and the consequent revision of their biography; and the response to the disruption including the mobilisation of cognitive and material resources. The experience of migration, according to Breckner (2002:216), can involve precisely this kind of disruption. The typical experience of a migrant, she says, comprises ‘a profound restructuring of the whole system of knowledge, now based on divergent common senses from different societies’ (Breckner, 2002:216).¹⁰ Firkin (2004:73) too refers to the disruption associated with migration, noting that ‘migration brings with it

8 All participants were veterans of the armed forces, and all but two (55 of 57) were male.

9 Bury (1991:453) too makes the same point when he talks about two kinds of meaning, the practical consequences of the illness, and its symbolic significance for the individual.

10 Breckner’s idea about common sense and the experience of migrants is based on the work of Alfred Schutz (cited in Breckner, 2002:216)

considerable disruption in various areas of life as people physically move countries, encounter new cultures, and try to establish new homes’.

Riemann and Schutze (1991) also refer to the process of biographical disruption in their work on migration, although they use the term **trajectory processes** to describe it. They undertook case studies of a French woman immigrant to the United States, and a Black American woman dying of cancer, to illustrate how both voluntary [migration] and involuntary [illness] life events can disturb an individual’s biography. Trajectory processes, they claim, ‘disturb or even destroy existing structures of social order in biographies’ (Riemann & Schutze, 1991:339). They note that in both case studies ‘the far-reaching biographical action scheme is distorted and interrupted by the powerful and devastating principle of biographical trajectory’ (Riemann & Schutze, 1991:342). It is ‘a deep biographical irony’, they suggest, that a trajectory process [biographical disruption], with its associated disorder and lack of control, can occur as the result of a voluntary act such as migration (Riemann & Schutze, 1991:342).

These biographical trajectories, according to Riemann and Schutze (1991:342), share a number of basic features. With this in mind, they constructed a sketch of nine different phases through which an individual moves in the process of dealing with the experience of trajectory [biographical disruption]. This begins with phase one, where ‘[t]he person is confronted with recurring multiplied falsifications of expectations in the course of everyday affairs and in the attempt to enact biographical plans’ (Riemann & Schutze, 1991:342). After moving through a process of gradual adaptation to the trajectory which spans seven distinct stages, the individual arrives at phase nine. At this point, ‘[t]he overwhelming and long-lasting process of suffering gives the person the chance of systematic reflection, of finding a deep relationship to her or himself and to the world and to significant others, and of mobilising biographical work and creativity’ (Riemann & Schutze, 1991:343). Riemann and Schutze’s nine features of biographical trajectory are reminiscent of Bury’s (1991:169) three aspects of disruption, although they contain a more detailed and elaborate description of the process.

Like those theorists working in the field of health and illness, Breckner (2002:217) too disputes a causal relationship between disruptive life events (such as chronic illness or migration) and biographical disruption. She maintains that even though biographical

disruption is one of the most discussed characteristics of migration, ‘in many cases, migration is experienced not primarily as a biographical discontinuity, disrupting life projects and networks...but rather as a continuity of specific biographical projects’ (Breckner, 2002:217). In the case of those migrants seeking refuge from violence, she says, migration may constitute the very continuance of life itself. In order to demonstrate the way that migration can acquire contrasting biographical significance, Breckner compares the migration stories of two migrants. The first migrant, a woman called Ana from the former Yugoslavia, is forced to leave her homeland after the outbreak of war. She and her immediate family settle in Sweden, but neither she nor her husband is able to find stable employment. Ultimately, the author claims, Ana’s migration represents a profound disruption in her biography (Breckner, 2002:223). Sasa is the second migrant in Breckner’s study. He migrates from Senegal to the former East Germany (GDR)¹¹ in order to complete his doctorate. Despite having to confront many obstacles, including the breakdown of the GDR, Sasa’s migration constitutes ‘just another step in his upwardly mobile educational path’ (Breckner, 2002:223).

The question of how the experience of migration is shaped within the biographical context, Breckner (2002:217) concludes, remains empirically open. Moreover, she makes the important point that the meaning of any migration experience in an individual’s life is shaped by an ongoing process. There is, therefore, no final or complete biographical meaning of the individual’s migration experience. Rather, it ‘has to be conceptualized as a changing, infinite and open process that entails a whole variety of other experiences making up a person’s biography’ (Breckner, 2002:217). In line with Bury’s (1991:453) contention about the influence of context on the experience of disruption, Breckner (2002:217) notes that a comparison of the two case studies ‘highlights the different impact the changes in social context had on the dynamics of these migratory processes and biographies’. It is not only the context within which each migration story unfolds, however, that determines the nature of the migration experience. The vital link between context and biographical meaning is, in fact, the way in which each individual subjectively takes account of these factors (Firkin, 2004:72; Bury, 1991:453).

¹¹ German Democratic Republic.

Firkin (2004:70-74) too uses the concept of biographical disruption as the theoretical starting point for his study into the labour market experiences of professional migrants in New Zealand. He claims that the notion of biographical flow, theorised by Faircloth et al., is a useful one for conceptualising migration trajectories. Further elaborating their idea, he suggests that the present can be seen as the tip of a lava flow, with the past located behind the tip, and the future represented in front of the flow as a possible course. The environment within which the lava flows constitutes the 'terrain of social life or structure' (Firkin, 2004:71). Firkin (2004:72) goes on to propose that the idea of biographical flow would benefit from the addition of another theoretical component, that of **biographical currents**. He conceptualises biographical flow as a composite of several biographical currents, each representing particular aspects of an individual's life. 'Thus', he notes, 'our biographies are made up of many currents (work, relationships, physical health and so on) that are interrelated but are often in some kind of tension with one another' (Firkin, 2004:72). The interplay of these currents, he claims, influences the nature and direction of an individual's biographical flow.

Using narrative interviews conducted with 12 professional migrants, Firkin (2004:73-74) attempts to answer the following questions: does migration always lead to biographical disruption, and is disruption the only or primary way in which migration can be biographically understood? Answering these questions, he claims, 'necessarily involves exploring migrants' biographical work as they cope with the impact of migration on their biographical flow and the biographical disruption, continuity and/or reinforcement that occurs' (Firkin, 2004:74). In order to adequately theorise the range of stories he encountered, Firkin (2004:74) introduced an additional concept to those just listed, that of **biographical revision**.¹² He uses this idea to describe situations where migration leads to a revision of the individual's biography, rather than its disruption. Overall, Firkin concludes that migration can be biographically understood in a range of ways, including continuity, revision, reinforcement and disruption. The experience of disruption may be contained within one biographical current in an individual's life, he notes, or extend over their entire biography, thus constituting a **biographical rupture** (Firkin, 2004:74-77). Breckner (2002:223) describes exactly this kind of profound

¹² Firkin (2004:74) acknowledges that Williams uses this term to refer to the constant biographical revisions that are a feature of late modernity.

biographical disruption in her analysis of the biographical meaning of migration in Ana's life (as discussed previously).

The concept of biographical currents as proposed by Firkin allows for a much more nuanced description of individual lives using ideas such as biographical disruption, work, continuity, reinforcement and revision. Breaking up a life into the various currents which comprise it permits an analysis which acknowledges the disruption evident in one area, while recognising the possibility of continuity in another, or indeed, an overall biographical continuity. Firkin (2004:76) provides an example of this in his analysis of Ram's story. Although Ram, a migrant from India, was unable to find work in the legal profession in New Zealand, his religious faith 'provides a sense of continuity and reinforcement of biography in what would otherwise be extremely disruptive circumstances' (Firkin, 2004:76). Importantly, Firkin maintains that the idea of biographical currents does not suggest that 'we are at the whim of some biographical forces, adrift in a sea', but rather that we are 'engaged in riding, resisting, managing and integrating...various currents' (Firkin, unpublished:8). Finally, Firkin's dynamic conceptualisation of biographical currents is able to account for both the infinite and open process of meaning-making being negotiated by each individual, and the way that past, present, and possibly future experiences alter the overall biographical meaning of a migration experience (Breckner, 2002:217).

In summary, in the first part of this chapter I charted the theoretical development of the concept of biographical disruption. I began by locating the origins of the term in Bury's (1982) ground-breaking work on the disruptive effect of chronic illness on biography. I then noted further theoretical developments in the sociology of health and illness, in particular an increasing emphasis on the consideration of meaning and context. Within the framework of this discussion, I introduced several new terms, including biographical reinforcement and continuity (Carricaburu & Pierret, 1995), and biographical flow (Faircloth et al., 2004). Next, I drew parallels between the biographical disruption often caused by chronic illness, and that brought about by the experience of migration. I then explored the relationship between biographical disruption and migration, and discussed new terms such as trajectory processes (Riemann & Schutze, 1991) and biographical currents and revision (Firkin, 2004). I concluded that the experience of migration, like that of chronic illness, did not always lead to biographical disruption. Instead, I

suggested that the biographical meaning of migration might be described in various ways, including biographical disruption, continuity, revision, rupture, or even reinforcement.

Disruption, Gender and the Biographical Meaning of Migration

In this section, I begin by situating the discourse on biographical disruption within the greater context of the changing social relations of late modernity. A consideration of this wider perspective supports the use of the analytic vocabulary developed in the first part of this chapter. Following this, I make an argument for the incorporation of a gendered focus into the analysis of biographical disruption, and introduce and define the concept of gendered biographical work. Finally, I list a range of contextual factors which provides a foundation for the individual analyses and the comparison of the cases which follows.

Contemporary Western society, according to Williams (2000:56), is characterised by 'less determinative social structures', 'more flexible patterns of work' and a 'wide range of explanatory discourses'. He suggests that the experience of chronic illness, operating within such a context, has the potential to be less disruptive and out of the ordinary than it did in the past. Wider, more inclusive discourses around what is considered 'normal', and important advances in medical treatment and management, have resulted in an increasing tolerance of difference and diversity. 'All this', he maintains, 'suggests a number of different options for 'doing' chronic illness at the turn of the century' (Williams, 2000:56).

The experience of disruption as it relates to migration must also be considered in the broader context of the rapidly changing social relations of the 21st century. In addition to the greater flexibility and tolerance of diversity that Williams describes, there are several developments that have specifically affected the contemporary experience of migration. These include: an increasing number of international migrants worldwide (Breckner, 2002:213; Bedford, Lidgard et al., 2005:47; Curran et al., 2006:205); rapid and increasingly inexpensive international travel; and new and instantaneous forms of

communication.¹³ There are now, as a consequence, many ways of ‘doing’ migration in contemporary Western society (Portes & DeWind, 2004; Kofman, 2004b). Within an environment characterised by change, difference and diversity, it becomes imperative to use an analytic vocabulary that incorporates a wide range of biographical outcomes. The ideas developed in the first part of this chapter: biographical disruption, continuity, revision, rupture, and reinforcement, constitute just this kind of vocabulary.

Certain elements of context have been neglected in scholarship dealing with biographical disruption. Williams (2000:50, emphasis mine), for example, claims that ‘[b]iographical disruption...carries particular class- and age-related connotations, as well as **gender** and ethnic dimensions, which remain, at present, under-played and under-researched’. I incorporate a gendered dimension into the following case analyses, and the subsequent comparison of cases. Where the inclusion of a gendered perspective necessarily involves the consideration of other variables such as age, class and ethnicity, I also integrate these into the discussion.¹⁴ I have previously argued that gender affects the experience of migration in myriad ways and will not, therefore, repeat this argument here. Suffice it to say that the incorporation of gender into the following analysis will help correct the neglect previously noted by Williams, and provide a more complete picture of biographical disruption within the context of migration.

In addition to the general focus on gender, I specifically consider the idea of **gendered biographical work** in the overview of the three cases. The concept of biographical work is used to describe the symbolic process of interpretation and synthesis, as well as the more practical activity of changing personal practice and behaviour (Wengraf, 2002:248). Both the symbolic and practical aspects of biographical work are affected by an individual’s access to different cognitive and material resources. Bury (1982:177-180), for example, describes how differential access to resources affects the way individuals cope with the disruption caused by chronic illness. Although he examines only those differences due to social class and occupation, access to cognitive and material resources is also gendered. This gendered access to resources affects the way

13 The field of transnationalism has developed in response to these changes (Glick-Schiller et al., 1992; Levitt, 2001; Portes, Guarnizo, & Landolt, 1999; Spoonley, Bedford, & Macpherson, 2003).

14 It is sometimes difficult to isolate the effects of specific axes of difference, such as gender. They can act together, in complex ways, to produce distinct outcomes for an individual living within a specific context.

individuals make sense of the disruption to their lives, and the practical and behavioural changes they make in response to it. In short, biographical work is a gendered process.¹⁵

In the following analysis, I present each case using the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption and gender developed in the first part of the chapter. Various contextual aspects provide the foundation for these presentations, and for the discussion of differences and similarities between the cases that follows. These contexts emerged from the data as having the most profound effect on the overall biographical meaning of the migration experience.¹⁶ They include: the actual experience of migration; the biographical projects developed before, during and after the move; the life stage during which the migration occurs; and the extent to which the migration is perceived as a voluntary or involuntary biographical event. Next, I introduce a generic model that uses the analytic language of biographical disruption and gender to characterise the processes involved in the biographical experience of migration. This model is then used to illustrate Sam's, Ellen's and Lorato's unique migration biographies.

Lorato

The experience of transition into a new environment has a significant effect on the biographical meaning of the migration experience. Breckner et al. (1999:90) make the same point in their study on the biographical risks of migration in Eastern Germany, noting that '[t]he way in which re-orientation in the changed and changing contexts is experienced...has a great impact on the overall biographical meaning of migration'. Lorato experienced her migration to New Zealand as a profound disruption to the biographical current of her employment. Because her career and her identity were so closely intertwined, and because her life was dominated by the struggle for professional fulfilment, this disruption could have been experienced as a biographical rupture. However, Lorato was able to mobilise sufficient resources to attempt various strategies of biographical repair: a strategy of separation from her husband and employment in South Africa; a sophisticated strategy of search for appropriate employment; a strategy of family rather than career development; and finally, a strategy of retraining. Each of

15 The idea of gendered biographical work is similar to Pessar and Mahler's (2003:813) idea of 'doing gender work'.

16 Breckner et al. (1999) also include these characteristics, among others, in their article on the biographical risks of migration in Eastern Germany.

these incorporated gendered aspects of symbolic and practical biographical work, resulting in the biographical reinforcement of her identity as an educated, professional woman, and the maintenance of an overall sense of biographical continuity.

Prior to Lorato's departure from South Africa, she had a thriving academic career from which she derived an independent income. This income allowed her to make regular contributions to a personal investment scheme, and to share the costs of supporting her and Tebogo's family. In addition to this egalitarian financial arrangement, Lorato and her husband also prioritised both their careers equally when making plans for their family. In fact, it was Lorato's unemployment in Australia that prompted their move across the Tasman. After their migration, Lorato became financially dependant on Tebogo for her everyday living expenses. Moreover, they did not have access to close family or to paid domestic help, so the burden of household maintenance and childcare fell squarely on Lorato's shoulders. Lorato and Tebogo's migration to New Zealand, in short, resulted in significant disruption to the current of Lorato's career, and the current of her household management. The effect of migration on these two biographical currents, and the way the tension¹⁷ between them is resolved, is explored in detail in the next chapter.

The 'inner landscape'¹⁸ associated with this gendered experience of disruption in Lorato's biography is defined by loss and grief. She lost, and then grieved for: her successful career in academia; her income and the financial independence this allowed her; certain aspects of equality and personal independence that defined her relationship with her husband; and the part of her identity that was derived from each of these factors. She did not, however, experience biographical rupture, in spite of the fact that her unemployment compromised her identity, her financial independence, and her overall biographical struggle for professional fulfilment. Using a range of cognitive and material resources, Lorato undertook considerable biographical work in order to repair the disruption to her biography. Part of the symbolic aspect of this biographical work involved her appropriation of the discourse of a 'subtle racism' towards migrants in

17 Biographical currents often exist in some tension with one another (Firkin, 2004:72).

18 Breckner et al. (1999:90) refer to the changes that occur in an individual's 'inner landscape' as a result of the experience of migration.

New Zealand society.¹⁹ This allowed Lorato to universalise her experience of long-term unemployment to other migrants of colour, rather than take it on as a personal failure. In addition, Lorato was able to draw on the cognitive resources that had enabled her to overcome considerable obstacles to success in her own country.

In terms of the practical component of biographical work, Lorato utilised four different strategies to repair the disruption to her biography. Each of these strategies, and the resources required to undertake them, were affected by gender. Firstly, Lorato returned to her previous employers in South Africa several times. The effect of gender is evident in the fact that Lorato took her son with her, rather than leaving him with his father, and the fact that she was able to work and take care of him there, supported by her extended family and the system of affordable domestic labour in her homeland. Secondly, Lorato undertook an extensive search for employment in New Zealand. In this situation, gender is manifest in the labour market itself, and in the fact that she had to organise her job search around the care of her son. Thirdly, Lorato decided to have another baby rather than continue her job search or accept work where she could not use her skills and experience. This particular strategy is gendered in that it is available only to women. It is, however, also reflective of the more general tension that exists between paid work and domestic life in contemporary Western societies. Finally, Lorato decided to retrain as a medical professional. The effect of gender on this last feature of practical biographical work can be seen in the way Lorato, and not her husband, assumed full responsibility for their two children, organising her study around their daily needs.

The process of gendered biographical work and repair is ongoing for Lorato, several years of training remain before she can enter the labour market as a fully qualified medical professional. She is still, as a consequence, living in a situation of financial dependency. Moreover, she retains almost complete responsibility for the maintenance of her household and the upbringing of her and Tebogo's two small children. In spite of these ongoing disruptions, however, Lorato has achieved an overall sense of continuity in her biography by maintaining her struggle for professional fulfilment. In addition, by following her childhood dream of becoming a medical professional, she has actually strengthened the connection between her career and her sense of self; experiencing

19 As I mentioned in Chapter 7, it is not my purpose here to question whether racism towards migrants did, or did not cause Lorato's long-term unemployment, but rather to examine the biographical meaning of this discourse within the context of her migration story.

biographical reinforcement of her identity as an educated, professional woman, and adding to her overall sense of biographical continuity. Finally, the continuity evident in Lorato's biography is reinforced by the strength and determination that characterises both the processes of biographical work and repair described here, and her early struggle to succeed in South Africa.

Ellen

The biographical meaning of Ellen's migration was shaped by disruptions that occurred both before and after her migration. Breckner et al. (1999:90) note the influence of events that take place outside the timeframe of migration, claiming that '[t]he meaning of migration is highly dependant on the interplay between biographical projects and experiences developed before, during and after the move'. The earliest disruption in Ellen's migration story occurred during her and Edward's trip to Europe in their early 20s, the second was caused by the migration itself, and the final disruption resulted from the diagnosis of Edward's life-threatening illness. These disruptions affected various biographical currents in Ellen's life: her sense of national identity, her plans for the future, her career and domestic life, and finally her personal identity and self-belief. Despite the considerable impact of these disruptions, Ellen was able to preserve a sense of biographical continuity through a gendered process of biographical sense-making and repair. Moreover, Ellen ultimately transcended these disruptive experiences, finding within herself increased personal strength, and greater self-awareness.

The first disruption in Ellen's migration trajectory occurred as a result of her and Edward's trip to Europe. The criticism she heard directed at her homeland during their travels disrupted Ellen's belief in the justice and viability of apartheid, her sense of national identity, and her plans for a future in South Africa. This sense of disruption was maintained and intensified over the following years by increasing periods of violence and civil unrest in her homeland. The biographical work that Ellen undertook in response to this ongoing disruption comprised both symbolic and practical components. The cognitive aspect can be seen in her appropriation of gendered discourses around family, nation and history. She uses these, for example, to make sense of her return to South Africa after the discovery of her first pregnancy in Europe, and to justify the

length of time between the disruption caused by her European journey, and her and Edward's eventual migration. Practical aspects of biographical work included their decision to send their younger son to an English speaking school, and the fact they taught their children to treat all ethnic groups with respect. Ellen's migration to New Zealand constituted the final practical component of biographical work in response to this disruption.

Although intended as a strategy of biographical repair, Ellen and Edward's migration was itself the cause of considerable disruption. It disrupted the currents of Ellen's family life, her career, and the gendered division of paid and unpaid work that characterised her life in South Africa. Ellen's family life was disrupted in two main ways. Firstly, her daughter decided to remain in South Africa, so her family was reduced from five to four. Secondly, her elder son was the first in the family to gain employment, and assumed a much more supportive role to his parents than he had in South Africa. Ellen's career was also disrupted. She struggled to find suitable employment in her field, and to find the time and energy to devote to the development of her own work. Edward's unemployment and the absence of affordable domestic help disrupted the balance of paid and unpaid work in their family. Ellen responded to these disruptions with a combination of symbolic and practical gendered biographical work. With respect to the symbolic aspect, Ellen drew on gendered discourses on the pivotal role of women in the family to make sense of what was occurring in her life. Practically, she attempted to maintain the gendered roles that she and Edward had developed over the course of their marriage, in spite of the challenges posed by her husband's unemployment, the absence of paid domestic help, and her part-time job.

The 'inner landscape' associated with each of these disruptions in Ellen's life is characterised by loss and grief. She lost, for instance, the experience of growing old in the land of her birth, the freedom from household labour that came with access to domestic help, and the professional independence her successful business had allowed her. Loss and grief are also features of the third and most profound disruption in Ellen's migration biography, the diagnosis of her husband's life-threatening illness. This traumatic event intensified the sense of disruption generated by their recent migration. Edward's diagnosis also affected Ellen's relationship with her husband, and, as a consequence, her personal identity and self-belief. She was forced to confront the

possibility of further loss and grief, the loss of Edward himself, the loss of their long and loving relationship, and the loss of the sense of family they had generated together. The 'inner landscape' connected with the process of sense making and repair that Ellen undertook in response to this disruption is defined by strength and determination.

In terms of practical biographical work, Ellen used the resources available to her and Edward through their newly-purchased health insurance as well as several support agencies. She also maintained her part-time job, and continued the physical and emotional work of sustaining her household. Symbolically, Ellen again drew on gendered discourses about the central role of women in nurturing and caring for their families. Throughout this gendered process of biographical work, Ellen was able to maintain a sense of continuity in her biography, the continuity of work in her field of training and expertise, and the continuity of her nurturing role as mother and wife. More than this, however, Ellen transcended the disruptions in her migration biography; resolving, to a large extent, her struggle for security and belonging. Although she continued to prioritise her family-centred existence, Ellen came to believe in her own strength and value as an individual. Riemann and Schutze (1991:343) describe this process as the ninth stage of dealing with the experience of trajectory [biographical disruption]. During this stage, they claim, the individual moves beyond their previous sense of self and relationship to others. It is also suggestive of the transformation potential of immigrant biographies that Inowlocki and Lutz (2000) portray in their analysis of Hulya's migration biography. Within the framework of the analytic vocabulary utilised in this chapter, this process can be described as **biographical enrichment**.

Sam

Disruption pre- and post-migration shaped the overall biographical meaning of Sam's migration experience. The first disruption took place in Sam's childhood, the second and most significant involved the armed carjacking of himself and his family, and the third resulted from the experience of migration itself. These disruptions affected several biographical currents in Sam's life: his sense of safety and security, his sense of Jewish identity and community, his path to career and economic success, and the gendered

division of paid and unpaid work in his home. Sam was, however, able to maintain a sense of continuity in his life through a synthesis of practical and symbolic gendered biographical work. An important aspect of this work involved the integration of Sam's Jewish identity, values, and religious practise into his life in New Zealand. This process had a defining influence on the overall biographical meaning of his migration. Breckner et al. (1999:90) make a similar point, commenting that 'the integration of 'old' social contexts into 'new' is another crucial element in the biographical impact of migration'. As well as the integration of Sam's Jewish identity, the overall sense of continuity in his biography was strengthened by the repair of his sense of safety and security, his ongoing involvement and success in the same industry, and by the maintenance of his gendered role as family breadwinner.

The first disruption in Sam's migration biography occurred during his childhood, and involved his witness of, and occasional victimisation in, a series of racist and sometimes violent events. These experiences, individually and cumulatively, disrupted the current of Sam's safety and security. Symbolically, he reacted to these disruptions by adopting a discourse of discomfort at being a White South African. In this way, he was able to distance himself from the racist policies of the apartheid regime in his homeland. Practically, Sam sought security through his identity as a Jew, through the development of his career, and through the formation of a strong family. The second and most profound disruption in Sam's migration trajectory was the armed carjacking of his family. This violent incident again disrupted Sam's sense of safety and security, but the disruption on this occasion was far greater. The carjacking threatened not only Sam's physical survival, but that of several members of his immediate and extended family. In addition to his fear for their physical safety, Sam was terrified that the female members of his family might be raped.

Sam attempted to make sense of his carjacking experience through a process of gendered symbolic and practical biographical work. Symbolically, he appropriated a rational discourse that took into account the effects of apartheid and the armed liberation struggle on young Black men in South Africa. His sense-making was also defined by discourses based on differences in gender, and in 'race'. These included discourses on the fear of Black sexual violence and the possibility of HIV infection, as well as those related to the fear of physical violence and death. The gendered discourse

on Sam's role as a father and protector of his family added a further dimension to this interpretive phase. More practically, Sam undertook a process of negotiation and discussion with his wife and various family members on the most appropriate response to this disruption. Although he maintained that internal migration was their best option, he ceded this position in the face of his wife and family's strong desire to leave South Africa. Sam's migration to New Zealand with his immediate family, and various members of his extended family, constituted the final aspect of practical biographical work in response to this disruption.

Sam's migration was successful in repairing the biographical current of his safety and security. Nonetheless, it was also the cause of considerable disruption in other areas of his life. Firstly, it disrupted the expression of his Jewish identity, through the dearth of kosher outlets, and the difficulties he encountered adjusting to the New Zealand Jewish community. Secondly, his path to career and economic success was disrupted as he was forced to establish his career from scratch in a new environment. Lastly, the current of Sam's household management was disrupted as he and his wife could no longer afford domestic help. With respect to the first disruption, Sam maintained the core precepts of his religious life, while making both practical and symbolic adjustments to his change in religious circumstances. Practically, he took time to find a section of the Jewish community within which he felt comfortable, he modified his purchasing habits to accommodate the paucity of kosher outlets, and he sent his children to a private Jewish school. Symbolically, Sam adopted a discourse in which he accepted the differences he found in his new religious community, while at the same time maintaining his own personal expression of Judaism.

In terms of the disruption to his employment and economic success, Sam devoted considerable practical energy to the re-establishment of his career. This gendered biographical work was facilitated by his wife's full-time presence at home; she assumed responsibility for most of the childcare and household labour. The symbolic work Sam undertook to repair this biographical current involved him overcoming two main fears: that of doing business without the support of an extensive network of Jewish professionals, and that of not being able to fulfil the gendered role of breadwinner in his family. Finally, Sam responded to the disruption in the current of his household management in practical ways, by making a greater contribution to domestic life than he

had in South Africa, and by supporting his wife's adjustment to her new circumstances. Symbolically, Sam made sense of his wife's absence from the paid workforce by adopting a gendered discourse that prioritised the needs of their younger child.

Each of the disruptions in Sam's life is associated with an 'inner landscape' of loss and grief. He lost and grieved for: his sense of safety and security, his chance at career and economic success in South Africa, and the support of the large and cohesive Jewish community in his homeland. The gendered process of biographical sense making and repair that Sam undertook in response to the disruptions in his life is characterised by strength and determination. In a situation not of his own choosing, he worked hard to re-establish his family, his career and his identity. Sam was able to achieve an overall sense of continuity in his life through the repair of his sense of safety and security, the resumption of his successful career, and the maintenance of his gendered role as family breadwinner. Most importantly for Sam, however, he was able to maintain a sense of continuity in his life by integrating his Jewish identity, values and practise into his life in New Zealand.

Comparison of Cases

There are a number of fundamental differences between the biographical meaning of migration for Lorato, Ellen and Sam. In the first instance, this diversity of meaning can be attributed to their disparate motivations for migration: Lorato's plan for a better life through the advancement of her and her husband's careers on the one hand, and Ellen's and Sam's need to escape the escalating violence in their homeland on the other. These different motivations can be viewed as occupying diverse positions along a spectrum of voluntary versus involuntary migration.²⁰ Moreover, while the disruption in Lorato's biography is caused by her migration and subsequent unemployment, Ellen and Sam experience disruption both pre- and post-migration. The final source of difference in biographical meaning is located in the distinct and gendered life stages at which their

20 After formulating the idea of migration as a spectrum of voluntary versus involuntary migration, I came across a similar idea in an article by Mahler and Pessar (2006:50). They suggest that 'as agency is more interrogated the commonplace poles of "voluntary" (immigrant) versus "involuntary" or "forced" (refugee, slave?) migration should be rightfully seen as endpoints in a long continuum with many intermediary measures and sites where gendered ideologies and processes operate'.

respective migrations took place; Lorato's and Sam's during the early years of family formation, and Ellen's in the last years of raising her children.

Several important similarities, however, are also evident in the biographical meaning of migration for Ellen, Sam and Lorato. Firstly, each of them experienced a disruption to the biographical current of their household management. A common feature of this disruption to their home lives is the absence of low-cost, full-time domestic servants in New Zealand's labour market. Secondly, all the migrants experienced considerable disruption to the biographical current of their employment. Thirdly, the inner landscape of grief and loss associated with the various disruptions, and the strength and determination linked to the subsequent processes of biographical work and repair, are also analogous. Lastly, Lorato, Sam and Ellen all experienced disruption as a consequence of their migration to New Zealand, but were nonetheless able to achieve an overall sense of continuity in their biographies. In this section of the chapter, I discuss each of these differences and similarities one by one.

Disparate Motivations

The most profound difference between the biographical meaning of migration for Lorato, Ellen and Sam can be found in their disparate motivations for migration. Lorato's migration to Australia, and then New Zealand, was part of a carefully considered plan to develop her and Tebogo's careers, and improve their lives. In contrast, Ellen and Sam wished to escape the violence in their homeland. Ellen believed that a backlash of revenge against White South Africans was imminent. She thought that the increasing rates of rape and homicide in South Africa's cities, and the violence committed against White rural property owners, were evidence of an impending crisis that might eventually evolve into outright civil war. Her migration, therefore, was motivated by a desire to escape this threat of violence, and to find a safe place for her and her family to live. Sam's migration was also motivated by a desire to escape the violence in South Africa, a violence he had experienced firsthand; he too wished to find a safe place to bring up his young family.

These differences in motivation are reflected in the disparate discourse on children in each of the migration stories. While children feature in Lorato's narrative only in terms

of their day-to-day impact on her post-migration life, in Sam's and Ellen's stories their children play a major role in justifying their decision to leave South Africa.²¹ In both these cases, the discourse on children is characterised by ideas about gender and 'race'. Ellen, for example, talked about how concerned she and her husband were about the future of their Afrikaans-speaking adult son in the new South Africa. The affirmative action policies instituted there, they believed, favoured women and Blacks over English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking White men. Disquiet over his children's future in the new South Africa also featured strongly in Sam's narrative. Although he expressed concern about the quality of the education and health systems, his overriding preoccupation was protecting his children from physical, and more particularly, sexual assault.

A Spectrum of Voluntary versus Involuntary Migration

The perception of migration as a voluntary or an involuntary biographical event has, according to Breckner et al. (1999:90), considerable biographical relevance. Rather than consider the issue of voluntary versus involuntary migration as an either/or situation, however, it may be more helpful to construct a spectrum of migration forms, with an entirely forced migration at one end, and a completely voluntary one at the other. Lorato's migration story could be placed towards the voluntary end of this spectrum, she and Tebogo sought to better their lives through the development of their careers in New Zealand. Her narrative does not contain a discourse of being forced away from her homeland by the fear of violence, or by the personal experience of a violent event. Ellen's story, in contrast, is based on the idea of being forced out of the country of her birth by rising levels of violence and a fear of civil war. Her migration story might be placed further towards the involuntary end of the spectrum.

Sam's migration story is perhaps the most involuntary narrative, and as such would appear closest to that end of the spectrum. It is involuntary on two different levels: from the point of view of being forced away from South Africa by the experience of a violent carjacking; and from the perspective that migration to New Zealand was his family's choice, and not his own. This sense of involuntary migration is reflected in the way his migration story is characterised by reluctance and ambivalence, and by the way he

21 Similarly, Firkin (2004:61) states that, 'children were the most often cited reason for migration'.

describes himself as a semi-refugee. The extent to which each migration might be considered voluntary or involuntary is also related to the occurrence of disruption in each migration story. For example, in Sam's and Ellen's stories, their migration is involuntary in the sense that it was precipitated by an earlier disruption in their lives. In contrast, Lorato's story is of a more voluntary migration, where the disruption is experienced as a consequence of her migration, not as a cause of it.

Life Stage

The life stage of a migrant can have considerable impact on their experience of migration (Gardner, 2002). Breckner et al. (1999:90) make a similar point, arguing that, 'it can be assumed that the life period in which the migration takes place is important for understanding its biographical meaning'. Ellen arrived in New Zealand in the latter years of family and career formation. She had an adult son, a soon-to-be teenager, and a lengthy background of running her own successful business. Moreover, her husband was several years older, and was vulnerable to the preference of employers for younger workers (Firkin, 2004:52). Ellen talked about Edward's anxiety over the financial losses they had incurred as a result of their migration, and the disruption to their finances caused by his unemployment and his illness. He felt, she said, considerable ongoing pressure to save for their impending retirement. Gender too can mediate the effect of life stage on the biographical meaning of migration. While Edward's income contributed to their retirement savings, Ellen's wages, in contrast, were considered her own personal affair.

Lorato and Sam, unlike Ellen, were in the process of establishing their families and their careers in the years following their migration. In spite of this shared life stage, however, Lorato's and Sam's experience of employment and family during this time was greatly affected by their differences in gender, ethnicity and culture. These differences contributed to the disparate outcomes of Sam's and Lorato's search for employment in New Zealand. In terms of gender more specifically, differences in the distribution of household work had a tremendous impact on the way that Sam and Lorato experienced this same life stage post-migration. Lorato had to negotiate the challenge of her employment and retraining, in addition to sole responsibility for the care of her children and the running of her home. Sam, however, was able to devote much of his energy to

the development of his career, because his wife assumed almost complete responsibility for the maintenance of their household, and the care of their children.

Gender Dynamics

Ellen, Sam and Lorato all experienced a disruption to the current of their household management post-migration. In each of the cases, established gendered patterns of paid and unpaid work were disrupted by the absence of domestic servants in New Zealand's labour market. The subsequent reshuffling of household responsibilities between the couples had the greatest impact on the women in each relationship. Ellen, for example, took up the vast majority of tasks that had previously been the responsibility of her servant. When Lorato and Tebogo were forced to live apart due to the demands of their respective careers, Lorato also assumed almost complete responsibility for housework and childcare. After Sam and Miriam arrived in New Zealand, Miriam postponed her career plans in order to stay home and take care of their youngest child. She too took on the greater share of housework and childcare in their household. This reassignment of household tasks represents the process of gendered biographical work undertaken by each couple in response to their change in domestic circumstances.

Employment

Disruption to the biographical current of employment is another common feature of each of the migration stories. Firkin (2004:73), too, claims that migration often generates this kind of disruption. Lorato experienced a severe disruption to the current of her employment as a consequence of her migration. After attempting several biographical strategies of sense making and repair, she relinquished her original career and decided to retrain as a medical professional. Migration also caused disruption to the biographical current of Ellen's employment. She discovered that running her own business the way she had in South Africa was both impractical and unprofitable. As a consequence, she took up part-time work teaching in her area of expertise. Lastly, Sam also experienced disruption to his career after arriving in New Zealand. He had to resume his career from scratch, without the support of an extensive network of Jewish businessmen. As noted previously, the gendered distribution of household work had an

enormous effect on the way that Ellen, Sam and Lorato experienced these disruptions to their employment.

The 'Inner Landscape'

The third shared characteristic of all the migration stories is the 'inner landscape' of grief and loss associated with each disruption. Ellen, Sam and Lorato lost and grieved for many aspects of their previous lives: close friends and family, established social networks and reputations, previous careers, and certain aspects of their identity. The process of gendered biographical work involved in making sense of these losses, and repairing them, is characterised by a common strength and determination. In his study on the labour market experiences of professional migrants in New Zealand, Firkin (2004:60) makes a similar point; describing the 'bravery' and 'courage' migrants demonstrate in their struggle to settle into their new lives. Lorato's decision to spend several years retraining as a medical professional while raising two young children, Ellen's adoption of a new direction in her career and her endurance in the face of her husband's illness, and Sam's maintenance of a strong Jewish identity and the reconstruction of his career, are all excellent examples of strength and determination.

Disruption and Continuity

Finally, although Ellen, Sam and Lorato all experienced disruption to various biographical currents as a result of their migration, they were also able to achieve an overall sense of continuity in their lives. Ellen achieved this by developing a teaching career in her area of expertise, and by recreating the same gendered balance of paid and unpaid work that had characterised her life in South Africa. Moreover, Ellen transcended the disruptions in her biography, moving beyond her previous sense of self to a new position of strength and autonomy. This process of self-actualisation was called biographical enrichment. Sam maintained a sense of biographical continuity by sustaining his Jewish identity within the constraints of a new environment, by re-establishing his career, and through the repair of his sense of safety and security. Lorato generated continuity in her biography by maintaining her struggle for personal fulfilment. In fact, by pursuing her life-long ambition to become a medical professional,

she experienced the biographical reinforcement of her identity as an educated, professional woman.

Summary

In the second part of this chapter, I used the analytic language of biographical disruption and gender to make sense of the biographical meaning of migration as it was articulated in the three case studies. I began this section by locating the discourse on biographical disruption within the greater context of late modernity. The wide range of biographical outcomes represented in the vocabulary of biographical disruption, I argued, is particularly suited to the change, difference and diversity that characterise this epoch. Next, I noted that the scholarship on biographical disruption had neglected certain elements of context, including gender. An argument was then made for the incorporation of gender into this analysis, after which the concept of gendered biographical work was introduced and defined. Finally, various contextual factors were used as the foundation for individual case presentations and case comparisons using the analytical vocabulary of gender and biographical disruption.

The Model

A series of models illustrating the biographical experience of migration constitutes the final section of this chapter. In the generic model, and the individual models that follow, I utilise the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption and gender to exemplify the dynamic processes involved in the gendered biographical experience of migration. Although the generic model comprises a synthesis of the migration experiences portrayed in this research, the broad range of biographical contingencies and outcomes it encompasses gives it a much wider applicability. The spectrum of voluntary versus involuntary migration might include, for example, the refugee's experience of forced migration or the wealthy expatriate's temporary sojourn as a highly-skilled labour migrant. The idea of separate biographical currents, in conjunction with the concepts of biographical rupture, repair, revision, reinforcement, continuity and enrichment, can represent an array of outcomes for a specific aspect of an individual's life, or indeed for their entire biography. While the model focuses on the disruption caused by the experience of migration, it is clear that the disruption caused by other major life events

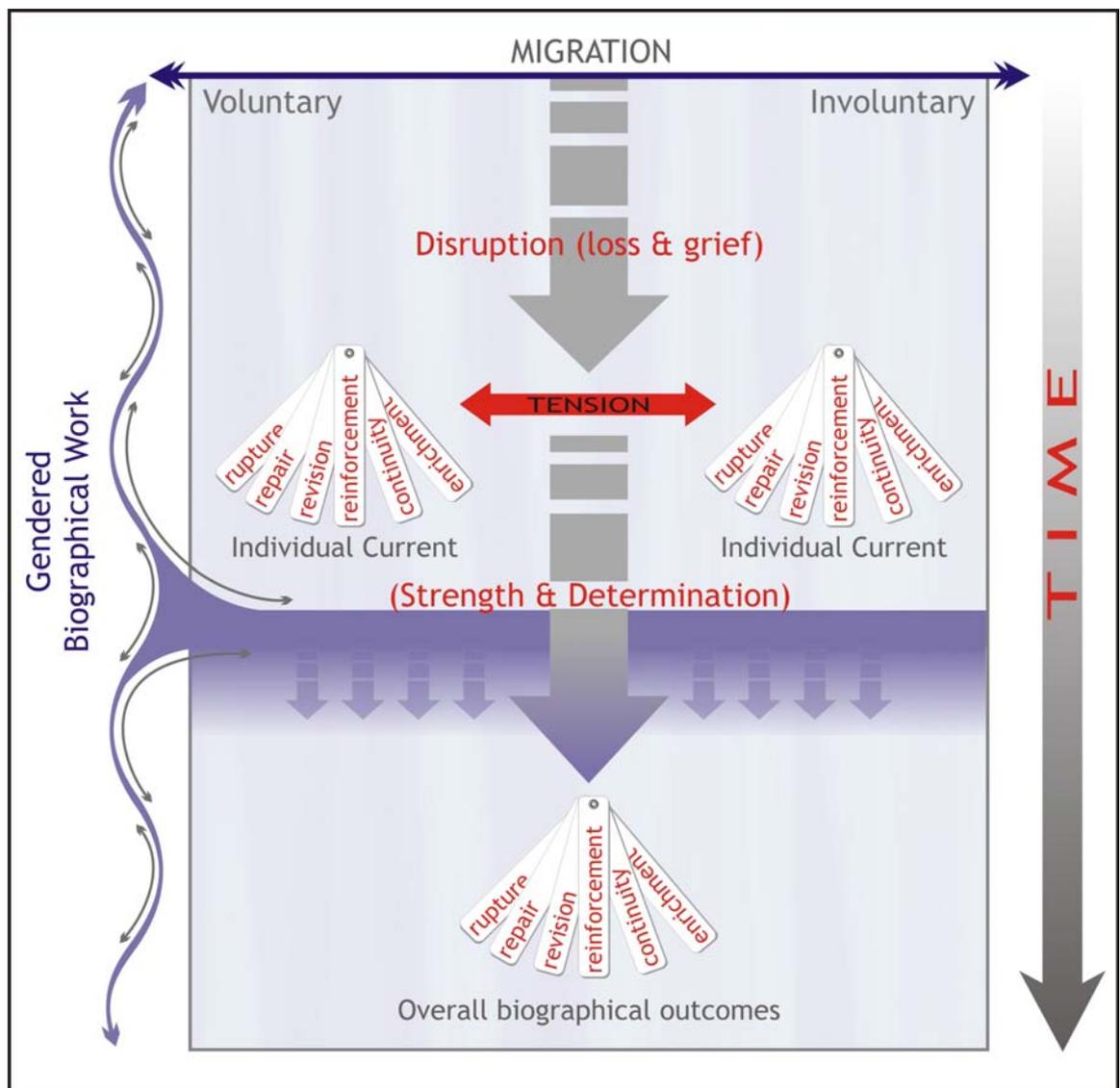
might also follow the same process of biographical work and repair. Disruptions pre- and post-migration in Sam's and Ellen's case presentations provide a clear example of this apparently universal process.

Specifically, the models represent the gendered biographical experience of migration as it transpires over time. The spectrum of migration as a voluntary or an involuntary event is represented at the top of the model. The degree to which each migrant perceived their migration as voluntary or involuntary is interpreted as a particular point along this spectrum. This interpretation can be seen in each of the individual models. Sam's migration, for example, is located closest to the involuntary end of the spectrum, while Lorato's is placed nearest the voluntary end. The passing of time is symbolised by the long axis on the right, while the parallel wave-like axis on the left stands for the constant and ongoing process of practical and symbolic gendered biographical work (Breckner, 2002:217). Open spaces in the model pre-, during and post-migration allow for the possibility of other life events contributing to the continuous sense-making process. This aspect can be seen, for example, in the model representing Sam's migration experience, where a disruption pre-migration acts as a catalyst for the migration itself. Similarly, it is also a characteristic of Ellen's model, in which the biographical experience of migration is affected by a disruptive life event that occurs after the migration.

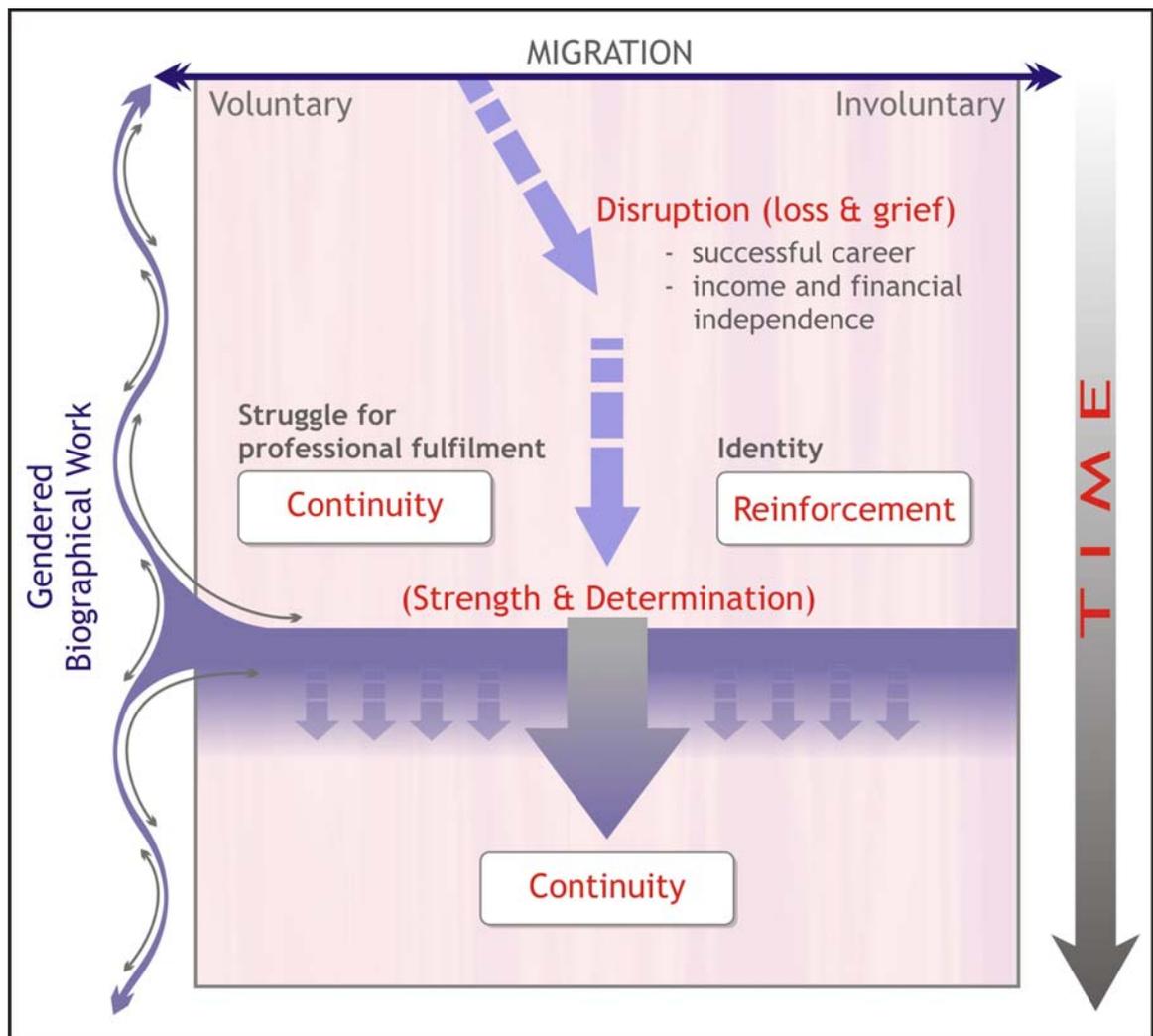
The particular colour that comprises the background of each model represents the specific context within which that migration occurred. Such contexts might include class, gender, historical time, geographical location, life stage, and ethnicity, among others. In Ellen's case, for example, the unique configuration of contextual factors is illustrated by the distinct background colour of her model. The 'inner landscape' of loss and grief associated with the experience of disruption post-migration; and the strength and determination linked to the resultant process of biographical work and repair are also represented in each model. Although the disruption caused by migration is illustrated in the generic model using two biographical currents, this number will vary according to a migrant's particular circumstances. This variation can be seen in the subsequent models, where four biographical currents are represented in the model of Sam's migration experience. Two biographical currents are represented in the generic model in order to demonstrate the tension that may exist between specific currents in an

individual's biography (Firkin, 2004:72). Such a tension might be generated, for instance, between a migrant's current of employment and the current of their household management post-migration. As previously mentioned, this particular tension is the subject of the following chapter; the generic model, together with its analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption, comprises the foundation for this analysis.

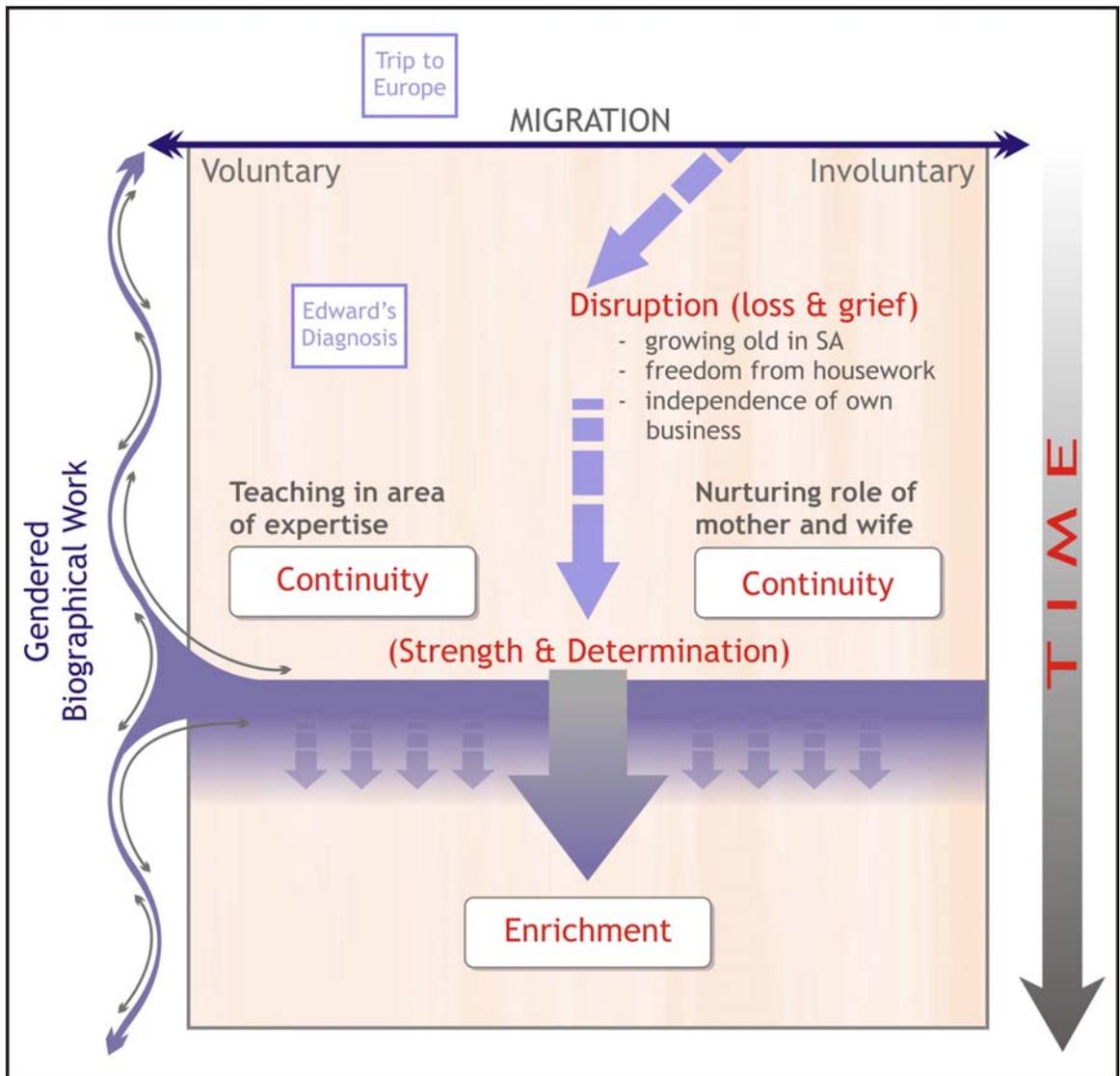
Model 1 The Generic 'Migration Biography' Model



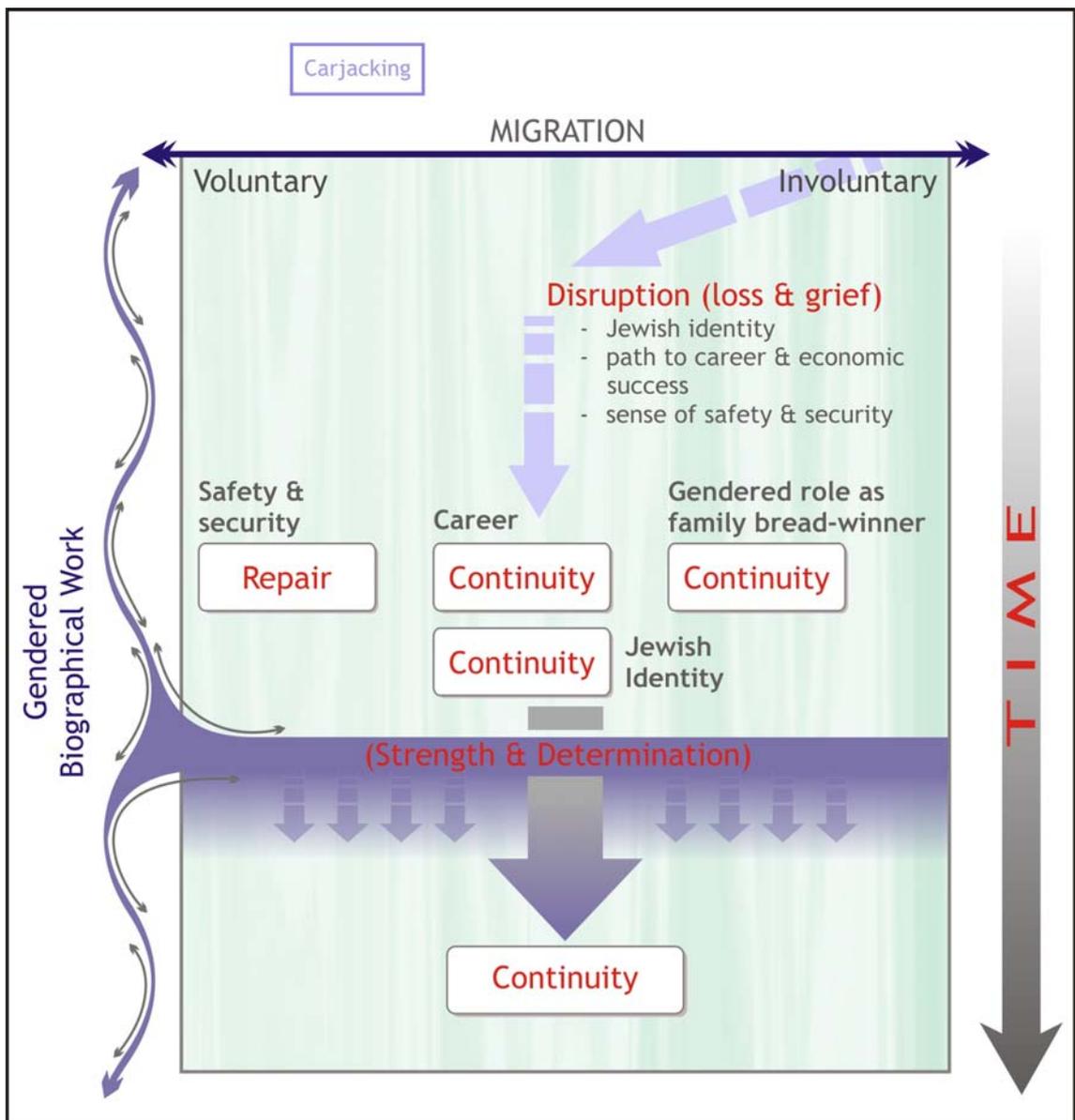
Model 2 Lorato's Migration Biography



Model 3 Ellen's Migration Biography



Model 4 Sam's Migration Biography



Conclusion

The analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption developed in this chapter has constituted a useful way of conceptualising the similarities and differences in the biographical meaning of migration in Ellen's, Sam's and Lorato's migration stories. The incorporation of gender into this analysis, in particular the introduction of the concept of gendered biographical work, has enabled a more complete examination of the biographical meaning of their migration experiences. Moreover, this conceptual innovation has also contributed to the theoretical development of biographical disruption; like other recent advancements in this field, it has followed the trend towards a greater consideration of context in the investigation of biographical disruption.

Not only does the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption and gender provide a helpful way of thinking about Ellen's, Sam's and Lorato's migration experiences, but it also constitutes an appropriate tool for examining the biographical experience of migration more generally. The wide range of biographical outcomes represented in the vocabulary make it suitable for the analysis of migration in contemporary Western society, an environment characterised by change, difference and diversity. The series of models that comprise the culmination of this chapter graphically employ the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption and gender to illustrate the dynamic processes involved in Ellen's, Sam's and Lorato's migration from South Africa to New Zealand. In addition to representing the biographical meaning of their individual migration experiences, the generic model, with its array of biographical outcomes and contingencies, exemplifies the biographical possibilities inherent in any contemporary experience of migration.

Chapter 9

Employment and Household Management: An Analysis of the Impact of Migration on the Gender Dynamics in Intimate Relationships

Introduction

The impact of migration on the gender dynamics of intimate relationships has long been a focus of feminist migration scholars (Espiritu, 2002:47). The earliest work in this field was undertaken during the 1970s and 1980s, and proposed a causal relationship between migration and the emancipation of migrant women. ‘Unskilled’ women from the developing world, it was suggested, were liberated from male domination through their migration to the West and their entry into the paid workforce (Kosack, 1976; Abadan-Unat, 1977; Kudat, 1982). Subsequent scholarship questioned this linear relationship, concluding that migration resulted in both losses and gains for migrant women (Anthias, 2000:36; Hugo, 2002:41; Kibria, 2000:190).

Gender and migration scholars also questioned many of the premises on which this early research was based, including: the focus on women rather than gender; the theorisation of gender as a fixed and static category; and the assumption that all migrant women share the same experiences. More recent work in this area, therefore, tends to examine the impact of migration on both women and men, and theorises their

experiences as constituent parts of a fluid, relational system (Donato et al., 2006:5-6). In order not to homogenise women's and men's experiences, this work also accounts for the way that gender intersects with other axes of difference, such as class, 'race' and ethnicity (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:29).

The analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption and gender, and the model presented in the previous chapter, constitute a useful way of conceptualising the impact of migration on the gender dynamics of migrants' intimate relationships. Both the language and the model are premised on the three fundamental developments in gender and migration literature outlined above. With respect to the first development, the analytic vocabulary and its associated model are built on the migration experiences of both women and men. In terms of the second, the concept of gendered biographical work, an integral component of both the language and the model, is founded on the notion of gender as continuously constructed and reconstructed through interactions between individuals, and through exchanges between individuals and gendered institutions such as the labour market. The third development mirrors the increased focus on context in the study of biographical disruption, as noted in the previous chapter. Finally, the distinct background colour of every model represents the unique configuration of each individual's class, 'race' and ethnicity, among many other possible axes of difference.

Moreover, the idea of biographical currents, introduced in the previous chapter, facilitates the analysis of one of the pivotal tensions through which gender dynamics are played out in the migration context, the tension between the current of migrants' paid employment and the current of household management in their new environment. This tension was a characteristic of each of the migration stories in this research, as well as being of ongoing interest to gender and migration scholars. I begin the first part of this chapter by using the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption to examine the impact of migration on the gender dynamics in Sam's, Ellen's, and Lorato's intimate relationships.¹ I determine this impact by considering the way the tension between paid employment and household management was resolved in South Africa, alongside the

1 The loss and grief associated with the disruption of migration, and the strength and determination associated with the process of gendered biographical work, are factors in each migrant's biography. They are not explicitly included in the following case studies in this chapter in order to avoid repetition.

specific gendered way each couple reconfigured their work and home lives after their arrival in New Zealand. Individual outcomes are then described using the language of biographical disruption; as rupture, repair, revision, reinforcement, continuity or enrichment. The data on which these case studies are based are derived from all three segments of the biographic narrative interview.²

Because the tension between paid work and domestic responsibilities is resolved by both spouses within the context of many structural constraints, these individual analyses incorporate to some extent the experiences of each interviewee's spouse and children, as well as their interactions with gendered institutions, in particular the labour market. The second part of this chapter comprises three main components: a comparison of the case studies; the formulation of a generic model representing the biographical impact of migration on the gender dynamics of intimate relationships; and the application of this model to each of the individual analyses. The generic model represents a modification of the model I developed in the previous chapter. While the preceding model described the overall biographical impact of migration, this version characterises the way migration affects a specific aspect of an individual's biography. In the conclusion I argue that the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption, and the model developed and presented in this chapter, constitute a useful way of thinking about the effect of migration on the gender dynamics of the individual case studies, as well as describing the impact of migration on the gender dynamics of migrants' intimate relationships more generally.

Sam

Sam was the owner and director of a large company in South Africa. He talked about his work in this way, *I mean I'm not shy to say this, I was hugely successful, um and I had a, a secretary and a personal assistant, and like there were three people you had to get past before you could get an appointment to see me, so I was sort of in a bit of an ivory tower, and I loved my job, I, I we had huge fun, we had huge success, and um huge fun, and ah I enjoyed that.* Sam took his role as family breadwinner seriously, one

2 As described in Chapter 3, the first of these parts comprises the initial question and the interviewee's reply, while the second consists of a series of questions derived from the content of the first part of the interview. In the third and final segment, usually conducted at a later date, the researcher is able to pose questions designed to further her specific research objectives.

of his major concerns before migration was that he would not be able to support his family in the way he always had in South Africa. An important part of being a Jewish father, he claimed, *was to provide for your family*. Sam also enjoyed considerable freedom in his work, organising his days according to the demands of his job. He said, for example, *lunchtime I'd probably meet a mate, and go have lunch and either work in the afternoon or not*. While Sam worked full-time as director of his own company, his wife, Miriam, worked part-time.

Miriam and Sam's domestic life in South Africa was organised around the employment of paid domestic help. In the morning, Sam said, *someone would bring me tea or coffee or whatever it was that I drank, and it would be made and waiting for me when I wanted...the house would be left... I mean like leave my pyjamas or whatever on the floor... get out of my bed not make it*. Either Sam or Miriam would drive their daughter to play group on their way to work, he noted, *but she would have had, had breakfast, had been dressed, [laughs]...so it was like quite hard just to put her in the car [laughs] and drive her to group*. When Sam arrived home from work in the evening, friends would visit for coffee. *If you came to my house*, he claimed, *my maid would know what exactly you like and how you take your coffee and if you came she'd just make it for you*. While Sam and Miriam were sharing a cigarette and a *sundowner*, their children were bathed by the servant. Afterwards, he said, *we'd play with the kids for a little while, and then supper would be served, and we'd eat supper and then we'd either go out or not go out*.

Migration disrupted the gendered balance of employment and household management in Sam's and Miriam's lives. Before examining the consequences of this disruption, it is important to note that the practical gendered biographical work they undertook in response to it occurred within the structural constraints of the New Zealand economy and labour market. These constraints included, among others: the absence of full-time, live-in domestic labour as it exists in South Africa; the stratification of the labour market along gender lines; and the problems migrants often encounter finding work because of a non-Kiwi accent (Firkin, 2004:52; Watts & Trlin, 2005:115) and/or a lack of New Zealand experience (Basnayake, 1999:24; Firkin, 2004:59). In terms of symbolic gendered biographical work, Sam and Miriam were drawing on a range of

competing discourses about what it means to be a woman or a man, a wife or a husband, a mother or a father.

Before leaving South Africa, Sam and Miriam had both planned to work in paid employment in New Zealand. Soon after their arrival, however, they realised that this plan was impracticable because they could not employ domestic help under the same wages and working conditions as they had in their homeland. As Sam said, *we thought we were coming to New Zealand and we'd [both work]... we forgot that like, oh there aren't maids*. Sam and his wife resolved this tension along traditional gendered lines.³ Sam took up a permanent full-time position in the same industry in which he had worked in South Africa, while Miriam stayed out of the paid labour force and took care of their home and children. Although Sam experienced some disruption to his employment as a consequence of their move to New Zealand, this current in his biography is characterised by a strong sense of **continuity**. In terms of practical biographical work, he remained in the same profession, although he lacked the prestige, the control, and the support staff he had in South Africa. Cognitively, he adopted a discourse based on the continued autonomy he enjoyed in this business, claiming, *I still have my freedom, my freedom's very important to me*.

The current of Sam's household management was also disrupted post-migration. Ultimately, however, this area of his life was also defined by **continuity**; in both South Africa and New Zealand, his involvement in this sphere was peripheral. The practical aspect of Sam's biographical work in this area included an increased contribution to domestic life. After Miriam returned to part-time work several years after their migration, Sam again increased his involvement at home. He described the changes in this way, *wake up earlier...get up, make the bed, get the house organised...make the kids' beds, or they would sometimes...do whatever you can around the house...give the kids breakfast...I normally take my son who goes to school in the city...at least two days a week, um, I would take the kids to...tennis, or, or rugby*. Cognitively, Sam viewed his

3 When the male partner works full-time and his female partner is based in the domestic sphere it is referred to as a traditional arrangement. A neotraditional arrangement, on the other hand, involves the male partner working full-time, while his female partner works part-time. When both partners work full-time, it is referred to as an egalitarian arrangement (Callister, 2005:6).

domestic contribution as *support work*. Implicit in this phrase is that Miriam had ultimate responsibility for the management of their household.

According to Sam, the disruption caused by migration, and the subsequent adjustments to their work and home lives, were particularly painful for Miriam. He claimed that *her life...changed more than mine. I still woke up, okay the only difference was like I made my bed before I went to work, you know, but I was at work, I was um easily mixing with people, she was stuck at home with a...baby, going to a coffee club twice a week.* Miriam was lonely and unhappy, he said, she missed her two best friends and was unable to replace them. Sam was deeply affected by his wife's unhappiness, describing the stress she experienced during their first years in New Zealand as the most negative aspect of his migration experience. Miriam's despondency was particularly difficult for Sam to cope with because the decision to leave South Africa had been largely her choice. As he succinctly put it, *the biggest negative was Mi-, Miriam's strain...and I was like, well, I didn't want to fucken come here in the first place!*

The disruption caused by migration, and the resultant biographical work undertaken to resolve the tension between career and home responsibilities, also put considerable pressure on Sam and Miriam's relationship. Sam maintained that the outcome of this process was positive, claiming that *it tested my relationship with Miriam, my wife, you know that, that made us, I don't want to say closer, cause we've been together since we were [young] and [laughs] we love each other a lot, but um, it was just sort of the two of us.* Sam and Miriam's relationships with their children were also altered by this process. Again, Sam believed that this was ultimately a positive adjustment. He said, *I think that probably their lives are improved...the whole thing of quality time with kids, you know it's bullshit, that's quantity time. So I think that they're getting a lot more time from Mum and Dad than they would ever have got in South Africa, just because when you come home from work then you're tired, and you've got a option of someone bathing your kids and doing everything and cooking supper, you take up that option. Sam concluded that it's **better** to do it yourself, I think.*

In summary, the currents of Sam's employment and household management are defined by a strong sense of **continuity**, in spite of the disruption caused by migration. **Continuity** also characterises the gender dynamics in Sam's and Miriam's relationship

post-migration. The way in which their work and home lives were organised in South Africa, and later in New Zealand, reflected a division between men's principal responsibility as breadwinners, and women's main function as housekeepers and child-carers. While Miriam did participate in the paid labour force both pre- and post-migration, her involvement was part-time only, and she maintained overall responsibility for the smooth running of the domestic sphere. Moreover, when Sam and Miriam could no longer employ a servant to take care of their younger child and perform the greater part of household work, it was Miriam who delayed her entry into the paid workforce and assumed virtually complete responsibility for housework and childcare. The biographical continuity in the gender dynamics in Sam's intimate relationship, and the process of post-migration biographical work that precedes it, is represented in a model in the second part of this chapter.

Ellen

Ellen owned and operated her own successful business in South Africa. She was involved in a creative industry, working from home in her own workspace, and venturing regularly to several high end markets to sell her designs. She said of her work, *I started with [] about in 1980 um...which was at that stage different to what every-, everybody else...was doing, so I used to go to [various] markets...we were very cosmopolitan with a lot of ah, tourists from Europe coming in and buying, so I think my [designs]'re all over Europe! [The process of creating]...can get very lonely...I like the social part of going to the, to the market...you get to know the other stall holders and...it's a lot of fun.* Ellen described this period in her life as *a wonderful time*. While she designed and sold her work part-time, Edward worked full-time as the director of his own established company.

In South Africa, Ellen managed her and Edward's domestic life with the assistance of paid domestic help. In the morning, she said, *I would take my children to school...my servant would then arrive...I would then typical tell her what to do, um wash the dishes from the night before, or what she's got to clean...then I would go to, into my [workshop], and I would then [work] the whole morning until about one o'clock.* After lunch, she continued, *I would go and pick the children up...and I would then feed the*

children, and talk to them. About five o'clock, thereabouts, I would, I would start the evening um, meal...then after that we would most probably go and watch television, or um, children do their homework. She commented that in South Africa our role [as wives and mothers] was so much different...because we had servants that did all the menial work...you had much more time personally for yourself...I have friends that did nothing more than visit and have tea parties, but I always, you know, [worked] a lot.

This gendered balance between the currents of employment and home management in Ellen and Edward's lives was disrupted by migration. In response to this, they undertook a process of gendered practical and symbolic biographical work. Practically, this work occurred within the structural constraints of the New Zealand economy and labour market. In this case such constraints included a preference for younger workers (Firkin, 2004:52), the general aversion of New Zealand employers towards migrants with non-Kiwi accents (Watts & Trlin, 2005:115; Firkin, 2004:52), the difficulty some migrants experience obtaining work commensurate with their qualifications and experience (Watts & Trlin, 2005:107), the absence of affordable domestic help, and the dearth of high quality markets. Symbolically, Ellen and Edward drew on various competing discourses about appropriate employment and household roles for women and men.

The current of Ellen's employment was disrupted soon after she arrived in New Zealand. After considerable practical and cognitive biographical work, she discovered that she would not be able to operate her own business the way she had in South Africa. The unpredictable and often wet weather in this country, she said, made open-air markets for high quality goods problematic. Moreover, she noted that *there's a much different market culture here...I must say the standard in South Africa was...very high...people of all walks of life, doing all sorts of things and selling them at the markets, whereas I found here...you don't find high quality at the markets.* Selling her work in high-end shops, she claimed, made her work too expensive, and the vast majority of the proceeds of each sale would go to the shop's proprietors. Meanwhile, Ellen acquired part-time work outside her area of training and expertise, a job in which she was not happy.

After several months, Ellen was offered part-time work teaching in her creative specialty at a local community centre, and decided to resign from her previous job. *I realised, she said, that was just so negative and I, I hated going there.* A succession of part-time teaching assignments with different community centres around the city followed, but Ellen decided to work solely for her local centre after they offered her an afternoon class every day. Once she took on this job, Ellen could no longer devote as much time to her own creative work. She explained, *I don't do so much [creative work] as I used to do, ah and the teaching I must say take up quite a lot of energy, cause teaching my classes about fifteen kids in a class, so you really go full on, and then you sort of collapse!* Notwithstanding the disruption to her employment, however, Ellen's ongoing involvement in her own creative field resulted in an overall sense of **continuity** in this area of her biography.

The current of Ellen's household management was also disrupted by her migration to New Zealand; without the support of a servant, her life became dominated by domestic tasks. She described her daily routine in this way, *I get up and I then prepare breakfast for Edward, and a different one for [my son]...and then I'll start cleaning the house...it keeps me busy until about 11 o'clock...once a week I go grocery shopping...I would then have a light lunch myself, and then, then go and read a book...I'll rest about an hour and a half and I'll get up, and prepare whatever is for dinner...then I teach an hour and a half...I get back about s-six thirty...when I walk into the door, then I have two hungry men staring at me...I grab a glass of wine and I walk straight to the, the stove and I cook...then after that I just relax in front of the television, and my husband kindly then usually washes the dishes for me.* As a result of the proliferation of Ellen's household responsibilities, and her increased confinement to the domestic sphere, this area of her biography is defined by **reinforcement**.

This reinforcement can be seen particularly clearly in the following quote, where Ellen talks about the difference between her life in South Africa, and her life in New Zealand. Before her migration, she said, *I could go to my [workshop], come back everything was neat and tidy...so we had a lot of time for socialising with your friends...I went away a lot with friends...and my husband allowed me to do that...but **here** it changed a lot because in the first place the women do the house work, you can't take off for two weeks or three weeks and leave your family...cause there's nobody to step in and do that, so*

the role has changed...you clean the house, you cook...the role is more, you know, hands on active, you know, doing things. By the time they arrived in New Zealand, Ellen claimed, it was too late to increase her sons' contribution to their domestic life. *My children, she noted, were already spoilt when we got here, so I could never really tie my boys in.* There was no suggestion that Edward might increase his contribution to running their home. In fact, Ellen admitted that she felt guilty when he washed the dishes after their evening meal. In South Africa, she noted, *the women managed the house and, and the men did their job.*

The increase in Ellen's domestic responsibilities constitutes the practical facet of biographical work she undertook in response to the disruption wrought by her migration. In terms of the cognitive aspect, Ellen made sense of the biographical reinforcement of this area of her life by referring to her belief in the central role of women as wives, mothers and homemakers. *I think personally, she said, that the woman in the house determines the whole, um the whole atmosphere...it starts with cooking, it starts with food...if you like making food...and you are a fulfilled person and happy in yourself I think it rubs off on your children, and your husband.* Although Ellen did not question women's primary caring and domestic responsibilities, she did suggest that the strict demarcation of women's and men's roles was generational. *My daughter, she said, studies [], I think her generation is, is very much...more professional...the housekeeping is not that important, and the roles are more equal with their husbands.*

Ellen's family relationships were altered by the disruption of migration, and the biographical work she undertook to resolve the tension between her domestic and working life. They were also affected by the diagnosis and treatment of Edward's life-threatening illness, and the stress of his post-migration unemployment. Living through these experiences, Ellen claimed, was ultimately positive for her relationship with her husband. *Edward and I, she said, went through that very difficult stage in the first...years, I think we um, in a way really got very close.* Ellen and Edward's relationship with their elder son also changed. *In South Africa, she said, we were always worried about him...and we always helped him, and when we got here it was interesting how the roles in the beginning reversed cause he was the first member of the family to get a full-time job...and he then helped us and stayed and paid rent um, and helped us out for two years.*

In summary, in spite of the disruption caused by her migration to New Zealand, the current of Ellen's employment is defined by a sense of **continuity**, while the current of household management in her biography is characterised by **reinforcement**. Overall, the gender dynamics in Ellen and Edward's relationship post-migration are defined by **continuity**. In both South Africa and New Zealand, the organisation of their work and home lives was based on the idea of men as principal breadwinners, and women as ultimately responsible for the care of their family and the smooth running of their households. Although Ellen worked part-time both before and after her migration, this did not alter the fact that she was ultimately responsible for their domestic life. This balance of gender dynamics was maintained post-migration in spite of the absence of domestic help, Edward's lengthy period of unemployment, and the diagnosis of his serious illness. Moreover, it was also replicated in Ellen's relationship with her two adult sons. The biographical work undertaken by Ellen post-migration, and the outcome of this process for the gender dynamics in her relationship with her husband, is represented in a model in the latter part of this chapter.

Lorato

Lorato was the head of her department at one of the universities in South Africa. She described her work in this way, *I had a lot of responsibilities because I wasn't like just ah heading [my own department]...because of ah, restructuring yeah, a lot of ah people had taken packages so there was a lot of shortage in terms of man power, so we had to close the gaps be- ah, [1] so what was happening is I was heading [1] about six subjects, six courses...when you are heading, such departments, you have to very conver- well conversant with your story, you know, so I was faced with a, a very big challenge...I had to do a lot of research and ah for instance with AIDS epidemic um, like some of the staff members will be...having to attend to...domestic emergencies, they will be absent but at the same time students have to be taught, so I was like doing my own job, and at the same time having to close all the gaps.* While Lorato worked full-time (and more) at the university, her husband Tebogo worked full-time as a medical professional.

In addition to the long hours Lorato worked during the week at university, she also had to attend many family functions during the weekend. *Life was very hectic*, she said, *weekends will mean a wedding, if it's not a wedding, it's a funeral, if it's not a funeral, um tomb stone unveiling of a tombstone, if it's not that it will be dowry of somebody*. Before their migration, Lorato and Tebogo's busy home and social life was organised with the assistance of extended family and paid domestic help. In South Africa, she said, *I had support structure, yeah, I mean I've got siblings...I had Mum and Dad...* In addition, she noted, *we've got cheap labour, at least we can still get away with it getting a nanny*. Lorato and Tebogo made equal contributions to the financial maintenance of their home and family. She explained that *we had like a common um, account with my husband but he will have his pocket money, I'll have my own pocket money for, he'll have his pocket money from the money that he's worked for, I'll have my pocket money from the money that I've worked for...although we had like one pool where we were putting money*.

The balance that existed between the currents of Lorato and Tebogo's busy career and home lives was disrupted by their migration. The process of practical biographical work they undertook in response to this disruption transpired within the constraints of the New Zealand labour market and economy. In this case these constraints included: the stratification of the labour market along gender and 'racial' lines; the discrimination against migrants with non-New Zealand accents and those from different cultures (Watts & Trlin, 2005:115; Oliver, 2000:30); and the lack of affordable domestic help and childcare. With respect to gendered cognitive biographical work, Lorato and Tebogo drew on various discourses about work and home, about women and men, and about the complex emotions, obligations and responsibilities that comprise intimate relationships.

An intrinsic part of Lorato and Tebogo's migration plan was the ongoing development of Lorato's career. This current in her biography, however, was disrupted soon after she and her husband left South Africa. Lorato undertook a lengthy and difficult process of biographical work in order to resolve this disruption to the current of her employment. Practically, this work included extensive job searches, occasional interviews, and the development of her curriculum vitae. Symbolically, Lorato made sense of her long-term unemployment by adopting a discourse based on the existence of a *subtle racism* in

New Zealand. Further practical biographical work included the return to her previous position in South Africa, the reluctant acceptance of a cleaning job, her choice to focus on her family rather than her career, and finally, her decision to retrain. The cognitive work involved in these practical strategies incorporated discourses based on the staffing crisis in South African universities, her boredom at staying at home as a housewife, her desire to do something meaningful with her life, and her life-time passion for a medical career. Overall, the current of employment in Lorato's biography can be characterised by **revision**. After responding to the disruption caused by her migration in several different ways, her final strategy was to revise of this area of her biography by studying to become a medical professional.

Revision also defines the current of household management in Lorato's migration story. In South Africa, Lorato and Tebogo, who were both engaged in full-time paid employment, managed their home lives with the support of her extended family, and access to affordable domestic help. Lorato's and Tebogo's involvement in the day-to-day tasks of household maintenance, therefore, was peripheral. This balance between work and home was disrupted by their migration to New Zealand. Practically, Lorato responded to this disruption by revising her household role, and taking over most of the tasks that had previously been performed by her family or by paid domestic help. Tebogo, in contrast, continued to combine full-time paid employment with a peripheral involvement in domestic life. Lorato's home life underwent further revision after she moved away from her husband in order to study. From this point onwards, she had complete responsibility for all childcare and household maintenance, except when Tebogo was able to visit during occasional weekends or holidays. As Lorato said, *here it's like a nightmare being a full-time student and a full-time Mum.*

She went on to explain that *some of my classes finish at six, at six o'clock where I have to go and get the kids quickly, sometimes I have to get to the class before then because the kids' club finishes at six...sometimes I loss, I lose of, some of the information in the lecture room, yeah and now I'll be faced with some catching up from other students...when I get home I don't have much time to spend with the children, um, I have to cook for them dinner, and bath them...I have to negotiate the, my way to, for them to sleep so that I carry on with my, my, my studying...there'll be assignments, there'll be, maybe writing a test tomorrow, or anything, it's really hard.* In terms of

symbolic biographical work, Lorato made sense of the revision of her domestic role by adopting a discourse based on women's pivotal role in family life. As a woman, she said, it was important to *be there for your family, yeah, and um make sure that [1] that things are working...because if things are not, the, the home is chaotic*. In addition, she also made sense of the change in her domestic circumstances by talking about her increased intimacy with her children. The absence of a nanny, she said, *has actually given me an opportunity to be very close to my children*.

In sum, after the disruption caused by migration, the current of Lorato's employment, and the current of her household management, are both defined by **revision**. Similarly, the gender dynamics in Lorato and Tebogo's relationship post-migration are also characterised by **revision**. In South Africa, they participated on an apparently equal basis in the areas of employment, home and finance. They were employed full-time in the paid workforce, were involved in a peripheral way in domestic life, and contributed equally to the financial upkeep of their home and family. Once they arrived in New Zealand, where they had no family support and could no longer afford domestic help, this egalitarian balance was disturbed. Although both Lorato and Tebogo are now both involved in full-time employment or tertiary study, the responsibility for maintaining their household and taking care of their children has fallen almost exclusively on Lorato. The egalitarian gender dynamics have thus been revised to reflect the more traditional association of women with domestic life and childrearing. This outcome is represented in a model in the next section of this chapter.⁴

Comparison of Cases

The most notable feature of a comparison of the three case studies presented above is the fact that they comprise a number of shared characteristics, most of them along gender lines. In the second part of this chapter I begin by listing these common elements, as well as the few disparities between the cases. I then discuss these similarities and differences in more detail, with reference to other scholarship in the field where appropriate. Next, I propose a generic model of the biographical impact of

4 Although the gender dynamics in Lorato's relationship have been revised in this way, it is important to note that the strategy of revising her career was undertaken with the aim of restoring her status as an independent, professional woman, and thus regain a more egalitarian balance of gender dynamics in her relationship with her husband.

migration on gender dynamics. Developed from the generic model presented in the previous chapter, this version represents the impact of migration on a specific aspect of the migration experience, rather than the overall biographical impact of migration. Following this, I use the model to represent the biographical effect of migration on the gender dynamics of each migrant case study. In the conclusion of the chapter I argue that the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption, and the model associated with it, comprise a useful way of conceptualising the effect of migration on the gender dynamics of the individual case studies presented here, as well as illustrating the impact of migration on the gender dynamics of migrants' intimate relationships more generally.

Similarities and Differences

Pre-migration, the tension between the current of paid work and the current of household management in each of the case studies was resolved through the employment of domestic help and/or the support of extended family. This balance between work and home was disrupted by each family's move to New Zealand. Post-migration, this same tension was resolved by the female partner, who took on most of the domestic responsibilities previously performed by other family members, or by the servant. For all of the women, the consequences of taking on this household work included an increased confinement to the domestic sphere, decreased personal freedom, less time to pursue their own interests, diminished possibilities for career advancement, and emotional difficulties. In all the analyses, the male partner became or consolidated his role as the principal breadwinner post-migration, even if, as in Edward's case, this took several years to achieve. Finally, each female spouse experienced a reduction in her role as income earner as a result of her migration to New Zealand.

Unlike the shared characteristics outlined above, there is one common link between each case study that crosses gender lines. All the interviewees, regardless of gender, claimed that they experienced closer relationships with their spouses and/or their children as a consequence of their migration. The differences between the case studies are fewer in number and smaller in scale than the similarities just listed. Firstly, Edward (and indeed his two adult sons) made the smallest personal adjustment to the change in his and Ellen's domestic circumstances post-migration. Secondly, in Sam's and Ellen's

New Zealand lives, paid and unpaid work are not divided strictly along gendered lines.⁵ In Lorato's case, however, her separate living situation has rendered the gendered division of paid and unpaid work almost complete. While Tebogo is the sole breadwinner, Lorato has virtually total responsibility for all the unpaid work associated with household maintenance and childcare.

In South Africa, where there are extreme levels of inequality (Thompson, 2000:287), and high levels of unemployment, relatively low-skilled individuals (usually Black women) are employed by wealthier families to provide housework and childcare services. These can range from full-time, live-in assistance, to several hours work once or twice a week. All the couples in the case studies employed domestic help in South Africa in order to balance the tension between work and home. This solution left largely undisturbed the traditional association of women with domestic work and childcare.⁶ Although women did not perform all the household tasks themselves, they were nonetheless usually responsible for the overall management of their homes, and the supervision of the domestic help. In addition to paid assistance, some women also had access to extended family to help balance the tension between housework and career.

Migration disrupted this gendered pre-migration balance between employment and household responsibilities in all the case studies. Firstly, full-time, live-in domestic labour as it exists in South Africa is not a feature of the New Zealand labour market, so this method of balancing the competing demands of work and home was not an option. Secondly, although part-time assistance with housework is available, the cost of this service is prohibitive for most families. Thirdly, quality childcare services can be both expensive⁷ and difficult for recent arrivals to access because of long waiting lists. Moreover, there is still a pervasive discourse linking the idea of a 'good mother' to one who remains at home to care for her children, particularly when they are young. Lastly, unless nuclear families migrate with members of their extended families, as occurred in

5 The gendered division of paid and unpaid work in Sam's and Ellen's cases resembles that of many New Zealand families, women do more unpaid work, while men undertake more paid work (Callister, 2005:19).

6 Ho (2006:504) also makes this point in her study of migrants from Hong Kong and China living in Australia .

7 Subsidised childcare hours have recently been increased in an effort by the Labour government to encourage more women into paid employment. Up to 20 hours free education for three- and four-year-olds is to be introduced to all teacher-led early childhood education centres from 1st July 2007 (<http://www.minedu.govt.nz>).

Sam's case, women and men must also do without the practical support of other family members in balancing their career and domestic lives.

After their arrival in New Zealand, the female spouses in each case study took on most of the household work that was previously the domain of paid domestic help or extended family. The male partner took on, or sought, full-time paid work. This gendered division of labour was maintained regardless of whether the women worked part-time, as Ellen and later Miriam did, or studied full-time, as Lorato did. In Ellen's case, this division of labour remained constant despite Edward's lengthy absence from full-time paid employment. Both Lorato and Ellen experienced an intensification of their domestic role post-migration; the analysis of Sam's migration story suggests that this was also a feature of Miriam's move to New Zealand. Furthermore, other researchers have concluded that particular groups of skilled female migrants experience an escalation of their role in the home post-migration (Dwyer, 2000:4; C. Ho, 2006:503; Yeoh & Willis, 2005:211; Man, 1997:203).

As a consequence of this escalation of household responsibilities, each of the women experienced an increased confinement to the domestic sphere, and a decreased level of personal freedom. Sam talked about Miriam leaving the house only to attend coffee morning twice a week, Ellen could not leave her family and travel with her friends as she used to, and Lorato could no longer participate in church activities or maintain her involvement with different community organisations. Moreover, the women no longer had the resources to pursue their own interests. The postponement of Miriam's paid work, Ellen's move into a part-time teaching job, and Lorato's retraining also curtailed the development of their respective previous careers. Lastly, the intensification of Ellen's, Lorato's and Miriam's domestic role had emotional ramifications. Sam stressed how lonely his wife was at home, Lorato talked about how bored she was being a 'housewife', while Ellen expressed her resentment at having to take care of the housework when she would rather be pursuing her own creative interests.

Sam, Edward and Tebogo all consolidated or assumed the role of main breadwinner after their migration to New Zealand. Ho (2006:508) notes a similar trend in her study of Chinese migrants in Australia. For both Sam and Edward, re-establishing this role was one of the most important, (and in Edward's case, the most difficult) challenges of

their migration. Although Sam found work in his own industry soon after his arrival in Auckland, prior to his departure he was concerned that he would not be able to provide for his family as well as he always had. He wondered if he could succeed in his field in New Zealand, where he would not have the support of an extensive network of Jewish businessmen. As a Jewish husband and father, he said, sustaining his family financially was an important part of his role. Sam also used his position as family breadwinner to justify his migration to New Zealand, arguing that in order to remain in South Africa and support his family, he would have had to be *a multi squillionaire* by the time he was 40. Hibbins (2005) also notes the pivotal role of men as family breadwinners in his study of male Chinese migrants living in Australia.

In Edward's case, it took several years before he was able to resume his position as the main wage earner in the family. In addition to experiencing great difficulty obtaining employment commensurate with his qualifications and experience, he was also diagnosed and treated for a life-threatening illness during this time. As Ellen said, these experiences constituted a *double blow* for Edward, affecting both his sense of masculinity and his relationship with his wife. Moreover, Edward's concern about the financial setback they had incurred as a result of their migration, and their need to save for their retirement, exacerbated his anxiety. Like Sam, Tebogo had no problem finding work in New Zealand. He did, however, experience considerable difficulty securing employment in the same city in which his wife was studying. Whereas he and Lorato had always shared the burden of supporting their family financially, after their arrival in New Zealand he became solely responsible for the maintenance of their two separate households.

In addition to the intensification of their domestic life, each of the women in the case studies experienced a reduction in her role as income earner as a consequence of her migration to New Zealand. Yeoh and Willis (2005) note a similar trend in their research on skilled Singaporean women living in China. In the first instance, Lorato moved from full-time employment as the head of a university department in South Africa, to a combination of under- and unemployment post-migration. She also underwent a concurrent transition from financial independence, where she contributed equally to the maintenance of her and Tebogo's family, to a situation of financial dependency. Although Lorato ultimately revised the biographical current of her employment and

began to retrain, her role as an income earner was still reduced, and she remained financially dependant on her husband.

She found this situation very difficult, noting that she had no independent bank account, and could not even buy her husband a gift without having to account for the money at a later date. Ho (2006:508-509) also comments on the frustration of her female respondents at their financial dependence on their male spouses. In the second instance, according to Sam, Miriam moved from part-time work in South Africa to full-time domestic responsibilities post-migration. She delayed her entry into paid work in order to stay at home and take care of their younger child. For several years after their arrival in New Zealand, Miriam continued to experience a reduction in her role as income earner. Finally, in the third instance, Ellen found she could no longer run her successful business post-migration, she eventually moved into part-time teaching work at her local community centre.

The only similarity between the cases that does not operate along gender lines is the way that Sam, Lorato and Ellen all reported an increased intimacy in their relationships with their spouses and/or their children post-migration. Both Sam and Ellen talked about the way migration had brought them closer to their spouses. There was, they said, a sense of solidarity in the two of them facing and then resolving challenges together. Sam and Lorato, each of whom had a young family, also talked about their improved relationships with their children post-migration. They connected this to the absence of domestic help in their new situation. In South Africa, they said, the servant had taken care of many of the daily tasks involved in caring for their small children, while in New Zealand these became parental responsibilities. As a consequence, Sam and Lorato noted, they spent a lot more time with their children than they had previously. Although the lack of domestic help made caring responsibilities post-migration more difficult and time-consuming, they claimed that this had allowed them to develop closer relationships with their children.

Ellen's husband and her adult sons made a relatively small adjustment to the change in their domestic circumstances post-migration. After they arrived in New Zealand, Ellen took on all the tasks involved in maintaining their household. Moreover, she made individual breakfasts for her husband and younger son, and often prepared meals for her

elder son even after he had left home. The sole contribution Edward made to this sphere was to wash the dishes after the family's evening meal. Neither of Ellen's sons took any responsibility for housework, in fact, she noted that they were already spoiled before they arrived in New Zealand. She had been unable, she said, to change this aspect of their behaviour. While Miriam also assumed responsibility for almost all the housework post-migration, Sam did increase his domestic involvement, particularly after she began part-time paid work. He took his children to after school activities several times a week, and contributed to the morning housework routine. Because Lorato and Tebogo live in separate households, Tebogo's domestic contribution post-migration is omitted from this comparison.

The difference between Edward's and Sam's contributions to domestic life may be attributable to the disparity in their ages,⁸ and to the fact that Edward and Ellen do not have small children. As Ellen noted in her migration story, there are generational differences in the distribution of paid and unpaid work in her family. Both her daughter and son-in-law, she said, work full-time, and her daughter is far less concerned about domestic matters than she is herself. This difference is perhaps part of a more general trend in industrialised countries towards women's greater participation in the labour market, and men's increased input into the domestic sphere (Callister, 2005). Men's greater involvement in domestic life, however, has largely comprised an increase in the time they spend with their young children, rather than a growth in time spent on other aspects of unpaid work such as house cleaning (Callister, 2005:16). The absence of small children in Ellen's and Edward's household post-migration may go some way towards explaining Edward's small domestic contribution. The growing emphasis on 'good fathers' in contemporary industrialised societies, and the expectation that men should spend both quality and quantity time with their children (Callister, 2005:15), may also shed light on Sam's comments about his improved relationships with his children. In fact, Sam explicitly used the concepts of 'quality' and 'quantity' time when he was talking about his relationships with his son and daughter post-migration.

In both Sam's and Ellen's cases, paid and unpaid work were not completely divided along gendered lines after their migration. In fact, the gendered division of labour in these analyses reflects a typical pattern in New Zealand and other industrialised

8 Edward is in his 50s, while Sam is in his 30s.

countries, men undertake more paid work, while women perform a greater share of unpaid work (Callister, 2005:19). In Lorato's case, in contrast, there was a clear gendered demarcation between paid and unpaid work post-migration. Tebogo became the sole breadwinner, while Lorato was almost completely responsible for household maintenance and childcare. Their current traditional division of labour is very different from the previously egalitarian way in which Tebogo and Lorato shared their work, finances, and home life in South Africa. This transition constitutes the biographical revision of the current of Lorato's career, of her domestic life, and of the gender dynamics in her relationship with her husband. The evolution of the division of labour in Lorato's and Tebogo's case from egalitarian to traditional represents the most significant change in the organisation of work and household responsibilities of all the individual analyses.

Summary

In summary, the most striking characteristic of a comparison of the case studies is the fact that there are so many similarities, the vast majority of which occur along gendered lines. They include each of the following common features. The tension between the current of paid work and the current of household responsibilities was resolved pre-migration by all the families through the employment of domestic help and/or the support of extended family. This method of balancing the competing needs of career and family life was disrupted in each case study by the move to New Zealand. Post-migration, the tension between work and home was resolved almost exclusively by the female spouse in each analysis, who took on nearly all the domestic work and childcare. Each woman was affected by this increased burden of housework. The consequences included increased confinement to the domestic sphere, less personal liberty and time to pursue outside interests, adverse career effects, and emotional difficulties. The male spouse in each case study took on or consolidated his role as the main breadwinner in New Zealand, while their respective female partners experienced a reduction in their capacity as income earners.

The only similarity between the cases that crosses gender lines is the improvement that each interviewee reported in their relationships with their spouses and/or their children post-migration. With respect to the differences between the case studies, firstly, Edward

and his two adult sons made the smallest contribution to their family's change in domestic circumstances after their arrival in New Zealand. Secondly, while the division of paid and unpaid work did not occur strictly along gendered lines in either Sam's or Ellen's families after their migration, the division of labour in Lorato and Tebogo's relationship post-migration comprised a clear demarcation between men's paid work in the labour force and women's unpaid work at home. Of all the case studies, Lorato's and Tebogo's transition from an egalitarian to a traditional division of labour constitutes the most significant shift in the gendered organisation of paid work and domestic life.

Overall, while these gendered patterns suggest that the experience of migration has impacted on the work and home lives of all the migrants in these case studies, the women appear, on the whole, to have experienced significantly more disruption than the men. The male partners retained or assumed the position of principal breadwinner, each of them working in the same field in which they were originally employed. Even though all of them assumed responsibility for more of the domestic burden than they shouldered in South Africa (albeit infrequently, in Tebogo's case, and in a small way in Edward's), the performance of these tasks has not greatly affected their participation in the labour force, the development of their respective careers, or ultimately their ability to earn an income. In contrast, all the women made significant career (and other) sacrifices after their arrival in New Zealand in order to nurture their husbands and children, and maintain their homes. The fact that each of the women assumed responsibility for housework and childcare post-migration suggests that the employment of domestic help and the assistance of extended family in South Africa served to obscure to some degree a traditional configuration of gender dynamics defined by women's association with home and children.

The Model

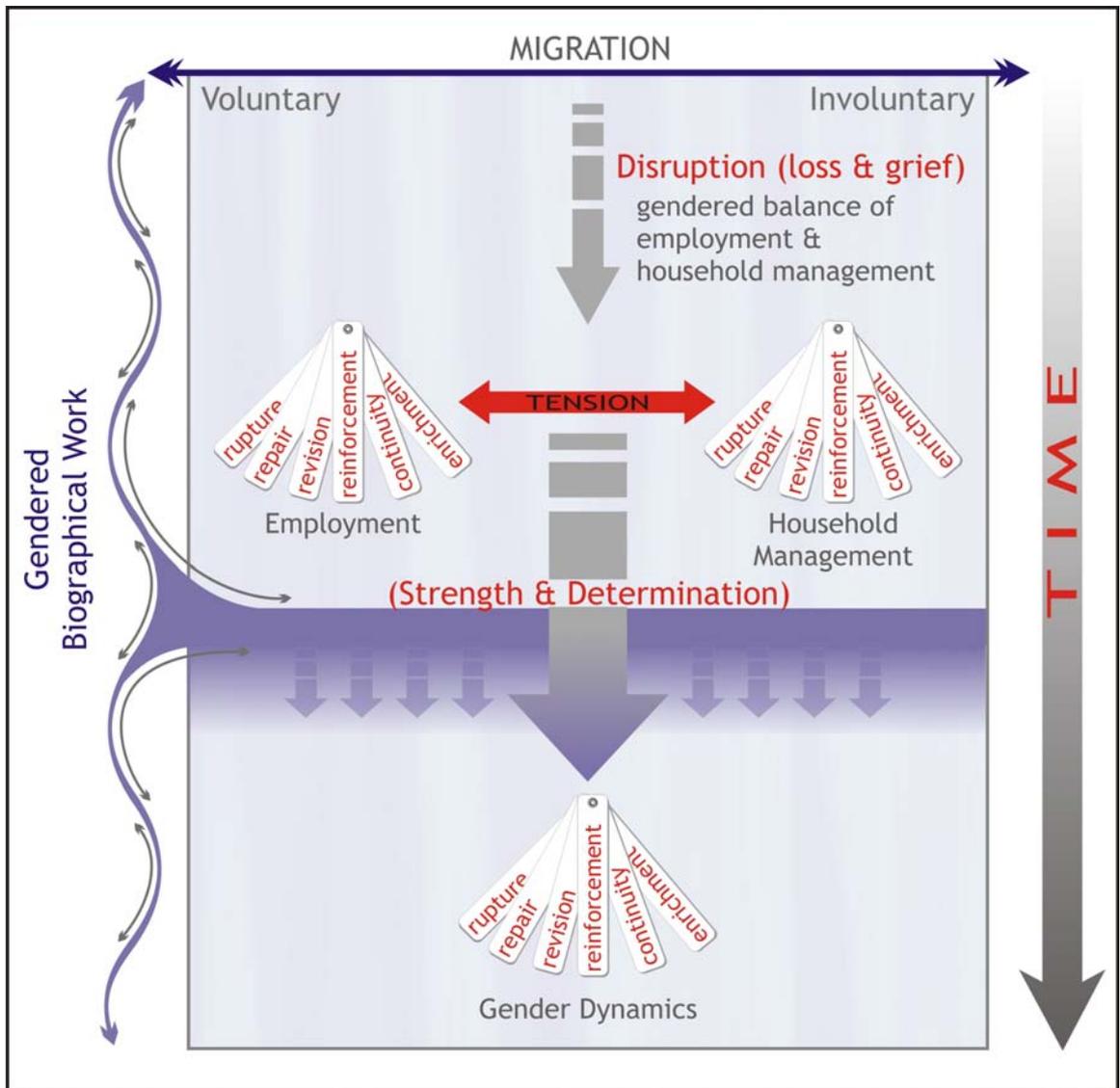
The following generic model of the biographical impact of migration on gender dynamics was derived from the model presented in the previous chapter. While the original model represented the general impact of migration on the biography of individual migrants, this adaptation illustrates the effect of migration on the gender dynamics of a migrant's intimate relationships. More specifically, it exemplifies the

way migrants resolve the tension between the current of their employment, and the current of household management in their new environments. As previously mentioned, this is one of the pivotal tensions through which gender dynamics are played out in the migration context. The effect of migration on each of these currents, and the gender dynamics of the migrant's intimate relationship, is conceptualised as biographical rupture, revision, reinforcement, continuity or enrichment.

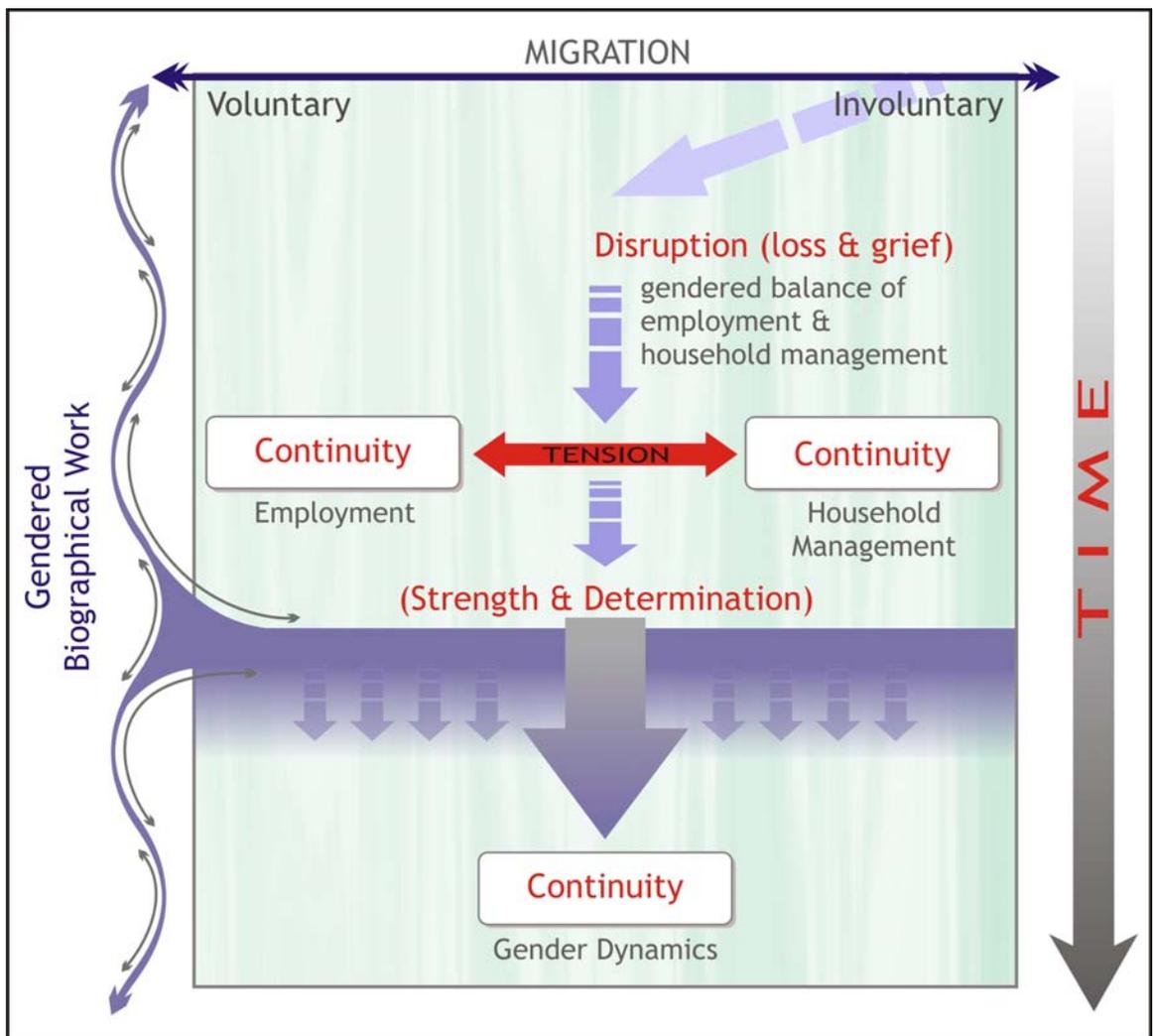
Like the previous model, the framework for this version incorporates two parallel axes: the passing of time is represented by the axis on the right, while the ongoing and open process of gendered biographical work is represented by the wave-like axis on the left. The spectrum of voluntary versus involuntary migration is also a component of both models. Similarly, each model includes the concept of migration as biographical disruption, the loss and grief which follow, and the strength and determination associated with the resultant process of gendered biographical work. However, while the original version incorporated the possibility of disruption to one or more biographical currents, this adaptation focuses exclusively on two specific currents and the tension between them: the current of employment, and the current of household management. Moreover, while the outcome in the previous model constituted the overall biographical impact of migration, the outcome in the present version represents the effect of migration on the gender dynamics of the migrant's intimate relationship.

The generic model is followed by three individual models, representing the biographical impact of migration on the gender dynamics in Sam's, then Ellen's, and finally Lorato's intimate relationships. While the generic model represents migration at a neutral point midway along the spectrum of voluntary versus involuntary migration, in each of the individual models, this point represents an interpretation of the degree to which that particular individual perceived their migration as either voluntary or involuntary. In Sam's case, for example, the migration trajectory originates more towards the involuntary end of the spectrum because he perceived his migration as a largely involuntary event. In contrast, the trajectory of Lorato's migration derives from the voluntary section of the spectrum because she and her husband decided to migrate to New Zealand in order to further their careers and experience life in another country.

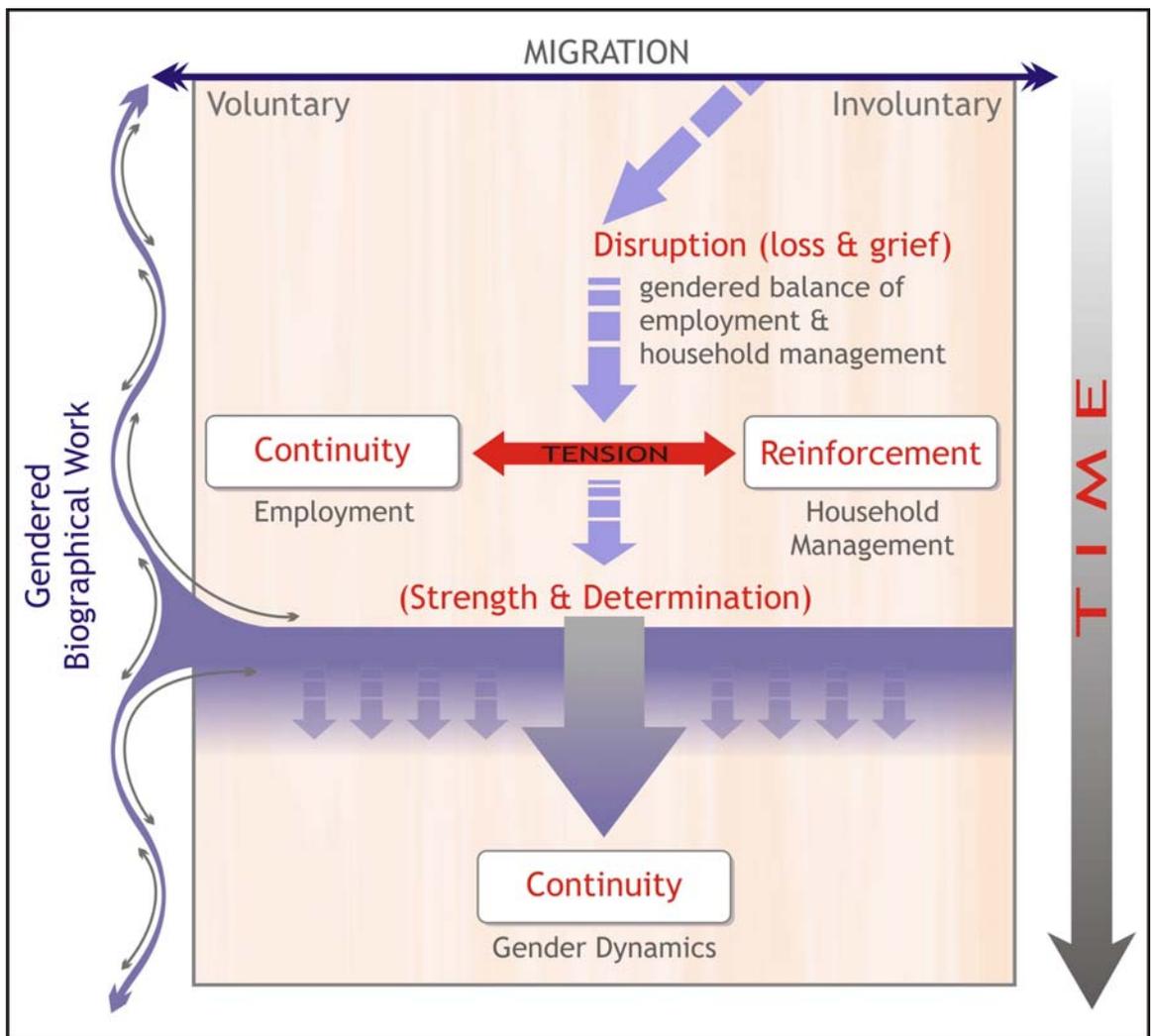
Model 5 The Generic ‘Impact of Migration on Gender Dynamics’ Model



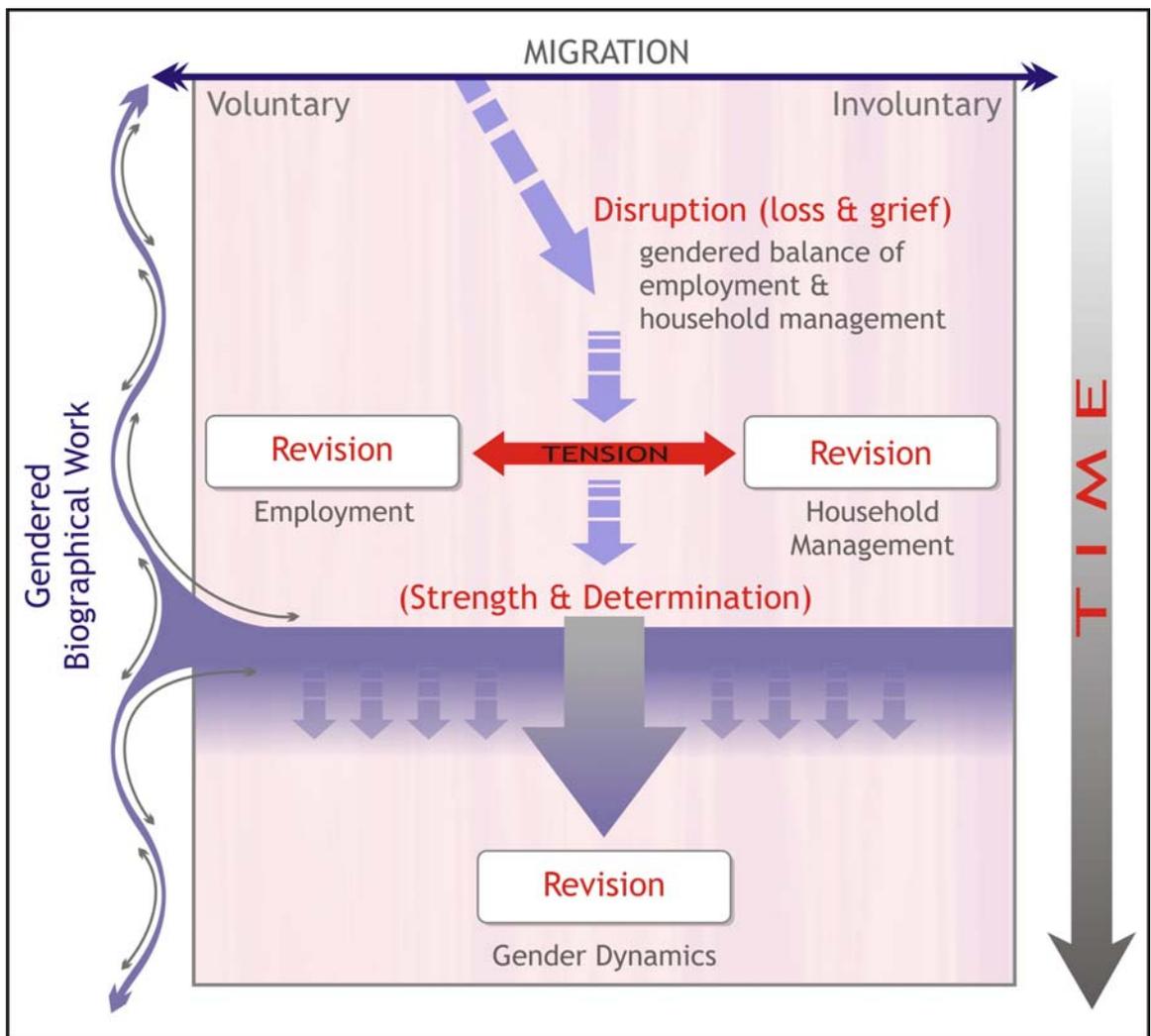
Model 6 Sam - The Biographical Impact of Migration on Gender Dynamics



Model 7 Ellen - The Biographical Impact of Migration on Gender Dynamics



Model 8 Lorato - The Biographical Impact of Migration on Gender Dynamics



Conclusion

The analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption, and the model developed from it, constitute a useful way of conceptualising the impact of migration on the gender dynamics of the migrants in this research. Both the language and the model, furthermore, also comprise a helpful way of thinking about the effect of migration on the gender dynamics of migrants' relationships more generally. As outlined in the introduction to this chapter, both were premised on the three fundamental developments in gender and migration literature: the notion that gender includes both women and men; the idea that gender is fluid and relational; and the view that women's and men's experiences are affected by social divisions such as ethnicity, 'race' and class. Moreover, the concept of biographical currents enables a consideration of one of the pivotal tensions through which gender dynamics are reconstructed throughout the experience of migration, the tension between the current of employment, and the current of household management.

Additionally, the emancipation narrative, and the language of losses and gains that dominate the literature, theorise the impact of migration on gender dynamics in dichotomous terms (emancipation/domination, losses/gains). In contrast, applying the vocabulary of biographical disruption and its associated model to this specific aspect of the migration experience characterises the impact of migration on gender dynamics in a variety of ways, including rupture, repair, revision, reinforcement, continuity or enrichment. Also and importantly, unlike these dichotomous terms, neither the language nor the model implies a judgement about whether the changes in work, home or gender dynamics represent a positive or a negative development for the individual. Rather, they allow for the possibility that a particular change in gender dynamics might in fact constitute some degree of pleasure and/or volition for the migrant concerned, even if the outcome deviates from some idealised version of gender equality. In summary, both the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption, and the model of the biographical impact of migration on gender dynamics, conceptualise male and female migrants as active agents operating within a specific set of gendered structural, institutional and discursive constraints.

Epilogue

Introduction

In the Prologue, I noted that the aims of the research fell into four broad categories: those which were focused on *the continued development of migration theory*; several that were concerned with *South African migration to New Zealand*; a number that related to the field of *gender and migration literature*; and lastly, some that were *methodologically oriented*. I now return to these original objectives, using them as a foundation from which to reflect on the main contributions of the thesis. I then summarise the key findings of the study and discuss possibilities for future gender and migration research in New Zealand. Lastly, I suggest that BNIM's aptness for the description and analysis of transition means that it has considerable promise as a research method for investigating contemporary social life in this country, characterised as it is by rapid social change, continuing high levels of international migration and an increasingly ethnically diverse population.

The Aims and Contributions of the Thesis

The aims in each of the four categories were of equal importance throughout the planning and writing of the thesis. Those objectives that related to the development of migration theory, however, were the most ambitious and the most challenging. I could envisage, from the interview and analysis phase of the research, how the thesis might fulfil the aims in the other categories. It was not until the latter stages of the research, however, that I was able to see how biography might be used to develop a gendered theorisation of migration.

Specifically, the thesis has contributed to *the continued development of migration theory* in several ways. It has developed migration theory that incorporates gender and accounts for its considerable impact on the biographical experience of international migration. The analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption and gender, the concept of gendered practical and symbolic biographical work, and the model which graphically represents the different stages of the gendered process of migration have provided a more gender-sensitive theorisation of migration. Moreover, each of these theoretical innovations has conceptualised gender as fluid, dynamic and relational, and as an integral part of the whole migration trajectory.

The research has also developed a nuanced and balanced understanding of the effects of structure and agency on the experience of international migration. Migration scholars continue to grapple with the problem of balancing the impact of structure and the influence of agency in the theorisation of the migration process. Both the analytic vocabulary of biographical disruption, and the model derived from it, represent the agency of individual migrants, in addition to the enabling and constraining influences of social structures and institutions. In particular, the concept of gendered practical and symbolic biographical work, which is a central feature of the analytic language and the model, incorporates elements of both structure and agency into its operation.

For example, the idea of gendered biographical work accounts for the ability of individual migrants to use practical and symbolic resources in coping with the disruption caused by migration, while it also acknowledges that migrants' access to such resources is subject to the constraining and enabling influences of social structures and institutions. Furthermore, the vocabulary, the model and the concept of gendered biographical work, based as they are on the core idea of biography, do not reproduce the theoretical barrier between migrants and society, but instead capture the way that structures and individuals can be both causes and effects of one another (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:27). These developments in the theorisation of migration are especially significant given the tendency in some migration scholarship to over-emphasise the constraining effects of social structures and institutions, and hence to portray migrant women as passive victims of circumstance (Anthias & Lazaridis, 2000:6).

The thesis has extended the debate about the effects of international migration on the gender dynamics of intimate relationships beyond the current binary conceptualisation of emancipation/subjugation, and gains/losses. The dichotomous theorisation of migrant women's status and position has been a central theme in gender and migration scholarship since the 1970s. The thesis has been successful at moving the terms of this debate beyond an either/or, oppositional way of thinking. Indeed, one of the main strengths of the analytic language of biographical disruption, and the model developed from it, is that they conceptualise the impact of international migration on gender dynamics in a variety of ways. Moreover, in line with the contemporary emphasis on gender rather than women in this field, these concepts describe changes in the gender dynamics of women's *and* men's intimate relationships, rather than focusing exclusively on women. Lastly, these theorisations allow for the possibility that certain changes in gender dynamics might constitute some degree of pleasure and/or volition for the individual concerned, even if the result is not congruent with an idealised version of gender equity.

In terms of the literature on *South African migration to New Zealand* the thesis has made the following contributions. It has increased the level of knowledge and understanding of South Africans' experiences of migration to this country. The individual case studies and the subsequent gendered biographical analyses have highlighted some of the major challenges faced by South African migrants in New Zealand, such as those associated with obtaining appropriate employment and others presented by the management of new configurations of paid and unpaid work.

The research has also augmented our awareness of the impact of migration on the gender dynamics of South African migrants' intimate relationships. Specifically, the gendered patterns that emerged from the analysis of this aspect of the migration experience highlight the significant upheaval South African migrants experience in balancing the requirements of the productive and reproductive spheres. Not only do they have to cope with the practical and emotional challenges of settling themselves and their families into a new country, but they must also negotiate a new way of sharing the multiple responsibilities of paid and unpaid work. The fact that women take on the majority of household tasks as a consequence of this renegotiation provides further

evidence of the gendered nature of the migration experience. Moreover, it serves as an insight into the particular stresses experienced by women and men during this time.

With respect to the development of *gender and migration literature*, the thesis has made several specific contributions. It has added to the relatively small body of scholarship on gender and skilled migration in the developed world; extended work on skilled migration and gender beyond its current focus on paid work; contributed a New Zealand perspective to the research on gender and migration; and finally, it has added to the small corpus of New Zealand work on this subject. While the thesis has contributed to each of these distinct areas of scholarship, its consideration of both productive and reproductive spheres (conceptualised in the thesis as separate currents in migrants' lives) has been helpful in correcting the current bias towards the productive sphere of paid work in contemporary gender and migration scholarship.

Lastly, the research has made a range of *methodological* contributions. In line with the thesis' original objectives, it adopted a qualitative methodology that incorporated the effects of both structure and agency, thus producing a balanced representation of the inter-relationship between migrants and their various environments. Moreover, the thesis used and developed a qualitative methodology that produced detailed, extensive data from which sociological theory about gender and migration could be generated. The research also utilised a qualitative methodology that accounted for the contemporary theorisation of gender as fluid, dynamic and relational, and constitutive of the whole migration process.

More specifically, with respect to the ongoing development of BNIM, the thesis has made various contributions. It has furthered the development of the 'socio' aspect of the sociobiographic method by incorporating a more detailed analysis of each migrant's social and historical context into the case studies and by focusing on the external dynamics between individuals and their environments, rather than their 'inner' worlds. In addition, the thesis has contributed to the development of BNIM by integrating into the method an increased level of transparency, reflexivity and a greater attention to power differences, particularly with respect to the interview phase of the research. The careful consideration of the complex ethical issues involved in working with biographical methods generally, and BNIM specifically, constitutes the project's next

contribution to the development of the methodology. This ethical segment adds to the ongoing debate about ethics and BNIM that is currently taking place amongst interested researchers.

Overall, BNIM had a number of advantages over other qualitative and narrative approaches with respect to furthering our understanding of the gendered experience of migration. Compared with other qualitative interviewing methods, BNIM allows the interviewee to tell their migration story according to their own system of meaning. In terms of analysis, BNIM makes each stage transparent; enables the researcher to understand the significance of particular biographical events or text fragments by using future-blind datum-by-datum analysis; and engages the perspectives of others in a process of group analysis that widens the researcher's interpretations. BNIM's emphasis on social and historical context distinguishes it from other narrative methods which tend to focus exclusively on the text itself.

Finally, the thesis has made one contribution that is not directly related to any of the areas included in the original aims of the research. The notion of *gendered biographical work* adds a gendered focus to a field that has previously been noted for its lack of a gendered dimension. In doing so, it continues the trend towards a greater consideration of context in the development of the notion of biographical disruption.

Key Findings

Some of the key findings of the thesis relate to the overall biographical experience of migration between the 'rainbow nation' and the 'land of the long white cloud', while others are centred on the impact of international migration on the gender dynamics of South African migrants' intimate relationships. The biographical experience of migration is characterised by disruption, even when the migrants concerned possess a high level of skills, significant work experience, and are moving to a developed nation that has actively sought their settlement. Furthermore, the experience of migration is disruptive even when the migration constitutes a strategy of biographical repair following a previous disruptive life event. This is especially salient in the case of South African migrants whose settlement is usually a response to disruptions in their home environment rather than the attraction of better opportunities in New Zealand. Similarly,

disruptions that occur in the post-migration period contribute to the overall process of sense-making and repair that occurs after settlement.

Even though the migration experience is universally disruptive, it is not inevitably experienced by all individuals as a profound disruption to their biography. Rather, the overall outcome of the disruption of migration can range from biographical rupture to biographical continuity. A number of similarities emerged between migrants' biographical experience of migration. All of them, for example, experienced some disruption to their paid employment after arriving in New Zealand. This disruption varied in severity from a short period of unemployment through to the cessation of the migrant's previous career and their subsequent retraining in another. In addition, all the migrants went through considerable disruption to the balance of gender dynamics in their intimate relationships post-migration.

A contributing cause of this disruption to gender dynamics was the difference in the domestic service economies of South Africa and New Zealand. In South Africa, the employment of domestic servants either full- or part-time is common, while in New Zealand these services are less available and prohibitively expensive for most families. Also analogous in each of the case studies was the inner landscape of grief and loss associated with the disruption of migration and the strength and determination linked to subsequent processes of biographical work and repair. Finally, differences in the biographical experience of migration were a result of the migrants' disparate motivations for migration and the different life stages during which settlement occurred. More specifically, participants' experience of migration differed according to how voluntary they perceived their migration to be and whether the settlement occurred during an era of family formation and consolidation, or in the period immediately prior to retirement.

Turning now to the effect of international migration on the gender dynamics of South African migrants' intimate relationships, there are seven key findings. Firstly, the pre-migration tension between paid and unpaid work was resolved in South Africa by the employment of domestic help and/or the assistance of extended family. Migration to New Zealand was universally disruptive of this balance. Secondly, this same tension was resolved post-migration almost exclusively by the female partner, who took on

most of the domestic responsibilities previously performed by others. Thirdly, for all of the female migrants, the consequences of taking on this household work involved an increased confinement to the domestic sphere; decreased personal freedom; less time to pursue their own interests; diminished possibilities for career advancement; and emotional difficulties. Fourthly, each male partner became or consolidated his role as the principal breadwinner post-migration, even if this took several years to achieve. Fifthly, each female spouse experienced a reduction in her role as income earner as a result of her migration to New Zealand.

The sixth key finding was that migration impacted on the productive and reproductive lives of South African migrants along gendered lines. When the tension between paid and unpaid work could no longer be resolved post-migration through paid domestic help and/or the assistance of extended family, women took on most of the responsibility for maintaining the household, at considerable cost to their careers, their freedom and their emotional well-being. Men, on the other hand, adopted or strengthened their position as principal earners, even when the re-establishment of their careers in New Zealand took some time. These findings are congruent with other international research on skilled migration and gender dynamics, such as Ho's (2006) work on Chinese women in Australia, and Yeoh and Willis' (2005) study of Singaporean women in China. Interestingly, the results also parallel the gendered redistribution of care work described in Parrenas (2005) research. While she found that the migration of Filipino women resulted in the shifting of the domestic burden onto other women in their home country, I found that South African women took on most of the reproductive work in their country of destination, when it could no longer be performed by other women. Nonetheless, the findings of both projects hint at how resistant gendered discourses and practices are to change.

Furthermore, these results support the claims of other gender and migration scholars that international migration can have diverse and sometimes contradictory effects on the gender dynamics of migrants' intimate relationships (Anthias, 2000; Akpınar, 2003; Hugo, 2002; Y. Zhou, 2000; Hirsch, 1999). As Parrado and Flippen (2005:606) suggest, '[t]he reconstruction of gender relations within the family at the place of destination is a dynamic process in which some elements brought from communities of origin are discarded, others are modified, and still others are reinforced'. The seventh and last

finding in this category, which did not occur along gendered lines, is that all the participants experienced increased intimacy in their relationships with their spouses and/or their children post-migration. With respect to spousal relationships, their greater closeness developed in the context of facing and overcoming the myriad challenges of settlement. In terms of the improvement in parent-child relationships, this was attributed to the fact that parents had taken over from the servant or other family members the daily tasks of caring for their children after arriving in New Zealand.

Possibilities for Further Research

In this section, two possibilities for further research are identified, both of which are policy-focused and involve the continued development of gender and migration scholarship in New Zealand. Firstly, migration policies play an important role in determining the relative positions of migrant women and men in countries of settlement, although the gendered implications of migration policies have received very little attention internationally (Iredale, 2005:156). Even when migration policies are apparently gender-neutral, they can inadvertently discriminate against women, and adversely affect their chances of successful settlement. In acknowledgement of this fact, Canada now subjects all new migration policy to a gendered analysis (International Organization for Migration, 2003:7). While the review of migration policy currently being undertaken in New Zealand (Department of Labour, 2006) provides an excellent opportunity to introduce a similar requirement in this country, the gender analysis of existing migration policy constitutes a more urgent research endeavour.

Secondly, for some time, commentators have pointed to the lack of post-settlement support services for migrants in New Zealand (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999), and also to migrants' need for such assistance, particularly in a contemporary context (Trlin et al., 2001). The New Zealand Settlement Strategy was launched by the Labour Government in 2004 in recognition of the importance of improving settlement outcomes for migrants and their families (Department of Labour, 2005b:9). As part of this strategy, the Government agreed to fund a range of initiatives to support migrant settlement, including increased funding for English tuition in schools, and the provision of career and labour market information, advice and guidance. The settlement strategy includes a

strategic component that plans for settlement needs locally, and develops a neighbourhood network of stakeholders to achieve this (Department of Labour, 2005b:11).

A BNIM-based project could run in tandem with the planning, development and evaluation of these local settlement support services. The research would have three important policy-based objectives: firstly, to integrate gender into the planning and implementation of these support services; secondly, to ensure that the services were appropriate to the needs of different migrant communities; and thirdly, to assist in the evaluation of the early phases of different settlement initiatives. The use of BNIM as the project's methodology would assist in achieving each of these aims. The authors of the SOSTRIS project, for example, present a convincing argument for the use of individual biographies as a vital source of social evidence for policy makers (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:12). Case study materials, they suggest, provide insights into lived experience, and throw light on issues of social context (Chamberlayne & Rustin, 1999:92). In sum, they note, 'biographical methods offer a fitting research tool, an inscription device which captures both personal and social dynamics, and which is helpful in thinking about both individual and collective strategies'.

Final Thoughts

By way of a concluding statement, I would like to suggest that BNIM's aptness for the description and analysis of change and transition, in addition to making it well-suited to the study of gender and international migration, also gives it considerable potential as a research method for investigating other aspects of social life in this country. This is particularly true in the context of life in 21st century New Zealand, where social relations are characterised by significant change, difference and diversity, and are being further altered by continuing high levels of international migration and an increasingly ethnically diverse population. Like the two suggestions for further research outlined in the previous section, I envisage that such BNIM-based research, and the insights gleaned from the detailed study of individual lives, would translate into the kind of differentiated social policy that reflects the divergent and changing needs of all New Zealanders.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Information Sheet

(Presented to participants on Massey University Letterhead)

The Experience of Migration: A Biographical Narrative Approach

This letter is to invite you to participate in a PhD research project I am undertaking on the experience of migration for people from South Africa. My name is Carina Meares and I am working under the supervision of Professor Paul Spoonley and Dr. Ann Dupuis from Massey University Albany.

Although migration and migrants have been the subjects of a lot of public debate, there has been little research undertaken on the real life experiences of South African migrants to New Zealand. The research that has been done has tended to focus only on the employment of different migrant groups, sometimes including South Africans. The focus of this research will be on each person's individual experience of migration, as expressed in their migration 'stories'.

It is intended that this research form the basis of my doctoral thesis, and also that it contribute to the small body of knowledge that exists about the South African

experience of migration to New Zealand. You have been invited to take part in this research because you arrived in New Zealand from South Africa between 1994 and 2001. Your name was passed on to me by a fellow member of the South African migrant community. Your participation and assistance in this research would be greatly appreciated.

Your involvement in the research would consist of two interviews, each of which may take up to two hours. The first interview is focused on the story that you tell about your migration, with some follow-up questions after you have finished. The second interview consists of further questions to fill out your migration 'story'. The interviews would be held at a place and time convenient for you. For example, you may wish to be interviewed in your own home, in my home, or in another location of your choice like the university.

The interview will be conducted according to the ethical principles that underpin university academic research. As a participant you have the right to refuse to answer any questions and to end the interview at any time. You also have the right to withdraw information related to this study for one month from the time of your interview. I can reassure you that all the information you provide is confidential and your anonymity will be protected. With your approval the interview will be audio taped, but the tape recorder will be turned off at any time during the interview if you so wish. After the research is completed a summary of the findings will be made available to you, if you wish.

Should you have any questions now, or at any time during the project please feel free to contact either myself or my supervisors. Our contact details are:

Carina Meares

486 4482

carina_meares@slingshot.co.nz

Dr. Ann Dupuis

414 0800 ext. 9054

A.Dupuis@massey.ac.nz

Professor Paul Spoonley

414 0800 ext. 9171

P.Spoonley@massey.ac.nz

Thank you for your assistance.

Carina Meares.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, ALB application 04/063. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Associate Professor Kerry Chamberlain, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Albany. Telephone: 09 414 0800 x9078, email humanethicsalb@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix 2

Consent Form

(Presented to participants on Massey University Letterhead)

PROJECT TITLE

The Experience of Migration: A Biographical Narrative Approach

This consent form will be held for a minimum of five (5) years

I have read the information sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand that I may choose not to continue with the interview process, or withdraw information without giving a reason, within a month after the completion of the interviews.

- I agree to take part in this research under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.
- I agree/do not agree that the interview will be audio taped.
- I wish/do not wish to have the audiotapes returned to me at the end of the research

Signed:

Name:

(please print full name clearly)

Date:

Appendix 3

Questions from Session Three

1. Do you think that the experience of migration has changed you as a person?
 - a. And if so, in what way?
 - b. How about the way that migration has changed you as a woman and a wife? [Or as a man and a husband]
 - c. And lastly, as a parent?

2. Could you tell me about a typical working day for you and your family in South Africa? Perhaps you could begin from when you all get up, and finish when the last person goes to bed?
 - a. And now could you do the same thing, but tell me about a typical working day for your family here in New Zealand?

3. Can you describe for me the 'ideal South African woman' [I asked women this question, and men their opinion on the ideal South African man]
 - a. And how about the ideal Kiwi woman? [man]
 - i. This question was poorly worded, and as a consequence, misunderstood. Moreover, I found that members of each different ethnic group phrased their answers with respect to these groups, rather than a generalised national stereotype.

4. Has the way that you dress changed since you arrived in New Zealand?
 - a. If so, can you tell me in what way?
 - b. What about hair and make-up, or personal grooming?

5. Have you or your husband/wife participated in church or community organisations since you arrived in New Zealand?
 - a. If so, is your participation different here than it was in South Africa?

6. How would your son's/daughter's life be different if s/he were growing up in South Africa?
7. Can you tell me how you and your husband/wife manage relationships with extended family still living in South Africa?
8. I noticed when I looked at figures from the last census that there were many South Africans living in New Zealand that no longer identify as South African. How would you define your own identity?
9. What are the three most negative experiences of your migration to New Zealand?
 - a. And the most positive?

Appendix 4

Example of Agenda for Group Analysis

Hi everybody,

Welcome to the second analysis group focusing on Ellen's life. For those of you who were here yesterday, thanks for coming back, and please bear with me while I give some background to those who are here for the first time. As I said yesterday, we're here to generate ideas about the life of Ellen, a South African migrant to New Zealand. In the Biographical Narrative Interpretive Method [or BNIM, for short], this part of the process is called the Biographical Data Analysis.

The reason we're doing this group analysis is because it helps me, as an individual researcher, to consider a range of ideas and possibilities that wouldn't be available to me on my own.

What's your role? Well, each of you is here because you have an interest in narrative methods or migration. You'll be adding a lot of value to the project by contributing different interpretations, perspectives and possibilities about the life we'll be studying.

How are we going to do this?

Agenda

1. Firstly, we'll begin with some introductions, which we'll do in the form of individual biographies

2. Then I'll give you some basic information about the process of group analysis
3. Before we move into the process itself
4. Around 11 we'll break for a cup of coffee or tea
5. And we'll finish around 12:15, so that we have a few minutes to discuss briefly how the analysis process went this morning

Some important points to consider:

1. Don't worry too much about BNIM terminology; the important thing about the group is the process of generating ideas about the individual's life
2. I'm sure you're all aware of the ethical issues involved in this kind of work. Let's remember that this is an interview with an individual from Auckland, and that although the names have been changed, we still need to be respectful of this person's privacy

The way I'd like to run this is:

1. I've put on the wall the questions we'll be thinking about as we look at each piece of data, so that you can refer to them whenever you need to
2. Let's listen positively to everything that's said; it isn't necessary to argue about the merits of opposing interpretations, the important thing is to have as many different ideas as possible
3. My role will be to facilitate the analysis, and to keep a written record of what gets said. I may need to ask you for clarification sometimes, and please feel free to stop me if I've put down something which you feel doesn't express what you had in mind.

Outcome

At the end of the session, we will have worked through several segments of data, and you will have become familiar with the way that BNIM analysis can work.

Appendix 5

Participant Report

From the Rainbow Nation to the Land of the Long White Cloud: Migration, Gender and Biography

Report Prepared for Participants

June 2007

Introduction

In 2004 you contributed to my PhD research which focused on the lived experience of migration between South Africa and New Zealand. Four years and many hours of contemplation later, my doctorate is now complete. This report contains excerpts from my thesis and describes some of the main results of my work. I have created it for two reasons. Firstly, I would like to thank you for taking the time to share your migration story with me. Together with the stories of other new South African New Zealanders, your narrative has been the foundation of my thesis. Secondly, I wanted to recognise your contribution by sharing some of the key findings of my work.

The report is divided into five sections: a copy of the acknowledgements as they appear at the beginning of my thesis; a brief background to my work and a list of some of the key findings; the framework I used to illustrate the lived experience of migration; the model I developed to portray the changes made in balancing paid work and domestic life after migration from South Africa to New Zealand and lastly, a few concluding comments.

Carina Meares
June 2007

Acknowledgements

Although writing this thesis has often been a solitary experience, its completion has nonetheless required the support of many people. I would like to thank my supervisors, Associate Professor Ann Dupuis and Professor Paul Spoonley, for their attentive and skilful guidance. I am particularly grateful to Ann, who often assumed responsibility for my supervision when Paul's other work commitments took him off campus or out of New Zealand. Ann responded quickly and thoughtfully to numerous emails, read endless drafts, gave honest, sensitive feedback and provided me with encouragement and emotional sustenance when I most needed them. Grateful thanks are also extended to Joy Oehlers for her generous assistance with my bibliography, and to Sue Claridge for her expert computer help.

Penny Lysnar has been my constant friend and supporter throughout my years of study. I owe her an enormous debt of gratitude for her time, her energy, her intellectual engagement with my work and her wonderful sense of humour. Similarly, I am very grateful to Patrick Firkin, who introduced me to narrative methods, inspired me with his original ideas, and responded patiently to my numerous requests for methodological assistance and advice. Tom Wengraf and Prue Chamberlayne also deserve my thanks. Not only did they facilitate the methods course I attended in the United Kingdom, but they also welcomed me into their home and gave freely of their time and knowledge long after the course was complete. I would like to thank each of the members of my analysis panels for their scholarly curiosity and the gift of their honest and thoughtful contributions. I am also greatly indebted to each of the South African migrants who gave so generously of themselves during our interviews. Quite simply, this thesis would not have been possible without them.

My doctoral study has greatly impacted the lives of those closest to me. I am grateful to my mother, Jan Kissane, who always believed I could do anything, and to my father, Giuseppe Di Maio, who told me my first 'migration story'. I am also deeply grateful to my friends, siblings and extended family for their love, their patience and their tolerance of my frequent physical and mental absences. I wish to thank my wonderful daughters, Rebecca Sian and Jessica Hope, for reminding me every day about the most important things in life. I am most indebted, however, to my husband, Hugh Meares. He gave me both the courage and inspiration necessary to begin this project, and the love and encouragement required to finish it. He put my needs before his own on countless occasions, woke without complaint before dawn to the sound of my keyboard, and

shouldered almost complete responsibility for the financial maintenance of our family. Most particularly, he could always be trusted to pick up the pieces of my sanity and myself and bind them together with his infinite love and energy. He is my greatest strength.

Background

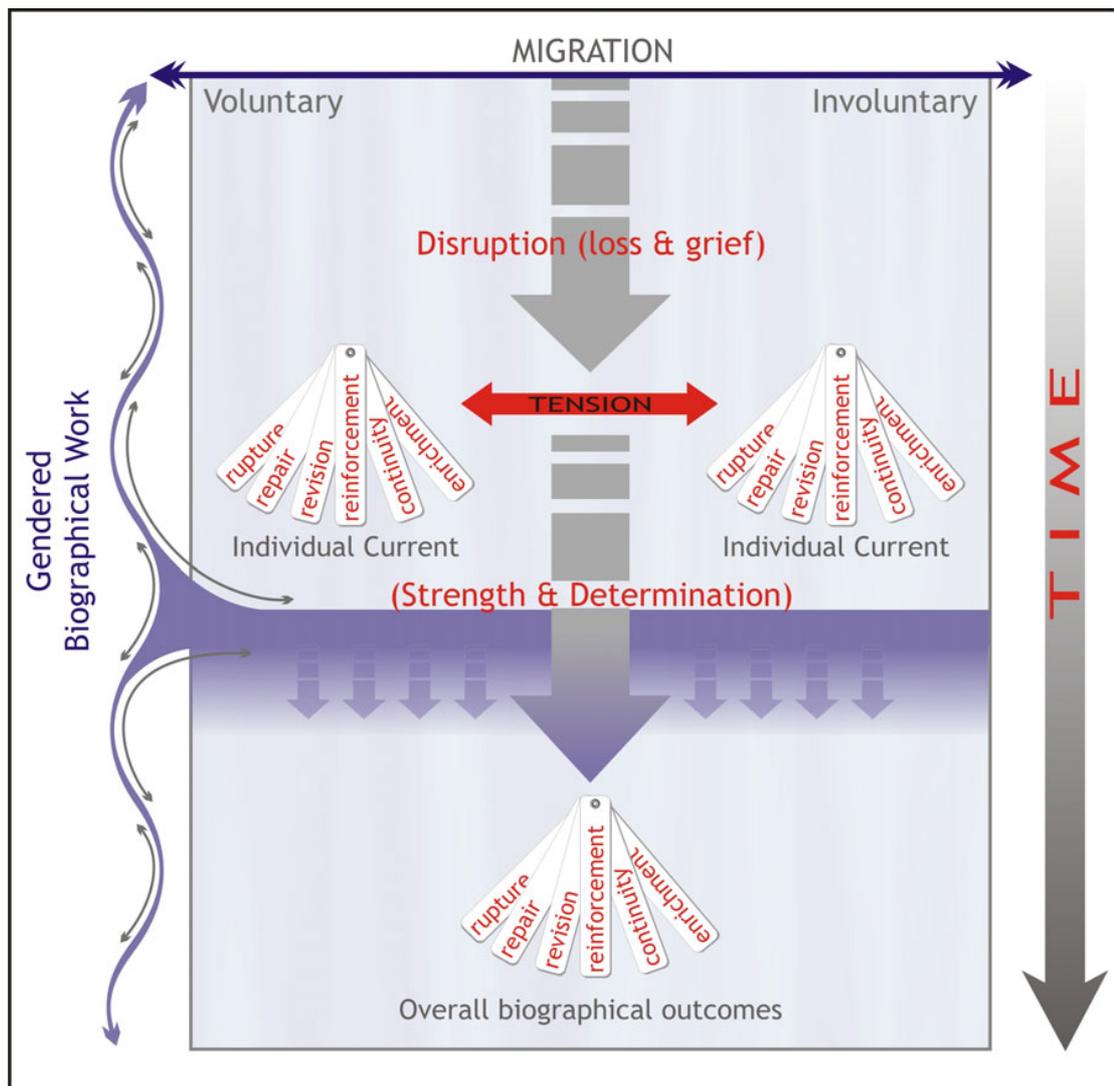
As I mentioned before our interview, a lot of migration research focuses on the employment outcomes of New Zealand's different migrant groups. In contrast, I was interested in women's and men's lived experience of migration, and because of this I chose a life history, or biographical method. I like this way of looking at migration because it has allowed me to consider both the wider forces that shape our personal lives, such as politics, economics and history, as well as those aspects of our experiences that are personal and individual. The careful analysis of your migration story, and those of several other South African migrants, has generated the following findings.

Key Findings

- The lived experience of migration is characterised by disruption.
- This disruption occurs even when migrants possess a high level of skills, significant work experience, and are moving to a developed nation that has actively sought their settlement.
- Furthermore, the experience of migration is disruptive even when the migration constitutes a strategy of biographical repair following a previous disruptive life event. This is especially salient in the case of South African migrants whose settlement is usually a response to disruptions in their home environment rather than the attraction of better opportunities in New Zealand.
- Similarly, disruptions that occur after migration can exacerbate and prolong the disruptive impact of migration.
- Even though the migration experience is universally disruptive, it is not necessarily experienced by all individuals as a profound disruption to their whole biography.
- A number of similarities emerged between migrants' biographical experience of migration.
 - All of them experienced some disruption to their paid employment after arriving in New Zealand. This disruption varied in severity from a short period of unemployment through to the cessation of the migrant's previous career and their subsequent retraining in another.
 - In addition, all the migrants went through considerable disruption to the balance of their paid work and domestic life post-migration.
 - Lastly, each migrant also experienced grief and loss at the disruption caused by their migration and needed both strength and determination to work through this difficult time.

- Several differences also emerged.
 - Migrants' experiences differed according to how voluntary or involuntary they perceived their migration to be.
 - Moreover, their migration varied in relation to the timing of settlement, for example whether it occurred during a time of family formation, or in the period immediately prior to retirement.
- Migrants responded to the disruption in the balance of their paid work and domestic life post-migration in similar ways.
 - The female partner took on most of the domestic responsibilities previously performed by others.
 - As a consequence of taking on this increased domestic load, women tended to experience more time at home; less personal freedom; less time to pursue their own interests; diminished possibilities for career advancement; and emotional difficulties such as loneliness and even depression.
 - Women also experienced a reduction in their role as income earners as a consequence of the realignment of paid work and domestic responsibilities
 - Men, in contrast, became or consolidated their position as the principal breadwinner in their families.
 - If the process of obtaining paid work was lengthy and difficult, men tended to experience this as very stressful.
- Both women and men experienced increased intimacy in their relationships with their spouses and/or their children post-migration.
 - With respect to spousal relationships, their greater closeness developed in the context of facing and overcoming the myriad challenges of settlement.
 - In terms of the improvement in parent-child relationships, this was attributed to the fact that parents had taken over from the servant or other family members the daily tasks of caring for their children after arriving in New Zealand.

The Lived Experience of Migration



This general framework shows the lived experience of migration over time. It illustrates the main features of the migration experience and can be modified to represent the particular stories of individual migrants.

The line at the top represents the degree to which a migrant considers their migration a voluntary or an involuntary event. As I mentioned in the Key Findings, migration from South Africa is often a move *away* from disruptions at home rather than *towards* the attractions of a new destination. This means that South African migrants often experience their migration to New Zealand as less than completely voluntary. Thinking about migration as a spectrum allows us to account for these shades of meaning, rather considering those who move as *either* migrants *or* refugees.

For example, if this framework were used to represent the ‘reluctant’ migration of a fictional individual called Anne who left South Africa after experiencing a random act of violence in her homeland, the central arrow in the framework might originate from the involuntary end of the migration spectrum.

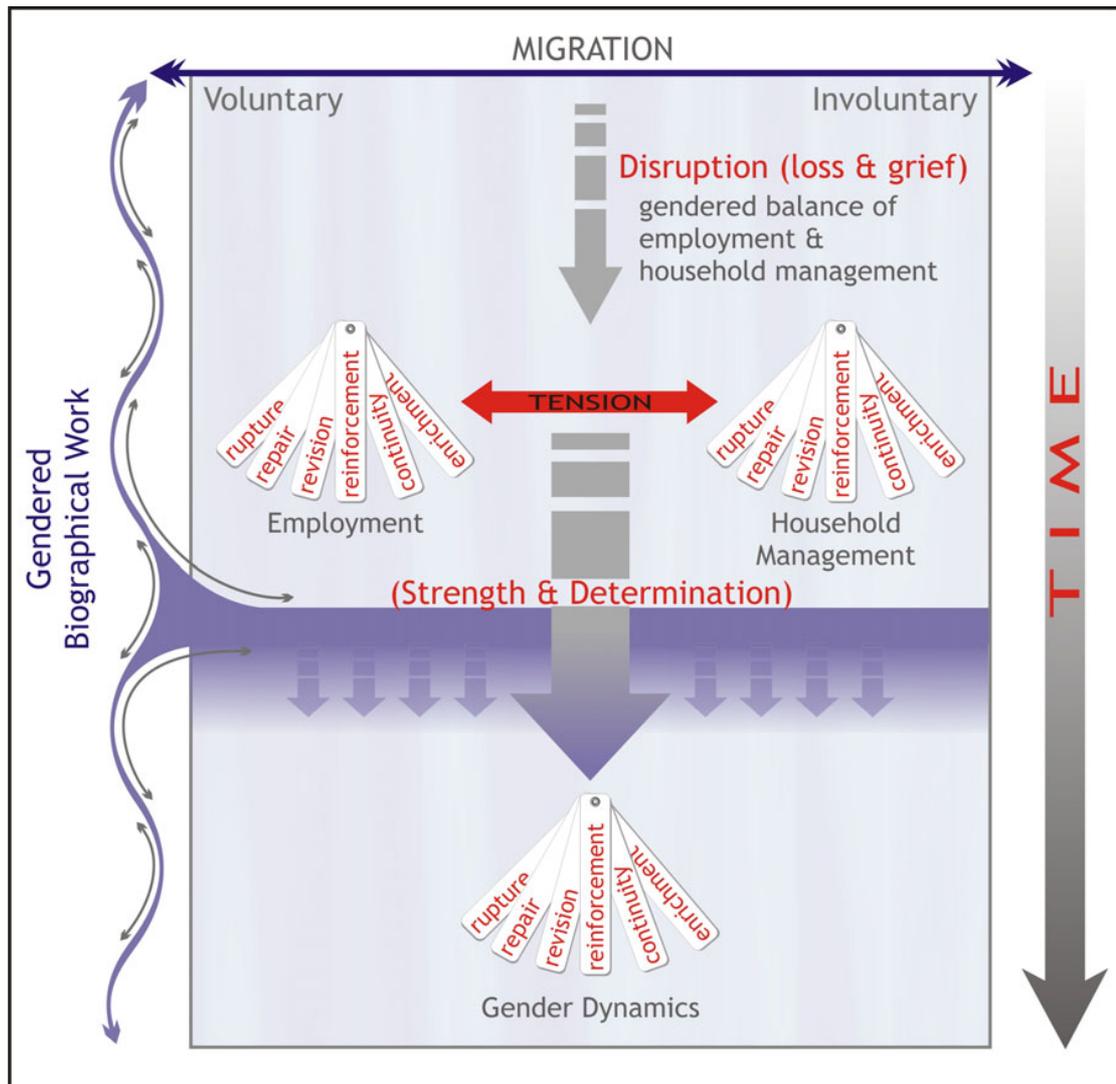
The passing of time is symbolised by the axis on the right, while the wave-like axis on the left illustrates the ongoing way in which migrants make sense of their migration experiences. Important aspects of disruption listed in the Key Findings are integrated into the core of the framework: disruption, loss and grief, and strength and determination.

In this general framework two currents represent those aspects of a migrant’s life that have been impacted by their transition. When the framework is used to illustrate Anne’s lived experience, the number of affected currents would reflect the specific details of her own story. For example, migration might impact her career, her health and her sense of safety and security. The red arrow stands for the tension that can exist between certain aspects of life, such as the tension between paid employment and domestic life that I identified in the Key Findings.

The words that form each of the fans represent a range of biographical outcomes, firstly for the individual currents disrupted by the migration, and then for the migrant’s overall biography. These include rupture, repair, revision, reinforcement, continuity and enrichment. Again using the fictional Anne as an example, she experienced significant health problems as a direct consequence of her migration, problems which caused her to revise many aspects of her daily life. This particular current of her life might therefore be described as ‘revision’. In addition, her career as a teacher ended after her migration to New Zealand because of her health problems and an ongoing difficulty obtaining work in her field. This current of her life might therefore best be portrayed as ‘rupture’. With respect to her sense of safety and security post-migration, however, this might be represented as ‘repair’.

Overall, Anne’s migration story might then be represented as biographical continuity because despite the damage to her health and the loss of her career she was able to regain her sense of safety and security and maintain her strong identity as a nurturing wife and mother.

Migration, Paid Work and Domestic Life



While the last framework represented the lived experience of migration, this one specifically illustrates the effect of migration on the balance of paid work and domestic life. It shares many of the features of the previous framework: the spectrum of voluntary versus involuntary migration; the parallel axes illustrating the passing of time and the ongoing way that migrants make sense of their experiences; and the loss and grief and strength and determination associated with the disruption of migration. It also contains a range of options for the specific currents of employment and household management, and for gender dynamics overall.

Using the fictional example of Anne again, her career as a teacher ended after her migration to New Zealand. As I mentioned previously, this current of her life might therefore best be described as 'rupture'. In terms of her domestic life, however, the family were unable to afford domestic help after they arrived in New Zealand, and as a consequence Anne stayed at

home to care for the children and took on all of the domestic work that had been performed by someone else in South Africa. This current of her life might therefore be represented as ‘reinforcement’.

Despite these enormous changes, however, the gender dynamics in Anne’s intimate relationship can best be characterised as ‘continuity’. In both South Africa and New Zealand Anne was ultimately responsible for the maintenance of the home and the care of the children. While she had had a mostly supervisory role with respect to the household work in South Africa, this changed after the family moved to New Zealand and Anne took a hands-on role in maintaining the home.

Concluding Comments

I would like to finish this report by reiterating my thanks for sharing your migration story with me. As I said in the acknowledgements that preface my doctorate, my thesis could not have been written without you. The abiding impression I take away from this work is a great admiration and respect for the courage it takes to leave your homeland and begin again.

I welcome any feedback you would like to make about my work, and can be contacted by phone or by email.

Carina Meares

C.L.Meares@massey.ac.nz

414 0800 ext. 9452

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